

The Southern Diaspora and the Urban Dispossessed: Demonstrating the Census Public Use Microdata Samples

James N. Gregory

Historians have been slow to make use of the Census Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS) that have been issued in the past decade. These resources, now available for nearly every census since 1850, are too valuable to be left to demographers and cliometricians. The following is a demonstration of how the Public Use Samples can clarify old debates and open new avenues for social-historical research.

The publication of Nicholas Lemann's *The Promised Land* in 1991 and Jacqueline Jones's *The Dispossessed* in 1992 brings back into focus an issue that in one way or another has concerned several generations of Americans. Both books deal with the greatest internal population movement of the twentieth century, the southern diaspora. The relocation to the North and West of at least eleven million southerners in the half century between World War I and 1970 had consequences for the entire nation. Filling the factories and expanding the cities of the nation's core economic zones, southerners, like the European immigrants who came before them, reshaped labor markets and housing markets and eventually the politics and culture of the places they settled.¹

Historians are most familiar with the great migration of African Americans who began leaving the South in large numbers during World War I and the 1920s and then poured into the big cities of the North and West during and after World War II. But White migration during those same decades was numerically much larger.

James N. Gregory is associate professor of history at the University of Washington, Seattle.

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¹ Nicholas Lemann, *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America* (New York, 1991); Jacqueline Jones, *The Dispossessed: America's Underclasses from the Civil War to the Present* (New York, 1992).

Table 1
 Southern-Born Persons Living Elsewhere in the United States,
 with Net Decennial Change
 1910-1990

	<i>Whites</i>	<i>Blacks and Other Races</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>(Decennial Change)</i>
1910	1,488,624	442,349	1,930,973	
1920	1,942,728	782,869	2,725,597	(+ 794,624)
1930	2,718,480*	1,460,633*	4,179,113	(+ 1,453,516)
1940	3,204,047	1,548,611	4,752,658	(+ 573,545)
1950	4,818,775	2,593,120	7,411,895	(+ 2,659,237)
1960	6,687,439	3,256,599	9,944,038	(+ 2,532,143)
1970	7,376,464	3,478,732	10,855,196	(+ 911,158)
1980	7,625,517	4,228,165	11,853,682	(+ 998,486)
1990	7,451,474	4,025,739	11,477,213	(- 376,469)

SOURCES: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington, 1975), 89-90; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1970 Census of Population: Subject Reports, State of Birth* (Washington, 1973), 3; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1980 Census of Population, Characteristics of the Population* (Washington, 1984), chapter D, vol. 1, 7-14; 1990 Census Public Use Microdata Sample, sample B.

* Hispanics are distributed between the racial categories for all decades except 1930. The Census Bureau classified Hispanics as nonwhites that year.

Accurate totals are difficult to calculate because of the uncertain rates of return migration, but census counts provide a very conservative estimate. As displayed in table 1, the 1970 census enumerated 3.4 million southern-born African Americans living outside that region and over twice as many (7.3 million) southern-born Whites. That was only the first generation. If we tried to estimate the number of children born to those migrants, the numerical impact would eventually more than double.²

The two migration streams were not completely parallel. African Americans left the South for political as well as economic reasons, and before the sun belt boom of the last twenty years, their departure tended to be permanent. White migration was much more conditional. Motivated almost exclusively by the search for economic opportunity, large numbers of Whites moved back and forth between new homes and old.³

Origins and destinations also differed. The Black diaspora originated in the Deep South and initially followed the rail lines to the large metropolitan centers of the

² The South, as defined by the Census Bureau, includes sixteen states and the District of Columbia: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia.

³ For recent arguments about the exodus, see Neil Fligstein, *Going North: Migration of Blacks and Whites from the South, 1900-1950* (New York, 1981); and Jack Temple Kirby, *Rural Worlds Lost: The American South, 1920-1960* (Baton Rouge, 1987), 308-33.

Northeast and the Great Lakes states, especially to New York and Philadelphia, Chicago and Detroit. The Pacific Coast became a secondary destination during and after World War II, but again the destinations were almost always major metropolitan areas. Most of the White migration came from the border South, especially the Appalachian states and Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. And Whites fanned out more widely than Blacks, to some extent avoiding the Northeast, heading for the smaller cities as well as the major metropolises of the north central and far western states.

