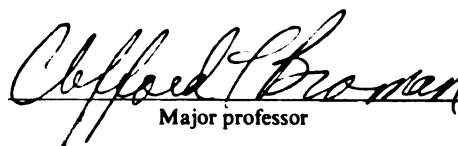


This is to certify that the
dissertation entitled
THE ROLE OF SUPPORT NETWORKS IN THE LIVES OF
A GROUP OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN SINGLE MOTHERS

presented by
NORMAN ANTHONY PEART

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for
DOCTORAL degree in SOCIOLOGY / URBAN
STUDIES


Major professor

Date 10-6-93



LIBRARY
Michigan State
University

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
1993 0 4 1993	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**THE ROLE OF SUPPORT NETWORKS IN THE
LIVES OF A GROUP OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN SINGLE MOTHERS**

By

Norman Anthony Peart

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Sociology

1993

ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF SUPPORT NETWORKS IN THE LIVES OF A GROUP OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN SINGLE MOTHERS

By

Norman Anthony Peart

This exploratory study seeks to identify and examine the ways Black single mothers gain support. Special focus is placed on three sources of support--kin, church, and the father of the children. The data for this small-scale qualitative study is collected through in-depth, semistructured interviews. Interviews consists of open and closed questions. The study reveals that the research families are still receiving support from their community. The three traditional sources of support are found to be operative for this study. The study also identifies the effect certain demographic variables have on the reception of support by these single mothers. The study found that the factors which attributed to women receiving the greater amount of support included: younger age of the single mother; younger children; a greater number of children; close proximity of the single mother's mother; closer proximity of the single mother's family; younger age of the children's father; and either having church membership

and/or being active in a church. The findings of the study are similar to Carol Stack's findings from 20 years ago as to the significance of support networks to African-American women.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I	Problem Statement & Survey of Literature.....	1
Chapter II	Methodology.....	47
Chapter III	The Accentuation of Independence.....	74
Chapter IV	Support Networks Analysis.....	91
Chapter V	The Effect of Life Course on..... Support Networks	153
Chapter VI	Summary and Conclusion.....	165
Endnotes.....		183
List of References.....		186

Chapter I

Problem Statement & Survey of Literature

Research has shown that the social support network of urban Blacks is an important facet of their survival. This network is a very important part of this group's ability to overcome the socioeconomic struggles they confront (Ladner, 1971; Stack, 1974; Shimkin, Shimkin, and Frate, 1978; Ladner and Gourdine, 1984; Willie, 1985). One subgroup for which this network holds special significance is the Black urban single mother (Stack, 1974; Belle, 1982; Kotlowitz, 1991). For this group the social support network's various components have worked to supply the diverse needs of this population. These components include extended families, churches, friends, and African-American males of various relationships to the single mother.

Extended families comprise the core of many Black social and support networks (Taylor and Chatters, 1988; Taylor, 1990; Hays and Mindel, 1973). In comparison to Whites, Blacks have a greater interaction with, and a greater evaluation of kin cohesion (Hays and Mindel, 1973). Nonkin ties may be less reliable and durable than kin bonds, since kin networks are more obligatory in nature (Ellison,

1990). Black churches are only second to families as an important social institution (Taylor and Chatters, 1988). The church is a very important source of social support since it uniquely endures over most of a person's life (Taylor and Chatters, 1988). Although African-American males have been a much maligned source of support for single mothers (Stack, 1974; Kotlowitz, 1991), some researchers have argued that Black males have been an important source of support for their children and the mothers of these children (Danzinger et al., 1990).

Yet, some scholars argue that the migration of middle class Blacks from the inner-city has injured these important support networks. This migration has injured these networks by destroying community solidarity, and weakening friendship and kin ties. Although noting the past role of the Black support system, Martin and Martin (1985) do not believe that this system is functioning as it once did. They argue that the system is not functioning as it once did because of the erosion of the Black community's social underpinning. They point to four factors as the reason for this erosion: first, the growth of the "bourgeoisie ideology," which stresses individualism to the detriment of the communal perspective; second, the "street ideology," whose emphasis on manipulation and exploitation has undermined the helping tradition; third, "urbanization"; and fourth, the growth of government funded programs. Martin and Martin summarize this

present situation in noting,

But today, although the extended family is still a powerful mechanism for the survival of black people in both rural and urban areas, its major elements have grown weak. Its elements of mutual aid and social-class cooperation are plagued by the bourgeoisie and street ideologies and a reliance by blacks on governmental aid (1985:95).

Another author who has echoed the view that the Black community and its support system have been undermined by contemporary social changes is William Julius Wilson (Wilson, 1978; 1987). Wilson argues that civil rights reforms and a change in the opportunities for Blacks have caused many upper class Blacks to leave the inner-city area. This has resulted in an isolation of lower class Blacks from employment networks (resulting in the establishment and perpetuation of a weak labor force attachment), mainstream behavioral modifications, different class and racial contacts, and mainstream social institutions and their values (Wilson, 1987:60-61; McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1989:96). Wilson also notes that contemporary urban Blacks differ both from their counterparts of earlier years, and from poor Whites because they are becoming increasingly concentrated in dilapidated territorial enclaves. These enclaves epitomize acute social and economic marginalization (Wilson, 1978:9; 1987:8).

In contrast, many scholars argue that there are various active support networks that are still operating within urban Black communities (Wellman, 1979; Wellman and

Leighton, 1979; Oliver, 1988; Garcia, 1989).

The reception of support has also been related to the age of the individual. As individuals get older they receive less support (Taylor, 1986; House et al., 1988). Based on this present condition in the African-American community it seems that many young Black single mothers who need support may not receive this support from the traditional sources of support in the African-American community---extended family, friends, church, and spouse, or boyfriend.

From this cursory overview I can see that there are two major foci I will examine in respect to this subject. The first, is a determination as to whether these networks presently exist. The second, is to determine the ability of younger single mothers to receive support through established support networks.

Still, there are various issues that have direct bearing upon this study. To appropriately analyze these relevant areas I will examine the pertinent literature by using four overviews. The first will be an overview of research on minority families; the second, an overview of research on female headed households; the third, an overview of research on support networks; the fourth, an overview of research on the present condition of the "urban underclass."

An Overview of Research on Minority Families:

There are three theoretical perspectives under which this work can be categorized. The first theoretical

underpinning, which is the basis for a large amount of the contemporary research on the Black family, is an ethnicity-based theory that uses the assimilation/modernization framework. This analytical paradigm espoused the view that the families of minority groups hinder the access of minorities to political power, social status, and economic rewards (Stone, 1985; Banton, 1983; Omi and Winant, 1986). As minorities are impacted by the modernization of American society, through urbanization and industrialization, these families would take on American values, attitudes, and behavior while discarding their own cultural peculiarities. The result of this process is that these families would become modernized and assimilate into the dominant society (Baca Zinn and Eitzen, 1990; Baca Zinn, 1990b). This theory, which was originally used to describe the process by which European immigrants integrated into modern American culture, came to characterize minority families (Omi and Winant, 1986:16; Baca Zinn and Eitzen, 1990:65; Abercrombie et al., 1988).

The classic study of the noted African-American scholar E. Franklin Frazier, The Negro Family in the United States (1939), epitomized and popularized this theory (Baca Zinn and Eitzen, 1990; Farley and Allen, 1987; Adams, 1978). The position of Frazier was based on the teachings of the social scientists of the University of Chicago, and especially by the work of his mentor Robert Ezra Park (Hughes, 1974:6;

Staples, 1971:120; Banton, 1983:80). Park believed in studying the various kinds of economic, political, and social arrangements that develop when races and nations meet. He was especially interested in the arrangements that develop when one nation or race has great power over the other (Hughes, 1974). This perspective became the basis for Park's theory, "the race relations cycle." This theory espoused the belief that a universal process existed through which minorities assimilate into society (Baca Zinn and Eitzen, 1990; Dodson, 1988). The theory stated that this cycle was initiated when dominant and minority groups came into contact. This process would then continue until the minority group assimilated into the majority group's patterns and processes (Baca Zinn and Eitzen, 1990; Omi and Winant, 1986).

Frazier revealed this perspective in his 1939 work as he used the "natural history" approach to trace the evolution of Black families. He used this approach to show that there was a series of disruptive social changes in the Black community that dissolved the cultural bases for family relationship, structure, and marital stability among Blacks. The culmination of this evolutionary process was the dysfunctional nature of the Black family. These disruptive social changes included enslavement, emancipation, migration from the rural South to the industrial and urban centers of the North (1948:361-362; Allen, 1978:119; Staples,

1971:121). Frazier argued that there are four primary variations of family patterns that resulted from these changes. The first, was that Black families took on a matriarchal character that placed Black males in a marginal role and limited their significance in the family structure. This variation was considered to be the principal pattern of the Black family because of slavery. The second variation, was the instability of marital life. This resulted from the fact that the institution of marriage had no legal basis in slavery. Therefore, the practice of having multiple sexual partners became the norm. The third variation, was a total dissolution, by the process of urbanization, of the stability of family life enjoyed by Black peasants in an agrarian society. The fourth variation, which primarily characterized only two small classes within the Black community--the "brown middle class" and the "black proletariat," was the two-parent family pattern (Frazier, 1948; Staples, 1976). Frazier believed that since the end of slavery the disorganization of the race, as expressed in the predominance of the first three family type variations, worked to hinder Blacks from achieving success in mainstream society. He states,

When one views in retrospect the waste of human life, the immorality, delinquency, desertions, and broken homes which have been involved in the development of Negro family life in the United States, they appear to have been the inevitable consequences of the attempt of a preliterate people, stripped of their cultural heritage, to adjust themselves to civilization.... However, when one undertakes to envisage the probable

course of development of the Negro family in the future, it appears that the travail of civilization is not yet ended (1948:367).

Frazier believed that as assimilation occurred in the future, Blacks would adopt modern family patterns and family disorganization would disappear (1948:367-368; Baca Zinn and Eitzen, 1990:70; Hays and Mindel, 1973:51). From the great emphasis Frazier places on this process one could deduce that the very success of Blacks in America was based on their adoption of white culture. Unfortunately, that was just how his statements were accepted (Staples, 1971:121).

The next major development in the construction of this theoretical perspective was the resurrection of Frazier's position in the mid-1940's to the mid-1960's by such social scientists as Gunnar Myrdal (1944), Kenneth B. Clark (1965), and Lee Rainwater (1966). The most widely contested expansion upon Frazier's perspective, though, came from Daniel P. Moynihan and his influential work The Negro Family: The Case for National Action (1965). Operating within the assimilation/modernization framework of Frazier, Moynihan categorized the family structure of lower class status Blacks as dysfunctional and a hindrance to the progress of these Black Americans. This conclusion was based on the high rate of out-of-wedlock births, female headed households, matriarchy, and Black male emasculation. These factors were presented as pathological features of the lower class Black family patterns (or structure), and were

highlighted as the reason for the present problems of the race, including "poverty and deprivation." Moynihan's use of this framework is evident in his comparative statement,

But there is one truly great discontinuity in family structure in the United States at the present time: that between the white world in general and that of the Negro American. The white family has achieved a high degree of stability and is maintaining that stability (1965:5).

Although Moynihan had set out to statistically prove Frazier's theory, he instead succeeded in pushing his own theory into public prominence. Whereas Frazier wrote that the Black family was disorganized as a result of various disruptive social changes, Moynihan wrote that the deterioration of the Negro family was the reason for the deterioration of the Black community's infrastructure (Moynihan, 1965:5).

There are various criticisms that can be lodged against this ethnicity-based theory in respect to its use in the study of minority families. The first is that this approach is rooted in a structural-functionalist perspective of the principles of family organization (Allen, 1978). Structural-functionalism views the nuclear family as a universal human institution because of its supposed numerous and important functions within society (Thorne, 1982; Abercrombie et al., 1988). The mainstream family pattern is, therefore, held up as the standard to which all other family forms are to conform (Frazier, 1948:359-360; Moynihan, 1965:5). Hays and Mindel note,

From this perspective, the two-parent family, typically with father as breadwinner and head, which is often used interchangeably with the term 'white, middle-class family,' is seen as the 'normal' or 'healthy' type, and the standard by which other families are evaluated. The assumption, apparently, is that if a particular family structure does not approximate the dominant American model then that form is somehow pathological. This outlook, in part, derives from the view that a particular type of family structure best serves the needs of an industrial society (1973:51).¹

But, this perspective is teleological, or circular, in that the very society that sets the goal is also the establisher of systems of racial stratification that hinders these minority families from sufficiently obtaining this goal (Thornton Dill, 1988). It is, therefore, impossible for many Black families to achieve the mainstream family pattern that this perspective advocates (Allen, 1978).

Secondly, the ethnicity-based perspective does not adequately address the issue of racial stratification and how this factor affects minority families (Baca Zinn, 1990). The assimilation/modernization framework has not been proven to be correct in its view that a minority group's assimilation into the dominant culture leads to the equal distribution of socioeconomic and political resources (Baca Zinn, 1990). An explanation for this failure is that Park, who laid the foundation for this framework, based his beliefs on European, white immigrants who lay outside the experience of those identified as **racial** minorities: Afro-Americans, Latin Americans, Native Americans and Asian Americans. As Omi and Winant further note,

The continuity of experience embodied in the application of the terms of ethnicity theory to both groups - to European immigrants and racial minorities - was not established; indeed it tended to rest on what we have labeled the **immigrant analogy** (1986:16).

This can also be seen in the fact that Frazier and Moynihan's belief that as Blacks assimilated and adopted a modern family form they would advance socioeconomically has not been proven to be true (Coner-Edwards and Spurlock, 1988; Updegrave, 1989).

The third criticism is that this perspective's categorization of the mainstream's family pattern and its processes as normative demands that any deviation from this pattern be given a negative value judgment (Dodson, 1988). This has resulted in the categorization of minority families as either deviant, dysfunctional, deficient, or unstable (Farley and Allen, 1987; Baca Zinn, 1990b). This categorization has primarily been used to describe the American Black family (Baca Zinn and Eitzen, 1990; Adams, 1978), but it has also been used to describe other minority families as well. A negative model of the family has also been used to characterize Chicano families (Baca Zinn and Eitzen, 1990). Miguel Montiel calls this the social science "myth of the Mexican-American family." The three characteristics of the Mexican-American family that caused this approach were fatalism, patriarchy, and familism (1978:71; Becerra, 1988). The results of this characterization have had some major effects on the race as

"Cultural differences were thus treated as cultural deficiencies and were considered the reason Chicanos are disproportionately found in subordinate positions in society" (Baca Zinn and Eitzen, 1990:72). Another minority family that has also been categorized by this negative model is the Native American family (John, 1988).

The categorization of minority family patterns as culturally deviant has been refuted by many scholars who have argued that alternative family patterns are responses to, but not responsible for the social location of minorities. These differences in family patterns have come to be viewed as survival strategies in light of conditions of racial inequality and poverty (Baca Zinn 1990b; Billingsley 1968; Gutman 1976; Ladner 1971; Stack 1974).

The final criticism is that the studies, and therefore the findings, of Frazier, Moynihan and others of this perspective focus on the poor Black family. The adaptations that these lower-class families implement for survival are then compared to middle-class White families that leads to these poorer families being characterized as dysfunctional and damaging. This approach reveals an intentional researcher bias since these poor families cannot be expected to resemble the White middle-class family. The results from such a study are, therefore, more appropriate for making a case that blames the victim for his/her situation instead of addressing the discriminatory nature of the social structure

(Staples, 1971; 1985).

The second theoretical perspective in the study of minority families is the social system theory. A system is defined as two or more social actors (institutions, things, organisms) engaged in a moderately stable interaction, within a delineated environment, which exists to fulfill a certain goal or function (Billingsley, 1968:4; Abercrombie et al., 1984). The prototypic analysis of Black family life within the social system framework was accomplished by Andrew Billingsley in his work Black Families in White America (1968). In this work he sums up his theoretical basis by stating,

Theoretically, we urge that the Negro family might appropriately be viewed as a social system inextricably bound up with and heavily influenced by the major institutions of the larger society. At the same time we argue that Negro families would function much more productively if the Negro experience were more adequately reflected in the dominant values and programs of the larger society (3).

Billingsley's work clearly challenged the thesis that the Black family was deviant and pathological. He argued that the principal subsystems of the larger society that directly influenced Black family life must be noted for their impact on these families. These forces of the broader social network he identified as the values, the political, the economic, the educational, the health, and the communication subsystems. These subsystems affect both the variety and dynamic quality of family structures, and determine the extent to which families are able to function

in meeting the needs of their various members (Billingsley, 1968:4,32).

On this basis Billingsley argued that the structures and processes of Black families directly result from adaptive reactions to the severe socioeconomic hardships that threaten their existence (1968:145; Allen, 1978:119). The ability of this perspective to highlight the "instrumental realm issues" that affect the Black family is probably its greatest strength. These issues include such concerns as the effect that institutional racism has on the quality of life of African-Americans (Coner-Edwards, 1988:39; Jenkins, 1988:116). This perspective is important in respect to this issue because it mandates that the researcher not only focus on the Black family, but also on the institutional structures that have worked to marginalize these families (Staples, 1971).

Other scholars who used and expanded upon this theory were quite numerous. Scanzoni (1971), along with Billingsley, argued that those who categorized the Black family as deviant and pathological did not take into consideration the effect that different contexts and values had on the structure and processes of Black families. Stack (1974) identified the adaptive nature of many lower class Black families by noting the important role that friend and kin networks played in the survival strategy of Black families. This point was also noted in the works of Hays and

Mindel (1973), Hill (1971), and Aschenbrenner (1978).

The social system view was very popular during the early 1960's and the mid-1970's since it was the primary perspective to hold when attacking the position of Frazier-Moynihan. The view's prominence has diminished since the position of Frazier-Moynihan decreased in popularity in the 1980's (Adams, 1978; Farley and Allen, 1987). Through the years there have been other important works that attacked the "deviant" characterization of the Black family. These works attempted to show that either the information that was used was inaccurate, or that a different view of the Black family should be taken. The authors include: Gutman (1976) who revealed that even during slavery Blacks often found ways of organizing stable and supportive family contexts for themselves and their children; and Wilson (1978, 1987), who argued that the present growth of Black female-headed households is caused by the inability of many Black males to obtain stable employment, and the resultant decrease in the pool of marriageable Black males.

There are various criticisms that can be lodged against the social system approach to studying minority families. The first is that it is rooted in a structural-functionalist perspective of the principles of family organization. Consequently, the approach suffers the same deficiencies as the assimilation/modernization ethnicity-based theory. The second is that the theory's emphasis on the ability of Black

families to adapt to the tremendous pressures of the social structure can be overestimated (Allen, 1978). This can have detrimental consequences, especially when research findings espousing this viewpoint are taken as the basis for social policy.

The third theoretical underpinning of studies of minority families is the view that their patterns and processes are culturally unique and valid (Staples, 1971; Allen, 1978; Adams, 1978; Farley and Allen, 1987). This categorization represents the view of scholars that the family form of a minority group is inherently different from the mainstream family pattern. The primary reason for this difference is the uniqueness of the minority group's culture.

One of the primary developers of this perspective is Robert Staples. Staples argues that to accurately examine Black family patterns and processes, a researcher must not only analyze the socioeconomic factors that impact it, but must also analyze the distinctive family life style of the Black subculture. In analyzing this subculture's life style, a researcher must examine its unique values, norms, sanctions, etc. (1971:126). Staples argued that when socioeconomic status is controlled, the distinctiveness of the Black family is still very evident on the basis of its cultural uniqueness. Therefore, this family form should be viewed as valid and not deviant.

Staples leveled much of the blame for the categorization of the African-American family as dysfunctional and deviant on the "equilibrium models" of the discipline of sociology. He describes this flaw stating,

What this means is that the traditional approach to the study of black family life has been to define the consequence of their family behavior on the basis of standards of the white community, and not only the white community in general, but white, middle-class people in particular. Rather than using a more objective approach and accepting the fact that black families are different and one must understand the way in which they live and try to understand their values and standards--other values and standards--white values and standards have been imposed on the study of black family life. The result has been that the black family continues to be defined as a pathological unit whose unique way of functioning sustains the conditions of its oppression (1971:133).

Staples also cites the discipline's tendency to focus on the most deprived segment of the Black population and to then make sweeping generalizations about the race's pathological nature (1985:8, 113-114).

Other major forces in the development of this perspective were two developments that occurred within the Black community. The first was a concern about the origins of Blacks in America, and a desire of the community to learn about its African identity. The second, was the community's concern with its contemporary ethnic identity (1985:176). To give validity to this position studies were undertaken to show the link between the family pattern of Africans and American Blacks. This group of Black scholars has been categorized as a part of the "Africanist" school (McAdoo

1988:9). Such scholars, as historian Benjamin Quarles (1964), and sociologist Robert Staples (1971, 1976) and Niara Sudarska (1980), wrote to highlight the similarities of the extended family structure in both African and American Black family patterns (Adams 1978; and McAdoo 1988).

The perspective that the patterns and processes of minority families are both unique and valid differs from the social system perspective in a very important way. The first is that this view sees the Black family as unique because of its cultural history alone. The adaptation that this family makes has only enhanced this uniqueness, not created it. The social system perspective places a greater emphasis on the adaptations that have occurred because of the interaction that takes place within the overall social system. Secondly, those who hold this view take issue with the degree to which the social system theory ties the minority family into the values of the broader social system. The minority family must be judged by its own standards and not by the standards of White mainstream society. Any one researcher who attempts to study the Black family must approach the task with full objectivity (Staples, 1971; Billingsley, 1968).

Other scholars who would hold to this viewpoint that minority family patterns are both culturally unique and valid are: Reynolds Farley and Walter Allen (1987); Charles Willie (1981); Niara Sudarska (1980); Bert Adams (1978);

Harry Kitano (1988); Juan Gonzales (1985); and Robert John (1988).

There are a few criticisms that can be raised against this perspective. The first is that although the position allows the researcher to appreciate the values of the family being studied, it can cause the researcher to overlook "factual deficiencies" in a minority family because it serves a functional purpose (Allen, 1978:126; McAdoo, 1988:9). The second is the danger that many researchers will not be able to use this framework since they must be able to eliminate normative, and often bias, sociological assumptions while retaining their analytic skills (Allen, 1978; Staples, 1971).

An Overview of Research on Female Headed Households:

An area that also has much literature relevant to this study is the female headed family. This body of literature has noted the rapid increase in households headed by nonmarried women in American society. In general, women now head 60% of single person households in the United States. They head 28% of America's 91 million households, which is nearly twice the 15% share of households headed by men. Female-headed families with children under 18 years of age account for just 25% of all female-headed households. Another 12% of all female-headed households include adult children, and 5% include relatives other than children. These three types of families make up 42% of all female-

headed households. Women who live alone account for 52% of female-headed households, and the other 6% live with an unrelated person or a roommate (Crispell, 1989). The primary reasons for the growth of this household structure vary by race in respect to Whites and Blacks. For Whites the major cause of growth has been the increase in women's employment opportunities. For blacks it has been a decrease in male employment (McLanahan et al., 1987).

More specifically for this study, the last three decades have seen mother-only families become increasingly common. Since 1960, when only about 7% of the families in America were female-headed households, the prevalence of these households has increased to the point that in 1985 over 21% of the families in America were female-headed households (McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1989; McLanahan and Booth, 1989). At the end of that decade it was noted that 86% of single-parent families were headed by women, and that single-parent families accounted for 27% of all households with children under the age of 18 years old (Crispell, 1989; Jayakody, 1993). Largely, single-parent families are headed by women under age 45 as 77% of these householders are 25 to 44 years old (Crispell, 1989). The needs of these two groups of women vary by age. For younger single mothers the primary needs are child care, affordable housing, and shopping convenience. For the older mothers, who don't always have someone living at home with them, their primary needs

include health care, companionship, and assistance with household chores (Crispell, 1989).

A significant variable in determining the types of households headed by women, and the growth and economic condition of female-headed families is race. In respect to types of households, the effect of race is very evident. For example, whereas two-thirds of the African-American and Hispanic households headed by women are families, only 36% of such families are headed by White females (Crispell, 1989). It also needs to be noted that the growth of mother-only families has been most prevalent among African-Americans. In the period between 1970 and 1988, the proportion of one-parent families increased from 8.9 to 18.1% among Whites and 33.0 to 55.6% among African-Americans. In light of this stark comparison, Black children are significantly more likely to live with their mothers only than are White and Hispanic children. Whereas only 19% of white children and 30% of Hispanic children reside in households headed by their mothers, the proportion among black children is an astonishing 54% (Jayakody, 1993). This large increase in the numbers of mother-only families, especially among African-Americans, strongly supports the view that over half of all children born since 1975 will spend some time in such a family before reaching age 18 (Bumpass, 1984). Although 45% of all White children will have this experience, this percentage is not comparable to

the 85% of all Black children who will have this experience (McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1989). Still, it should be noted that although the actual numerical increase of female-headed households is greater among Blacks, the rate of increase is greater among Whites. This statistic clearly reveals the relevance of this trend to both Blacks and Whites. As McLanahan and Garfinkel conclude "Clearly, the mother-only family will have a profound effect on the next generation of Americans" (1989:93). Unfortunately, the high rate of women, and families headed by women in poverty sound an alarm of concern in respect to this trend.

The role gender has to play in the plight of single mothers is, unfortunately, very evident. In 1987 both the earnings and welfare figures reveal that single mothers are weakly attached to the labor force, and that 56% of these women will be dependent on welfare for ten years or more (McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1989). It is estimated that the income of single mothers and their children is only 67% of their predivorce income one year after divorce. This is in stark contrast to the income of divorced men who receive 90% of their predivorce income (McLanahan and Booth, 1989; Jaynes and Williams, 1989). The three determinants of these low incomes in mother-only families are: the inability to gain inexpensive child care that limits employment for the mother to earn much money; the nonresidential father's lack of child support; and the small benefits the state provides

(McLanahan and Booth, 1989; Jaynes and Williams, 1989). In respect to their economic condition, though, the Black female parent faces her own set of unique difficulties. While the median income in 1987 for families headed by White females was \$17,000, the median income for Black females who headed families was only \$9,700 (Crispell, 1989). In 1989, 47% percent of families headed by Black females were below the poverty level. Close to three quarters (73%) of all poor Black families were headed by Black females. This is in stark contrast to 25% of families headed by white females, and 12% of Black families headed by a married couple (Jayakody et al., 1993). In comparison to young White female-headed households, young Black female-headed households enter poverty at a higher rate and have longer average spells in poverty (Kniesner et al., 1986). Because of the dire economic situation of mother-only families, they are considered to be a growing aspect of the urban underclass. There is also evidence that there are long-term economic and social mobility consequences for children from these families (Wilson, 1978; McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1989; McLanahan et al., 1987; Jayakody et al., 1993).

The absence of fathers has been hypothesized to be a key causal factor in the low economic attainments of female-headed households (McLanahan, 1985). A major reason for this viewpoint is the social science's use of the normative nuclear family pattern as a standard by which all other

family structures are evaluated. This perspective thereby mandates that other forms of family structure be rejected. The peculiar role of Black women in the Black family did not allow these scholars to view this adaptation as a sign of resiliency, but as a sign of weakness (Staples, 1971). Although some of these scholars noted the adaptive nature of this family structure, the Black female-headed family has nonetheless been traditionally viewed in sociology as the cause of much of the problems facing African-Americans today. The large representation of Black women among the poor is viewed as a result of this destructive cultural trend. One of the primary figures, if not the primary figure, in identifying African-American female-headed households with the dire economic conditions of the Black race was Daniel Patrick Moynihan. In his influential work The Negro Family: The Case for National Action (1965), Moynihan expressed the ideology that racialized Black female-headed families as the causal feature of poverty among African-Americans. Using W. E. Burghardt Du Bois' (1969) and E. Franklin Frazier's (1948) discussion of the Black matriarch, Moynihan highlighted the dominant nature of Black women as a major reason for the growth of this family structure. The dominant nature of the Black woman was also credited by Moynihan as causing the present problems of the race, including "poverty and deprivation" (Hill Collins, 1990). By its prominence in inspiring contemporary theory

and research this family structure was clearly viewed as the reason for the race's situation in the eyes of policy makers and social science scholars (Staples, 1971).