Two distinct literatures have followed these migrants on their journeys. A complex and nuanced historical and sociological literature developed around the African American exodus. Part of it has been policy driven, concerned with issues of economic and social adjustment, with poverty and urban morphology. But historians were quick to realize that more profound questions were also involved, and they have tried to assess the myriad ways that the migrants remade themselves and remade the nation. The impacts have been so stunning, so epochal, that to study Black migration from the South is to write about the transformations of cities, politics, popular culture, and of course citizenship in the twentieth century.⁴

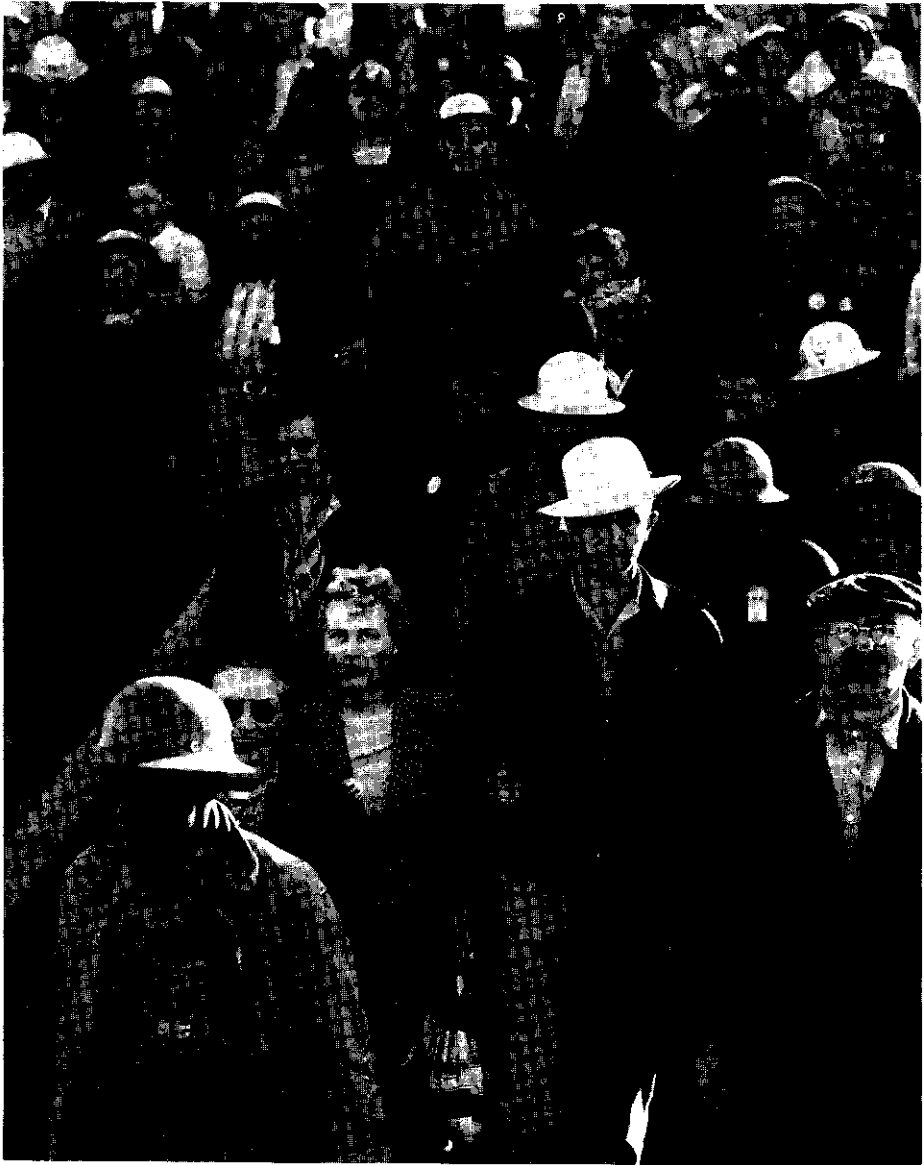
The literature of the White migration has been much less adventurous. The subject itself has at times generated enormous public interest. One and perhaps two great novels and scores of sociological and journalistic accounts have rolled off the presses in the decades since the public became aware of "hillbillies" in the northern cities and their "Okie" and "Arkie" cousins out west. With few exceptions, however, only one kind of question has been of interest: Did migration bring success or failure? Did the White refugees from southern poverty find opportunity outside the South, or did they fall victim to new structures of inequality?⁵

That issue was posed by John Steinbeck's classic treatment of the Okie migration to California, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), and taken up again in Harriette Arnow's *The Dollmaker*, a 1954 novel about a Kentucky family in wartime Detroit. It is also the question that sociologists and policy analysts asked repeatedly over the decades, sometimes in a comparative framework that also treats southern Black migrants.⁶

⁴ Among recent contributions are James R. Grossman, *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration* (Chicago, 1989); Joe William Trotter, Jr., ed., *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective: New Dimensions of Race, Class, and Gender* (Bloomington, 1991); his earlier book, Joe William Trotter, Jr., *Black Milwaukee: The Making of an Industrial Proletariat, 1915-1945* (Urbana, 1985); and Peter Gottlieb, *Making Their Own Way: Southern Blacks' Migration to Pittsburgh, 1916-30* (Urbana, 1987).

⁵ A few recent studies have opened up different questions, including the issue of the cultural impact of White southerners: see James N. Gregory, *American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migration and Okie Culture in California* (New York, 1989); Dan Morgan, *Rising in the West: The True Story of an "Okie" Family from the Great Depression through the Reagan Years* (New York, 1992); and Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz, "One or Two Things I Know about Us: 'Okies' in American Culture," *Radical History Review* (No. 59, Spring 1994), 4-35.

⁶ John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (New York, 1939); Harriette Arnow, *The Dollmaker* (New York, 1954). For examples of the first generation of sociological literature, see Grace G. Leybourne, "Urban Adjustments of Migrants from the Southern Appalachian Plateaus," *Journal of Social Forces*, 16 (Dec. 1937), 238-46; Erdmann Doane Beynon, "The Southern White Laborer Migrates to Michigan," *American Sociological Review*, 3 (June 1938), 333-43; Rosemary Deyling, "Hillbillies in Steelville: A Study of Participation in Community Life" (M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1949); Eldon Dee Smith, "Migration and Adjustment Experiences of Rural Migrant Workers in Indianapolis" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1953); and Harry P. Sharp, "Migration and Social Participation in the Detroit Area" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1954).



Shift change at the Kaiser shipyards in Richmond, California. Defense work was the initial source of employment for most of the two million Whites and Blacks who left the South during World War II. *Copyright the Dorothea Lange Collection, The Oakland Museum, The City of Oakland. Gift of Paul S. Taylor.*

The conclusions have usually been sobering. The sociological studies, although rarely as pessimistic as the fictional perspectives, have generally confirmed that southern Whites have had great difficulties in the North and that along with southern Blacks they have often fallen through the cracks of urban America. This

was the conclusion of a number of important studies conducted in the 1960s and 1970s. In *The South Goes North*, psychologist Robert Coles drew parallel portraits of White and Black southerners struggling first with marginal lives in the rural South and then with the failed promises of the big-city North. Based on interviews and focusing particularly on the children of the diaspora, Coles's powerfully empathic book made the case that poverty and urban failure were problems faced by Whites as well as Blacks. Todd Gitlin and Nanci Hollander pressed a similar point in *Uptown: Poor Whites in Chicago*. One of a number of participant-observer studies of the Uptown district of Chicago, which had long been known for its concentration of southern Whites, the book helped cement the impression that newcomers of the two races moved into separate ghettos that were plagued by poverty and other signs of social distress.⁷

Now Nicholas Lemann and Jacqueline Jones have reopened the issue of migration and its relationship to the urban dispossessed. Both conclude that today's social problems are linked to the southern diaspora. Lemann makes this an African American story. Resurrecting some of the arguments in Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan's *Beyond the Melting Pot*, he explores the trail of hope that led Black families from Clarksville, Mississippi, to Chicago, Illinois, and the string of personal and public policy failures that left many of those migrants in poverty.⁸