In the decades following Moynihan's work, the concept of the "underclass" became the contemporary tool for analyzing, categorizing, and dealing with poverty in America (Marks, 1991). Still, the emphasis continued to be placed on female-headed households as the major characteristic of, even reason for, this new and indigent population (Auletta, 1982; Lemann, 1986; McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1989; Marks, 1991; Baca Zinn, 1989). Charles Murray (1984) went as far as suggesting that the solution to the growth of female-headed households might be to more drastically cut federal assistance and support systems (Murray, 1986).

A primary theorist of the Black underclass, and the role of female-headed households within this population is William J. Wilson (1978). Wilson argued that the growth of this family structure was a clear indication of the inability of Black males to gain employment. He substantiated his position by citing the relationship between unemployment and marital instability (1987). Wilson asserted that this family structure was the result of, and not the reason for the dire economic conditions of urban Blacks. Although emphasizing the structural explanation for poverty's growth among Blacks, Wilson encouraged the perception that the growth of female-headed households was a

clear sign that lower-class Blacks needed to be in contact with middle-class Blacks. This contact was considered a means by which lower-class Blacks could improve their family patterns and economic conditions (1987).

One way of thinking about female headed households is captured in the concept of "the feminization of poverty." A succinct definition of this term is that it designates a growing trend in the disproportionate representation of women and female-headed households among the poor (Pierce, 1987; Hartmann, 1989; McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1989). The factors that are commonly identified as determinants of low income in female headed households are: the pay differentiation between men and women; the existence of only one wage earner in the family; and the lack of child support by the nonresidential father (Pearce and McAdoo, 1981; Nelson, 1984; McLanahan and Booth, 1989; Garfinkel and McLanahan, 1985).

The public policies that have been proposed to address the needs of this family type have varied. Various welfare programs were implemented to meet the needs of these families, but concerns were raised that these programs were undermining the labor force attachment of poor single mothers (Danzinger et al., 1982; McLanahan et al., 1987; McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1989). More recent policies have emphasized strengthening the ties of these women to the work force and loosening their dependence on government

assistance. This has resulted in reduced levels of benefits and work requirement legislation for single mothers (McLanahan et al., 1987; McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1989).

In reference to policies designed to correct the socioeconomic situation of women and female-headed households, an important work is the critical essay of Diana Pearce (1987). This work highlights the fact that public policies are most effective when tuned to meet the specific character of the group (e.g., the aged poor) whose needs are being addressed. The policies that are being applied to address the economic conditions of female-headed households were designed to implicitly and explicitly meet the needs of males and not the needs of females. This is evident in the fact that these policies assume that a job will solve the poverty problem for every person in poverty. She identifies two factors that distinguish women/mothers' poverty from that of men and the elderly. The first, is that poor women/mothers bear the economic burden of their children alone. Census Bureau data states that less than half of absent parents, mostly fathers, pay child support, and less than half of those pay the full amount. The second are the lower wages women receive in the labor market in comparison to men. Pearce concludes her work by suggesting various policies that can better meet the needs of these families. With such present policy approaches, though, it is no wonder that many feminists have preferred the phrase "the

pauperization of women" to the "feminization of poverty" (Hartmann, 1989:159; McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1989).

An Overview of Research on Support Networks:

There are five aspects of social support that need to be considered in this literature review. The first is a general discussion of social support networks; the second is the impact social support networks have on female headed households; the third is the role of social support networks in minority families; and the fourth is the role of social support networks in Black families.

The first area is a general discussion of social support networks. The use of the term support network has come to refer to the existence of an organized number of individuals who are united in a social relationship. This social relationship obligates them to provide and to receive assistance from one another (Stack, 1974; House et al., 1988; Taylor and Chatters, 1988). The use of the term support denotes reassuring qualities in social relationships that provide health promoting or stress buffering needs. The channels by which these beneficial needs are provided are instrumental aid, emotional caring or concern, and information relevant to self-evaluation (House, 1983; House et al., 1988).

There are three forms of support that have been identified. The first form of support is emotional support. "Emotional Support" is the provision of information and/or

companionship that bolsters an individual's self-evaluation in the midst of stressful situations. Examples of such support are: visiting, companionship, comfort, personal advice, counsel. This form of support seems to be the most important type of support and involves the provision of empathy, caring, love, and trust. When individuals think of others being supportive of them they are usually referring to emotional support (House, 1983; McLanahan et al., 1981; Taylor, 1986). The second form of support has been identified as material support. "Material Support" is defined as instrumental behavior that directly helps an individual in need. Examples of such support are the provision of: food, money, transportation, personal loans, bill payments, child care, the running of errands, and assistance with small purchases (House, 1983; Taylor, 1986). The third type of support is cognitive support. "Cognitive Support" is the transmission of information that provides an individual with knowledge that can then be used to help him/her cope with personal and situational problems (House, 1983; Taylor, 1986). This differs from material support in that only information is communicated that the individual then uses to help him/herself.

Although most researchers have depicted social support as having a uniformly positive effect on an individual's well-being, a growing number of researchers suggest that this may not be true (Belle, 1982; Thompson and Peebles-

Wilkins, 1992). Stack (1974) noted the negative pressures a woman's social support network placed upon her when she married. Thompson and Peebles-Wilkins (1992) found that support networks have both stress-reducing and stress-producing qualities. Strauss (1980) found that family violence is more common among couples who have many neighbors living in close proximity to them, in comparison to those couples who were geographically isolated from relatives. A low incidence of abusive and violent behavior in African-American families have been related to network embeddedness (Hill, 1986; Uzzell and Peebles-Wilkins, 1989). Researchers have also shown that **weak** associations within an individual's social network is very important in providing material and informational assets (Granovetter, 1973; Zippay, 1990-1991).

A second area contributing important literature for this study is the role that support and support networks have in improving the situation of single mothers. It has been noted that there are various sources of stress for single mothers. Poverty and economic instability are the two major sources of stress in female headed households. Various studies have shown that social support has been a major factor in allowing individuals to deal with stress. Studies have shown that a Black adult's satisfaction with his/her support network benefits their psychological and emotional well-being. Many of these individuals were found to have

their self-esteem and personal respect intensified (Hughes and Demo, 1989). Satisfaction with social support from family and friends was also found to reduce distress in the midst of employment and unemployment pressures (Brown and Gary, 1988; Angel and Tienda, 1982). The role of social support has been shown to be a very important survival strategy for poor single mothers who are living in urban areas (Stack, 1974; Kotlowitz, 1991; McLanahan and Booth, 1989).

The third area contributing relevant literature is social support networks in minority families. Research has shown that Mexican Americans have a high amount of interaction with their social networks. It has been shown that Mexican Americans are surrounded by large amounts of their family and kin, and that they frequently participate in large kin networks (Vega, 1990; Mindel, 1980). The Mexican American support network has also been categorized as supplying more emotional support than material support (Mindel, 1980; Wagner and Schaffer, 1980; Baca Zinn, 1982/83). In comparison to Anglos and African-Americans, Mexican Americans have the highest extent of extended familism (Mindel, 1980; Wagner and Schaffer, 1980). African-Americans have been found to have the next greatest evaluation and utilization of the extended kin system. Although African-Americans have been identified as having smaller families than Mexican Americans and Anglos, their

kin network has still been noted to be a very important source of material support (Hays and Mindel, 1973; Mindel, 1980). Anglos, on the other hand, have been found to evaluate and to depend on kin the least for aid and other kinship support (Hays and Mindel, 1973; Mindel, 1980).

The fourth area of literature that has bearing on this study is the importance of informal social support networks as a source of assistance to Black urban families. This body of literature has noted that important sources of support are friends, church members, and extended family. Various ethnographic studies have contributed much information on the functioning of informal social support networks among African-Americans (Stack, 1974; Shimkin et al., 1978; Kotlowitz, 1991). The patterns of this informal assistance are based on long term reciprocal bonds of exchange that have developed over the life of the network's members. Church members have also been shown to be a very important source of social support for African-Americans (DuBois, 1907; Frazier, 1974:41; Taylor and Chatters, 1988; Taylor et al., 1990). The important role of the extended family in providing support has been highlighted in studies of various minorities (Angel and Tienda, 1972; Hofferth, 1984). African-Americans have been shown to use their kin in a more instrumental way, what can be described as a reciprocal aid-and-support system, than Mexican Americans and Anglos (Mindel, 1980). These sources of support should, therefore,

be viewed as intricate components of an adaptive network that has been developed for the benefit of inner-city Blacks (Stack, 1974). They are very important to urban Blacks because they have allowed this marginalized group to survive the adversity of urban poverty. These support sources have accomplished this by being the means through which financial, service, and emotional support is obtained (Oliver, 1988; Hays and Mindel, 1973; Taylor, 1986).

The fifth area of the social support literature that has bearing on this study is its identification of seven factors that determine the receipt of social support by mother-only families. The first is the race of the single mother. Racial comparisons reveal that the Black extended family plays a greater role in the lives of mother-only families than their White counterparts (Taylor, 1986; Taylor et al., 1990; Hays and Mindel, 1973). The importance of extended family support has been noted in the Black community where Black adults have heightened self-esteem and personal efficacy when they have supportive family and friendship relations (Taylor et al., 1990). Hofferth (1984) argues that since Black mother-only families receive less monetary support from their kin networks they do not benefit from these networks as much as White mother-only families. Although Hofferth is correct that the monetary support Black female-headed households receive from their kin-networks is very limited, research by Stack (1974), Taylor (1986),

Jayakody et al. (1990) and others have highlighted the fact that these networks must not be judged solely on their monetary assistance. These studies revealed that these kin networks are still very valuable to Black female-headed households through the variety of ways by which they provide support. Studies have also shown that in comparison to White grandparents, the role of Black grandparents in the lives of single mothers is far more active (Cherlin and Furstenberg, 1986; Taylor et al., 1990). The active role of African-American grandparents might be attributable to either cultural norms or economic adaptations (Taylor et al., 1990). The second factor that is important in determining the receipt of support by single mothers is the age of their children. This issue is significant in light of many studies that reveal the relationship children's age has on the receipt of social support. It has been noted that a woman is at her greatest risk for demoralization, depression, frustration, and dysphoria when she is providing support to a child while receiving only inconsistent support in return (Belle, 1982). It has also been shown that when a low income mother suffers from depression she is unable to provide the emotional support the child needs (Belle, 1982). Another factor relating to the age of a child is in relation to the provision of support by the father of the child. It has been shown that the younger the age of a child, the greater involvement that child receives from others, including the

child's father (Taylor, 1986; Danzinger et al., 1990; Sullivan, 1989; Anderson, 1987). Finally, it has been shown in general that as individuals grow older they receive less support (Taylor, 1986).

The third factor is the number of children. This issue is significant in light of various studies that show a relationship between the number of children and the quality of social support received. Various studies have found a relationship between the number of children and the quantity of social support received. Hofferth (1984) shows that the amount of children is clearly related to the amount of support obtained. Extended family is much more likely to play an important role in the socialization of children depending on the number of children within a family (Hays and Mindel, 1973). The number of children has also been shown to be related to the strength of kin ties for several reasons. First, children are often the foci of kin relationships, and are the recipients of gifts. Secondly, the support of children is often the reason for exchange of items between kin. Finally, the number of children often decides a family's living standards and is, therefore, a determinant of a family's socioeconomic condition. The lowering of the family's socioeconomic condition further necessitates the need for further support (Hofferth, 1984:793).

The fourth factor is the proximity of family members.

The important role of extended families has been evident in many studies examining their benefits to single mothers. It has been shown that the assistance extended families give to adolescent mothers has a positive effect on their parenting skills, the development of their offspring, their educational accomplishments, and their economic achievement (Taylor et al., 1990). The importance of this support has also been noted in the Black community where Black adults have heightened self-esteem and personal efficacy when they have supportive family and friendship relations (Taylor et al., 1990). An important influence on kin networks is the availability and proximity of kin, since a desire to maintain relationships is futile without the availability of kin (Hofferth, 1984). Findings show that familial relationships, proximity of relatives, and family contact all play an intrinsic role in the informal social support networks of Blacks. These factors were also shown to be related to the probability of receiving support (Blauner and Wellman, 1973; Taylor, 1986; Taylor, 1990). It has also been noted that family contact is a more important factor in receiving support than satisfaction with one's family (Taylor, 1986; 1990). An important influence on kin network is the availability and proximity of kin, since a desire to maintain relationships is futile without the availability of kin (Hofferth, 1984). It should also be noted that of the family variables examined by Taylor (1986) proximity of

immediate family is of lesser importance than other factors (especially proximity of relatives) in predicting the reception of support.

The fifth factor is the role the age of the father of the child(ren) has on the quantity and quality of support that is received. There is much interest in the involvement males have in teen pregnancy in general, and specifically in relation to teen pregnancy in the Black community (Harrison, 1981; Conner, 1988). A particular emphasis has been the difference between older and younger males. Various studies have focussed on this comparison. Younger males were shown to have more involvement with their children than older males (Danzinger et al., 1990; Taylor, 1990). Younger males were concerned about the future of their children and the mother who bore them. On the other hand they were shown to have unrealistic views about parenthood (Harrison, 1981). Children are viewed by young males as being greater personal and social assets than they are by young females. These young males believe that having children will furnish them with more approval from others (Thompson, 1980).

The sixth factor is the effect religious affiliation has on the quantity of support that is received by single mothers. Church membership has been found to be an important source of support for Blacks (Taylor et al., 1990:999; Frazier, 1974). Its importance has been heavily based on the fact that it provides the bond through which individual acts

of support are extended. Individuals with high scores in reference to the religious involvement variables (church membership, frequent attendance, and a high degree of subjective religiosity) are more likely to receive support from church members in comparison to those who don't have as high scores. These variables are important indicators for social involvement and integration within the church (Taylor and Chatters, 1988). Studies have also noted that gender, age, and marital statuses are significantly related to receiving support. Men are more likely to receive support than women; younger individuals are more likely to receive support than their older counterparts; and married individuals are more likely to receive support than divorced individuals (Taylor and Chatters, 1988). Although church membership is an important position in the provision of support for Blacks, religiosity has not been found to be related to the sexual activity of Black females (Chilman, 1983). In light of these issues it is important that the role that church membership plays in the receipt of social support be considered. The seventh factor is the age of the single mother. There are two reasons why the age of the single mother should be noted as explaining variations in support. The first explanation is based on the perspective that changes within the Black community have negatively effected the kin networks within these communities. Because of the severity of urban poverty and the increased

segregation by social class within the Black community, the informal support networks of African-Americans have degenerated (Martin and Martin, 1985; Wilson, 1987; Hogan et al., 1990). As a result, younger single mothers are less likely to have strong relationships with extended kin networks, which were significant support sources for older single mothers (Stack, 1974). The second explanation afforded us by using age is based on the belief that intergenerational teenage motherhood has negatively affected younger mothers' reception of support. The perspective is that the mothers of these young single mothers are young themselves, which raises the likelihood that they have young children to care for. For this reason, it has been conjectured that these mothers do not take on traditional surrogate mother roles, which has been common in the Black community (Frazier, 1948; Tinsley and Parke, 1984). Such traditional responsibilities as providing child care have not been fulfilled because these young grandmothers devote most of their time to the raising of their own children (Frazier, 1948; Ladner and Gourdine, 1984; Tinsley and Parke, 1984; Burton, 1990). As a result of this intergenerational phenomenon, a primary aspect of the kin support networks, grandmothers (Stack, 1974), may not be functioning for young mother-only families.

From this review of the literature I have identified a group of important issues that will be noted in the study.

First, a determination of the effect the younger ages of single mothers have on their ability to establish and gain support. I will especially note the ability of these younger mothers to gain support from the social networks from which their parents gained support. This is very significant considering that many of these younger women are second generation single mothers. Studies have not examined the effect age has on the ability of single mothers to recruit support from the three important support sources examined in this study. With the present socioeconomic conditions that confront families, and the friend networks assisting these families, it is possible that these sources of assistance cannot provide the support they once did. The second issue is the role that the migration of middle class Blacks has had on the ability of social support sources to be able to provide support to these urban single mothers.

An Overview of Research on the Urban Underclass:

The subject of this section of the dissertation is one of the most hotly debated concepts in the study of poverty today---the underclass. The term "underclass" was coined by Gunnar Myrdal in his 1962 book Challenge to Affluence² to designate an economically marginalized group of people within society (Auletta, 1982; Gans, 1990). Myrdal's definition of the concept was also revealed in his usage of the term in his 1970 book The Challenge of World Poverty. In this work Myrdal places the term underclass in juxtaposition

to the term middle class in order to differentiate between these two groups in Latin America. This underclass he locates in the rural and urban slums of Latin America, and characterizes them as having very little education, and very little power or interest in the political process (1970:460). As Gans (1990) stresses, Myrdal's aim in using the term underclass was to reform the economic system and not to blame those who suffered within that system.

The term is now a catchall that refers to poor African-Americans in the United States' inner cities. The fact that the category had undergone significant growth after 1960, and was considered to be comprised of criminals and freeloaders brought it into national prominence (Nathan, 1987:57-58). The extent to which the nation was focussed on this category is best expressed in this statement:

One of the most hotly debated aspects of poverty in the 1980s, however, was neither the recessions nor Reagan's policies. Rather, it was the mounting, indeed sometimes near-hysterical, alarm over the specter of what many contemporaries termed as an 'underclass.' More than worries over the statistical increase in the numbers of poor people, this concern brought poverty back to the front pages, where it had not been since the 1960s. To many Americans, the underclass--an unflattering euphemism for the most deprived black masses in the ghetto--threatened to undermine all that was good and promising in national life. As one frightened liberal exclaimed in 1985, 'An American version of **lumpenproletariat** (the so-called underclass), without work and without hope, existing at the margins of society, could bring down the great cities, sap resources and strength from the entire society and, lacking the usual means to survive, prey upon those who possess them (Patterson, 1981:215; Cauce, 1967:79-81).

The primary depiction of this category was that it

consisted of "hopeless people" (in that they did not desire to better their socioeconomic conditions) who were predominantly Black (Rollison, 1991). This characterization is evident in many of the early articles on the underclass (Marks, 1991:447).

The lamentable result of this new definition of the term underclass is that behavioral patterns, and not economic definitions came to define those who comprised this group (Wilson, 1990). Gans notes this in stating that,

The researchers tend to assume that the behavior patterns they report are caused by norm violations on the part of area residents and not by the conditions under which they are living, or the behavioral choices open to them as a result of these conditions (1990:272).

Because the concept has "taken on so many connotations of undeservedness and blameworthiness that it has become hopelessly polluted in meaning," Gans (1990) called for the use of this concept to cease and "the issues involved studied via other concepts." Despite noting the benefits of reclaiming the concept, Wilson (1990), a primary figure in this debate, chose to relinquish the use of the term in his American Sociological Association address. In this address Wilson substituted the term "ghetto poor" for the term "underclass."

Although noting that the use of the term "urban underclass" has been a hotly debated issue (Gans, 1989; Gans, 1990; Wilson, 1990), I have chosen to use the term in my dissertation. I have decided to use the term because it

is still a legitimate and well recognized term denoting an economically marginalized and disadvantaged category within society (Wilson, 1990:12). This is the sense in which I am using the concept.

Another issue in respect to the urban underclass is the effect that the migration of middle class Blacks out of the inner-city has had on the urban underclass. The two most dominant theoretical perspectives as to the condition of the underclass have been the culture of poverty and the structural perspective. The culture of poverty perspective implies that the values and attitudes of the urban underclass have been internalized thereby controlling behavior (Moynihan, 1965; Auletta, 1982; Lemann, 1986; Murray, 1984;). The structural perspective emphasizes fundamental weaknesses within the capitalist economy (Myrdal, 1934; Axinn and Stern, 1988). A third perspective, that is primarily structural, although noting some cultural effects, is that of William Julius Wilson (1987). Wilson argues that structural causes (e.g., rise of the service sector, male job displacement, and the Civil Rights Movement) has resulted in a bifurcation of the Black urban community as the Black middle class moved from the inner city leaving poorer Blacks behind. This event, he suggests, has resulted in "social isolation." In other words, the separation of the two groups has worked to undermine the presence of role models among the urban poor who would

reinforce mainstream societal values. This bifurcation has also resulted in the loss of job networks, which perpetuates the cycle of poverty for the underclass.

Although many scholars agree with Wilson's position that a socioeconomic schism has occurred within the Black community to the underclass' detriment (Brimmer, 1970; Coleman, 1971; Glasgow, 1979; Willie, 1981), some scholars disagree with his view that the urban Black community is decimated. These scholars would argue that there are various active support networks that are still operating within urban Black communities (Granovetter, 1973; Wellman, 1979; Wellman and Leighton, 1979; Oliver, 1988; Garcia, 1989). Wellman (1979) argues that kin and neighborhood networks still exist in urban, industrialized societies because of their efficacy in providing support and sociability. Garcia highlights that there are still "strong family units (including those headed by single women), community networking and support systems, dedicated and inspiring teachers and clergy" that enable women in urban ghettos to escape poverty (1989:36-37). Oliver denounces those who depict the urban Black community as "disorganized" or "pathological." Instead, his research findings lead him to contend that this community is "an elaborate organization of personal networks that tie people together within and outside the community in bonds of support and sociality" (Oliver, 1988:640).

From this survey of the literature I note that this project will, therefore, seek to answer two critical questions. First: How and in what ways Black single mothers gain support from family, church, and the other parent(s) of their children? Social support can be provided in various forms, but this research will be primarily concerned with material aid (financial and child care) and emotional aid (advice and companionship). This aspect of the study will be in the research tradition of those studies that have examined the supportive functions of informal support networks for African-Americans (Aschenbrenner, 1973; Taylor and Chatters, 1988; Danzinger and Nichols-Casebolt, 1990; Taylor and Chatters, 1991). The research tradition also includes those studies that have considered the supportive functions of these sources of support for single parent families (Stack, 1974; Hofferth, 1984; McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1989; McLanahan and Booth, 1989; Hogan, 1990). Second: What is the difference in the significance of these sources of support in respect to younger single mothers versus older single mothers? I believe that there is a younger group of Black single mothers within the urban underclass who do not receive as much support from these three social support sources as their older counterparts. The research will, therefore, identify this new dimension of these Black single mothers within the urban underclass. This aspect of the paper seeks to examine the theory of William

Julius Wilson that the severity of urban poverty and the increased segregation by social class within the Black community has led to the decimation of the informal support networks within African-American communities (Wilson, 1987; Martin and Martin, 1985; Hogan et al., 1990).

The answers to these questions are important for four reasons. First, to show that the support that is received from these various sources is part of a Black single mother's network of relations. These networks are established and sustained by these mothers for assistance in surviving the harshness of the urban experience. Second, to inform urban researchers in identifying needs that are unique to each of these groups of single mothers. Third, to assist in the development of effective policies for meeting the needs of this segment of the Black urban underclass. Finally, to lend further insight to the present condition of the contemporary Black family and of the urban underclass.

Chapter II

Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to present the data collection method and analytical strategy utilized in answering the two critical research questions of this study. These critical questions are: First, How and in what ways do Black single mothers gain support from family, church, and the fathers of their children? Second: What is the difference in the significance of these sources of support in respect to younger single mothers versus older single mothers?

To expedite the examination of these two foci I have identified three supplementary sets of research inquiries. These inquiries magnify the existence of support networks in the lives of these women, and the effect age has on the support they obtain. I list the specific research questions here, and I shall elaborate upon them in the ensuing pages. The first research inquiry is: What effect does age have on the ability of single mothers to recruit support from the three important sources of social support examined in this study? The second research inquiry is: What effect does the age of the children, the number of children, the proximity

of the single mother's mother, the proximity of family members, the age of the father of the children, and church membership have on the quality of social support received by Black urban single mothers? The third research inquiry is: What effect does age have on the type of social support that is received by single mothers? Each of these research inquiries will be elaborated.

The first research inquiry concerns the existence of a social support network. This will be accomplished by noting the effect age has on the ability of single mothers to recruit support. Special attention will be placed on noting their ability to recruit support from the three important sources of social support examined in this study. The research question that will be considered is: What effect does age have on the ability of single mothers to recruit support from the three important sources of social support examined in this study?

The second research inquiry is in reference to the quality of social support received. This will be accomplished by focussing on the effect various demographic variables (the age of children, the number of children, the proximity of the mother of the single mother, the proximity of family members, the age of the parent of the child[ren], and church membership) has on the quality of social support received by Black urban single mothers.

There are six issues (labeled issues 2A to 2F) this

study will address: The first is the effect the age of children has effect the quality of support received. Issue 2B is the effect the number of children that a single mother has on the quality of social support received. Issue 2C examines the effect the proximity of family members has on the quality of support received. Issue 2D examines the effect that the age of the single mother's mother has on the receipt of social support. Issue 2E will examine the role the age of the father of the child(ren) has on the quality of support that is received. Issue 2F examines the effect religious affiliation has on the quality of support that is received by single mothers.

Therefore, the research question that will be considered is: What effect does the age of the children, the number of children, the age of the single mother, the age of the single mother's mother, the proximity of family members, the age of the father of the children, and church membership have on the quality of social support received by Black urban single mothers?

The third research inquiry concerns the type of social support received. I will accomplish this endeavor by using several individual issues that specifically examine the type of assistance that is provided by the support networks of these Black urban single mothers. The general overarching issue of this endeavor is how age affects the reception of social support by single mothers. The basis of this

examination is the consideration of whether older single mothers are more likely to receive support from the three traditional sources of support in comparison to younger single mothers. On this foundation these issues propose that older Black urban single mothers receive more material, emotional, and cognitive support than younger single mothers. This is in opposition to many studies that show that as the age of individuals increase, the amount of social support received inversely decreases (Danzinger et al., 1990; Sullivan, 1989; Taylor 1986; House et al., 1988; Burton, 1990³).

For this reason, the research question that will be considered is: What effect does age have on the type of social support that is received by single mothers?

The Method:

To accomplish the goals of my study, I selected the interview as the methodological procedure for the collection of data. I chose the interview because it allows face-to-face conversational exchange (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Denzin, 1970; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; Spradley, 1979; Jorgensen, 1989), explains and contextualizes what the researcher sees and experiences (Fetterman, 1989), and encourages relatively good response rates (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973). There are various types of interview formats and the specific format that I implemented in this study is the focused interview, or the nonscheduled standardized

interview (Denzin, 1970). The focused interview mandates that certain types of information be obtained from each respondent while giving the interviewer the freedom to adjust the phrasing and order of questions to fit the characteristics of each respondent (Denzin, 1978).

There are five critical strengths this method lends to this study. The first strength is that this method facilitates the presentation of my findings in a way that reflects a proper understanding of the women who comprise this social phenomenon. Because the perspective of the respondent is paramount I will be able to use the very words and accounts of these women in the presentation of my research findings. The second strength is that this method gives the interviewer the flexibility to adjust questions and their order to meet the unique personality and circumstance of each respondent being interviewed. The third strength is that although this method lends flexibility to the interviewer, it also mandates that the same set of questions or problems be addressed (Sieber, 1973).