Jones answers with a biracial, regionalist argument. Reminding us that more of the nation's poor are White than Black, *The Dispossessed* locates the major root system of contemporary poverty in the historical structures of southern agriculture, in the cotton plantation system that condemned a major portion of the South's White population and almost all of its Black population to generations of hardship and struggle. Almost poetically, she moves that analysis out of the nineteenth and through the twentieth century, arguing that the long shadow of the plantation followed southerners into the factory towns of their own region and into the cities of the North. Her final chapters simultaneously distinguish and link the fates of White and Black migrants in the North. Arguing that the two groups faced racially ordered opportunities not unlike the segmented structures of the South, she initially stresses the movement of White migrants out of poverty, noting that the majority enjoyed easy access to stable industrial jobs and often to new suburban homes. Then she turns to those who were not so lucky, revisiting the familiar images of southern White poverty and social maladjustment in rundown neighborhoods such as Chicago's Uptown and Cincinnati's Lower Price Hill, making the case that White southerners as well as Black southerners contribute substantially to the ranks of

⁷ Robert Coles, *The South Goes North* (Boston, 1971). See also Robert Coles, *Migrants, Sharecroppers, Mountaineers* (Boston, 1971); and Todd Gitlin and Nanci Hollander, *Uptown: Poor Whites in Chicago* (New York, 1970). Two other Uptown studies are dissertations: Edwin S. Harwood, "Work and Community among Urban Newcomers: A Study of the Social and Economic Adaptation of Southern Migrants in Chicago" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1966); and Don Edward Merten, "Up Here and Down Home: Appalachian Migrants in Northtown" (*ibid.*, 1974). Uptown and other Chicago enclaves are discussed in Lewis M. Killian, *White Southerners* (New York, 1970), which was based in part on his earlier dissertation: Lewis M. Killian, "Southern White Laborers in Chicago's West Side" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1949).

⁸ Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963).

today's urban dispossessed. In the early 1980s, she concludes, "up to a third of all (6 million) Appalachians in the Midwest lived 'lives of extreme hardship in an inner-city world that can destroy body, mind, and soul.'"⁹

Is that true? For more than half a century the story of White southern migrants has been bathed in Steinbeckian pathos and equated with the struggles of African Americans. The evidence has been drawn sometimes impressionistically, as it was in Coles's book and most of the Uptown studies. Other analysts have employed surveys and other quantitative data, but always on a selected population. That was true of two careful studies conducted in the 1970s, William W. Philliber's *Appalachian Migrants in Urban America*, which looked at Cincinnati, and *Southern Newcomers to Northern Cities* by Gene B. Petersen, Laure M. Sharp, and Thomas F. Drury, which was based on a sample of southerners living in the poor neighborhoods of Cleveland. Jones relied on these and several dozen complementary studies and reports in developing her portrait of sometimes troubled Whites and more often troubled Blacks.¹⁰ But what has been missing from this entire literature is a source that provides a broad view of the experiences, not of the highlighted few, but of the often invisible millions. That is where the Census Public Use Microdata Samples come in.

The Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS) are computer-readable samples of individual and household records from the manuscript census schedules. Readers of *Historical Methods* and *Social Science History* are well aware of the Public Use Samples and what they can do, but the wider historical community has been slow to take note. These sources do not require advanced computing or statistical skills, and they can be used expeditiously so that they need not be the sole research focus. More important, they have a great deal to offer. Students of immigration, labor, the family, urban and rural social life, and many other aspects of social history will find them an important—indeed often indispensable—source.

PUMS turns the census into a manipulatable data base, replacing (or supplementing) the volumes of tables that the Census Bureau publishes each decade. The published reports are useful for certain kinds of issues: If the subject of interest is a place (city, county, state) or the very broadest of population groups (Whites, Blacks, men, women), there is an abundance of data. But researchers with more specific interests soon realize the limitations of the published reports. Try to learn about Italian-born immigrants, aircraft workers, single mothers, or southern-born migrants; the most one can find are simple population counts for various settings.

⁹ Jones, *Dispossessed*, 251. She gives her source for the embedded quotation as "Problems in the Community," *Mountain Life and Work*, 8 (Aug. 1976), 6.