Therefore, comparative data is obtained for all questions and from every respondent (Denzin, 1970; 1978). The fourth strength of this method is that it allows for the inclusion of open and closed questions within the same interview. Although this study primarily consists of open questions, which gives the respondent freedom to express his/her self, there are a few closed questions. The closed questions

obtain data on a few important aspects of the study, such as the age of the respondent and her children, and are asked at the most appropriate time in the conversation (Warwick and Lininger, 1975; Schuman and Presser, 1981; Sheatsley, 1983; Converse and Presser, 1986). The final strength of the field research method is that it is best suited for discovery studies (Denzin, 1978). Because this method enables the researcher to determine the ways in which subjects talk about objects and events, it allows the researcher to get an insider's view of their reality (Singleton et al., 1988:297; Charmaz, 1983; Agar, 1983). Realizing my limited knowledge of the lives of single mothers and their support networks, this attribute of the field research method allowed me to gain these women's perspective on their social reality.

This method does have weaknesses. The first weakness is that the focused interview restricts the quantification of data. But since I am doing a case study my primary focus is on a qualitative analysis of this social phenomena. The second weakness is that the focused interview is not the best suited interview format for hypothesis testing. Because this study is an exploratory study designed to provide hypotheses for further testing using quantitative approaches, I do not believe that this weakness is as significant.

In conclusion, I believe that the advantages of this method outweigh its weaknesses.

The Design:

The design of this research is to facilitate the exploration of the socially relevant subject of the social support network of Black single mothers. My sample size is 20 women (10 older single mothers, and 10 younger single mothers). Originally, I planned to select my sample from a list of single mothers a Lansing program had compiled. This program is the Single Parent Family Institute, which provides services to single mothers of all ages.⁴ Unfortunately, upon obtaining this list I realized that none of the women who had gone through the Institute's program were eligible for this study. For this reason I have only used the name of the Institute to gain legitimacy and access in a few cases. To obtain women to be interviewed I have had to use the referrals of former participants of the Institute and other single mothers. I limited the amount of referrals that any one person could give to two so that the sample would reflect a variety of backgrounds.

Therefore, this study uses a purposive or judgmental sample, in that I have chosen to subjectively select individuals who fit the study's criteria (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1976; Miller, 1991; Kerlinger, 1986). The sampling technique is the snowball sampling technique,

The basic idea of snowball sampling is to obtain sufficient information from a known instance of the phenomenon to be able to identify and locate subsequent instances for observation. As the name suggests, phenomena for observation tend to grow like a snowball through this procedure (Jorgensen, 1989:50).

There are three criteria I used for the selection of my sample. The first is age. The standard for this criterion is given in the **Operationalizations** section of the paper. The second criterion is length of time in the program. I used only select women for the sample who may have been in the Single Parent Family Institute's program six months or less, since these women would not have yet attended any personal growth and coping classes. The third criterion is race. All the women I selected for the sample are African-American.

By using the snowball sampling technique I obtained a total of 26 names and telephone numbers of single mothers who might be willing to participate in my study. I called 22 women in seeking to obtain 20 interviews. The two women who were called but not interviewed, were not selected to be interviewed for two separate reasons. One woman was not interviewed because I was unable to get in touch with her. She never returned any of my calls. The other woman was not interviewed because she did not meet my race criteria. That particular single mother is White.

The interviews were performed between January 11 through February 13, 1993. The average length of the interviews were 1 1/2 hours. Most of the interviews (75%: n=20) occurred before 5 p.m. in the homes of the women, while a smaller number (25%) were performed after 5 p.m. at either the homes of the women or at another location. Most of the interviews occurred during the weekdays (85%: n=20),

while a few interviews (15%) took place on a Saturday.

The Analysis:

The data that is used in the research related to the similarities between a single mother's family and her own mother's family situation; the age of the single mothers; the areas of need, as identified by the single mother; the frequency and quality of the contact the single mother has with her family, church, and the other parent(s) of her child(ren); the composition of the single mother's support network.

Analytical Strategy. My analysis of the study's narrative data is accomplished by using a five-step approach. The first step is to review the field notes I completed for each interview the evening of the day on which the interview occurred (Charmaz, 1983). This allowed for the inclusion of any observations made during the interview and the clarification of any unclear notes. My experience with this procedure validated Schatzman and Strauss' (1973) observation that even brief notes and drawings easily stimulates an interviewer's recall a few hours after the interview. I found, as they noted, that even,

A single word, even one merely descriptive of the dress of a person, or a particular word uttered by someone usually is enough to 'trip off' a string of images that afford substantial reconstruction of the observed scene (1973:95).

After reviewing my field notes I would then take the next few days to transfer these notes to my computer. The placing

of my notes on the computer allowed me to expand, revise, and arrange my notes with great ease (Fetterman, 1989).

The second step is a preliminary analysis of the raw data by coding and organizing the data according to its relationship to the various aspects of the study. My working strategy is to organize and code my field notes daily as I transfer the raw data to the computer. Before I began interviewing, preliminary content categories, revealing classes of information, and corresponding coding symbols were selected and defined. My selection of these preliminary content categories and coding symbols was based on the general information I believed I would garner from the interviews (Emerson, 1988; Singleton et al., 1988). I selected the remaining content categories and coding symbols as I proceeded in the analysis process (Emerson, 1988; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; Singleton et al., 1988). The primary focus of the content analysis is to note the extent to which these mothers receive support from various sources; the types of support rendered; and the way in which these sources, and the support they render, are perceived. Nineteen coding symbols are used in the content analysis. Examples of these symbols include: D\$- denoting demographic information on the income of the single mother; ON- identifying observational notes recorded during the interview; and CS- denoting support that the single mother receives from a religious group.

The third step is the differentiation and grouping of the interviews according to the ages of the interviewees. The grouping of the interviews into two age groups, younger and older, further facilitated inter- and intra-group content analysis of the interviews (Singleton et al., 1988). In the fourth step I relate and compare content categories within and between the two categories of single mothers. In comparing these content categories my main intent is to note similarities and differences between the women (Singleton et al., 1988). For example, although I noted that both younger and older mothers lived apart from the fathers of their children, I also noted that the younger women cited more instances in which they received support from the fathers of their children. I would not have readily noted this dissimilarity if I was only seeking to identify similarities between the two groups of mothers.

In the fifth step I again examine the interviews to note the number of instances certain concepts, feelings, perspectives, events, and expressions occur. As Fetterman (1989) encouraged, I am seeking to identify patterns of thought and behavior with various participants and in various situations. These patterns are then used to either confirm or disprove the preliminary inferences I made while performing the previous steps in the analytical process.

Analytical Definitions. The term "single mothers" refers to female head of households with at least one child

in the home. "Support" denotes reassuring qualities in social relationships that provide health promoting or stress buffering needs through instrumental aid, emotional caring or concern, and information relevant to self-evaluation (House, 1983; House et al., 1988). I defined support as the provision of any of these services for the meeting of the needs of a Black urban single parent family. "Support network" refers to the existence of an organized number of individuals who are united in a social relationship. This relationship obligates them to provide and to receive assistance from one another (Stack, 1974; House et al., 1988; Taylor and Chatters, 1988). Hofferth notes that most of the research in this area has focussed on "frequency and functionality" (1984:792). "Family" refers to "...the smallest, organized, durable network of kin and non-kin who interact daily, providing domestic needs of children and assuring their survival. The family network is diffused over several kin-based households, and fluctuations in household composition do not significantly affect cooperative familial arrangements" (Stack, 1974). I use this definition to compare her findings from 18 years ago with contemporary findings under the same circumstances. "Kin" is used to designate a network of related individuals who may not reside together (Hofferth, 1984).

I define the term "church" as any Christian or non-Christian religious group from which services are received.

The study uses three important predictors of receiving support from church members. These three are: church membership; church attendance; and subjective religiosity. The first two indicators are also social indicators of social involvement and integration within the church (Taylor and Chatters, 1988).⁵

Analytical Operationalizations. Often, the operationalization of the research variables is straightforward in that information regarding these variables is obtained by requesting information from those being interviewed.⁶ This is the case in respect to such variables as the ages of these single mothers, the existence of a support network, the age of the other parents of the children, the quality of social support received, the amount of emotional, material, and cognitive support received.

The other research variables of the study are operationalized by eight diverse measures. First, I define "younger" single mothers in this research as those who are 25 years old and younger. The "older" single mothers in this research are those who are 26 years old and older.⁷ Secondly, the age of the other parent of child(ren) is categorized as "younger" if he is in the age range of 25 years or younger. The other parent of the child(ren) is categorized as "older" if he is in the age range of 26 years or older. Third, the "younger" age of children is chosen as four or less years, and the "older" age of children is

chosen as five or more based on the usual ages of those children who care for themselves before or after school without any supervision.⁸ Therefore, these children may need less child care and other provisions since the child is viewed as responsible. Fourth, the age of the single mother's mother is categorized as "younger" if she is between 30-45 years of age. A single parent's mother is categorized as "older" if she is 45 years of age or older (Burton, 1990; Ladner and Gourdine, 1984).

Fifth, I believe that those single mothers who have three or more children, "a lot of children," are more likely to receive more social support than those mothers who have only two or less children, "a few children." Sixth, in reference to proximity of family I define family members as being "in close proximity" if they live in the Lansing area. They are categorized as not being in close proximity if they are not living within the city limits of Lansing.

Seventh, this study uses three measures of paternal involvement and, therefore, the provision of support. First, the mother's assessment of the quality of the father-child relationship. This is a rating of his expression of nurture. Second, the mother's evaluation of the activities or chores in which the father participates (e.g., dressing and playing with the child). The frequency of interaction a father has with his children has been viewed as an indication of a positive father-child relationship. For non-residential

fathers the important issue may be whether fathers have ever performed these tasks. Third, the mother's report of the extent to which she had a discussion about a father's child with that father. This variable focusses on the paternal behavior of sharing in decision making about the child (Danzinger and Casebolt, 1990).

Finally, the study uses three measures to determine the amount of support received from churches or religious institutions. They are: church membership, church attendance and participation, and subjective religiosity (Taylor and Chatters, 1988).

Before discussing the problems that I encountered while doing this research, I would like to note some of the issues that were anticipated to have an effect on my performing the research. If these issues affected the research process, I was unable to discern their influence.

The Issues:

I decided to perform all interviews myself because of my belief that the strengths of this approach far outweigh its weaknesses. There are two strengths to this approach. The first is that this approach allowed me to perform this study within the confines of the limited resources at my disposal. This approach removed the cost of hiring research assistants. Secondly, my performance of all the interviews improved me, as investigator, as an "instrument" in the study (McCracken, 1988:18). This approach allowed me to

c
c
a
a
a
a
c
i
q
in
La
ha
ea
gi
ot!

become more familiar with the respondents, and to place me in a better position, therefore, for analyzing the data (Miles, 1979; Guba and Lincoln, 1981; McCracken, 1988).

My decision to perform all interviews presented two potential weaknesses that I need to address since they represent possible limitations to this study (Sudman, 1976). The first of these potential weaknesses is that of gender. The very fact that I, a male researcher, am performing a study of female subjects does raise the issue of whether interviewer bias affects my findings' validity. These validity concerns arise from the various research findings that indicate that gender influences both research and everyday interactions. It has been shown that the characteristics of the interviewer can contribute a spurious amount of variance to a set of research findings (Webb et al., 1981; Cannell, Miller, and Oksenberg, 1981; Campbell and Stanley, 1963). It has also been shown that these characteristics can affect the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. Clearly the time and quality of interaction between individuals vary when those individuals differ in gender (Sudman and Bradburn, 1974; Larwood, Zalkind, and Legault, 1975; Webb et al., 1981). It has also been shown that both men and women view women as easier to interact with, especially in the role of support givers. Studies have shown that women in stress turn to other women rather than to their husbands, for emotional

support and understanding (Belle, 1982). Also, both men and women view women as better support givers because of the social training they receive on how to provide support (Belle, 1982; House et al., 1988). The interaction during transactions in banks was also shown to be impacted by the gender of the customer and that of the teller. Transactions were generally found to be longer when the teller, the position of greatest control, was male and the customer was female (Larwood et al., 1975).

Another effect of gender that could be problematic has been noted in the various writings of feminist scholars. Feminist literature is replete with criticisms of the past failures of male researchers to abdicate their positions as experts or "authoritative voices" when studying the experience of women (Hooks, 1989:45; Sherif, 1987; Gilligan, 1987; Collins, 1990). This resistance on the part of men was correctly identified as being based on a "rupture in experience" between men and women (Smith, 1987). The reason for this rupture was that the experiences of women were not deemed to be a separate source of knowledge from that of men. Therefore, not deemed worthy of consideration in the construction of social reality (Smith, 1987; Harding, 1987). The result of this perspective in sociology has literally been "the male study of male society" (Millman and Kanter, 1987). Although the works of mainstream feminists have caused the experiences of women to be considered worthy of

study, the lives of women of color, and working class-women were not equally esteemed (Baca Zinn et al., 1986). Clearly the inclusion of the experiences of these women is necessary and valuable if sociology's conception of social reality is to be accurate (Cannon et al., 1987; Collins, 1991).

In light of this legitimate criticism I clearly recognize my limitations as a male researcher in this particular study. I, therefore, have no delusions that this study is a "definitive work" (Hooks, 1989:45). I do believe, though, that the findings of this study can be important and valid. I believe this to be the case for two reasons. The first is that the three years I worked at the Single Parent Family Institute helped to alleviate some of the suspicions respondents might have in respect to my research. The second is evidence that my position as an outsider, in respect to gender and class, did not have to cause the answers of respondents to be dishonest or to invalidate this important study (Stack, 1974; Kotlowitz, 1991; Riessman, 1991).

To reiterate, I realize that I am unable to do anything about the gender issue, but having worked to understand its effect I believe that I was better prepared to do this study. Because of this perspective I was aware of gender's role and was better equipped to overcome the gender differences and to relax my female respondents. I primarily tried to relax my respondents by attempting to ask questions in such a way that built trust, facilitated recall,

motivated participation, and revealed a logical progression of thought (Warwick and Lininger, 1975).

The second potential weakness is the challenge of doing research in minority and oppressed communities. With the rise of Black consciousness in the 1960's the African-American community began to question the uneven nature of interaction between predominantly White social science researchers and its community members (Ladner, 1971; Ellis and Orleans, 1971; Blauner and Wellman, 1973; Wilson, 1974). Blauner and Wellman highlight the exploitative and dominating nature of this asymmetrical interaction that caused this attention in stating,

Exploitation exists whenever there is a markedly unequal exchange between two parties, and when this inequality is **supported** by a discrepancy in social power. In social research, subjects give up some time, and some energy and some trust, but in the typical case get almost nothing from the transaction. As social scientists, we get grants which pay our salaries; the research thesis legitimates our professional status, then publications advance us along in income and rank, further widening the material and status gaps between the subjects and ourselves. Thus many of us know ghetto residents who have said, partly boasting, partly complaining, that they have put a dozen people through graduate school, so studied have some Black communities been (1973:316).

Another reason African-Americans began to disdain the probing of these researchers was the negative evaluations these studies had of the African-American community in the conclusions of their studies (Jones, 1973). A "neo-colonialist bias" was identified as the reason for these researchers' inability to comprehend or appreciate the rich

nuances of the Black experience and its resultant life styles (Ladner, 1971; Blauner and Wellman, 1973; Moore, 1973).

In reaction to this treatment by social scientists African-American and other minority communities responded by developing various empowering strategies. Robert K. Merton summarizes this view by stating,

When a once largely powerless collectivity acquires a socially validated sense of growing power, its members experience an intensified need for self-affirmation. Under such conditions, collective self-glorification, found in some measure among all groups, becomes a predictable and intensified counterresponse to long standing belittlement from without (1972:18-19).

One such strategy was to become "active critics" and to confront social researchers rather than being "passive objects" (Blauner and Wellman, 1973). Another strategy was to give false information to the enquiry of "outsider"⁹ social science researchers (Baca Zinn, 1979; Staples, 1976).

Although noting that the response of minority interviewees are different for minority interviewers than for White interviewers (Schuman and Converse, 1971; Myers, 1977), there are three important problems confronting "insider" interviewers. The first is that the hostility many minority communities have toward outsider university scholars will also be aimed at insider researchers who similarly come in the name of the university (Blauner and Wellman, 1973; Staples, 1976). The second is that the minority researcher will have a greater propensity to be

subjective in his/her research. This will lead to bias in data gathering and interpretation (Baca Zinn, 1979).¹⁰ The third problem is that the minority researcher operates within the tension of fulfilling the expectations placed upon he/she as a fellow minority, and protecting the long-term goals of the research project. Baca Zinn identified this tension by noting how she was challenged to prove her identification with the Chicano community she was studying by taking action that could possibly have jeopardized her research project (1979:216). I can identify with this tension for although I am performing research in a like-race community, I realize that I am fundamentally an outsider. This is the case because I am an academic, and not a resident of that community.

Despite the methodological challenges of being a researcher of like-race to those I am studying, and this position's threat to validity, I believe that my racial identity gave this research project three significant strengths. The first is that my racial identity allows me to identify with the social reality of many of my respondents. This identification then guides me in the asking of questions and in the gathering of data (Ellis and Orleans, 1971; Blauner and Wellman, 1973; Baca Zinn, 1979). Secondly, my being an African-American researcher removes a large amount of the suspicions and distrust of those individuals being interviewed. Baca Zinn identifies the distinct

methodological advantage of an insider doing field research when she states,

People in minority communities have developed so many self-protective behaviors for dealing with outsiders that it is quite reasonable to question whether many real behaviors and meanings are accessible to outsiders of another color. The issue here, again, is not only that minority people would consciously mislead white researchers (though they may well do so), but also that those researchers often lack insight into the nuances of behavior (1979:212).

The third strength, which is related to the above quotation, is the use of the field research methodology in this study. Montero highlights field research in the study of minorities because it "sensitizes the investigator to the parameters and nature of the community and its members" (1977:7). Along with my position as an insider, this methodological approach enables a better examination and comprehension of the social reality of minorities (Johnson, 1975:200).

Having completed my interviews, my experience has confirmed my decision to perform all interviews myself. I have especially found this to be the case since this approach allowed me to become more familiar with the respondents. It also allowed me to immediately follow up on issues and pertinent questions that I did not consider ahead of time. One such instance was the opportunity I had to inquire as to the role male friends played in the support networks of the younger women. This research inquiry began to be made after a few of these women mentioned that they

had more male friends than female friends. Performing the interviews myself also placed me in a better position, therefore, for analyzing the data.

Problems Encountered:

There are three problems that I did not foresee going into the research study that I should note. The first problem is that those women who had greater earnings rejected in some cases, and even disdained in other cases, the financial gift I offered participants in the study. The first time this occurred was with the sixteenth woman, Pam, I interviewed. Upon offering Pam ten dollars for her participation she immediately got an expression of shock and said that I should not offer any of the women money for participating. She acted as if this gesture of appreciation was an insult to her and said that, although this action was acceptable in academia, it would not be viewed favorably in the African-American community. When I mentioned that other mothers had accepted my monetary gift, she expressed disbelief and continued to advise me to not continue this practice. This reaction also was expressed by the head of a service agency who strongly urged me not to give money to those women who participated in the study. This person felt that the women I would be interviewing were very resourceful and did not need my money to make it. She also felt that the amount that was going to be given was not as significant as it was in years past and would most likely be looked down

upon by the women. She more earnestly pressed this viewpoint upon me when she learned that this money would be coming from my own income.

Despite these strong protestations, I did not find the money that I offered to be offensive to the women I interviewed. There were only two women whom I overtly offered the money to who refused to take it. One woman was the individual I mentioned above, and the other was an older lady, Isa, who felt that it was not necessary for me to give it to her. Isa refused the money and advised me to spend it on my family. For two other women whose earnings were a little higher than the rest of the mothers, I was able to give them money by offering to pay for their meal after the interview. I was able to accomplish this because these particular interviews occurred at a restaurant.

The second problem that was encountered was a difficulty in getting some of the younger women to keep their appointments. These women would miss their appointments without calling to tell me that they would not be able to make the appointment. One individual who missed an appointment never called me, even though I called her three times and left my number. I later called and she answered the phone, which enabled me to set the appointment that she finally kept. To get around this difficulty, I began the practice of calling the day before, and a few hours before the interview to remind the women of our

appointment.

The third problem encountered was my entering a situation that could have placed me in danger. This situation was my entering a house where drug abuse may have taken place. In this particular home I noticed that there was an individual who never awoke or moved from the couch. He or she was laying on the couch during the whole time the interview took place. This situation especially could have become dangerous when I gave the person I interviewed in the home \$10. The home did seem to buzz after this presentation and one individual did follow me out to the porch attempting to engage me in casual conversation, but that was all. I did not realize that this situation may have been dangerous until after the interview. If I had realized this earlier, I would have asked the individual for her address and then mailed her the money.

The Sample:

The average age of the younger mothers interviewed is 20. The average age of these women at the birth of their first child is 18. Eighteen is also the age at which most of these women had their first child, as seven of the women were eighteen when their child was born. The other ages at which the first child was born varied from ages 17 to 21. The average number of children born to the younger group of mothers is 1.3. The average age of the older mothers interviewed is 45. The average age of these women at the

birth of their first child is 22. The age range for the birth of the first child in this group extended from ages 16 to 30. The average number of children born to the older group of mothers is 2.5.

None of the younger mothers were married at the time of their first child's birth, nor have any of them ever been married. Only one of these mothers is presently living with her boyfriend and father of her child, but she still considers herself a "single mother." Of the older women, 50 percent (n=10) of the older women were married at the time of their first child's birth. Presently, 70 percent (n=20) of the women have never been married, 25 percent are divorced, and 5 percent are separated. None of the women are widowed, and I believe that only one is presently living with her boyfriend, who is not the father of either of her children.

The total number of fathers of children for the younger group of mothers is 11, and the total number of fathers for the older group of women is 18. The average age of the children's fathers for the younger group is 21. The average age of the men when this child was born was 20. Twenty is also the age at which most of the men had their first child with a woman from this group. Four of these fathers had a child born to them at this age. The age range for the birth of the mothers' first child to the men in this group extended from ages 17 to 23. The average age of the older

fathers was 25. The age range for the birth of the mothers' first child to the men in this group extended from ages 16 to 38.

The average age of the younger single mother's mother at the time her daughter gave birth to her first child is 40. For the older single mother's mother that age is 47.

The median yearly income of the younger mothers is \$6,636.00 per year. The lowest income is \$4,632 per year and the highest is \$11,400 per year. The median yearly income for the older mothers while they were raising their children, to the best of their recollection, was \$12,570.00 per year. The lowest was \$1,332 per year and the highest was \$60,000 per year.

Chapter III

The Accentuation of Independence

An important issue in social psychology (House, 1977) has been the extent to which an individual has personal autonomy, or independence (Phares, 1976; Rychlak, 1979). There are two perspectives. The first is the perspective that all human behavior is shaped by the social structure and their interactions within that structure (Bem, 1967; Skinner, 1971). Because of this radical behaviorist position, this perspective has been characterized as treating the autonomy of the individual as a myth (Phares, 1976; Rychlak, 1979). The second perspective, although equally noting the role that the social structure has in shaping human behavior, strongly emphasizes the importance of the individual's self-concept in determining his/her actions (Rosenberg, 1979; Kohn, 1977). Because of this second perspective's focus on both the social structure and an individual's autonomy, I will use this perspective to examine the theme of independence that recurred throughout the interviews. The independence motif is expressed in the desire of many of these women to feel that they are autonomous and in control. This theme is primarily expressed

by some of the women when they manifest their feeling that they did not receive support from anyone. The nature of, and reasons for this claim differed for the two groups of mothers interviewed. Therefore, I will examine each of these groups to exhibit their perspectives on this issue.

For the younger group of women, the repeated emphasis on independence revealed their shared awareness that they should be viewed as having moved to the next culturally defined phase in the generational structure of their family (Hagestad, 1985; Burton, 1990). The fact that they now had their own child is perceived by them as proof that a transition to adulthood has occurred (Ladner, 1971; Burton, 1990). Their emphasis on autonomy is now the result of an overall battle to gain respect from their parents, who believe that they are not responsible enough to take care of their children. Although most of the women accentuated their independence, 50 percent of the young women interviewed (n=10) indicated that their parents treated them as if they are too young to care for their children. Yet, this perspective stood in stark contrast to the fact that the information given in these interviews revealed that typically these women had received support from their parents. In some cases the parents are continuing to provide support although the women did not recognize these sources as such, nor fully appreciate their significance.

Struggling for Independence from Mother: Liz, Gayla, and Flo. To reveal the struggle for independence that takes place between these young women and their parents, I will now examine three cases in which this struggle is most evident. The three women I will focus on are Liz, Gayla, and Flo.

Liz is a 20 year old who has a one year old daughter. Liz repeatedly made it clear to me that she is a very good mother, and that she is more than capable of raising her daughter correctly. The reason for these statements became clear to me when she noted that she and her mother have occasional disagreements over the care of Liz's daughter Kat. In this context I noted that Liz vehemently stated that the reason for these disagreements is that Kat is "my child." Liz further went on to say "She [Liz's mother] tell me what to do but it's my child." From this statement Liz clearly feels that she does do a good job caring for her daughter. Yet, simultaneously Liz reveals her doubt about her mother's evaluation of her ability, and her transition to adulthood (Burton, 1990).

As an example of the degree to which the conflict grew between Liz and her mother she related to me this story. Liz said that on one occasion when Liz's mother had taken Kat to Detroit she called and accused Liz of not taking good enough care of Kat. Liz's mother went on to accuse Liz of allowing Kat to be abused.¹¹ The mother's accusation was based on the

bad skin condition of the baby's bottom. When confronted with the accusation Liz noted that this was not the case and that the baby just had a bad diaper rash. Liz's mother did not believe Liz and eventually took Kat to the doctor. The doctor examined the baby's bottom and concluded that this was in fact a bad case of diaper rash. When Liz later called and learned the result of the examination from her mother, she responded by emphasizing her adequacy as a mother to her mother. Liz's mother responded by getting angry and hanging up the phone on Liz.

It has to be noted that although Liz firmly emphasized her ability to raise her child, she also stated throughout the interview that she always depends on her mother. Liz said that she will only leave her child with her mother because she does not trust Kat with any other person. Liz also noted in the interview that her mother often takes Kat with her when she goes to Detroit. That was exactly where Kat was during my interview with Liz. Still, this relationship between mother and daughter reveals the struggle of the daughter to highlight her independence in the midst of her dependence on her mother. Unfortunately, the mother identifies this ambiguity in the relationship as a lack of responsibility.

The second case is that of Gayla. Gayla is a 21 year old who has 2 year old and 1 year old daughters. Gayla said that she did not have a good relationship with her mother,

although Gayla and her daughters live with her mother. The original reason for this conflict is that Gayla's mother favors Gayla's older daughter over her younger daughter because she likes one father over the other. The reason for the continuation of the conflict is that Gayla's mother took Gayla to court, while she was dating the second daughter's father, to gain custody of her oldest grandchild. Gayla's mother took this action arguing that Gayla was an unfit mother because she was with the second daughter's father. Because Gayla missed the court date, her mother received custody of the child. The mother now views Gayla's oldest daughter as her own daughter.

In light of the conflict between Gayla and her mother, Gayla noted in the interview that she paid rent and had to provide food for herself and for her 2nd daughter. She felt that she is on her own and that she is not really receiving anything from her mother. Even then she felt that she is a good mother and that she took care of her second daughter very well. She also noted that all her support relationships are reciprocal, stressing the fact that she viewed herself as responsible and independent.

Despite this argument, Gayla did not note the assistance that she is receiving from her mother. Gayla stated in the interview that she had lost her apartment when the girlfriend she was sharing the apartment with ran out of money. At this point she then moved into her mother's house.

Yet, Gayla did not view her mother's assistance positively but negatively. She also did not note the fact that although she paid rent she did not have to pay for any of the utilities or furnishings she used. Gayla also did not identify the child care assistance given to her by her mother in that she does not have to care for her older child. From her statements it was evident that she fully trusted her mother's care of that daughter. Again it is to be noted that a mother's perception of her daughter as irresponsible has resulted in the daughter's highlighting her independence. This emphasis is made by the daughter even though she has some dependence on her mother.

The third case is that of Flo. Flo is 19 years old and her daughter is 10 months old. She has just moved back to Lansing from Ohio where she lived with her mother. Flo had gone to college on a track scholarship but later dropped out of school when she became pregnant. Her return to Lansing primarily is an attempt to reconcile with her boyfriend. Unlike the other women who emphasized their independence in the face of their mothers doubting their maturity, Flo's accentuation of her independence stood in opposition to the views of her father. Flo's father and mother are not together, and he lives in Indianapolis. Flo and her father are not on speaking terms and communicate very little because he disapproved of her having the baby. He is upset that he was informed about the pregnancy late, and that he

was told about the birth of the child late as well. Flo also is upset because her father wanted her to have an abortion when he first heard of the pregnancy, but she decided against that. There has been further disagreement in that her father now wants her to marry the father of the child although he does not approve of the child's father.

Flo gets no support from her father because he is "still mad." They were close before all this and Flo now misses him. Flo's father has never seen the baby, and this has been especially painful to her because this is his only grandchild. Still, Flo is strong in her resolve that she must now go her own way and that the decisions she made are correct. As for her father Flo stated "He needs to accept the fact that I have a baby. I don't ever call and ask for money so he should change."

Again I note that the treatment of a young mother's parent has caused her to highlight her independence despite her need of emotional support from that parent. Being recognized as having made her transition to adulthood in the eyes of her father, is clearly more important to Flo than her need to receive emotional support from him.

The theme of independence amongst some of the younger women is their response to the questions raised by their parents about their level of maturity and their ability to care for their children. Highlighting their responsibility is the answer of each of these mothers to the skepticism

expressed by their parents. For the other young women who strongly emphasized their independence in the interviews, this action is based on a larger issue of which the older women are more aware.

The accentuation of independence by the older women is in response to the societal belief that African-American mothers cannot, and to some extent should not, raise children by themselves. Within the older group of women the emphasis on independence is very evident as they highlighted their dependence on "self" to a greater degree. The word was used by 80 percent (n=10) of the older women as an expression of their ability to provide for themselves. In contrast, the word was only used by 30 percent (n=10) of the younger women to express the same perspective.

The emphasis on independence by the older women primarily seemed to result from their internalizing the social norms that oppose their raising their children by themselves (Wells and Stryker, 1988). This point was noted by 60 percent (n=10) of the older women in one form or the other. In comparison, none of the younger women mentioned this as an issue.

Depending on Self: Pam, Isa, and Red. There are three particular interviews in which these older women accentuate their independence as a response to a notion of womanhood that is contradictory to their own experience. The three women interviewed are Pam, Isa, and Red.

The first example of this response is given by Pam who is a 44 year old divorcee with a 17 year old son. Pam, by her facial expressions and interactions with me, seemed very guarded and suspicious of my questions. Her response interested me, since the interview format and the questions I asked her did not differ from the approach used for the fifteen mothers' interviewed before her. In none of those interviews did I encounter a similar response.

Pam from the outset presented a strong image of herself as self sufficient. She expressed this early in the interview when she responded to my inquiry about where she received financial support by answering "myself or the Credit Union." She emphasized that it is her responsibility to provide her financial needs. She also stated that she had not depended on any members of her support network to provide child care, but had instead used contractual child care providers. After struggling to assure her that my research intent was to learn about her sources of support, she finally shared her reservation about participating in a study of single mothers. I believe that Pam's statements most forcefully and succinctly summed up the viewpoint of the older women. These women who felt the pressure of the larger society around them, which stood in disagreement to their raising their children by themselves.

Pam began by stating "I don't call myself a single parent. I see myself as a mom who is single. People, when

they hear of a single parent family, think of a female with a child. They have a problem with a female raising a child and not a male raising a child." She believes that single parent families are no more dysfunctional than a two-parent family. Concerning my focus on the support networks of single mothers she went on to note "I have the same kinds of needs I had when I was married. I have the same kinds of support as when I was married." In comparison to when she was a married person, Pam believes that she does better parenting now that she is the only parent. Pam believes that she has become a better parent because she cannot depend on the other parent. She believes that she is now more focussed, stronger, and a better survivor.

Clearly Pam realizes that the perception in society is that single mothers are dependent and in need of much assistance to raise their children. She also recognizes that there is a negative perception as to the nature of such a family, and she firmly disagrees with this perception. Pam so strongly disagrees with this standpoint that she describes herself as "fighting" to show others that single mothers can raise their children successfully.

The second single mother who reflects such an understanding is Isa. Isa is a 69 year old divorced woman who has three children ages 47, 45, and 34. Isa and her husband divorced early and of that experience she states "Sometimes we don't want it to happen. You marry with the

thought of staying together for life." Still, she believes that the actions of her husband forced her to choose divorce. She related that after the birth of each of her children, her husband abandoned her. The periods of abandonment were sometimes as long as a year before she eventually went to him, or he came back to her. Isa finally came to the conclusion that she didn't need her husband to raise her children. Since he still seemed very immature, and because she was of childbearing age she felt that if he were going to be absent every time they had a baby, she would eventually have "a dozen kids" because of this pattern.

Her awareness of society's evaluation of single mothers raising their children is expressed in these two accounts she shared. The first, is her experience at a school board meeting. She stated that at this school board meeting many individuals began to separately denigrate the ability of single mothers to raise their children successfully. The result they said would be failure and that these mothers would lose their kids. After hotly enduring this kind of presentation for a period of time Isa finally decided that she had to stand and make her viewpoint known. She then stood up and vehemently disagreed noting that single mothers could, and have successfully raised their children. She then highlighted for me the fact that she would not allow her kids to say "if I graduate," for they were to speak and act as if it was already a reality. Isa later noted that all her

children did graduate.¹²

The second incident occurred when a female welfare worker came over to see her and to evaluate her for receiving welfare. When she saw the way Isa's oldest daughter was dressed when she came home from school, the welfare worker commented that Isa's daughter was nicely dressed. The worker went on to comment, though, that her own daughter never went to school looking that good. The worker was also astounded at the quality of the television set that Isa had in her home. Upon notifying Isa that she would recommend that Isa be denied for public assistance, the worker remarked while leaving that Isa's quality of living was such that she wouldn't even give Isa a lump of coal. Isa said "I don't want your coal for you've given me so much more. The incentive to achieve." This pushed her to work and to make sure that her children achieved their goals.

These accounts clearly reveal the common beliefs that single mothers cannot be successful in raising their children, as the school board incident revealed, or in providing an adequate lifestyle and living environment for their children, as the welfare worker's views revealed. As with Pam, Isa's comments manifests the awareness these women have of society's images and beliefs about Black single mothers. This awareness is also the motivation for these women to push both themselves and their children to do the best that they can do.

The third and final single mother who reflects a knowledge of society's perception about the ability of single mothers to raise their children is Red. Red is a 43 year old divorced woman who has three children. The divorce occurred because her husband left her for another woman. Before the divorce Red and her husband had built the home she presently lives in and she was employed with the Lansing school district. She related how tough the struggle was trying to make it on her own, and during this communication she expressed her awareness of the pressures she placed upon herself to succeed. She revealed that she placed this pressure on herself because of society's perception of single mothers raising children.

The first such revelation is evident in the way in which she viewed her house. Red more than once mentioned that she views her house as a bank, and that she views herself as living in her bank. She and her husband designed and physically built the house in 1977. Although Red leaned on her fasting training to fast for 10 days while giving the food she would have eaten to her children, she continued to view her house as a treasure she would not part with. Her priorities were: house, utilities, and then food. "My house became my support." With this order of priorities she noted that "I was not going to be moved." Red's evaluation of her house as her bank parallels the perspective revealed by those who have a very pessimistic outlook on the future.

Liebow notes that such individuals view themselves as having an uncertain future and therefore need their financial security to be very simplistic. Simplistic, in that they can constantly be aware of its security and that they can have convenient access to it (1967:65-66). Red seemed to have that perspective although she had not been a single mother for a long time. Her outlook is most likely based on the perspective that a single mother might not succeed in her endeavor to provide for herself and her children. Therefore, her most treasured possession is that which guarantees her protection from the elements and, even more important, would provide her with a large sum of money when it is needed. This is evident in Red's placing her house as her priority even above its utilities and the food for her family.

The second statement of Red's that clearly reveals her understanding of the perception society has of single mothers raising children, is her reference to the way in which men respond to single mothers. Red, as if speaking from her own experience, stated "I believe that when you're a single mother men are more likely to do things for you than they would for married women. Some actions are out of sympathy and some are out of care and concern." This statement is important because it reveals that society has a collective image of the conditions and circumstances single mothers are experiencing. From the use of the terms "sympathy," "care," and "concern" I conclude that this

societal image of single mothers is that they are in trouble, if not failing, in their endeavors to provide for themselves and their children.

Red's outlook, which she revealed in her statements, shows us the awareness these women have of the difficulties they expect to face as they raise their children. This expectation influences the way in which these women view their present lives and their future. Yet, Red's statements also reveal the way in which others view these women and, by that, influence their responses to them.

A Variation in Research Findings: Contrasting Burton's Findings with the Findings of this Study. Linda Burton (1990) found that many of the young women in her study are expected to have their children when they are young so that their mothers would then be able to raise their granddaughters. This pressure is placed on these young women because grandmothers are the ones who traditionally raise their grandchildren in the Gospel Hill community (1990:132). Although the women in my study expressed some of the same tendencies as those in the Gospel Hill area, in that some grandmothers tried to raise their grandchildren by formally removing their daughters from that responsibility, there is a marked difference. This difference is that the grandmothers in the Lansing study are not taking the babies as an opportunity to raise the children for their own benefit. Their action, on the other hand, is a way of

providing the children "mature" care that they do not believe that their young daughters can provide. The motivation is primarily a concern for their grandchildren's well-being and their actions, therefore, does not stem from a desire to finally experience the raising of a child. This is expressed by the mother of a 19 year old, Kim, who stated that her 41 year old mother wanted the baby in the house by 5-5:30 p.m. because of the "night air." Kim related that her mother had taken over the care of her grandson, and that she would sometimes hinder him from going places with Kim. This is based on the grandmother's view that either the time or the place where Kim is going is not advantageous to the health of her grandchild.

One of the reasons for this difference in outlook and expectations is directly a result of a difference between communities and their customs. Burton noted that the traditions and expectations of the Gospel Hill community are based on three factors: the great desire of grandmothers to raise their children; the expectation of early morbidity within the community; and the shortage of marriageable Black men in the community. These three factors have led to the development of "an intergenerational system of support with specific role responsibilities for female family members" in this community (1990:133). In contrast, none of these factors seem to exist in the Lansing community and, therefore, the outlook of these older women is very

dissimilar (Oliver, 1990).

Chapter IV

Support Networks Analysis

One of the most important issues I will examine in this study is the existence and composition of the support networks of urban African-American single mothers. This consideration is important for two reasons: first, because it reveals the present condition of the Black family and community; second, because it reveals the assistance available to these mothers so that they might survive the harshness of the urban experience. To obtain a better image of the state and nature of these networks, I will utilize three different research concerns to help me focus on these networks. The first research concern is to determine whether each of these women has a support network. The second concern is to learn the patterns in the formation and perpetuation of these networks. The third concern is to examine the effect certain demographic factors have on the reception of support by these mothers.

The first research concern I will use to examine these networks is existence, or a determination of whether these women have social support networks. From my analysis of the interviews I have noted that each of the single mothers in

this study has some sort of support network upon which they rely. I would have concluded that these women did not have a support network if they expressed in their interviews that they did not receive, nor had any possibility of receiving, material, emotional, or cognitive support from any individual or group with whom they had an ongoing social relationship. My use of the term support is to denote the reassuring qualities in social relationships that provide health promoting or stress buffering needs. The types of interaction within these relationships that provide these needs are: instrumental aid, emotional caring or concern, and information used for self-evaluation (House, 1983; House et al., 1988). Although many of the women argue that they are making it on their own, their interviews reveal that they have various individuals or groups from which they receive, or could receive, assistance. The propensity of some of the women to accentuate their independence is discussed in the preceding chapter.

The second research concern I will use to examine these networks is to focus on the patterns in the formation and perpetuation of these networks. Because of the largeness of this section I will divide it into nine segments to more efficiently examine these networks.

The Single Mother's Mother:

The first segment will focus on the role of the single mother's mother in these networks. Mothers are a very

important part of the support networks of these single mothers, whether a younger mother or an older mother. All of the younger mothers expressed in their interviews that they received some sort of support from their mothers. A recurring theme expressed by these younger mothers is that they are satisfied with the support they received from their mothers (90%: n=10). The young mothers had a shared perception of their mothers as the primary source of various kinds of support for them, the most significant of these being child care. The importance of mothers in these networks is summed up by one single mother, Liz, who stated that her mother is her primary child care provider. Liz considered her mother to be her primary child care provider because Liz viewed her as the most trusted person she can look to for child care.

Another shared characteristic of these mothers that made them very valuable to the networks of their daughters is their commitment to their daughters. This characteristic is best personified in the account of one mother's actions toward her daughter. Bobbie, the daughter of the mother now under consideration, shared with me the difficult situation she faced, and the important role her mother played in helping her meet her needs. Bobbie, at age 17, faced the predicament of not only being pregnant six months, but of also having to raise her child without the assistance of the baby's father, her boyfriend. He was recently incarcerated

for selling drugs. She would later learn that her boyfriend would not get out until 1994. To make matters even worse, she learned that her child was mentally disabled.

In the midst of these challenges, along with trying to graduate from the twelfth grade, Bobbie's mother stepped in to help Bobbie cope and achieve her goals. When Bobbie had the baby, her 35 year old mother took a leave of absence from her job to provide full time child care and support for Bobbie. Bobbie's mother worked in the housekeeping division of Sparrow Hospital. Her leave of absence eventually lasted twelve months. This action by Bobbie's mother was undertaken despite her having three other children in the home. This step allowed Bobbie to better focus on her school work as well as allowing her to gain employment. Bobbie's mother also allowed Bobbie to live with her while only paying a third of the rent and helping with the provision of food for the household. Although Bobbie has since moved into her own apartment, she is confident that she will make it because her mother continues to provide transportation and money to her. Her mother has even invited Bobbie to come home and live with her if she needs to.

This example of a mother giving of herself to assist her daughter is repeated, although not as strikingly, in many of the younger mother interviews. There was only one exception to these younger single mothers praising the support they had received from their mothers. One single

n
f
c

v
s
M
t
t
m
f
o
a
h
c
I.
tl
d.
mc
de
kn
th
anc
her
sim
par

mother, Gayla, said that she is not pleased at all with the support she receives from her mother. Still, Gayla did express in her interview ways in which her mother helps her.

In respect to the older mothers, I noted that most of them repeatedly mentioned in their interviews that they receive some sort of support from their mothers (70%: n=10). Most of these mothers expressed the recurring evaluation that they are satisfied with the support they receive. For these women the areas of support varied. Jay, a 40 year old mother of a 2 year old, said that she was able to provide for herself after her divorce twenty-three years ago because of the assistance her mother gave her. Her mother's assistance is just as important to Jay today. Jay highlighted this reality in saying that "the first person called is my mom when she's [her 2 year old daughter] sick." Isa, who is presently 69 years old, in reflecting back on the role that her mother played in supporting her after her divorce said "I couldn't have raised those kids without mom." She described her 4'11" mother who lived through the depression as "a typical Black mom---care giver, lover, who knew when something was wrong." She later went on to say that her mother helped her with everything as she came over and cooked, cleaned, and provided child care support for her. Astonishingly, Isa went on to state that her mother simultaneously helped her sister who was also a single parent. Other single mothers who had never been married said

that

skill

rec

res

I n

you

in

old

of

mig

sin

hav

sin

sup

int

bot

hig

jus

app

to s

who

some

Consi

mothe

Africa

that they could not have raised their children without the skills they had been taught, and the support they had received from their mothers.

In comparing the two groups of single mothers in respect to the assistance they received from their mothers, I note a clear similarity. The acknowledgement by all the younger mothers of the important roles their mothers played in their support networks, parallels the evaluations of the older mothers. The older mothers did have a weaker pattern of attributing significant roles to their mothers. Yet, this might be attributable to some of these mothers' becoming single parents at a later age. Therefore, their mothers may have been deceased or too old to provide support. Only two single mothers indicated that they were not pleased with the support they received from their mothers. Still their interviews revealed ways in which they received support. In both groups the sacrifices made by their mothers are clearly highlighted, and appreciation expressed. This expression is just as impassioned from the 18 year old who says that she appreciates her mother coming home from a long day of work to spend some time with her. As it is from the 69 year old who said "I could never say enough. I wish I could be in some capacity to my children as my mom was to me." Considering the important support provider role these mothers have to their daughters, I must conclude that African-American mothers have been, and continue to be

i

n

s

(

p

g

n

m

(

i

th

yo

th

th

ar

de

ca

th

im

ty

mo

gi

sin

sch

important members of their single parent daughters' support networks. This is the case despite the age of either the single mothers or their mothers.

It has been suggested that since many of these mothers (or grandmothers in the generational chart) are young single parents themselves, they do not now take on the traditional grandmother roles as child care providers. These roles are not being filled because these grandmothers are devoting most of their time to the raising of their own children (Ladner and Gourdine, 1984; Tinsley and Parke, 1984; Burton, 1990). This however, is not the finding of this study. Of those young single mothers whose mothers are 41 years old or younger at the time of their first child's birth, all of them expressed various ways in which their mothers supported them. The view, therefore, that younger single mothers today are not being supported by their mothers, who are young with dependent children at home, has not been proven to be the case in this study. Conversely, the actions undertaken by the mothers of both groups of women clearly revealed the importance of their labors for their daughters. The various types of support offered by the mothers of these single mothers should be viewed, therefore, as one of the strongest girders of support within the support structure of these single mothers.

This analysis coincides with the assessments of other scholars who have recognized the centrality of mothers and

o

m

c

l

l

o

b

a

m

s

b

i

o

g

b

o

p

s

a

g

Y

a

f

othermothers, "women who assist bloodmothers by sharing mothering responsibilities," in the African-American community (Hill Collins, 1990:119; Frazier, 1948; Stack, 1974; Taylor et al., 1990; Brooks-Gunn and Furstenberg, 1986; Stevens, 1984; M. Wilson, 1986).¹³ Networks comprising of grandmothers, sisters, aunts, cousins, or friends have been noted to provide reciprocal support to both children and bloodmothers who need assistance (Hill Collins, 1990).

The Immediate and Extended Family:

The second segment will focus on the role the single mothers' immediate and extended family plays in providing support for her. Family support, combining the support given by nuclear and extended family members, is the second most identified source of support (90%: n=20) in the interviews of these women. Those identified as providing support are grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles, sisters, brothers, and cousins.

In examining the support providers for these two groups of women, it is evident that although both have similar providers, there are also noticeable differences. More specifically, the patterns of identification and appreciation in the interviews revealed that siblings are a greater source of support to older mothers than they are for younger mothers. This circumstance is probably caused by the age of the siblings of the older mothers being greater than for the younger mothers. Consequently, the older mothers

hav

fro

is

are

old

sin

ear

thi

aun

pla

int

mem

ever

sim

the

int

pat

of t

in t

was

gran

the

comp

appr

gran

have greater opportunities to receive meaningful assistance from their siblings. For younger mothers I noted that there is a shared reasoning that grandmothers, uncles, and aunts are more significant providers of support than they are for older mothers. This latter comparison needs more attention since this discrepancy, although also age related, is not as easily explained as the former comparison. Let us examine this comparison by focussing on the support provided by aunts, uncles, and grandmothers to these groups of mothers.

The first is the role that the aunts of these mothers played in providing support to these mothers. Whereas the interviews of the younger women noted aunts as significant members of their support networks, none of the older mothers even mentioned an aunt as a support provider. Secondly, a similar case is noted in relation to the role of uncles in the social support networks of these women. In the interviews of the younger women I recognized a recurring pattern of these mothers identifying their uncles as members of their support networks. I did not find a similar pattern in the interviews of the older mothers, as only one uncle was identified as a social support provider. Finally, the grandmothers' role is also noted to be more significant to the social support networks of the younger mothers in comparison to those of the older ones. There was shared appreciation by the younger mothers for the roles their grandmothers held in their support networks. On the other

•

•

•

}

t

W

6

b

04

46

De:

hand, only one older mother even mentioned her grandmother as a support provider. Even this older mother, a 42 year old named Val, noted that her grandmother only **lent** her money, which she then had to pay back. Because of the stipulation placed on this assistance, Val did not categorize her grandmother's actions as meaningful support. Although Val mentioned that her grandmother is "poor," Val still seemed to expect more from her.

The statements by Val may help to explain the reason aunts, uncles, and grandparents are so rarely mentioned by these older women as support providers. In her interview Val not only identified her grandmother as poor but also her whole family who, like her grandmother, gave her loans rather than gifts. It could be the case then, that the aunts, uncles, and grandmothers of the older mothers are of the depression, or post depression, generation. This may have resulted in their being poorer, and more focussed on the needs of themselves and their immediate families.

There are three mothers whose evaluation of their family's support to them stood in variance to the evaluation of the other mothers. These three mothers expressed that they are either not satisfied or not totally satisfied with the support they receive from their family. The first mother, Val, has already been noted. The second mother is Bell, a 36 year old from the small rural town of Baldwin, Michigan. Bell is another mother, like Val, who expressed

t
z
n
a
E
h
h
f
t
i
m
f
f
n
w
"
a
s.
ye
ol
ha
mo
Pr
anc
far

that her family was poor. Bell said that she had 24 people living in the home with her when she was growing up. Her mother had 12 kids with Bell's father, and one child with another man. Her father had 26 kids, including the 12 with Bell's mother. Bell's mother later married a man with 10 kids and 5 of them came to live with her. With the family being this size, she said that she hated to cook for her family. When she had to cook, Bell said that she would have to cook three chickens in a very big pot. Besides the indigence of her family, she later moved to Lansing. Her move did not allow her to gain any assistance from her family because of the distance between them. With time the family migrated to various parts of the United States. She now recalls that her family was "there for me," but she would not call it support. Bell now has an attitude of "forget them," and said "Find hard not to have relatives around, but ain't been around so long."

The third mother who stated that she did not gain any significant support from her family is Cece. Cece is a 39 Year old mother of six children ages 18 through 10 years Old. She has had various challenges that have included having an \$8,000 light bill, and being homeless for four months before making it to an economic crisis center. Presently Cece has had her five children taken away from her and placed into a foster home. When I asked Cece about her family and the support she receives from them, she stated

that she has old aunts and uncles in Lansing who are too old to help. Cece went on to describe them as old and senile. Cece related that she could not turn to her cousins in the area because they are crackheads and into using drugs. Cece's sister, her only sibling, also lives in Lansing and even works for Michigan State University. But Cece believes that her sister thinks that she is better than Cece. The sister has three children and lives in a very spacious home in East Lansing. The home has four bedrooms, but she would not let Cece and her children live with her while they were homeless. This is the decision her sister made, though she only had two children living at home during Cece's time of need. Still, Cece's sister did not change her mind even after Cece had volunteered to sleep in one of her spacious hallways, or anywhere else where there might be room. Her sister just sternly responded that she "Needed the hallways and floorways clear in case of fire." Cece angrily said that her sister has plants that are living better than she and her children. The two sisters haven't talked in a long time and they don't know where each other presently lives.

Although extended families have been reported to comprise the core of many Black social and support networks (Taylor and Chatters, 1988; Taylor, 1990; Hays and Mindel, 1973), this study has shown that it does not hold the position of being the primary support source for these single mothers. Some of the women even revealed that they

rec

the

of

the

per

imp

sup

Ta

st

sup

di

pr

ex

ne

Wi

st

wh

ne

si

fa

fa

of

fa

received no support from their families. Still, other than these three mothers who reported this, the shared perception of both the younger and older mothers is that the support they receive from their families is beneficial. This perspective would agree with previous studies showing the importance of the nuclear and extended family in providing support to the African-American single mother (Stack, 1974; Taylor et al., 1990). This study would also agree with other studies that have shown that satisfaction with social support from one's family has the effect of reducing distress in the midst of employment and unemployment pressures (Brown and Gary, 1988; Angel and Tienda, 1982).

Despite the various reasons forwarded for the view that extended families are no longer as important to the survival networks of African-Americans (Martin and Martin, 1985:95; Wilson, 1978, 1987; McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1989:96), this study noted none of these reasons as factors in those cases where families did not play a major role in the support networks of these mothers. The factor that is most significant is unresolved interpersonal conflicts between family members. Conversely, the immediate and extended family support networks continue to be an important source of support for the single mother.

The Single Mother's Father:

The third segment is the role of the single mother's father in her support network. Of the seventeen women

interviewed whose fathers were alive at the time they became single mothers, only six fathers were noted as providing support to them. For the younger mothers the most significant support provided by the fathers is emotional support. While none of these fathers are identified as a primary provider of emotional support to their daughters, their ability to support their child in this way is highly esteemed. One young mother, Von, illustrated this in noting that although her father is divorced from her mother and presently living in Saginaw, he has proven his importance as a friend by traveling to be with her to encourage her. Therefore, Von placed her father as a very important member of her support network. These women repeatedly mentioned that their fathers also provide money and transportation when needed. One father was uniquely identified as providing child care every weekend for his daughter.

Unfortunately, these men are the exception since the shared evaluation of these young mothers is that their fathers provide no support to them (70%: n=10). For this group there is very little communication or contact between the daughters and their fathers. One daughter, Gayla, mentioned that she had no idea where her father presently is since she had not seen him for the past three years. She has only heard that he is doing drugs. Another mother, Liz, only recently saw her father whom she had not seen since she was 4 years old. Still, she realized that he had come back into

her life only because her brother had been getting into trouble with the law. She knew that her father's primary focus was to keep her brother from getting into further trouble with the law. Liz's father did invite her to come and live with him, but she declined his offer since she has never received any support from him before. For those fathers in this group who communicated with their daughters regularly, there seemingly was no deepness in the relationship that fostered intimacy or emotional support. This is expressed by such mothers as Dee who said that she and her father are on good terms. He will occasionally send her money and "Thinking of you" cards, and they will spend time over the phone gossiping about family members. Yet, she receives no emotional support from him, nor does she appraise the support he lends as essential. Similarly, Deb noted in her interview that although she received items for her baby from her father, she is not satisfied with his support. Deb viewed her father as the only person she knew who did not give her support. She said "Give me money! The support he gives he could keep it."