¹⁰ Their conclusions vary somewhat, but all of these studies find similarities in the economic experiences of White and Black former migrants: William W. Philliber, *Appalachian Migrants in Urban America: Cultural Conflict or Ethnic Group Formation?* (New York, 1981), esp. 37; Gene B. Petersen, Laure M. Sharp, and Thomas F. Drury, *Southern Newcomers to Northern Cities: Work and Social Adjustment in Cleveland* (New York, 1977). See also Harry K. Schwarzweller, James S. Brown, and J. J. Mangalam, *Mountain Families in Transition: A Case Study of Appalachian Migration* (University Park, 1971); and William W. Philliber and Clyde B. McCoy with Harry Dillingham, eds., *The Invisible Minority: Urban Appalachians* (Lexington, 1981).

The Public Use Samples, on the other hand, allow researchers to organize, specify, and combine data to fit particular questions. Interested in military veterans, domestic servants, female-headed households, jail inmates, or Hispanic school teachers? PUMS can provide an array of information about any of these population categories including occupational distributions, income, education, ethnic backgrounds, housing, and family arrangements. A recent article on "Single Parenthood in 1900" by Linda Gordon and Sara McLanahan demonstrates the potential. Using the 1900 PUMS, they were able statistically to identify a family category that is all but invisible in the published tables and to generate new insights and hypotheses about a social phenomenon that had been hard to access even impressionistically, so hidden had it been in the various silences of turn-of-the-century America.¹¹

The Public Use Samples are especially relevant to students of internal migration. Relocated southerners (or New Englanders, New Yorkers, Hawaiians) disappear in most published census reports, becoming part of the ubiquitous "native-born white" and "native-born black" categories. PUMS makes it possible to disaggregate those categories on the basis of state of birth and state of current residence. Thus it is possible to identify the southern-born in other regions of the country and to learn quite a bit about their social and economic circumstance—and to do so with a large degree of confidence in the results. These are huge samples, containing in most cases one percent of all individuals and households enumerated in a given census (for example, 2.6 million cases of the 260 million in the 1990 census).¹²

Recalculating the Dispossessed

A complete analysis of the experiences of former southerners would track them across the twentieth century. This report will concentrate on the generation that left the South during and after World War II. As a glance back at the decennial change figures in table 1 will show, the population of former southerners living outside their region of origin more than doubled to almost ten million between 1940 and 1960 and then grew modestly for twenty years before beginning to decline in the 1980s. 1970 is a good year to begin marking their socioeconomic experience. It allows us to catch a large majority of the southern expatriate population in their prime income-earning years.

The calculations that follow focus on five Great Lakes states (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin) and one western state (California). Those six states were the major destinations of both White and Black southerners. 1970 found at-

¹¹ Linda Gordon and Sara McLanahan, "Single Parenthood in 1900," *Journal of Family History*, 16 (April 1991), 97–116. For other instructive uses of the samples, see Steven Ruggles, "The Transformation of American Family Structure," *American Historical Review*, 99 (Feb. 1994), 103–28; Rogelio Saenz, "Interregional Migration Patterns of Chicanos: The Core, Periphery, and Frontier," *Social Science Quarterly*, 72 (March 1991), 135–48; and John J. Bukowczyk and Peter D. Slavcheff, "Metropolitan Detroit Polish Americans: A Statistical Profile," *Polish American Studies*, 48 (Spring 1991), 23–62.

¹² As in any sample, the probability of error grows larger as the number of relevant cases gets smaller. But as we can see in the tables that follow, the sample *N*s remain comfortably large even when we subdivide the southern-born groups into occupational, income, and age categories. For a discussion of sampling error and its estimation, see U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population and Housing: Public Use Microdata Samples. United States. Technical Documentation* (Washington, 1992), 3:1–3:17.

Table 2
 PUMS Population Estimates and Census Bureau Reported Populations of Former
 Southerners Living in Great Lakes States and California
 1970

<i>State of residence</i>	<i>PUMS Estimates</i>			<i>Census Report</i>	
	<i>South-Born Whites</i>	<i>South-Born Blacks</i>	<i>South-Born Total*</i>	<i>South-Born Total*</i>	<i>Percentage of State Population</i>
Illinois	457,400	451,400	958,600	955,929	8.6%
Indiana	478,100	119,100	616,900	614,781	11.9%
Michigan	444,700	357,700	832,200	839,515	9.4%
Ohio	1,060,100	321,300	1,407,700	1,388,623	13.2%
Wisconsin	56,200	46,500	111,200	116,719	2.5%
California	1,683,800	570,600	2,494,000	2,483,621	12.4%

SOURCES: 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample: 5% State Sample; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1970 Census of Population: Subject Reports, State of Birth* (Washington, 1973), 25.

* Southern-born Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Native Americans are not shown separately but are included in the south-born totals.

NOTE: Sample Ns are 1% of estimates.

most 2.5 million persons of southern birth living in California and 3.9 million living in the five midwestern states, altogether accounting for almost 60 percent of the 10.8 million southerners living outside their home region. In California, where the southern-born accounted for over 12 percent of the population, White southerners outnumbered Blacks better than three to one. Representations of southerners varied widely in the Great Lakes states, from more than 13 percent of Ohio's population to 2.5 percent in Wisconsin. Overall in those five states White southerners outnumbered Blacks by roughly two to one. Table 2 also demonstrates the reliability of the PUMS samples. The population estimates derived by multiplying sample values by a factor of 100 are extremely close to the published Census Bureau calculations.¹³

Table 3 reports several measures of economic standing for various population groups in the Great Lakes states and California. It should be immediately apparent that the old story of southern White economic marginality needs to be revised. Expatriate southern Whites by 1970 show no evidence of exceptional poverty in either the Midwest or California. Average and median family incomes of southerners were close to the norms for other parts of the White population, and they exceeded those

¹³ The Census Bureau produced six different one-in-a-hundred public use samples for 1970. Each is a subset of the two major samples that the bureau used for its published reports. All the 1970 calculations for this essay come from the PUMS sample labeled "5% state sample." It consists of 1/5 of the records in the initial 5% sample. Two clarifications: (1) Households in the tables that follow include living groups recognized as families by the census and also "primary individuals" (persons living alone or with nonrelatives); (2) "Other races" have been omitted from the tables because to include them as a single category would falsely aggregate some sharply differentiated population groups.

Table 3
Household Income and Poverty Status
1969

	<i>South- Born Whites</i>	<i>Locally Born Whites</i>	<i>Other US-Born Whites</i>	<i>Foreign- Born Whites</i>	<i>Hispanics</i>	<i>South- Born Blacks</i>	<i>Other Blacks</i>
Great Lakes area residents*							
Average family income	\$10,111	\$10,493	\$11,320	\$9,400	\$9,232	\$7,694	\$7,061
Median family income	\$9,400	\$9,600	\$10,000	\$7,900	\$8,500	\$7,000	\$6,100
% of households below poverty line	11.1%	10.5%	10.3%	16.6%	13.3%	23.6%	26.9%
N	(10,022)	(79,297)	(14,138)	(7,030)	(2,181)	(6,215)	(4,473)
California residents							
Average family income	\$10,163	\$11,023	\$11,191	\$9,653	\$8,062	\$7,210	\$6,738
Median family income	\$9,100	\$9,800	\$9,700	\$8,000	\$7,200	\$6,100	\$5,500
% of households below poverty line	10.7%	10.4%	9.7%	13.5%	19.0%	23.3%	26.1%
N	(7,550)	(13,250)	(28,261)	(4,826)	(5,845)	(2,750)	(1,514)

SOURCE: 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample: 5% State Sample.

* Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin residents.

NOTE: Sample Ns are 1% of total.

for foreign-born Whites and by a large margin those of African Americans and Hispanics.¹⁴

Poverty rates follow the same pattern. Around 11 percent of households headed by a southern-born White claimed incomes below the federal poverty line in the two regions, very close to the rates for other Whites native to the United States. Foreign-born Whites and Hispanics suffered higher rates of poverty, while Black families in the two regions were more than twice as likely to endure below-poverty-line incomes.¹⁵

There were some differences within the southern White group in the Great Lakes states. Migrants from the Appalachian states of Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia lagged slightly in average income compared to Whites from other parts of the South. Still, neither the 12.2 percent poverty rate of Appalachian-born families nor their \$9,586 average income diverged greatly from White norms, as table 4 shows.