For the older mothers the most repeatedly mentioned type of support provided by their fathers is material support, in that their fathers provided housing and finances to them. Emotional and cognitive support are the other types of assistance provided to these women by their fathers. Jay is the primary example of this kind of support as her father

pro
the
in
for
ti
to
of
wo
mo
mo
mo
di
sa
Ha
pro
the
the
Cec
not
tha
did
tim
mon
bou
her
stat

provided housing for her after her divorce. She said that he then "went and found a place to get a job and took me to the interview. He told me to be ready. I got the job." He also found her an apartment and co-signed a loan for her. Over time he also provided child care, encouragement, and helped to protect her from her ex-husband. But, like the fathers' of the younger mothers, most of the fathers of these older women did not provide support for their daughters. One older mother, Cece, said that her father was forbidden by her mother's family from coming to the home where she and her mother lived. As a result, Cece never knew her father nor did she ever see a picture of him. She does believe that she saw him when she was 20 years old and with her grandfather. Having never seen her, Cece's father believed that she was a prostitute on her grandfather's arm. Learning who she was he then asked Cece for a hug, but she responded by asking for the money he should have sent her when she was growing up. Cece related that he eventually walked away when she would not give him the hug he requested. Another mother Val said that her father was not a support giver, and stated that he didn't do things like that. She could only recall three times when he provided support to her. The first was a monetary gift to her one Christmas. The second was when he bought her some Bible books. The third was his paying for her hospital bill after the birth of her first child. Val stated that she was not satisfied with the support she

rece

prov

netw

tha

moth

fath

supp

is a

his

live

in t

Nan,

and

of e

inco

focu

moth

by t

in ti

the r

twent

mothe

of th

received from him because she believed that he could have provided financial assistance to her.

The role of the single mother's father in her support network is a subject that has not been addressed in studies that have focussed on the support networks of single mothers. From this study it does seem that in most cases the father of the single mother is not a significant provider of support to these women. In those situations where a father is an active member of a single mother's support network, his assistance is very important. This is evident in the lives of such women as Jay, who is highlighted above. Even in the situation where the father is deceased, one mother, Nan, noted that the remembrance of her father's work ethic and dedication to family became one of her greatest sources of encouragement. For many fathers whose support is deemed inconsequential, most often the support they offer is focussed toward their grandchildren and not the children's mother. Consequently, their actions are not highly esteemed by the single mothers.

The Children's Father:

The fourth segment is the role of the children's father in the network of the single mother. The overall picture of the role of these men is not very positive. Only nine of the twenty-eight fathers (32%) are identified by the single mothers as support providers. The shared negative evaluation of these fathers is revealed when the amount of fathers who

provide support that is deemed satisfactory by the single mothers is considered. Only two of the nine fathers identified as providing support are recognized as providing support that the mothers are satisfied with. A better picture of the mothers' expectations, by which this support is evaluated, and the provisions provided by these fathers are gained when the two groups of mothers are examined individually.

In examining the younger mothers I note a recurring pattern of identifying fathers as providers of support, in one form or another, to these mothers. The various types of support noted by these mothers are: purchasing items for the baby (disposable diapers, clothes, shoes, etc.); providing the mothers with money; providing transportation; providing information; providing child care; providing emotional support; and providing medical coverage for the child. Of these, the two types of support provision that are evenly noted the most are buying items for the baby and providing money to the mother. Although the number of fathers providing support is greater than the aggregate, the percentage of those younger fathers whose support is deemed satisfactory by the single mothers is lower than the aggregate. Only one of the younger fathers identified as providing support, had his support deemed very satisfactory by a younger mother. The other fathers who are identified as providing support, had their support evaluated as either not

ful

rec

fat

by

sup

Tas

pre

The

in

any

resp

exat

fir

her

thro

to

had

shop

day,

whic

such

unre

dist.

with

daug:

fully satisfactory, or as being in need of improvement.

To gain a greater understanding of the support that is received by these younger mothers, I will examine two fathers and the mothers they support. The support provided by each of these fathers appears at two extremes of the support provision spectrum. The first single mother is Tasha. Tasha is a 20 year old with a 2 year old daughter who presently shares an apartment with her 56 year old mother. The father of her child is 21 years old and presently lives in Atlanta, Georgia. Tasha says that he has never given her any support and has not really shown any maturity in his responsibility as the father of her child. She gave two examples as proofs for her depiction of him in this way. The first is the fact that although his daughter resides with her, she doesn't know if he has come to Lansing except through friends. At the time of our interview she had spoken to him two months before our meeting. Tasha related that he had said then that he would take the baby and her out to shop for items for both of them. He came by at 3 p.m. that day, but she was not in. He later came back at 11 p.m., to which Tasha responded "What store is open at that time?" For such actions Tasha doesn't trust him and considers him unreliable. The second example further indicates why she distrusts him. Tasha mentioned that he has promised to sit with her mother and discuss issues relating to her daughter's pregnancy, and his resultant responsibilities.

Unfortunately, he has never fulfilled his promise. He comes by with his friends, but rushes away because he has to be somewhere. Needless to say, Tasha is unsatisfied with the support he has provided.

The second young single mother is Deb. Deb is a 17 year old twelfth grader who has a 3 month old son. She presently lives with her mother. Her boyfriend, who is the father of her child, is 20 years old and plays a very important role in her support network. Deb said that the baby's father "Helps more than I do." She went on to illustrate this in noting some care activities that he is involved in. She said that the baby's father gets the baby in the morning and takes the baby over to his mother. His mother provides child care for Deb. When Deb's boyfriend picks up the baby in the morning he then takes Deb to school. This routine occurs five days a week. Her boyfriend also helps Deb with money, and she said that he gives her a significant amount. She has been working for Meijers for two months, but the baby's father has told her to keep her checks. He said that he will give her money for herself and the baby. She also said that he helps her emotionally. Deb is the only young mother to say that she is fully satisfied with the support her baby's father provides.

There are some issues that are raised in examining the interviews with these younger women that needs to be highlighted. The first is the limited awareness many of

these younger women had about the personal lives of the fathers of their children. Many of the women are ignorant of basic information that would be expected to have been learned in a relationship spanning a period of years. For example, Deb, who was just highlighted, has been dating her boyfriend for two years, yet she does not know what he does for a living. She only knows that he does "something with records," and that he works in the Treasury Building located in downtown Lansing. Another mother, Gayla, although saying that she had dated the father of her first child for a long time, mentioned that she is no longer in touch with him because she lost his telephone number. She knew that he stayed in Detroit, but did not know exactly where he lived. Gayla also mentioned that she had never met any members of his family. The relationship these women have with the men in their lives parallels the definition of friendship forwarded by Elliot Liebow after his observation of the relationships fostered by some African-American males in Washington, D.C..

Friendship thus appears as a relationship between two people who, in an important sense, stand unrevealed to one another. Lacking depth in both past and present, friendship is easily uprooted by the tug of economic or psychological self-interest or by external forces acting against it (1967:207).

The nature of some of these male/female relationships reveal a great degree of superficiality betraying the fact that many of these couples did not spend time learning about each other. A deepening of conversation and interpersonal

kn

an

mo

fi

re

ch

re

ch

th

is

Al

her

par

tak

she

Nik

her

the

And

her

is :

the

nice

his

he p

knowledge is not attained, and for these relationships there are very little, if any, continued interactions between the mother and the father of the children.

The second issue, which I believe is related to the first issue, is the lack of emotional support these women received, or are receiving from the fathers of their children. This issue also highlights the shallowness of the relationship these younger women have with the men whose children they have borne. This situation is exemplified in the responses from such young single mothers as Nikki. Nikki is a 23 year old with three sons' ages 5, 3, and 11 months. Although Nikki lives in the same house with the father of her three boys, she emphasized to me that they are "single parents." She went on to explain that although he helps with taking care of the kids, and provides child care and money, she receives no emotional support from him. When I asked Nikki if she is satisfied with the support she receives from her boyfriend she responded "No!," and went on to say that the emotional area of their relationship has to improve. Another example is Von who sees her boyfriend, the father of her child, four times a week. Still, she believes that there is improvement needed in relation to the emotional aspect of their relationship. She noted that sometimes he's not very nice and says that it is because he is so tired from working his two part-time jobs. Although Von appreciates the money he provides she still argues that he could do a little more

by talking more. She views the communication aspect of their relationship as weakening their overall relationship.

This also is the case with some of the men these women are presently dating, but had no children by them at the time of the interview. Kim, a 19 year old, related in her interview that although she really appreciated her 21 year old boyfriend and the support she receives from him, which she noted is much more than the support that she receives from the baby's father, she is not totally satisfied with the relationship. Kim hinted at the reason for this lack of satisfaction when she said that she can unburden herself on her boyfriend, but noted that she doesn't talk to him a lot like that. She then pointed out that her boyfriend talks to her in this way quite often. The emphasis is that although her boyfriend can accept her emotional unburdening, he or she for some reason does not allow this to happen more often. He on the other hand does this often, for which she is not as pleased.

In both of these issues I note that the nature of some of these male/female relationships reveal a great degree of superficiality. Consequently, a deepening of conversation and interpersonal knowledge is not attained. The result of this deficiency in the relationship is a marginalization of the father in respect to the mother's support network. This marginalization is manifest in the area of emotional support, or in a total break in the relationship.

pa

fa

and

the

for

ch.

var

not

mon

fin

mar

ide

con

wer

of

do

sat

sup

sat

sat

But

thi

by t

supp

In examining the older mothers I note that there is no pattern of fathers supporting their children. Only a few fathers provide support to these mothers in one form or another. The various types of support that are noted by these mothers are: providing child care; purchasing items for the child (clothes); providing medical coverage for the child; emotional support; and child support. Of these various types of support the type of assistance that is most noted is the provision of money. Of those fathers providing money, most mothers repeatedly mentioned that their financial support is based on the fact that they are mandated to do so. Only a few of these fathers were identified as providing financial support voluntarily. In comparison to the younger fathers, very few older fathers were identified as support providers. The shared evaluation of a great majority of the mothers is that the older fathers do not provide the kind of support these older mothers deem satisfactory. Only one of the older mothers regarded the support she receives from the father of her children as satisfactory. One other older mother stated that she is satisfied with the support she receives from her ex-husband. But her statement is sarcastic in that her reason for saying this is that her ex-husband gave her "space."

To gain a greater understanding of the support received **by** these older mothers I will examine two fathers whose **support** appears at opposite extremes of the support

provision spectrum. The first single mother is May. May is a 38 year old mother of two boys ages 8 and 6. Her ex-husband, who lives in Lansing, is 37 years old and May said that he has provided sporadic support from time to time. The support he sometimes provides is financial, but it has not been dependable so she doesn't count on this support. Because of the undependable nature of his support May does not include him as part of her support network.

Another mother reveals a situation in which she has a mixed support circumstance, as one of the two fathers of her children provides support. The father of Jay's first two children for a while provided child support, but he later found a way to remove himself from this responsibility by manipulating the system. Jay related that while her husband was in California he would pay child support, because the child support papers had been filed for California. One day he called Jay from California and during the conversation she mentioned to him that she had stopped receiving child support. To Jay's astonishment her husband exclaimed "It worked!" Jay later learned that her husband had led the child support system to believe that he was now living in Michigan when he was still living in California. Because of this, Jay never received any more child support from that point on. The father of Jay's third child is very different from the father of her two older daughters. This father pays child support, covers his daughter under his Blue Cross/Blue

Shield medical plan, purchases clothes for his daughter, and "whatever she needs he goes and buys. A lot of times ahead of time." He also provides Jay with money (if she needs it), transportation, and emotional support. He is also the first person in her support network to whom she would turn for housing if she needed it. Jay's experience, in that she has one father who provides support and another who does not, is the norm for those older mothers who have more than one father of their children.

When a comparison is made between younger and older mothers, a few interesting distinctions are noted. The first is that the younger mothers receive more support from the fathers of their children than do the older mothers. This can be seen concerning the provision of various items for their children. Whereas only one older father provided items for the care of his child, four younger fathers are noted as providing items for the care of their children. The interviews revealed that the younger fathers are more actively involved in the lives and care of their children. Secondly, the younger mothers also said that they are more satisfied with the support they received from the fathers of their children. It must be noted that the money provided to these mothers by the younger fathers are not viewed by these mothers as mandated by the courts. The mothers communicated to me that the money given to them is a totally voluntary gift by the fathers to them. This stood in stark contrast to

the older mothers who had most of the money that is given to them by the fathers mandated by the courts. The young fathers are also noted by the younger mothers as providing money to them for their personal use. The money that is given, is not provided so that they can care for their children. This is an important point because the older mothers do not deem a father's support as support if he has to be commanded to give it by the courts. This evaluation is based on the perspective that a father's financial support is not really "support" if the father either gives money inconsistently, or if he must be told by the court to provide that financial assistance. This point is noted by four older mothers who did not categorize the financial support given by the fathers as support. This categorization was made because the financial support given by the fathers matched one of the two above-mentioned categories. One older mother who fought 16 years to obtain child support from a father, mentioned that she finally ended her battle because she did not consider him a father to her child at that point.

Although African-American males have been a much maligned source of support for single mothers (Stack, 1974; Kotlowitz, 1991), some researchers have argued that Black males have been an important source of support for their children and the mothers of these children (Allen, 1981; Danzinger et al., 1990). In this study I have noted that

some fathers do play an important role in the support networks of the single mothers. Unfortunately, this is primarily the case for younger single mothers than for the older single mothers.

The Family of the Children's Father:

The fifth segment is the role of the father's family. From an examination of the interviews of these women it becomes evident that the father's family does not play a major role in the single mother's support network. Few of the mothers identified the family of the father as a source of support. Although the father's family has not been a major source of support for most of the women, it has been the source of significant support for those women who receive such assistance. Most of the women who received support from the family of the children's father mentioned that they were satisfied with the assistance they received. For those women receiving support from the family of the father, the type of assistance most often mentioned is material. This kind of assistance included the provision of money, child support, and transportation. The second kind of assistance that is most often mentioned by these mothers is emotional support, primarily consisting of encouragement.

In examining the younger single mothers, I find that the numbers are almost evenly divided between those receiving support from the father's family, and those who do not receive support. Of those women who received support,

there is a strong pattern of these mothers evaluating the assistance they receive as satisfactory. The type of support that is primarily received by these younger women is material support which is most commonly expressed through the purchasing of various items for the baby. This point needs to be highlighted because it appears quite often in the interviews with those single mothers who receive such support from this group. The items that are purchased by the father's family members (such as toys, clothes, and food) and given to the young mothers are focussed on meeting the needs of the child. Gayla summed this up in stating that the baby's paternal grandmother viewed Gayla's daughter as her own. None of the younger mothers mentioned that the father's family bought something for them personally. Still, though, the mothers are very satisfied with the support that is provided. Flo expressed this in stating that she "Doesn't expect much from them. The baby gets more from them than I expected." Those who provided items for the child included aunts, mothers, and cousins in the father's family. These individuals are also providers of transportation as well.

The father's family members are also important providers of emotional support in some cases. Nikki said that her boyfriend's father is the primary provider of encouragement to her. May and Deb both expressed that they are able to gain important encouragement from relatives of the father's family. Each woman gained a deeper

understanding of the father, as well as having a source upon which they could unburden themselves.

In focussing on the older mothers I note that only a few of these mothers said that they received support from the father's family. Of those women who received support, most of these repeatedly said that they are satisfied with the support they received. The type of support that is primarily received by these older women is material support. This support is most commonly expressed by the purchasing of various items for the mother's children. Like the younger women, the material support that is received is primarily focussed on providing for the needs of the children. One mother who stood in stark contrast to this norm is Cece. The mother of one father is so committed to providing for Cece and her children, even those who are not her grandchildren, that she called Cece her daughter. Her commitment to Cece is so great that this mother even went as far as planning to leave Cece her home when she died. Unfortunately, the children of the women protested to such an extent that the mother reversed her decision.

In most cases, though, the father's family did not provide any support for the mothers. Pat, a 46 year old with two children ages 26 and 14, said that she never received any support from either of the fathers' families. In other cases the families of the fathers are very antagonistic toward the single mothers. One mother, Isa, related that her

former mother-in-law was a major antagonist against her. Isa illustrated the tension within this relationship by noting how she once went to her mother-in-law and complained about the way her son was treating her. After her description of his abuse Isa stated that her mother-in-law said "He's feeding you isn't he." To this statement Isa angrily responded that she was eating before him. Another single mother, Bell, said that the relationship was very bad between herself and the third father's family. Bell said that they "hated my guts," and shared that things got so bad that the father's mother told Bell that if she came back over to the mother's house "I would be pushing up a hump."

In comparing the two groups of mothers examined in this study, I find that the younger mothers receive more support from the families of their childrens' fathers, and that they are more satisfied with the support they receive from these families. In both cases the interviews reveal that the material support that is given by the fathers' families is primarily focussed on providing for the needs of the children. Sometimes the mothers did have close relationships with members of the fathers' families, but this is not the norm. It is noted that usually where the childrens' fathers refused to acknowledge their children, or failed to stay in touch with them, the families of these fathers also had very little interaction with these children. This observation paralleled the results that were noted by Carol Stack in her

study of the Flats (1974:50).

The Single Mother's Friends:

The sixth segment will focus on the role of friends in the single mother's support network. Support provided by friends is the most identified source of support (100%: n=20) in the interviews of these women. Those who are identified as friends are of different genders, ages, and relationships to the mothers. The type of support most often identified as provided by friends to these mothers is emotional support. The second most common type of support provided is material support. Only a few of the women related that they receive support from their friends that could be categorized as cognitive support. Although all of the mothers stated various ways in which they received support from their friends, two of the women, one younger and one older, noted that they are not satisfied with the support that they receive from their friends.

To gain a better understanding of the role of friends in the support networks of these two groups of women, I will examine these women separately. From the outset it must be noted that these younger mothers did not have large circles of friends. A characteristic that is repeatedly mentioned by these younger single mothers is that they have "very few friends." This is probably the result of their being young mothers since it is also noted by a few of the women that they had friends who did not have children.

In examining the interviews of the younger mothers, material and emotional support are repeatedly mentioned by the women as the most common type of support provided to them. Half the women repeatedly indicated that they received support that could be categorized as cognitive support. The most mentioned material support that is provided for this group of women is money. Many women said that if they needed money they could ask a friend and that friend would lend it to them. The friends of these women are also an important provider of transportation and of child care. One mother noted that her friends did not provide any money to her, but they do provide transportation and child care for her. In order to provide child care for this mother, her friends would even come over to her home to get her son to take care of him. Emotional support from friends is also revealed in the interviews as an important aspect of the support network of these women. The role of these women's friends is most commonly depicted as giving the mothers an opportunity to talk and to interact with someone. This is expressed by the women in their use of the term "gossip," and the phrase "to just talk to" in describing their interactions with their friends. Deb exemplifies this in that she interacts every day with her friends at school and then "hangs out" with them on the weekends. Although she noted that she does discuss "deep things" with them, she admits that most of them can't fully understand all that she is going through.

She feels that they cannot understand because they do not have children. Nikki stated that friends are not an intimate part of her support network, because she believes that her answers to personal issues are better than the answers she would receive from them. She does not go to them at all for counsel or advice. Tasha also made similar statements concerning her friends, but based her views on the fact that her friends did not have children. Therefore, she felt that they could not relate to her. Although many mothers described their friends in this way, many of the women also related that they had one friend who is considered their close confidant. Bobbie exemplifies this in that she has one special friend to whom she turns to "unburden" herself. Not even with her sister, with whom Bobbie shares her apartment, does she bare some of the secrets she divulges to her special friend. Another important aspect of the relationship between these mothers and their friends is the provision of encouragement. Liz and Gayla classified their friends as the most important source of encouragement in their support network.

A phenomenon that is noted in the interviews of these younger mothers is the role of male friends in their support networks. Most of the women noted the shared pattern of having males be a part of their support network. Three of these women revealed a shared reasoning in their decisions when they said that they intentionally had more male friends

than female friends. Gayla said that the reason she had more male than female friends is that females gossip too much. Dee said that she has more male friends because she believes that too many girl friends give you trouble. "They get in your business. They can be jealous, they want what you have. For example, your boyfriend." Although Dee views her female friends this way, she does not, on the other hand, give her male friends a significant role in her support group.

In examining the role played by friends in the support networks of older mothers I find that the most common type of support that is mentioned by these women is emotional support. Material support is the next most frequently mentioned type of support, with only two mothers mentioning that they received cognitive types of support. Many of the women said that they had friends with whom they had relationships extending over many years. Encouragement is the primary type of emotional support given by friends to these older mothers. Most of the mothers noted friends as a major source of encouragement for them. May, who categorized her friends as the most important members of her support network, expressed the importance of her friends to her emotionally in stating "It is okay to say to them that I had a bad day and to burden them with the details." Jay is another older mother who noted that her friends are her primary source of support. So important is this source of support that she designated the sharing she does with her

friends as "safe dumping." This designation would also exemplify the emotional sharing that takes place within many of the friendships of these older women.

It should be noted that the emotional support provided by the friends of these older women is most commonly described by them as occurring within a social context. The older women's descriptions depicted relationships that are interactive. By this I mean that unlike the younger mothers, the older mothers more often noted activities they undertook with their friends in describing the emotional support they received from their friends. On the other hand, only one younger mother mentioned an activity that she and her friends participated in. This activity she described as their "hang[-ing] out." This characteristic is evident in Jay's interview as she described the various activities she and her friends participate in. Jay noted that she and her friends discuss the Bible, cook, sew, exercise, and diet together. Jay and her friends have participated in these activities together, despite the fact that some of her friends reside in Ohio. Pam similar defined the emotional support she received from her friends as consisting of both social activities and encouragement. Pat related that she and her closest friend usually sit and interact over a bottle of liquor. At these times they might also be joined by other acquaintances and friends. Red, in describing the important part her friends played in helping her cope with

the stress of raising her children after her divorce, shared one way in which she and a friend encouraged each other. Red related that she and a younger friend, who was also a single mother, would annually get together for a meal. Her younger friend would supply food stamps and W.I.C (Women, Infant, and Children Program) food, and Red would provide the house and the car.

The next major type of support that is received by these mothers is material support. This category of support included the giving of money, transportation, and child care. The final, and least noted, type of support that is received by these mothers is cognitive support. The information provided by the friends of these older mothers primarily focussed on which service providers would do a good job at the best cost. Both May and Red noted the importance of friends as an information resource for the obtaining of needed items, or reasonable estimates on necessary repairs.

In comparing the role of friends in the support networks of younger and older mothers it is apparent that the roles are quite similar, with a few notable exceptions. The first is that the older mothers had a larger network of friends. Secondly, the description given by the older mothers of the emotional support provided by their friends differs from that given by the younger women. The difference is that the older women's descriptions depict relationships

that are interactive. By this I mean that unlike the younger mothers, the older mothers more often noted activities they undertook with their friends to describe the emotional support they received from their friends. On the other hand, only one younger mother mentioned an activity that she and her friends participated in together. Thirdly, the older mothers noted more often that they receive cognitive support. The type of support that is provided by the friends of these older mothers is primarily the communication of information about the most economic service providers. For the younger mothers the cognitive support primarily focussed on their accessing and operating within the system. For both groups of mothers, though, friends played a very significant role in their support networks.

The finding of this study strongly agrees with the finding of previous ethnographic studies showing that friends, as an informal support source, play a very important role in the support networks of African-Americans (Stack, 1974; Shimkin et al., 1978; Kotlowitz, 1991). The study has also shown that for the younger women many of these friendships are being cultivated for future use. For the older women, the study reveals that the patterns of this informal assistance are based on long term reciprocal bonds of exchange that have developed over the lives of these mothers. This study has also confirmed previous studies showing that satisfaction with social support from friends

has the effect of reducing distress in the midst of various family and economic pressures (Brown and Gary, 1988; Angel and Tienda, 1982).

The Church:

The seventh segment is the role of the church in the support network of the single mother. The findings exhibited a supportive role of the church in most of the support networks of the mothers. The interviews revealed that 60% (n=20) of the mothers are church members, and that most of these mothers considered themselves active in their churches. The interviews also showed that a little over half the mothers, not all of those being church members, received some support from a church. Of those women who received support from a church, most of these mothers said that they are satisfied with the support they received. The most important type of support that is received by these women is emotional support, with material support being a close second. Most of the women identified the pastor and/or the associate pastor as the most significant provider of support in the church.

Let us examine the role of the church in the support networks of the two groups of mothers. In examining the church's role in the support networks of younger mothers I note that although there are only a few of these women who are members of a church, most of the younger mothers received support from a church. Of those women who received

support, most of these women are satisfied with the support they received. For these women, emotional and material support are equally the most noted types of support that is provided by the church.

The emotional, material, and cognitive supports that are provided by the church are primarily offered by the pastor. In respect to emotional support their personal influence is very evident. Tasha noted that her pastor provided emotional support daily. She stated that one reason for this is that her pastor is her mother, with whom she shares her apartment. The down side of this arrangement is that her mother's wearing these two hats in the home causes many conflicts within their relationship. As Tasha said "She's trying to steer me in the right way, but I rebel at times." Another young mother who has a great relationship with her pastor is Kim. Kim said that her pastor is only second to her mother as a primary provider of encouragement to her. Kim said that she is **very** satisfied with the support she received from her pastor. She went on to explain that some of the characteristics that made her pastor so important to her is his humility and his evident concern for her. Kim believes that her pastor's humility is because he does not have a holier than thou attitude, which she attributes to his past. Kim noted that her pastor used to be the drummer for the Ohio Players and can, therefore, understand the pressures on a young person. Kim believed

that her pastor's concern for her could be seen in the fact that "He comes over almost every day to see him [her son]." Pastors are also the primary providers of material support from the church to these young mothers. Von noted that her pastor and his wife have been very helpful as they have provided financial and item gifts to her. The assistant pastor also invited her over for dinner a few times. Kim noted that her pastor will provide money to her for the baby if she needs it. In respect to cognitive support, Gayla said that although she has not attended her church recently she can still receive information from her pastor as to the best ways to access the welfare system and obtain assistance.

The younger women also noted the fact that they receive various forms of assistance from other members of the congregation as well. Von noted that various members of her church invite her over for meals, while other members provide transportation and money when she is in need. Nikki said that she receives food and support through a community outreach program of a church with which she has no affiliation.

Some of the younger women expressed some strong feelings and views as to why the church did not meet their needs. They also suggested ways in which churches could change to improve that situation. Dee noted that although she had received financial support from a church for six months, she believed that churches had to change. Dee

explained that people in a church push you and tell you that you are a sinner and on your way to hell without providing any real emotional support. She felt that churches had to change this attitude. Although her mother and daughter are members of a church in Lansing, Liz noted that a church would have to be bigger for her to attend. The reason for this perspective is that such a church would be more likely to have more members her age. A few of the other mothers noted that all churches should be willing to help young mothers, though those mothers may not be members of that church. This outlook is highlighted by the expectation of these mothers that although they receive no support from a church, they believe that they can go and get support from a church if they need to.

In examining the interviews of the older mothers I found that most of the women are members of a church. I also learned that only half the women receive support from a church, with most of these women expressing a shared evaluation that they are satisfied with the support they receive. The most common type of support received is emotional support, closely followed by material support. The least mentioned type of support is cognitive support.

Like the younger mothers, the older mothers received most of their support from the pastors of these churches, in contrast to receiving support from its members. For example, Jay noted that the pastor and associate pastor of her church

visited her after a major operation to encourage her. They have also been very instrumental in providing information to her by which she could then receive financial assistance from the church. Bell said that during a very difficult time in her life she received significant counsel and encouragement from her pastors. Cece said that the pastor of a church that she had attended a few times paid her electric bill when she could not afford the bill. Val said that she talks to her church members, but she and they are "not that close." For this reason Val does not discuss her problems with her fellow church members. On the other hand, Val does go to the pastor, and would go to him first if she needed any help. Val knows that this would be the case because she has gone to her pastor in the past to obtain his counsel and she said that it helped her immensely.