Table 5 helps clarify the components of poverty in the Midwest and California, showing the representation of various groups within the population of below-poverty-line households. Here we see what is wrong with a literature that uses

¹⁴ Census data for income, which is self-reported, are not always reliable. However, there is no reason to believe that aggregated income statistics will be biased differently for any of the reported population groups. For a discussion of reporting procedures and common errors, see Bureau of the Census, *Public Use Microdata Samples. Technical Documentation*, B:16-B:19.

¹⁵ Poverty status is a coded census variable that is statistically derived from reported household income. The federal guideline varies according to family size and age of householder and is updated annually.

Table 4
Household Income and Poverty Status for Appalachian-Born in
Great Lakes Area
1969

	<i>Appalachians*</i>	<i>Other South- Born Whites</i>	<i>All Other Whites</i>	<i>All Blacks</i>
Average family income	\$9,586	\$11,203	\$10,533	\$7,429
% of households below poverty line	12.2%	8.8%	10.9%	25.0%
<i>N</i>	(6,755)	(3,267)	(100,465)	(10,688)

SOURCE: 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample: 5% State Sample.

* Born in Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia.

Table 5
Estimated Number of Households with Below-Poverty-Line Incomes
and Percent Distribution of Impoverished Households by Regional
Origin and Ethnicity
1969

	<i>South- Born Whites</i>	<i>Locally Born Whites</i>	<i>Other US-Born Whites</i>	<i>Foreign- Born Whites</i>	<i>Hispanics</i>	<i>South- Born Blacks</i>	<i>Other Blacks</i>	<i>Total</i>
Great Lakes area residents								
Poor households	111,300	834,900	146,100	116,600	28,900	146,500	120,200	1,511,600*
% of poor households in Great Lakes region	7.4%	55.2%	9.7%	7.7%	1.9%	9.7%	8.2%	99.8% (<i>N</i> = 15,116)
% of all house- holds in Great Lakes region	8.1%	64.0%	11.4%	5.7%	1.8%	5.0%	3.7%	99.7% (<i>N</i> = 123,818)
California residents								
Poor households	80,600	137,800	274,600	65,100	111,100	64,000	39,500	772,700*
% of poor households in California	10.1%	17.3%	34.5%	8.2%	14.0%	8.0%	5.0%	97.1% (<i>N</i> = 7,727)
% of all house- holds in California	11.5%	20.2%	43.0%	7.3%	8.9%	4.2%	2.3%	97.4% (<i>N</i> = 65,747)

SOURCE: 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample: 5% State Sample.

* Totals include other races not shown in table.

Table 6
Poverty in Households Headed by Working-Age Adults (25-59)
 1969

	<i>South- Born Whites</i>	<i>Locally Born Whites</i>	<i>Other US-Born Whites</i>	<i>Foreign- Born Whites</i>	<i>Hispanics</i>	<i>South- Born Blacks</i>	<i>Other Blacks</i>
Great Lakes area residents							
% of working-age households below poverty line	7.0%	5.2%	4.9%	5.1%	9.7%	18.9%	21.5%
<i>N</i>	(7,317)	(52,552)	(9,323)	(2,835)	(1,174)	(4,465)	(3,160)
California residents							
% of working-age households below poverty line	6.9%	6.2%	6.1%	5.1%	16.2%	19.9%	22.4%
<i>N</i>	(5,291)	(8,993)	(18,733)	(2,432)	(4,414)	(2,082)	(1,037)

SOURCE: 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample; 5% State Sample.

former southerners to put a White face on urban poverty. The five Great Lakes states counted 1.5 million households living below the poverty line at the end of 1969. Only 7.4 percent of those households were headed by southern-born Whites. Of the region's 3.8 million individuals sharing below-poverty-line incomes, only 226,500 (less than 6 percent) were Whites of southern birth. The modal face of mid-western poverty belonged not to a southerner, but to a northerner, a White northerner. More than 55 percent of poor families were headed by White natives of the Great Lakes states. Next in scale were African Americans (17.9 percent), then Whites from other parts of the United States (9.7 percent), then foreign-born Whites (7.7 percent), all of them outnumbering the southern-born White contingent. In California, southern-born Whites likewise accounted for but a small portion (10.1 percent) of impoverished households. The poor in that state were more apt to be Whites from some other part of the United States (34.5 percent), followed by California-born Whites (17.3 percent), Hispanics (14 percent), and African Americans (13 percent).