Not all women, though, are pleased with their pastors. Nan lamented the relationship that presently exists between herself and her present pastor. She felt that the pastor's personality hindered her from receiving any emotional assistance from him since "I can't see myself going to him for advice and counsel." Although Nan has gone to this church for 15 to 20 years, she does not believe that she will have as good a relationship with this pastor as she has had with the former pastors.

Although the pastors are a major source of assistance for these older mothers, church members are also a very

important source of support. Most of the support that is provided by church members is financial. Cece listed two women in a church she occasionally attended for a while as primary financial providers. Jay noted that the members of her church invited her over after services to share a meal with them. She also mentioned that these members called her during the week just to see how she was doing.

There are three criticisms of the church, in respect to its provision of support, which the older women forwarded in their interviews. The first criticism is that the women did not feel secure in sharing their needs in the church context. This sentiment was even expressed by some women about the churches they had been members of for more than five years. Consequently, many of the women did not view their churches as viable sources of support. One older mother, May, exemplified this scenario as she noted in her interview that she had never received any support, of any kind from her church. When I asked why she believed this to be the case, she replied that she did not make her needs known. May said "I am not really looking for anything. As long as I'm doing okay--not evicted, paying my bills...I figure someone else can use the assistance." I asked her if she would go to her church if she really had a need. May responded by stating that she would still not go to them. Her reason is that the church is "Too impersonal. I would go to my friends first." Another mother, Cece, said that her

reason for not being close to the members of a church she attended was because she felt that the members were unconcerned. Cece said that the church members were nosey people who didn't help her to get to church, but wanted to get in to her business when she got there. She resolutely said that she would not share her needs with such people. Pat, a single mother who has attended a church for many years, said that she goes to church because she was "Brought up that way." Yet, she admits that the reason she does not receive support from the church is that she stays to herself. The pastor knows who she is, but they do not really talk.

A second criticism is the way in which the church treats single mothers. The women noted that the churches needed to have a consistent perspective of, and approach to supporting single mothers in their midst. Jay, who had a child when she was in her forties, shared that being in church with a child out of wedlock caused her greater stress than the experience of gaining much weight, which was personally traumatic for her. Jay was most disturbed by the conflicting responses she received from her fellow members. Whereas some members realized the strain on her and tried to comfort her, others responded negatively to her because of what she had done. One of the most difficult situations she had to deal with was the comment of an older single mother in the church who told her "Girl, if I had a baby I would be

up on that table having an abortion." This was especially disheartening to Jay, not just because the perspective was diametrically opposed to her views and the views of the church, but because this perspective was espoused by a church sister. Jay said that the most support she received came from those church members who although not approving of her having a baby outside marriage, were still supportive of her decision not to have an abortion. Bell, who also had her children out of wedlock, when asked if she was satisfied with the support she received from her church said that she wasn't. Bell explained that she "Just never fitted in." Bell said that she had fit into the church she attended before she became a single mother, but felt that after having a child she was not able to fit into the independent lifestyles of the other younger members. Bell emphasized the point that the issue was not that the church looked down on her, for as she stated "Sin is sin and they talked about it but not her." The concern Bell had was not at all about the way in which she was viewed by her church. The problem, though, was similar to the point noted by Jay. The problem is that the church does not reach out to meet the emotional needs of a single mother. Bell noted in her interview that she received spiritual support from the church like anyone else, but she did not feel that her needs were understood.

A third, and final, criticism is raised by one older mother who believed that the church did not have a

comprehensive program in place to prevent teenage pregnancies. Bobbie, who had her daughters out of wedlock and at a young age, said that although the church had a positive impact on her self confidence and her desire to succeed in her later years, she was not satisfied with the support she received from her church. Bobbie explained "I don't think the church does too much for single mothers. No programs for teenage girls to prevent teenage pregnancy. It has no program because no one came to talk to me about the difficulty of raising kids alone."

In comparing younger and older mothers in relation to the role of the church in their support networks I see some interesting distinctions. The first distinction is the way in which the church is viewed by these two groups of mothers. The differing perspectives become evident when church membership and church assistance is compared for these two groups. The younger women's perspective of the church is revealed in the fact that while only a few of these mothers are members of a church, over half these younger mothers received some type of support from a church. The difference in percentages between members and, for lack of a better term, consumers denote an interesting perspective of the church. These numbers highlight the fact that the church is not a primary institution in the lives of these younger women, as evidenced by their low participation in, and commitment to a church. Yet, the high percentage of

those receiving assistance from a church reveals that the church is still viewed as a major source of support for these mothers when needs arise. On the other hand, I note that although the older women are more committed to being involved in a church (80% are church members), their inclination to go to a church to have their needs met is very similar to that of the younger mothers (only 50% received some type of support from a church).

This difference reveals that whereas most younger mothers have no predilection to be committed to a church, they do realize its ability to assist them when they are in need and, therefore, make use of its assistance. The older mothers on the other hand, have a predilection to be committed to a church, yet they are noticeably less inclined to go to a church to receive assistance. This situation denotes the reality that the church's position as a provider of spiritual guidance may not be as significant to a younger generation of African-American mothers as it once was to an older generation of African-American mothers. Still, the role of the church in the support network of both groups of these mothers is very evident.

In respect to the findings of other studies, this study shows significant agreement with two significant conclusions. The first is the important role pastors, and especially church members have as support providers. Various studies have shown that pastors and church members have been

a very important source of social support for African-Americans (DuBois, 1907; Frazier, 1974:41; Taylor and Chatters, 1988; Taylor et al., 1990), and this study has revealed that pastors and church members continue to be an important part of the support networks of many of these African-American mothers. The second is the important, though not as prominent, role Black churches have as support providers in the African-American community. It has been noted that Black churches are only second to families as an important social institution (Taylor and Chatters, 1988). The Black church as an institution has always been viewed as a very important source of social support because it is one of the only institutions that endures over a major portion of a person's life (Taylor and Chatters, 1988). This study has shown that the role of the church is not as strong among younger African-American single mothers as it is among older African-American single mothers in this community. Note that only 45% of all the women (n=20) considered themselves active in a church. Although most of the women received some form of support from a church, many of these women did not look to the church for a consistent and continual influence in their support networks. Still, many of these women noted that in the time of need the Black church is still looked to as a source of assistance within this African-American community. Although Lincoln and Mamiya note that the significance of the Black church is declining

in some realms of the African-American community, these scholars emphasize that its overall importance in these communities is still very strong.

At the beginning of the last decade of the twentieth century the black churches are still healthy and vibrant institutions. While there has been some chipping away at the edges, particularly among unchurched underclass black youth and some college educated, middle-class young adults, black churches still remain the central institutional sector in most black communities. Based on the indices of church membership, church attendance, and charitable giving in 1987, different studies have pointed out the following: about 78 percent of the black population claimed church membership and attended once in the last six months; blacks (44 percent) tend to have slightly higher rates of weekly church attendance than white Protestants (40 percent); and they have the highest rates of being superchurched (attending church more than on Sundays) among all Americans (37 versus 31 percent). Furthermore, if time and money are an indication of loyalty, black churches received a far higher percentage of the charitable dollar and more volunteer time than that given to any other organization by black people (1990:382).

The Single Mother's Children:

The eighth segment is the role of the single mother's children in her support network. This support source is only noted in the support networks of older single mothers since their children are of an age to provide support to their mothers. Of the older mothers interviewed, exactly half these mothers mentioned their child as a source of support. The type of support that is provided by these children is primarily emotional support, with two providing financial support.

The two children who provided material support contributed various items. Val noted that although her

daughter did not earn much money, the money she does contribute is combined with Val's wages to maintain the household. Jay noted that her daughters provide child care, transportation, little "I love you gifts," cook, and clean for her.

The emotional support that is provided took the form of being a listener upon which the mother could unburden herself. Cece expressed the need of a single mother to have someone to share her burdens upon when she said that she really appreciated the Single Parent Family Institute because "At least someone here listens to me." Clearly, the importance of the institute to Cece is that it provides a source upon which she could unburden herself. This burden caused Cece to lament in our interview "It got to the point where I was asking them [her children] advice." Nan said that she now views her two older sons as "friends" and considers them a part of her supportive network. Although her eldest son lives in Texas, Nan and he call and communicate often. Nan said that she likes talking with them, interacting with them, and that she thoroughly enjoys them. The topics of their discussions encompass everything from complaining to each other about their bosses, to discussions about their love interests. Jay identified her daughters as the primary members of her support network with whom she could "just talk." Jay said that she realized that both daughters began to give her the advice she once gave

them. They also give her emotional support when she and her boyfriend fall out, "Don't argue with him, don't get upset, he'll be back." Still, the greatest way in which they have provided emotional support to Jay is the way they accepted her having a baby so much older in life. She expressed her joy in relating that her older daughters "pick with her [their younger sister] by saying 'she was my mom first'."

Those older mothers who had younger children noted that there are negative consequences to their children being used as confidants for them to emotionally unburden themselves. The first negative consequence is that the children are not emotionally prepared to deal with the pressures placed upon them by what is revealed. Cece noted this when she related that although she wanted her children removed from the foster care system as soon as possible, she realized that they needed an emotional break from her. She then lamented that "It got to the point where I was asking them advice." The second consequence that is noted by the mothers is that the older male children began to act as their protectors. May identified this repercussion in her oldest son who began to act as a parent toward his brother although the two boys are only two years apart. She also mentioned that she would have to remind her eldest son of his age and his position within the household. Cece noted that because of her sharing with her eldest son the pressures she was facing, she noticed that he began to get into fights at school and in

the neighborhood that centered on what the other child said about his mother.

African-American Males:

The ninth segment focuses on African-American males who are not blood relatives, but who have a role in the single mother's support network. From the interviews I find that 40% (n=20) of the women noted such males as providers of support to them. The primary type of support that is provided by these males is material, with emotional support running a close second, and cognitive support being least provided.

In respect to the younger women, only three of the mothers mentioned such a male as a support provider. One mother, Kim, said that her boyfriend, who is not the father of her child, is a primary provider of support to her. Kim noted that he is the third primary provider of money to her, and that he is also someone she could call on to take care of her son if she needed assistance. The other two males who are mentioned are both the boyfriends of the single mothers' mothers. Liz, who received more support from her mother's boyfriend than did the other single mother, said that she really valued the support that she received from this individual. Liz said that her mother's boyfriend buys things for her baby, gives gifts to Liz and her daughter at holidays, and is an individual from whom she can obtain money when and if she needs it. Liz also said that her

mother's boyfriend is someone to whom she can talk to. She noted that the conversations are not usually intimate, but they do provide her with the opportunity to express her thoughts and obtain ideas.

The interviews with the older women revealed that exactly half these women mentioned an African-American male who is not a blood relative, but who is an individual who provided support to them. Two of these men are romantic interests of the mothers, but are not the fathers of their children. One is landlord, one is a stepfather, and the last one is just a male friend. The two most significant providers of support, though, are the significant others and the landlord. The two mothers who highlighted their romantic interests revealed the extent to which these men impacted their lives. One mother, Val, said that her boyfriend, who she has known for ten years and is sixteen years older than her, is the most influential individual in her life and in the life of her children. Val noted that he has helped increase her self esteem and caused her to take pride in herself. She said that everything is new and different since she met him. Val noted that she "Kind of grew up with him and became a different person. He helped me see how I spend too much money. He taught me about saving." She presently attributes most of her financial and spiritual growth to his interaction with her. Her boyfriend has also played an important role in the lives of her children. He gives her

children advice on school, boys, clothes, and talks to them as a father. She noted that he has also helped them financially, and provides emotional support to them since they feel that they can speak freely with him. The other mother who identified her romantic interest as an important support provider is Cece. Cece noted that her "lover" provides information, encouragement, money, transportation, and housing to her. This individual did not have much influence on the lives of Cece's children since they are all in foster homes. She did note, though, that he is playing a major role in helping her cope with the stress of not having them with her.

Another African-American male who held an important support role for an elder mother is a landlord. Pat highlighted the fact that her landlord is a primary support giver in her network. He will give her money when and if she needs it. Pat said that she needs this kind of support many times but she usually does not request it. The relationship with her landlord is such that he is the only one to whom she will turn to for this kind of assistance. Pat also noted that although she keeps many things to herself, she does feel comfortable enough with her landlord to sit and talk to him during one of those occasions when they drink together.

In summarizing the significance of these men to the support networks of the single mothers in this study, I must conclude that their significance is very limited. The

primary reason for this is that there are very few African-American males who play a part in providing support to these single mothers. The reasons for this circumstance are uncertain, but one mother provided an open criticism and explanation for why this situation is the way it is in her predicament. The statement was offered to me although I did not solicit it. One of the last statements Red made as I was departing after our interview was that the only group from which she has received no support has been Black males. She said that they are intimidated by her house and her personal achievement. By the percentages of the older mothers who said that they received support from Black males it is obvious that many of these mothers would also agree with Red's statement that this is one of the only groups from which support was not received.

Those men who are noted as providing support are very much appreciated by the women, and the support they provide is positively highlighted. Still, not many of these men are identified.

The third research concern is to examine the effect certain demographic variables have on the reception of support by these mothers. This will be accomplished by focussing on the effect of seven demographic variables (the single mother's age, the age of children, the number of children, the proximity of the mother, the proximity of the family members of the single mother, the proximity of the

parent of the child[ren], and church membership) have on the reception of social support by these Black urban single mothers.

The Single Mother's Age:

The first variable is age. The study has revealed that younger single mothers receive just as much, if not more, support as older mothers. These findings would not dispute the findings of previous studies that have shown that as individuals get older they receive less support (Taylor, 1986; House et al., 1988). This study has revealed that a subsection of the African-American community of Lansing has provided support for many young Black single mothers who stand in need of such support. The avenues of this support have been the traditional sources of support in the African-American community---extended family, friends, church, and boyfriend.

The Children's Age:

The second variable is the relationship the age of the single mothers' children has on their receipt of social support. The findings of this study have shown that single mothers with younger children receive more support from various support providers than those mothers who have older children. This finding is important considering the fact that it has been noted that a woman is at her greatest risk for demoralization, depression, frustration, and dysphoria when she is providing support to a child while receiving

only inconsistent support in return (Belle, 1982). It has also been shown that when a low income mother suffers from depression she is unable to then provide the emotional support the child needs (Belle, 1982).

The Number of Children:

The third variable is the effect the number of children has on the single mother's reception of support. The findings of this study have shown that single mothers with a higher number of children receive more support from various support providers than those mothers who have a smaller number of children. This issue is significant in light of various studies that show a relationship between the number of children and the quantity and quality of social support received. Hofferth (1984) shows that the amount of children is clearly related to the amount of support obtained. Extended family has been shown to be much more likely to play an important role in the socialization of children (Hays and Mindel, 1973). The number of children has also been shown to be related to the strength of kin ties for several reasons. First, children are often the foci of kin relationships, and are the recipients of gifts. Secondly, the support of children is often the reason for exchange of items between kin. Finally, the number of children often determines a family's living standards and is, therefore, a determinant of a family's socioeconomic condition. The lowering of the family's socioeconomic condition further

necessitates the need for further support (Hofferth, 1984:793).

The Proximity of the Single Mother's Mother:

The fourth variable is the effect the proximity of the single mother's mother has on the single mother's reception of support. The findings of this study have shown that the nearness of a single mother's mother results in a greater amount of support received. Studies have shown that women in stress turn to other women than to their husbands, for emotional support and understanding (Belle, 1982). It has also been shown that both men and women view women as better support givers. The social training women receive on how to provide support has been credited for this characteristic (Belle, 1982; House et al., 1988). Considering, the important role of women as support givers, special attention will be paid to the role the mother of these younger single mothers plays in the provision of social support to their daughters. This is of special significance since many of these grandmothers are young single mothers themselves and do not now take on the traditional grandmother roles as child care providers. The grandmother role of child care provider has been discarded so that these women can devote most of their time to the raising of their own children (Frazier, 1948; Ladner and Gourdine, 1984; Tinsley and Parke, 1984; Burton, 1990). For this reason special attention will be paid to the response of younger single

mothers as to the support they receive from their mothers.

The Proximity of Family Members:

The fifth variable is the effect the proximity of the single mother's family members has on the single mother's reception of support. The findings of this study have shown that single mothers who had their family members living near them received more support from their family members than those single mothers who did not have their family members living in close proximity. This finding is important since the role of extended families has been evident in many studies examining their benefits to single mothers. It has been shown that the assistance extended families give to adolescent mothers positively affects their parenting skills, the development of their offspring, their educational accomplishments, and their economic achievement (Taylor et al., 1990). The importance of this support has also been noted in the Black community where Black adults have been noted to have heightened self-esteem and personal efficacy when they have supportive family and friendship relations (Taylor et al., 1990). An important influence on kin network is the availability and proximity of kin, since a desire to maintain relationships is futile without the availability of kin (Hofferth, 1984; Parish et al., 1991). Findings show that familial relationships, proximity of relatives, and family contact all play an intrinsic role in the informal social support networks of Blacks. These

factors have also been shown to be related to the probability of receiving support (Blauner and Wellman, 1973; Taylor, 1986; Taylor, 1990). It has also been noted that family contact is a more important factor in receiving support than satisfaction with one's family (Taylor, 1986; 1990). It should also be noted that of the family variables examined by Taylor (1986) proximity of immediate family is of lesser importance than other factors (especially proximity of relatives) in predicting the reception of support.

The Age of the Childrens' Fathers:

The sixth variable is the effect the ages of the children's fathers have on their involvement in the lives of their children. The findings of this study have shown that those single mothers with younger fathers of their children receive more father/child interaction from these fathers than those single mothers with older fathers of their children. This issue is important because there is much interest in the involvement males have in teen pregnancy in general, and specifically in relation to teen pregnancy in the Black community (Harrison, 1981; Conner, 1988). One emphasis has been the difference between older and younger males. Various studies have focussed on this comparison. Younger males are shown to have more involvement with their children than older males (Elster and Hendricks, 1986; Sullivan, 1989; Anderson, 1987; Danzinger et al., 1990;

Taylor, 1990). Younger males are concerned about the future of their children and the mother who bore them. On the other hand they are shown to have unrealistic views about parenthood (Harrison, 1981). Children are viewed by young males as greater personal and social assets than they are by young females. These young males believed that having children will furnish them with more approval from others (Thompson, 1980). The findings of this study in Lansing would agree with the more active involvement of younger males in the lives of their children.

The Effect of Religious Affiliation:

The seventh variable is the effect the single mother's religious affiliation has on her reception of support from that religious organization. The findings of this study have shown that single mothers who are members and active in a church received more support from the church than those mothers who are neither members nor active. This issue is important because church membership has been found an important source of support for Blacks (Taylor et al., 1990:999; Frazier, 1974). The church's importance has been heavily based on the fact that it provides the bond through which individual acts of support are extended. Therefore, individuals with a high amount of social involvement and integration within the church are more likely to receive support from church members in comparison to those who don't have as high scores (Taylor and Chatters, 1988).

Chapter V

The Effect of Life Course on Support Networks

This chapter is concerned with the effect a single mother's position in the life span has upon the composition and the personal evaluation she has of her support network. The central proposition of the chapter is that age, and other factors related to age, cause variations in the social support networks of African-American single mothers and their evaluations of those networks. The consideration of the differences in the composition of the support networks among people of different ages has been noted as a research priority for exploration (Kahn and Anotucci, 1980b).

Procedural Explanations:

The life course perspective¹⁴ will be used to examine the composition and personal evaluation a single mother has of her support network. The life course perspective has been chosen for this task because it allows me to focus on the ways in which various events and changes over a single mother's lifetime affects her "convoys."¹⁵ The significance of examining the social support networks of these mothers from the life course perspective reveals how the earlier experiences of these mothers lay the foundation for their

ability to make it over time (Jackson et al., 1990; Kahn and Antonucci, 1980a, 1980b). For a more focussed examination of the convoys of single mothers over the broad expanse of the life course, I will need to identify and use an important concept that allows us to more accurately focus on this subject. Kahn and Antonucci note the importance of this type of approach in stating,

To advocate a life-course perspective, however, is by no means sufficient; the notion is too general to guide research. The life course must be disaggregated in order to be researchable. We propose role as one of the key concepts for understanding stress throughout life. An individual's life at any given time can be defined to a considerable extent in terms of the roles that he or she holds and enacts, and the sequential pattern of these roles over the years in large part defines the life course. The nature of those roles and the changes in them and in their compatibility define the expectations and demands that an individual encounters; they are the major sources of external stress in the life of the person (1980b:384).

Therefore, for my examination of the convoys of these single mothers I will accentuate the concept of role, and specifically the parental role, as my analytical guide in this endeavor. The role of parent is chosen because it is an age-linked role, in that it changes in respect to content and style with age, although remaining nominally unchanged (Kahn and Antonucci, 1980a).

Definitions:

There are five stages of parenting that I can identify, which will be used for this life course examination. These stages are constructed considering the capabilities of the children developmentally, and the response demands they

place on parents.¹⁶ These five stages are: the total care parenting stage; the transitional care parenting stage; the adaptation parenting stage; the preparation parenting stage; and the autonomy parenting stage.

The first stage is total care parenting. This stage would include children from birth to about 4 years of age. This stage would demand the full attention of the parent as the child is totally unable to provide for its own needs. The children in this wide developmental age range display parental challenges that include: total dependency on the parent to have all needs met; waking up at various times throughout the night, the lack of mobility, pulling self up on various items throughout the house, and walking freely to his/her own destination.

The second is the transitional parenting stage. This stage would include children from ages 5 through 9 years old. This stage would mandate that the parent prepare the child for a proper transition into the school system and the demands that accompany this passage. The parental challenges that would demand such attention include: the development of a common language and speech, control of walking and running abilities, the desire not to sit for extended periods of time, and the ability to respond to control through reason.

The third stage is the adaptation parenting stage. This stage would include children from ages 10-14 years old. This stage would mandate that the parent prepare the child for a

proper passage into the physiological changes that accompany passage into adolescence. The child, as well as the parent would now begin to adapt to the changes taking place in their relationship. The parental challenges that would demand such attention include: physical changes, a desire to test the rules and to obtain more independence from parental supervision.

The fourth stage is the preparation parenting stage. This stage would include children from ages 17-22 years old. This stage mandates that the parent prepare their children for the stage of moving outside their parent's home and out on their own. This period also demands that the parent prepare herself for lessening her authority in the life of that child. The parental challenges that would demand such attention include: college and career decisions, marriage, child birth, moving out of parent's home.

The fifth stage is the autonomy parenting stage. This stage would include children from ages 23 and older. This stage would mandate that the parent restrain themselves from being overbearing and controlling in the lives of their children to give them autonomy over their lives. The primary parental challenge at this stage is to allow children to live their own lives without the type of input the parent once offered them. Although the single mother retains her position as parent, the responsibilities of that position are greatly limited.

I will define role as: a behavioral concept, in that its defining components are a social position; a set of activities that are expected because of that person's occupation of that position; and interaction that is mandated because of the existence of counterroles with which an individual in a particular role must interact with (Kahn and Antonucci, 1980b; Stryker and Statham, 1985).

Variations in the Convoys of Social Support:

Having established this procedural foundation, I will now focus on how convoys of social support vary in respect to composition and evaluation, for these mothers at different stages in their lives as parents. Again, the categories that will be used in this examination are: the total care parenting stage; the transitional care parenting stage; the adaptation parenting stage; the preparation parenting stage; and the autonomy parenting stage. Note that some single mothers had more than one child, some varying greatly in ages, which placed some of these mothers in more than one of these stages.

The first stage is total care parenting. Ten mothers had children whose ages called for this type of parenting. All these mothers are younger mothers except one mother, Jay, who had a 2 year old while in her forties. The support networks of these mothers all reveal a heavy dependence on family and mother. The primary type of support that is provided by these mothers is child care. For 30% (n=10) of

these single mothers their own mothers are the primary child care providers. One of these mothers has even gone as far as legally taking on a surrogate mother role (Burton, 1990). Even Jay, the oldest woman in this category, repeatedly said that her mother is a vital part of her support network. Jay said that her mother is as vital to her support network now as she was twenty years ago when Jay's other children were the age of her present child. The importance of the family during this stage can also be seen in the fact that 60% (n=10) of the mothers still live at home where they can more readily receive kin support (Parish et al., 1991).

The mothers who are not living at home also express a great amount of dependency on their mothers and their nuclear and extended family members. One of these mothers, Bobbie, has a mentally disabled child that heightened her dependency on her mother and family members. Because of the tremendous responsibilities that are added to her parental load because of this condition, Bobbie depends heavily on her mother and family to provide child care. Her mother went as far as staying off her job to take care of Bobbie's daughter so that Bobbie could go back to school. Bobbie's mother also allowed her to come home to stay with her during this time so that she could provide full time child care assistance. Since Bobbie's departure from the home her older and younger sisters continue to provide child care and other assistance to her. Hogan et al. (1990) noted a similar

phenomenon and benefit of an adult family member being in the household with a single mother who has to care for an impaired family member. The phenomenon they identified, though, focussed on the participation of extended family members and not nuclear family members.

Another aspect of the support convoy of mothers at this parenting stage is that the fathers, and especially the younger fathers, of the children are actively involved in providing for both the mother and child. This involvement is primarily noted for younger fathers, with one exception. The one exception is again Jay who received much assistance from the father of her 2 year old daughter.

The second is the transitional parenting stage. One mother had children who mandated this type of parenting approach. This mother, May, has two sons who place her in this parenting stage. Her support network reveals a high amount of dependency on her friends to provide emotional and informational support to her. The composition of the social network at this stage differs in comparison to the first stage that revealed a large degree of dependency on family members. She is very close to her older sisters, but because of distance she usually communicates with them by telephone. The nature of the support that she receives from these family members is emotional, as she said that they give her counsel and the opportunity to unburden herself. Because her mother is in her sixties, May finds that their communication

is primarily to determine how each other is doing. Because May is one of the younger members of her family her oldest sister has now taken the role of mother to her and provides counsel to her.¹⁷ Though her family is important to her support network, the primary aspect of her support network is her friends. May's friends hold this position because they are the ones she turns to for counsel and information dealing with her children.

The third stage is the adaptation parenting stage. There are three mothers whose children mandated this type of parenting approach. The support networks of these women are varied as it comprises two mothers who had very few members in their support networks. One of these mothers, Pat, said that she has very few dependable individuals in her support network. The only dependable member of her support network is her landlord, who is also her drinking partner. The other mother, Cece, also had very few dependable members of her support network other than her lover. The third mother differed from the other two mothers because she had a strong relationship with her mother who provided support to her daughter. Still, Nikki had no other member of her support network upon which she could depend for support. The interesting trait that characterized these women is that none of them noted anyone from which they received informational support.

The fourth stage is the preparation parenting stage.

There are six parents whose children's ages called for this type of parenting approach. Most of these mothers (67%: n=6) do not have a child living at home. Most of the children are living with a significant other, attending school, or living on their own. The aspect of the support network of these mothers that became prominent is the role of the church and self. Of these mothers, 67% (n=6) mentioned that the church is a significant source of support for them.

The fifth stage is the autonomy parenting stage. There are five mothers whose children's ages called for this type of parenting approach. At this stage there is a variation as to the composition of these women's support convoy. For 40% (n=5) of the women the church became the center of their support convoy. For the other 60% of these women friends became the center of their support convoy. One very interesting aspect of this stage is that the child now becomes a major part of the mother's support convoy. Of the mothers at this stage 80% (n=5) of them noted that their child had now become a primary source of emotional support for them. Not all these children can provide material support to their mother. In some cases, though, the children are able and did provide financial assistance to their mother. The children who moved into their mothers' support convoy at this stage are described by their mothers as close friends.

Observations:

There are various observations that I can make in examining and contrasting the support networks of these women over the life course. There are three primary observations that need to be noted here. First, the women who are later along in their family stage, which created a contrast between the older and the younger mothers, can include their children as a part of their support convoy. Clearly, the benefits of emotional and material support to both children and parents increases as there is an increase in age.¹⁸ This phenomenon within the older mothers' support convoy enhances the strength of that convoy since it has been shown that older African-American adults with adult children have a greater likelihood of receiving support from extended family members (Taylor, 1985, 1990). They are also found to have a larger helper network (Chatters et al, 1985).

Secondly, the older women have a greater history of having provided tangible resources to other individuals. They can, therefore, receive the results of this assistance at a future time from that particular individual. The evidence of this in the current study is that most of the older women had more extensive support networks comprising a more diverse group of individuals. The perspective that the older women with a longer socioeconomic history receive more reciprocal assistance, is complimentary to the life course

perspective. The life course perspective emphasizes that if I am to understand the current support exchanges, I must view the current exchanges in the context of past exchanges (Jackson et al., 1990). The fact that many of the older women are at a higher socioeconomic status for a longer period of time also favors their ability to obtain more substantial support at their present position on the life course in comparison to the younger women. The lower socioeconomic position of most of the younger women places them in a position where their ability to provide for others is quite limited. This results in their inability to receive reciprocal assistance in the future,

For example, a lifetime of limited economic resources does not provide the same capability of building a tangible 'support reserve,' that is, a history of having provided tangible resources to others so that they might provide the same or similar resources to you in some future time of need.... (Jackson et al., 1990; Antonucci, 1985).

Therefore, younger women of lower socioeconomic status, education, and income are more likely to have an exclusively family based support convoy and to have multiple relations with fewer people (Jackson et al., 1990). This is the case in this study. Still, Stack (1974) has shown that even those mothers of limited resources can develop their support convoy through an exchange system. This system entails the exchange of services and goods, to the extent that the incomes of these women can allow. This phenomenon has also been noted in this current study.

Thirdly, younger fathers have been shown to be more involved in the lives of their children. The involvement of these fathers with their children includes physical interactions with them, and a concern for shouldering financial responsibilities (Elster and Hendricks, 1986). Many of the fathers in this study have been noted by the mothers to provide emotional and financial support to them as well. Their support for the mother and child caused them to be considered by the mothers as an important part of their support convoy.

Finally, an examination of the convoys of mothers with dependent children revealed that these younger mothers relied heavily upon the support they received from their mothers. Although many of the mothers of these single mothers' are younger and had children in the home, they still provided various types of support to their daughters. An important type of support they furnished was primary child care provision. In one case this child care provision took the form of a surrogate mother role.

Chapter VI

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has a threefold purpose: first, to review some of the principal findings of the study; second, to discuss the implications of these findings to other relevant studies and issues; third, to propose ways in which pertinent policies can be informed by these findings. The limitations of the study, as well as directions for future research on this topic will also be addressed.

Findings and Implications:

I will overview the findings of this study by using the study's four principal subject areas as an organizing scheme. I will therefore discuss my findings by focussing on these four areas in this order: the relevance of the study to Black female headed households; minority families; the urban underclass; and support networks. The first subject area is the study of Black female headed households. In respect to Black female headed households, this study identified many factors that have previously been identified as playing a major role in deciding the ability of single mothers to provide for both themselves and their children. The three primary factors in limiting the ability of these

single mothers to provide for their families are: the inability to gain inexpensive child care, which limits employment options; the nonresidential father's lack of child support; and the small benefits the state provides (McLanahan and Booth, 1989; Jaynes and Williams, 1989). The study noted that often a mother's support network could intervene in such a way to limit the effects of these factors. Still, these support networks are not, in most cases, able to totally negate the impact of these factors upon the single mother. Still, the study revealed that the social support networks of these mothers, which they all said that they possessed, plays a highly significant role in their lives. The mothers credited these support networks with enabling them to cope with, and to confront the socioeconomic struggles confronting them.

The second subject area for which my research findings have relevance is minority families. The study's findings support the view that the patterns and processes of minority families are culturally unique and valid (Staples, 1971; Allen, 1978; Adams, 1978; Farley and Allen, 1987). The findings of this study reveal that these women forge the structures of their social support networks by including both kin and nonkin support providers. The study noted the fact that various individuals such as stepfathers, friends, and even present boyfriends are a part of the mother's support network. This finding parallels those of other

scholars who have noted the role substitute kinships play in the support networks of African-American communities. In these communities substitute kinships are used to develop support networks that will provide the functions that an individual's family cannot furnish for whatever reason (Stack, 1974; Duneier, 1992).

This finding emphasizes the importance of a researcher's use of two critical perspectives when examining the family forms of minority groups. The first perspective is that the family form of a minority group is different from that of the mainstream family pattern. The primary reason for this differentiation is that minority families have been socially constructed in different ways. The social conditions that have impacted minority families have produced variations in their experiences and their structures (Staples, 1971; Allen, 1978; Adams, 1978; Farley and Allen, 1987). The second perspective is that there are reasons for the differences in family patterns between minority and mainstream families. Therefore, special attention must be focussed on identifying the reasons for these variations, and the benefits these families obtain from them. If this second perspective is not used, it will be very hard for the researcher to fully appreciate the uniqueness of the minority group's family pattern (Billingsley, 1968; Scanzoni, 1971; Stack, 1974; Aschenbrenner, 1978; Mindel, 1980; Kotlowitz, 1991; Duneier,

1992).

Third, my research findings had relevance to the study of the urban underclass. Many scholars have agreed with Wilson that there has been a socioeconomic schism within the Black community to the detriment of the underclass, and to the decimation of the urban Black community (Brimmer, 1970; Coleman, 1971; Glasgow, 1979; Willie, 1981). Still, the findings of this study do not agree with this viewpoint. The findings of the study revealed that the sample families are still receiving support from the Black urban community in which they reside. The interviews with these women revealed that the support they receive come from many traditional sources of support formerly noted to exist within the Black community. Even the poorest of the single mothers could identify various kin and/or nonkin members of their support network. These findings agree with the many scholars who argue that there are various active support networks that are still operating within urban Black communities (Granovetter, 1973; Wellman, 1979; Wellman and Leighton, 1979; Oliver, 1988; Garcia, 1989). Wellman (1979) argues that kin and neighborhood networks still exist in urban, industrialized societies because of their efficacy in providing support and sociability. Garcia notes that there are still "strong family units (including those headed by single women), community networking and support systems, dedicated and inspiring teachers and clergy" that enable

women in urban ghettos to escape poverty (1989:36-37).

Oliver denounces those who depict the urban Black community as "disorganized" or "pathological." Instead, his research findings lead him to contend that this community is "an elaborate organization of personal networks that tie people together within and outside the community in bonds of support and sociality" (Garcia, 1989:640). Duneier adds his voice to the debate by arguing that the working poor continues to have moral standards upon which their actions are based. He highlights the fact that these African-Americans have not become void of their moral standards because middle class and working class Blacks have departed from their communities (Duneier, 1992:131).

The fourth subject area for which this study had relevance is the support network of African-American single mothers. The study primarily sought to determine the existence and composition of these networks. The other three research inquiries for the study are: ascertaining the ability of younger single mothers to receive support through established support networks; discovering the demographic variables that affect the reception of support; and determining the changes in the composition of the support convoys over the life course.

The results of this endeavor are basically threefold. First, I found that every one of the single mothers in this study has a support network upon which they rely. Although

many of the women argued that they are making it on their own, their interviews revealed otherwise. Many interviews revealed that they had various individuals or groups from which they received, or could receive, assistance. The women noted that this assistance is important to them either emotionally, materially, and/or cognitively. These networks varied as to their extensiveness and composition. In respect to their extensiveness, the support networks of some mothers extended only as far as including a small number of intimate associates. Conversely, other support networks encompassed large numbers of individuals. In respect to composition, again there is great diversity. Some support networks are composed of individuals of diverse relations to the single mother, while others are composed of individuals with only one type of relationship to the mother. For example, one mother's support network consists of friends alone. The members of these networks who play a part in the networks of these women are: the single mother's mother; immediate and extended family members; the single mother's father; the children's father; the family of the children's father; the single mother's friends; the church; the single mother's children; and various African-American males of various relations to the mothers, but who are not blood relatives. The three most noted providers of support by the mothers are, in this order: friends, family members, and the single mother's mother.

Secondly, the study revealed that the support networks of younger single mothers made use of established sources of support. The support networks of these younger single mothers when compared to those of older single mothers showed no sign of having suffered because of the differences in ages between the two groups. In some cases, most notably the support received from the children's fathers and the families of these fathers, the younger mothers showed that they received more support from their network than did the older mothers. Despite differences in the appreciation of the support received from members of their networks, both groups of mothers received support from the same sources of support.

The fact that both groups of mothers have identical support providers who are important to their support networks is significant. The determination that an African-American community is presently fostering support networks for young single mothers, as it formerly did for older ones, supports the view that contemporary social changes have not eroded the African-American community's support systems. The study's findings, therefore, agree with the standpoint of those who argue that these support networks are still operating in the Black community (Granovetter, 1973; Wellman, 1979; Wellman and Leighton, 1979; Oliver, 1988; Garcia, 1989). On the other hand, these findings stand in opposition to those who say that these support networks are

not functioning today within these communities (Martin and Martin, 1985; Wilson, 1978, 1987).

Thirdly, the findings of the study highlighted the effects of assorted demographic variables on the reception of support by these single mothers. The study found that the factors that attributed to women receiving the greater amount of support included: younger age of the single mother; younger children; a greater number of children; close proximity of the single mother's mother; closer proximity of the single mother's family; younger age of the children's father; and either having church membership and/or being active in a church. These findings all agreed with previous studies on the effect these variables have on the receipt of support.

Fourthly, a life course examination of the support convoys of the younger mothers revealed that they depended heavily upon the support that they received from their mothers. Although many of these grandmothers are younger and had children in the home, they still provided various types of support to their daughters. One of the primary types of support that is provided is primary child care provision. In some cases these grandmothers even took on the posture of surrogate mothers when they doubted the care their daughters would give to their grandchild. This finding deviates from those who argue that because these grandmothers are young single mothers themselves, they do not take on the

traditional grandmother roles as child care providers. This perspective is based on the viewpoint that these grandmothers devote most of their time to the raising of their own children (Ladner and Gourdine, 1984; Tinsley and Parke, 1984; Burton, 1985, 1990). The current study did not find that the younger grandmothers are unwilling to take on the role of a primary child care provider, or surrogate mother for their young daughters. Usually these grandmothers move to take surrogate mother roles, in respect to their grandchildren, because of their belief that their daughters are unable to adequately fulfill the role of primary child care provider.

The differences in study findings is based on the differences in the community contexts in which these studies are based. As Burton noted "When the findings from this study are reviewed, it is important not to divorce the data from the context, thereby attributing the life course patterns of black families in Gospel Hill to black families in general or to poor black families specifically" (1990:136).

Finally, my findings were similar to Carol Stack's findings from 20 years ago as to the significance of support networks to African-American women. I believe that the contribution of my work to this subject area is that it shows that these networks are still operative in the African-American community. This is the case despite the

tremendous social changes these communities have undergone over the last several decades.

Policy Ramifications:

There are three policy suggestions that need to be highlighted from the findings of this study. First, the fact that churches are viewed by most of these women as a source of support must encourage service providers, even government programs, to continue to enlist their assistance. This strategy should seek to set up on-site assistance centers in churches, and to provide information by which churches can network with other service providers.

The implementation of such a strategy will also require that churches be more open to working with and through general assistance programs. Taylor and Chatters note the implications of this openness by churches in stating,

As opportunities within wider society, and access to larger social support agencies increase, a challenge facing the Black church will be to function in a more specialized role . This specialization would include complimenting other sources of informal and formal aid ,and functioning as service advocates for their members (Taylor and Chatters, 1988; Haber, 1984; Lincoln, 1974).

Second, the study revealed that some mothers needed trustworthy child care providers so that they can obtain employment. Especially those mothers who do not have family members close enough to them to provide child care, or who are not on good terms with family members. Garfinkel and McLanahan (1989) also noted the need for child care provision for those single mothers who are Aid to Families

with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients, to enable them to enter the labor force. For the mothers in the study who are AFDC recipients and do not have family members near them, the establishment of a child care allowance program would be very helpful. The provision of benefits to allow single mothers to contract child care providers whom they trust, would result in these mothers seeking employment. Such a policy would benefit the child support and general assistance systems, while also increasing the self esteem of these mothers.

Third, the ability of so many fathers to disappear from the detection of the child support agency argues for the improvement of this system's effectiveness. Funding, employment, and jurisdiction enhancements must be made in the child support system to forcibly encourage fathers to fulfill their financial responsibilities (McLanahan and Booth, 1989; Garfinkel and McLanahan, 1985).¹⁹ One suggestion that I believe would accomplish this goal is the adoption of a wage withholding system.²⁰ Such a system would make all parents who live apart from their children liable for a child support deduction from their gross income. The percentage of the noncustodial parent's wages that would be deducted would be based on the amount of children being supported. In those cases where the noncustodial parent pays less than the minimum amount established by the program, the difference would come from the general revenues now devoted

to the AFDC program. The adoption of such a system would result in a more certain and efficient way of collecting child support.

Fourth, the fact that younger fathers are more positively involved in the lives of the mothers and their children than older fathers (Elster and Hendricks, 1986; Danzinger and Nichols-Casebolt, 1990; Taylor et al., 1990) highlights an important policy proposal. In the past it has been the practice of policy makers to primarily focus on the young mother of the children (Vinovskis, 1986). Yet, there are some important steps that should be taken to assist young fathers in assuming responsible father roles. The principal intent of this proposal is to give these younger fathers input, at this point in their lives when this input will have its greatest long term effects, on how to provide the best assistance to these mothers and the couple's children. Based on the findings of this study a training program should be established to train these young fathers in parenting skills, emotional support skills, and vocational and educational training.

Parenting skills are included in this program so that the addition of these skills might further encourage these fathers to assume a responsible role in the lives of their children. Many of these younger fathers will need assistance in realizing the commitment and sacrifice it will take to fulfill the father role in the lives of their children

(Elster and Hendricks, 1986; Danzinger and Nichols-Casebolt, 1990). Emotional support skills are included because many of the women, although expressing pleasure in the fact that the fathers of their children provided material support, complained that these fathers did not meet their emotional needs. For many mothers, both young and old, this is a primary complaint, as well as a suggestion for improvement. The inability of these fathers to empathize with these mothers, whether this is based on an uncertainty of the relationship's future or not, can be a determinant of the quality of the father and mother's relationship (Elster and Hendricks, 1986).

Educational training coupled to a job training component will also be a part of this program since most of these younger fathers will need the educational and vocational training. This preparation will provide them with viable options to either low paying jobs, which limits their ability to provide for their family, or unemployment (Elster and Hendricks, 1986). There must also be an enhancing of the employment opportunities of these younger fathers to enable and encourage their fulfillment of their parental obligations (Wilson, 1987; Danzinger and Nichols-Casebolt, 1990). The finding that fathers are more likely to be involved in the lives of their children if they have been employed in the last year further highlights the importance of this emphasis (Danzinger and Nichols-Casebolt, 1990;

Taylor et al., 1990).

Limitations and Future Research Directions:

Before examining the limitations and future research directions of such a study, let us first examine the way in which potential problems played out in the study. The first potential problem is the fact that all interviews are performed by the same interviewer, who is also of the same race as the interviewees. The potential difficulty that I noted at the beginning of this study is that I might not be objective since I am an "insider" interviewer. I do not believe that this danger was realized in either data gathering or interpretation as I labored to follow the methodological standards I established for the study, and the accepted standards of scientific research (Baca Zinn, 1979). The fact that I performed all the interviews myself is also beneficial to the study in that I improved as an investigator and as an "instrument" in the study (McCracken, 1988:18). This approach allowed me to become more familiar with the respondents, and to place me in a better position, therefore, for analyzing the data (Miles, 1979; Guba and Lincoln, 1981; McCracken, 1988).

The second potential problem is the possibility that the hostility many minority communities have towards outsider university scholars might be aimed at me since I came to perform research in the name of the university (Blauner and Wellman, 1973; Staples, 1976). Although all of

the women are very supportive of my pursuing a degree at the university, there was one interviewee who vented upon me her disdain of the way in which university scholars have examined and negatively depicted African-American single mothers. Her frustrations limited her ability to fully participate in this research, but there was no personal attack on me because of her viewpoint. She is the only interviewee for which my affiliation with the university had a negative connotation.

The third potential problem, which is very closely related to the second potential problem, is the possibility that I as a minority researcher would have to operate within the tension of fulfilling the expectations placed upon me as a fellow minority, and protecting the long-term goals of the research project. The time during the study when I faced this tension was when the interviewee described above detailed depictions of single mothers that she did not believe was an accurate representation of most single mothers. The tension that I faced then, was to avoid noting interviewees in the study who fit this depiction in order to fulfill the expectations she placed on me to not continue this common representation of Black single mothers.

Let us now focus on the limitations of the study. The major limitation of the current study is that it is an exploratory investigation involving a nonrandom sample. For this reason the findings of this study should not be

divorced from the context of the community in which it is performed. This study is not representative of the support networks of all African-American single mothers, or of the support networks that exists in every African-American community. Because each African-American community is different, each community creates variations in some elements of social organization while creating similarities in others (Oliver, 1988).

A third, and final, limitation is that the study is performed by a male researcher without a way of measuring the effect of gender on the findings. Despite the fact that the women are all very candid in the interview sessions, I realize that it would have been informative to have had a female researcher work with me in order to examine the effect of gender on the findings. Still, I must emphasize the fact that this is a case study for a larger and more exhaustive study on this subject in the future. I do believe, though, that the findings of this study are important and valid.

ENDNOTES

1. For a further examination of this structure see Thornton Dill (1988).

2. James Patterson (1981) disagrees with this date for Myrdal's use of the term and states that the term was used by Myrdal and others in the 1940s (215).

3. Although noting that younger single mothers have a greater pool of potential care givers, she argues that these mothers have fewer economic resources and contacts with those that have such resources (128).

4. The Single Parent Family Institute is a non-profit, privately funded organization, which was created to help single parent families move from conditions of dependency to self-sufficiency. It seeks to accomplish this goal through a two year program (which includes personal development, educational, social services, and employment service provisions) to single mothers. This list is a record of single mothers, including their addresses and telephone numbers, who have at one time or the other contacted this program.

I received permission from the program to perform this research based, somewhat on the fact that I had worked with the Institute for the last three years as a graduate assistant in the program's research and evaluation component. I believe that this program can benefit from my research as it will allow the program to better meet the needs of its clients.

5. This type of question is designated as "subjective" or "perceived" support. This is an appropriate question because social support is likely to be effective only to the extent it is paramount to the measurement of social support (House 1983).

6. Koblinsky and Todd (1989), and Cain and Hofferth (1989) describe such children as "latchkey" children and place their ages between that of 5 and 13. Although Cole and Rodman (1987), and Long and Long (1884) respectively choose 6 and 7 as the younger age, they do agree with the older age of 13. I have selected 5 as the younger age to have the

study encompass as many of these children as possible.

7. These age groupings were constructed to create two groups of single mothers to be analyzed. The age grouping construction is based on the age groupings Burton identified in her 1990 study.

8. For an overview of the "insiders" and "outsiders" controversy see Merton (1972); Wilson (1974), and Baca Zinn (1979).

9. Baca Zinn (1979) believes that this problem, although important, can be alleviated by the minority researchers following the accepted standards of scientific research (213).

10. The nature of this abuse, whether physical or sexual, was not specified.

11. It should be noted that there is a differentiation between the life span and the life course perspectives. Wells and Stryker (1987) note that "The differences are matters of degree rather than of kind, of relative emphasis on individual versus social frames in characterizing the shapes of people's lives" (198). The life span perspective could be characterized as more of a personal structure which an individual constructs of experiences. This brief overview reveals the fact that the life span perspective originated in the discipline of developmental psychology. The life course perspective could be categorized as primarily a social timetable of life events through which individuals progress through in life. This brief sketch reveals that the life course perspective finds its origin in the discipline of sociology and its concern with the social structure of aging and age stratification (Wells and Stryker, 1987; Aldous, 1990).

12. Isa's actions are a clear example of what Hill Collins (1990) describes as a "mothering of the mind". She states that "Mothering is an empowering experience for many African-American women.... This special relationship that Black mothers have with their children can also foster a creativity, a mothering of the mind and soul, for all involved" (137).

13. It is important to emphasize, as Hill Collins (1990) notes, that Black motherhood as an institution should not be wrongly conceived as monolithic. She explains that,

The institution of Black motherhood consists of a series of constantly renegotiated relationships that African-American women experience with one another, with Black children, with the larger African-American

community, and with self.... Moreover, just as Black women's work and family experiences varied during the transition from slavery to the post-World War II political economy, how Black women define, value and shape Black motherhood as an institution shows comparable diversity (118).

14. When examining support networks from the perspective of the life course they are designated convoys (Kahn and Antonucci, 1980b). Because I will be using the life course research paradigm in this chapter I will from this point in the chapter refer to support networks as convoys for the rest of this chapter. Kahn and Antonucci (1980a) define convoy, or personal network, as "the structure within which social support is given and received" (255).

15. Some of the material used in this construction are White (1975); Santrock and Yussen (1984); and Schiamberg (1985).

16. The phenomena of the oldest sister taking on the role, and being viewed as mother by her siblings was noted by two mothers, May and Dee. The other mother, Dee, stated that her oldest sister is treated with much respect by she and her sisters who watch what they say around her. Dee states that the reason for this view of her sister is based on the fact that her oldest sister took care of Dee and her siblings when they were growing up.

17. Although the observations in this section will note the ages of these mothers, I must highlight the fact that the critical issue in this chapter is still family stage. Age continues to be prominent in this chapter because of its position as the primary variable in distinguishing between the two groups of mothers.

18. The need for fathers to financially assist the mothers of their children is paramount in light of the economic condition of female headed households. Pearce (1987) notes that women-maintained families account for about half of all poor families, and that almost half of all indigent individuals are women (37). Hartmann (1989) highlights the fact that women and children made up the majority of the poverty population, and that the disproportionate representation of women among the poor was increasing. Clearly there is a growing trend in the disproportionate representation of women and female-headed households among the poor.

19. The wage withholding proposal is outlined by Garfinkel and McLanahan (1986) who present it as a key aspect of their "new Child Support Assurance System." Their Child Support Assurance System would work to both increase the income of

female headed families as well as working to reduce their dependence on government programs.

LIST OF REFERENCES

LIST OF REFERENCES

- Abercrombie, Nicholas; Stephen Hill; and Bryan S. Turner.
1988. The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology. (New York:
Penguin Books).
- Adams, Bert N. 1978. "Black Families in the United States:
An Overview of Current Ideologies and Research," The
Extended Family in Black Societies. Demitri B. Shimkin,
Edith M. Shimkin, and Dennis A. Frate (Eds.). (Paris:
Mouton Publishers):173-180.
- Agar, Michael. 1988. "Ethnography and Cognition,"
Contemporary Field Research: A Collection of Readings.
Robert Emerson (Ed.). (Prospect Heights, ILL: Waveland
Press, Inc.):68-77.
- Aldous, Joan. 1990. "Family Development and the Life Course:
Two Perspectives on Family Change," Journal of Marriage
and the Family. 52:571-583.
- Allen, Walter R. 1978. "The Search for Applicable Theories
of Black Family Life," Journal of Marriage and the
Family. 40 (February):117-127.
- Allen, Walter R. 1981. "Moms, Dads, and Boys: Race and Sex
Differences in the Socialization of Male Children,"
Black Men. Lawrence E. Gary (Ed.). (Beverly Hills, CA:
Sage).
- Anderson, Elijah. 1989. "Sex Codes and Family Life Among
Poor Inner-city Youth," Annals. 501:59-78.
- Angel, Ronald; and Marta Tienda. 1982. "Determinants of
Extended Household Structure: Cultural Pattern or
Economic Model?," American Journal of Sociology. 87:
1360-1383.
- Antonucci, Toni C. 1985. "Personal Characteristics, Social
Networks, and Social Behavior," Handbook of Aging and
the Social Sciences. B. H. Binstock and E. Shanas
(Eds.). (New York: Van Norstrand Reinhold):94-128.

- Aschenbrenner, Joyce. 1978. "Continuities and Variations in Black Family Structure," The Extended Family in Black Societies. Demitri B. Shimkin, Edith M. Shimkin, and Dennis A. Frate (Eds.). (Paris: Mouton Publishers):181-200.
- Auletta, Ken. 1982. The Underclass. (New York: Random House).
- Axinn, June; and Mark Stern. 1988. Dependency and Poverty: Old Problems in a New World. (Lexington, Mass: Lexington).
- Baca Zinn, Maxine. 1979. "Field Research in Minority Communities: Ethical, Methodological and Political Observations by an Insider," Social Problems. 27 (December):209-219.
- Baca Zinn, Maxine. 1982/83. "Familism Among Chicanos: A Theoretical Review," Humboldt Journal of Social Relations. 10:224-238.
- Baca Zinn, Maxine; and Stanley Eitzen. 1990. Diversity in Families. (New York: Harper Collins).
- Baca Zinn, Maxine. 1990b. "Family, Feminism, and Race in America," Gender and Society. 4 (March):68-82.
- Baca Zinn, Maxine; Lynn Weber Cannon; Elizabeth Higginbotham; and Bonnie Thornton Dill. 1986. "The Costs of Exclusionary Practices in Women's Studies," SIGNS: Journal of Women in Culture and Society. 11:290-303.
- Banton, Michael. 1983. Racial and Ethnic Competition. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Becerra, Rosina M. 1988. "The Mexican American Family," Ethnic Families in America: Patterns and Variations. Charles H. Mindel, Robert W. Habenstein, and Roosevelt Wright, Jr. (Eds.). (New York: Elsevier Science Publishing):141-159.
- Belle, Deborah E. 1982. "The Impact of Poverty on Social Networks and Supports," in Marriage and Family Review. 5:89-103.
- Belle, Deborah. 1982. "The Stress of Caring: Women as Providers of Social Support," Handbook of Stress: Theoretical and Clinical Aspects. Leo Goldberger and Shlome Breznitz (Eds.). (New York: The Free Press).

- Bem, Daryl J. 1967. "Self-perception: An Alternative Interpretation of Cognitive Dissonance Phenomena," Psychological Review. 74:183-200.
- Billingsley, Andrew. 1968. Black Families in White America. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall).
- Blauner, Robert; and David Wellman. 1973. "Toward the Decolonization of Social Research," The Death of White Sociology. Joyce A. Ladner (Ed.). (New York: Vintage Books):310-330.
- Bumpass, Larry L. 1984. "Children and Marital Disruption: A Replication and Update," Demography. 21:71-82.
- Brimmer, A. 1970. "Economic Progress of Negroes in the United States: The Deepening Schism." Paper presented at the Founder's Day Convention, Tuskegee, Alabama, March 22.
- Brooks-Gunn, Jeanne; and Frank F. Furstenberg. 1986. "The Children of Adolescent Mothers: Physical, Academic, and Psychological Outcomes," Developmental Review. 6:224-251.
- Brown, Diane R.; and Lawrence E. Gary. 1988. "Unemployment and Psychological Distress Among Black American Women," Sociological Focus. 21:209-220.
- Burton Linda M.; and Vern L. Bengtson. 1985. "Black Grandmothers: Issues of Timing and Continuity of Roles," Grandparenthood. Vern L. Bengtson and Joan F. Robertson (Eds.). (Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications):61-78.
- Burton, Linda M. 1990. "Teenage Childbearing as an Alternative Life-Course Strategy in Multigenerational Black Families," Human Nature. 1 (2):123-143.
- Cain, Virginia S.; and Sandra S. Hofferth. 1989. "Parental Choice of Self-Care for School-Age Children," The Journal of Family and Marriage. 51 (February):65-77.
- Campbell, Donald; and Julian Stanley. 1963. Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Cannell, Charles F.; Peter V. Miller; and Lois Oksenberg. 1981. "Research on Interviewing Techniques," Sociological Methodology. Sam Leinhardt (Ed.). (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass):389-437.

- Cannon, Lynn Weber; Elizabeth Higginbotham; and Marianne L. A. Leung. 1987. "Race and Class Bias in Qualitative Research on Women," Feminism and Methodology: Social Science Issues. Sandra Harding (Ed.). (Bloomington, IND: Indiana University Press):237-248.
- Caute, David (Ed.). 1967. The Essential Writings of Karl Marx. New York: Macmillan Press.
- Charmaz, Kathy. 1988. "The Grounded Theory Method: An Explication and Interpretation," Contemporary Field Research: A Collection of Readings. Robert Emerson (Ed.). (Prospect Heights, ILL: Waveland Press, Inc.):109-126.
- Chatters, Linda M.; Robert J. Taylor; and James S. Jackson. 1985. "Size and Composition of the Informal Helper Network of Elderly Blacks," Journal of Gerontology. 40:605-614.
- Cherlin, Andrew J.; and Frank F. Furstenberg. 1986. The New American Grandparent: A Place in the Family, a Life Apart. (New York: Basic Books).
- Chilman, Catherine S. 1983. Adolescent Sexuality in a Changing American Society: Social and Psychological Perspectives for the Human Services Professions. (New York: Wiley and Sons).
- Clark, Kenneth B. 1965. Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power. (New York: Harper and Row).
- Cole, Cynthia; and Hyman Rodman. 1987. "When School-Age Children Care for Themselves: Issues for Family Life Educators and Parents," Family Relations, 36 (January):92-96.
- Coleman, James E. 1971. "Community Disorganization and Conflict," Contemporary Social Problems. 3rd Edition. Robert K. Merton and Robert A. Nisbit (Eds.). (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich).
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 1990. Black Feminist Thought. (New York: Routledge).
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 1991. "Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought," Gendering Knowledge. Joan E. Hartman and Ellen Messer-Davidow (Eds.). (Tennessee: The University of Tennessee Press):41-65.
- Coner-Edwards, Alice F. 1988. "Mate Selection and

- Psychological Need," Black Families in Crisis: the Middle Class. Alice F. Coner-Edwards and Jeanne Spurlock. (New York: Brunner/Mazel Publications):37-49.
- Conner, Michael E. 1988. "Teenage Fatherhood: Issues Confronting Young Black Males," Young, Black and Male in America. Jewelle Taylor Gibbs (Ed.). (Dover, Mass.: Auburn House Publication Co.):188-218.
- Converse, Jean; and Stanley Presser. 1986. Survey Questions: Handcrafting the Standardized Questionnaire. (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications).
- Crispell, Diane. 1989. "Women in Charge," American Demographics. 11:26-29.
- Danzinger, Sheldon; George Jakubson; Saul Schwartz; and Eugene Smolinsky. 1982. "Work and Welfare as Determinants of Female Poverty and Household," Quarterly Journal of Economics. 97:519-534.
- Danzinger, Sandra K.; and Ann Nichols-Casebolt. 1990. "Absent Does Not Equal Uninvolved: Predictors of Fathering in Teen Mother Families," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 52:636-642.
- Denzin, Norman K. 1970. Sociological Methods: A Sourcebook. (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company).
- Denzin, Norman K. 1978. The Research Act: The Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company).
- Dodson, Jualynne. 1988. "Conceptualization of Black Families," Black Families. Harriette Pipes McAdoo (Ed.). (Newbury Park, CA.: Sage Publications):77-90.
- Duneier, Mitchell. 1992. Slim's Table: Race, Responsibility, and Masculinity. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press).
- Du Bois, William E. B. 1907. Economic Cooperation Among American Negroes. (Atlanta: Atlanta University Press).
- Du Bois, W. E. Burghardt. (1969). The Negro American Family. (New York: Negro Universities Press).
- Ellis, William Russell Jr.; and Peter Orleans. 1971. "Race Research: 'Up Against the Wall' in More Ways than One," Race, Change, and Urban Society. Peter Orleans and William Russell Ellis, Jr. (Eds.). (Beverly Hills: SAGE) 5:9-20.

- Ellison, Christopher G. 1990. "Family Ties, Friendships, and Subjective Well-being among Black Americans," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 52 (May):298-310.
- Elster, Arthur B.; and Leo Hendricks. 1986. "Stresses and Coping Strategies of Adolescent Fathers," Adolescent Fatherhood. Arthur B. Elster and Michael E. Lamb (Eds.). (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers):55-66.
- Emerson, Robert M. 1988. "Introduction: Theory and Evidence in Field Research," Contemporary Field Research: A Collection of Readings. Robert M. Emerson (Ed.). (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.):93-107.
- Farley, Reynolds; Walter R. Allen. 1987. The Color Line and the Quality of Life in America. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation).
- Fetterman, David M. 1989. Ethnography: Step by Step. (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications).
- Frazier, E. Franklin. 1948. The Negro Family in the United States. (New York: The Citadel Press).
- Frazier, E. Franklin. 1974. The Negro Church in America. (New York: Schocken Books).
- Gans, Herbert. 1989. "Sociology in America: The Discipline and the Public American Sociological Association, 1988 Presidential Address," American Sociological Review. 54 (February):1-16.
- Gans, Herbert J. 1990. "Deconstructing the Underclass: The Term's Danger as a Planning Concept," Journal of the American Planning Association. 56:271-277.
- Garfinkel, Irwin; and Sara McLanahan. 1985. "The Feminization of Poverty: Nature, Causes, and a Partial Cure," mimeographed (Madison: University of Wisconsin, Institute for Research on Poverty Discussion Paper. Paper No. 776-85.).
- Garcia, Sandra Anderson. 1989. "My Sister's Keeper: Negative Effects of Social Welfare and Affirmative Action Programs on Black Women," Sex Roles. 21:25-43.
- Gilligan, Carol. 1987. "Woman's Place in Man's Life Cycle," Feminism and Methodology: Social Science Issues. Sandra Harding (Ed.). (Bloomington, IND: Indiana University Press):57-73.

Gla

Gla

Gox

Gr

Gu

Gu

Ha

H

H

H

H

H

H

H

H

- Glasgow, Douglas G. 1981. The Black Underclass. (New York: Vintage).
- Glaser, Barney; and Anselm Strauss. 1967. The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research. (New York: Aldine de Gruyter).
- Gonzales, Juan L. Jr. 1985. "The Origins of the Chicano Family in Mexico and the American Southwest," International Journal of Sociology of the Family. 15 (Spring-Autumn):181-196.
- Granovetter, Mark S. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties," American Journal of Sociology. 78:1360-1380.
- Guba, Egon G.; and Yvonna S. Lincoln. 1981. Effective Evaluation. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass).
- Gutman, Herbert. 1976. The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom:1750-1925. (New York: Pantheon).
- Haber, David. 1984. "Church-based programs for Black Care Givers of Non-Institutionalized Elders," Journal of Gerontological Social Work. 7:43-55.
- Hagestad, Gunhild. O. 1986. "Dimensions of Family Time," American Behavioral Scientist. 29:679-694.
- Harding, Sandra. 1987. "Introduction: Is There a Feminist Method?," Feminism and Methodology. Sandra Harding (Ed.). (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press):1-14.
- Harrison, Algea. 1981. "Attitudes Towards Procreation Among Black Adults," Black Families. Harriette Pipes McAdoo (Ed.). (Newbury Park, N.J.: Sage Publications):199-210.
- Hartmann, Susan M. 1989. From the Margin to Mainstream: American Women and Politics Since 1960. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press).
- Hays, William C.; and Charles H. Mindel. 1973. "Extended Kinship Relations in Black and White Families," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 35 (February):51-56.
- Hill Collins, Patricia. 1990. Black Feminist Thought. (New York: Routledge).
- Hill, Robert B. 1971. The Strengths of Black Families. (New York: Emerson & Hall Publications).
- Hill, R. 1986. "The Future of Black Families," in Currents

in Modern Thought. :573-586.

- Hofferth, Sandra L. 1984. "Kin Networks, Race, and Family Structure," Journal Marriage and the Family. 46:791-806.
- Hogan, Dennis P.; Ling-Xin Hao; and William L. Parish. 1990. "Race, Kin Networks, and Assistance to Mother-Headed Families," Social Forces. 68:797-812.
- Hooks, Bell. 1989. Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black. (Boston: South End Press).
- House, James. 1977. "The Three Faces of Social Psychology," Sociometry. 40:161-177.
- House, James S. 1983. Work Stress and Social Support. (Menlo Park, CA.: Addison-Wesley Publication Co.).
- House, James S.; D. Umberson; and K. R. Landis. 1988. "Structures and Processes of Social Support," Annual Review of Sociology. 14:293-318.
- Hughes, Everett C. 1974. "A Memoir," The Negro Church in America by E. Franklin Frazier. (New York: Schocker Books):5-6.
- Hughes, Michael; and David H. Demo. 1981. "Self-Perceptions of Black Americans: Self-Esteem and Personal Efficacy," American Journal of Sociology. 95:132-159.
- Jackson, James S.; Toni C. Antonucci; and Rose C. Gibson. 1990. "Cultural, Racial, and Ethnic Minority Influences on Aging," The Handbook of the Psychology of Aging. James E. Birren and K. Warner Schaie (Eds.). (San Diego: Academic Press, Inc.):103-123.
- Jayakody, Rukmalie; Linda M. Chatters; and Robert Joseph Taylor. 1993. "Family Support to Single and Married African American Mothers: The Provision of Financial, Emotional, and Child Care Assistance," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 55:261-276.
- Jaynes, Gerald David; and Robin M. Williams Jr. (Eds.). 1989. A Common Destiny: Blacks and American Society. (Washington D.C.: National Academy Press).
- Jenkins, Adelbert H. 1988. "Black Families: The Nurturing of Agency," Black Families in Crisis: the Middle Class. Alice F. Coner-Edwards and Jeanne Spurlock. (New York: Brunner/Mazel Publications):115-128.

- Johnson, John M. 1975. Doing Fieldwork. (New York: The Free Press).
- Jones, Rhett S. 1973. "Proving Blacks Inferior: The Sociology of Knowledge," The Death of White Sociology. Joyce Ladner (Ed.). (New York: Vintage Books):114-135.
- John, Robert. 1988. "The Native American Family," Ethnic Families in America: Patterns and Variations. Charles H. Mindel, Robert W. Habenstein, and Roosevelt Wright, Jr. (Eds.). (New York: Elsevier Science Publishing):325-363.
- Jorgensen, Danny L. 1989. Participant Observation: A Methodology for Human Studies. (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications).
- Kahn, Robert L.; and Toni C. Antonucci. 1980a. "Convoys Over the Life Course: Attachment, Roles, and Social Support," Life-Span Development and Behavior. Volume 3. Paul B. Baltes, David L. Featherman (Eds.). (New York: Academic Press, Inc.):253-286.
- Kahn, Robert L.; and Toni C. Antonucci. 1980b. "Convoys of Social Support: A Life-Course Approach," Life-Span Development and Behavior. Volume 3. Paul B. Baltes, David L. Featherman (Eds.). (New York: Academic Press, Inc.):383-405.
- Kitano, Harry H.L. 1988. "The Japanese Family," Ethnic Families in America: Patterns and Variations. Charles H. Mindel, Robert W. Habenstein, and Roosevelt Wright, Jr. (Eds.). (New York: Elsevier Science Publishing):258-275.
- Kerlinger, Fred N. 1986. Foundations of Behavioral Research. (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston).
- Kniesner, Thomas; Marjorie B. McElroy; and Steven P. Wilcox. 1986. "Family Structure, Race, and the Feminization of Poverty," mimeographed (Madison: University of Wisconsin, Institute for Research on Poverty Discussion Paper. Paper No. 810-86).
- Koblinsky, Sally A.; and Christine M. Todd. 1989. "Teaching Self-Care Skills to Latchkey Children: A Review of Research," Family Relations. 38:431-435.
- Kohn, Melvin L. 1977. Class and Conformity: A Study in Values. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Kotlowitz, Alex. 1991. There Are No Children Here. (New

York: Doubleday).

Ladner, Joyce. 1971. Tomorrow's Tomorrow. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc.).

Ladner, Joyce; and Ruby Morton Gourdine. 1984. "Intergenerational Teenage Motherhood: Some Preliminary Findings," SAGE: A Scholarly Journal of Black Women. 1 (Fall):22-24

Larwood, Laurie; David Zalkind; and Jeanne Legault. 1975. "The Bank Job: A Field Study of Sexually Discriminatory Performance on a Neutral-Role Task," Journal of Applied Social Psychology. 5:68-74.

Liebow, Elliot. 1967. Tally's Corner: A Study of Negro Streetcorner Men. (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company).

Lincoln, C. Eric. 1974. The Black Church Since Frazier. (New York: Schocken Books).

Lincoln, C. Eric; and Lawrence H. Mamiya. 1990. The Black Church in the American Experience. (Durham: Duke University Press).

Lemann, Nicholas. 1986. "The Origin of the Underclass," The Atlantic. 257 (June):31-55.

Long, Lynette; and Thomas Long. 1984. The Handbook for Latchkey Children and Their Parents: A Complete Guide for Latchkey Kids and Their Working Parents. (Berkeley: Berkeley Publications).

Marks, Carole. 1991. "The Urban Underclass," Annual Review of Sociology. 14:445-466.

Martin, Joanne M.; and Elmer P. Martin. 1985. The Helping Tradition in the Black Family and Community. (Silver Springs, MD: National Association of Social Workers).

McAdoo, Harriette Pipes. 1988. "Preface to the First Edition," Black Families. Harriette Pipes McAdoo (Ed.). (Newbury Park, N.J.: Sage Publications):7-15

McCracken, Grant David. 1988. The Long Interview. (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications).

McLanahan, Sara. 1985. "Family Structure and the Reproduction of Poverty," The American Journal of Sociology. 90:873-901.

McLanahan, Sara; Irwin Garfinkel; and Dorothy Watson. 1987.

"Family Structure, Poverty, and the Underclass," mimeographed (Madison: University of Wisconsin, Institute for Research on Poverty Discussion Paper. Paper No. 823-87.).

McLanahan, Sara; and Karen Booth. 1989. "Mother-Only Families: Problems, Prospects, and Problems," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 51:557-580.

McLanahan, Sara; and Irwin Garfinkel. 1989. "Single Mothers, the Underclass and Social Policy," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. 501: 92-104.

McLanahan, Sara; Nancy Wedemeyer; and Tina Adelberg. 1981. "Network Structure, Social Support, and Psychological Well-Being in the Single-Parent Family," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 43:601-612.

Merton, Robert K. 1972. "Insiders and Outsiders: A Chapter in the Sociology of Knowledge," American Journal of Sociology. 78 (July):9-47.

Miles, M. B. 1979. "Qualitative Data as an Attractive Nuisance: The Problem of Analysis," Administration Science Quarterly. (December) 24:590-601.

Miller, Delbert C. 1991. Handbook of Research Design and Social Measurement. (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications).

Millman, Marcia; and Rosabeth Moss Kanter. 1987. "Introduction to Another Voice: Feminist Perspectives on Social Life and Social Science," Feminism and Methodology. Sandra Harding (Ed.). (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press):29-36.

Mindel, Charles. 1980. "Extended Familism Among Urban Mexican Americans, Anglos, and Blacks," Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences. 2:21-34.

Montero, Darrel. 1977. "Research Among Racial and Cultural Minorities: An Overview," The Journal of Social Issues. 33:1-10.

Montiel, Miguel, Editor. 1978. Hispanic Families: Critical Issues for Policy and Programs in Human Services. (Washington, D.C.: National Coalition of Hispanic Mental Health and Human Services Organizations).

Moore, Joan W. 1973. "Social Constraints on Sociological Knowledge: Academics and Research Concerning

- Minorities," Social Problems. 21 (Summer):65-77.
- Moynihan, Daniel Patrick. 1965. The Negro Family: The Case for National Action. (Washington D.C.).
- Moynihan, Daniel Patrick. 1971. "Employment, Income, and the Ordeal of the Negro Family," The Black Family: Essays and Studies. Robert Staples (Ed.). (Belmont Ca.: Wadsworth Publishing Company):313-342.
- Murray, Charles. 1984. Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950-1980. (New York: Basic Books).
- Myers, Vincent. 1977. "Survey Methods for Minority Populations," The Journal of Social Issues. 33:11-19
- Myrdal, Gunnar. 1944. An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy. (New York: Harper).
- Myrdal, Gunnar. 1962. Challenge to Affluence. (New York: Random House).
- Myrdal, Gunnar. 1970. The Challenge of World Poverty. (New York: Random House).
- Nachimias, David; and Chava Nachmias. 1976. Research Methods in the Social Sciences. (New York: St. Martin's Press).
- Nathan, Richard P. 1987. "Will the Underclass Always Be With Us?," Society. 24:57-62.
- Nelson, Barbara J. 1984. "Women's Poverty and Women's Citizenship: Some Political Consequences of Economic Marginality," Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society. 10 (Winter):209-231.
- Oliver, Melvin L. 1988. "The Urban Black Community as Network: Towards a Social Network Perspective," Sociological Quarterly. 29:623-645.
- Omi, Michael; and Howard Winant. 1986. Racial Formation in the United States: 1960's-1980's. (New York: Routledge, Kegan, Paul).
- Parish, William L.; Lingxin Hao; and Dennis P. Hogan. 1991. "Family Support Networks, Welfare, and Work Among Young Mothers," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 53:203-215.
- Patterson, James. 1986. America's Struggle Against Poverty 1900-1985. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).

- Pearce, Diana. 1987. "Women and Poverty," The Women's Economic Justice Agenda: Ideas for the States. Linda Tarr-Whelan and Lynne Crofton Isensee (Eds.). (Washington, D.C.: The National Center for Policy Alternatives):37-41.
- Pearce, Diana; and Harriette McAdoo. 1981. Women and Children: Alone and in poverty. (Washington D.C.: The National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity).
- Phares, E. Jerry. 1976. Locus of Control in Personality. (Morristown, NJ: General Learning Press).
- Riessman, Catherine Kohler. 1991. "When Gender is Not Enough: Women Interviewing Women," The Social Construction of Gender. Judith Lorber and Susan A. Farrell (Eds.). (Newbury Park, N.J.: Sage Publications): 217-236.
- Rainwater, Lee. 1966. The Moynihan Report: The Politics of Controversy. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press).
- Rollison, Garry L. 1991. "An Exploration of the Term 'Underclass' as it Relates to African-Americans," Journal of Black Studies. 21:287-301.
- Rosenberg, Morris. 1979. Conceiving the Self. (New York: Basic Books, Inc.).
- Rychlak, Joseph F. 1979. Discovering Free Will and Personal Responsibility. (New York: Oxford University Press).
- Santrock, John; and Steven Yussen. 1984. Children and Adolescents: A Developmental Perspective. (Dubuque, IA: W. C. Brown).
- Scanzoni, John. 1971. The Black Family in Modern Society. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon).
- Schatzman, Leonard; and Anselm Strauss. 1973. Field Research: Strategies for a Natural Sociology. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc.).
- Schiamberg, Larry. Human Development Across the Life Cycle. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company).
- Schuman, Howard; and Jean Converse. 1971. "The Effects of Black and White Interviewers on Black Respondents in 1968," Public Opinion Quarterly. 35 (Spring):44-68.

- Schuman, Howard; and Stanley Presser. 1981. Questions and Answers in Attitude Surveys. (New York: Academic Press).
- Shimkin, Dimitri; Edith M. Shimkin; and Dennis A. Frate, (Eds.). 1978. The Extended Family in Black Societies. (Paris: Mouton Publishers).
- Sheatsley, Paul. 1983. "Questionnaire Construction and Item Writing," in Handbook of Survey Research. Peter H. Rossi (Ed.). (New York: Academic Press):195-230.
- Sherif, Carolyn Wood. 1987. "Bias in Psychology," in Feminism and Methodology: Social Science Issues. Sandra Harding (Ed.). (Bloomington, IND: Indiana University Press):37-56.
- Sieber, Sam. 1973. "Integration of Fieldwork and Survey Methods," American Journal of Sociology. 78:1335-1359.
- Singleton, Royce; Bruce C. Straits; Margaret M. Straits; and Ronald J. McAllister. 1988. Approaches to Social Research. (New York: Oxford University Press).
- Skinner, Burrhus Frederic. 1971. Beyond Freedom and Dignity. (New York: Knopf, 1971).
- Smith, Dorothy E. 1987. "Woman's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology," Feminism and Methodology. Sandra Harding (Ed.). (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press):84-96.
- Spradley, James P. 1989. The Ethnographic Interview. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston).
- Stack, Carol. 1974. All Our Kin. (New York: Harper & Row).
- Staples, Robert. 1971. "Toward a Sociology of the Black Family: A Theoretical and Methodological Assessment," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 33:119-138.
- Staples, Robert. 1976. Introduction to Black Sociology. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company).
- Staples, Robert. 1985. "Changes in Black Family Structure: The Conflict between Family Ideology and Structural Conditions," The Black Family: Essays and Studies. Robert Staples (Ed.). (Belmont Ca.: Wadsworth Publishing Company).
- Stevens, Joseph H., Jr. 1984. "Black Grandmothers' and Black Adolescent Mothers' Knowledge about Parenting,"

Developmental Psychology. 20:91-97.

Stone, John. 1985. Racial Conflict in Contemporary Society. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).

Straus, Murray A. 1980. "Social Stress and Marital Violence in a National Sample of American Families," in Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences. 347:229-250.

Stryker, Sheldon; and Anne Statham. 1985. "Symbolic Interaction and Role Theory," Handbook of Social Psychology. Volume 1. Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson (Eds.). (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers):311-378.

Sudman, Seymour. 1976. "Small-Scale Sampling with Limited Resources," Applied Sampling. (New York: Academic Press):25-48.

Sudman, Seymour; and Norman M. Bradburn. 1974. Response Effects in Surveys: A Review and Synthesis. (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company).

Sullivan, Mercer. 1989. "Absent fathers in the inner city," Annals. 501:48-58.

Sudarkasa, Niara. 1988. "Interpreting the African Heritage in Afro-American Family Organization," Black Families. Harriette Pipes McAdoo (Ed.). (Newbury Park, N.J.: Sage Publications):27-43.

Taylor, Robert J. 1986. "The Receipt of Support from Family Among Black Americans: Demographic and Familial Differences," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 48 (February):67-77.

Taylor, Robert J. 1990. "Need for Support and Family Involvement Among Black Americans," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 52:584-590.

Taylor, Robert J.; and Linda M. Chatters. 1988. "Church Members as a Source of Informal Social Support," Review of Religious Research. 30:193-203.

Taylor, Robert; Linda M. Chatters; M. Belinda Tucker; and Edith, Lewis. 1990. "Developments in Research on Black Families: A Decade Review," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 52:993-1014.

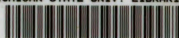
Thompson, Kenrick S. 1980. "A Comparison of Black and White Adolescents Beliefs About Having Children," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 42 (February):133-139.

- Thompson, Maxine Seaborn; Wilma Peebles-Wilkins. 1992. "The Impact of Formal, Informal, and Societal Support Networks on the Psychological Well-being of Black Adolescent Mothers," in Social Work. 37:322-328.
- Thorne, Barrie. 1982. "Feminist Rethinking of the Family: An Overview," Rethinking the Family: Some Feminist Questions. Barrie Thorne and Marilyn Yalom (Eds.). (New York: Longman Inc.).
- Thornton Dill, Bonnie. 1987. "The Dialectics of Black Womanhood," Feminism and Methodology: Social Science Issues. Sandra Harding (Ed.). (Bloomington IN.: Indiana University Press):97-108.
- Thornton Dill, Bonnie. 1988. "Our Mother's Grief: Racial Ethnic Women and the Maintenance of Families," Journal of Family History. 13:415-431.
- Tinsley, B.; and R. Parke. 1984. "Grandparents as Support and Socialization Agents," Beyond the Dyad. M. Lewis (Ed.). (New York: Plenum Press):161-191.
- Updegrave, Walter L. 1989. "Race and Money," Money. 18 (December):152-172.
- Uzzell, Odell; and Wilma Peebles-Wilkins. 1989. "Black Spouse Abuse: A Focus on Relational Factors and Intervention Strategies," in Western Journal of Black Studies. 13:10-16.
- Vega, William A. 1990. "Hispanic Families in the 1980s: A Decade of Research," Journal of Marriage and the Family. 52 (November):1015-1024.
- Vinovskis, Maris A. 1986. "Young Fathers and Their Children: Some Historical and Policy Perspectives," in Adolescent Fatherhood. Arthur B. Elster and Michael E. Lamb (Eds.). (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers):171-192.
- Wagner, Roland M.; and Diane M. Schaffer. 1980. "Social Networks and Survival Strategies: An Exploratory Study of Mexican-American, Black, and Anglo Female Family Heads in San Jose, California," Twice A Minority: Mexican-American Women. Margarita B. Melville (Ed.). (St. Louis: The C. V. Mosby Company):173-190.
- Warwick, Donald; and Charles Lininger. 1975. "Questionnaire Design," The Sample Survey: Theory and Practice. (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co.):126-181.

- Webb, Eugene J.; Donald T. Campbell; Richard D. Schwartz; Lee Sechrest; and Janet Below Grove. 1981. Nonreactive Measures in the Social Sciences. Second Edition. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company).
- Wellman, B. 1979. "The Community Question: The Intimate Networks of East Yorkers," American Journal of Sociology. 84:1201-1231.
- Wellman, B.; and B. Leighton. 1979. "Networks, Neighborhoods and Communities," Urban Affairs Quarterly. 15:363-390.
- Wells, L. Edward; and Sheldon Stryker. 1987. "Stability and Change in Self Over the Life Course," Life-Span Development and Behavior. Volume 8. Paul B. Baltes, David L. Featherman, and Richard M. Lerner (Eds.). (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers):192-224.
- White, Burton L. 1975. The First Three Years of Life. (Englewood Cliff, N.J.: Prentice Hall).
- Willie, Charles Vert. 1981. A New Look at Black Families. (New York: General Hall, Inc.).
- Willie, Charles Vert. 1985. Black and White Families: A Study in Complementarity. (New York: General Hall, Inc.).
- Wilson, Melvin N. 1986. "The Black Extended Family: An Analytical Consideration," Developmental Psychology. 22: 246-256.
- Wilson, William J. 1974. "The New Black Sociology: Reflections on the 'Insiders' and 'Outsiders' Controversy," Black Sociologists: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives. James E. Blackwell and Morris Janowitz (Eds.). (Chicago: Chicago University Press):322-338.
- Wilson, William J. 1978. The Declining Significance of Race. (Chicago: University Press).
- Wilson, William J. 1987. The Truly Disadvantaged. (Chicago: University Press).
- Wilson, William J. 1990. "Studying Inner-City Social Dislocations: The Challenge of Public Agenda Research, 1990 Presidential Address," American Sociological Review. 56 (February):1-14.

Zippay, Allison. 1990-1991. "The Limits of Intimates: Social Networks and Economic Status Among Displaced Industrial Workers," in The Journal of Applied Social Sciences. 15:75-95.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIV. LIBRARIE



31293010432049