Age is an important variable in calculations of economic standing, and as table 6 indicates, it is especially important in considering White poverty. In the Midwest, 45 percent of poor southern White households were headed by an individual aged sixty years or older, and another 6 percent by persons under the age of twenty-five. When we confine our attention to those households headed by a working-age individual (25-59), the rate of poverty shrinks further, and the gap between White and Black experience widens ominously. Of southern White households in that age cohort, 7 percent experienced poverty along with 5 percent of other Whites in the Great Lakes, 6 percent in California. Working-age African Americans in both regions were three times as likely to be poor.

Table 7
Educational Characteristics of Adults (Age 25 +)
 1970

	<i>South- Born Whites</i>	<i>Locally Born Whites</i>	<i>Other US-Born Whites</i>	<i>Foreign- Born Whites</i>	<i>Hispanics</i>	<i>South- Born Blacks</i>	<i>Other Blacks</i>
Great Lakes area residents							
% with at least some college	14.5	20.8	29.7	15.4	12.4	10.6	14.4
% with some high school	43.1	53.1	44.0	29.4	39.3	42.1	54.0
% with no high school	42.3	26.1	26.4	55.2	48.3	47.3	31.6
Total	99.9	100.0	100.1	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>N</i>	(17,292)	(137,844)	(24,847)	(12,573)	(3,597)	(10,061)	(7,328)
California residents							
% with at least some college	25.4	41.5	36.6	26.3	12.2	20.3	25.1
% with some high school	46.4	47.6	46.1	38.0	37.2	45.1	50.5
% with no high school	28.2	10.9	17.3	35.7	50.5	34.5	24.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.9	99.9	100.0
<i>N</i>	(12,689)	(20,930)	(46,494)	(8,518)	(10,061)	(4,268)	(2,204)

SOURCE: 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample: 5% State Sample.

If White southerners were not the appropriate representatives of the dispossessed, how should we understand their experiences in the North and West? Jones, Philliber, Coles, and many other analysts have stressed that southern Whites and Blacks shared similar work and educational backgrounds, and the census seems to confirm at least the educational part of that assumption (table 7). Only 14.5 percent of southern-born White adults over age 25 in the Great Lakes states had ever attended college, compared to 22 percent of Whites born in the Midwest and other parts of the United States. Another 43.1 percent of southern Whites had attended high school for at least part of one year, but an almost equal number (42.3 percent) had never gone past elementary school. Except for the foreign-born, no other segment of the White population had such a large proportion of poorly educated adults. Southern-born Blacks had a still less enviable schooling record, but the combined population of African Americans had roughly the same educational distribution as southern Whites. In California educational attainments were higher for all social groups, but the basic pattern remained the same. Southern White educational backgrounds were closer to those of Black Americans than to other American-born Whites.

Table 8
Households by Residential Setting
1970

	<i>South- Born Whites</i>	<i>Locally Born Whites</i>	<i>Other US-Born Whites</i>	<i>Foreign- Born Whites</i>	<i>Hispanics</i>	<i>South- Born Blacks</i>	<i>Other Blacks</i>
Great Lakes area residents							
% in core city, multi-family housing	8.8	6.9	12.8	16.0	26.8	32.6	40.1
% in core city, single-family housing*	22.0	20.0	20.3	32.5	27.6	52.0	44.6
% in suburban ring	46.6	40.6	46.4	41.1	29.0	11.5	10.6
% in small city/rural areas	22.5	32.5	20.5	10.4	14.5	3.9	4.8
Total	99.9	99.9	100.0	100.0	99.9	100.0	100.1
N	(10,022)	(79,297)	(14,138)	(7,030)	(2,181)	(6,227)	(4,616)
California residents							
% in core city, multi-family housing	9.2	10.8	13.6	18.9	12.4	21.0	31.4
% in core city, single-family housing*	19.9	22.4	23.5	27.5	27.9	48.4	40.5
% in suburban ring	60.4	55.6	56.8	49.5	53.7	28.7	27.1
% in small city/rural areas	10.5	11.1	6.0	4.1	6.0	2.0	1.0
Total	100.0	99.9	99.9	100.0	100.0	100.1	100.0
N	(7,550)	(13,250)	(28,261)	(4,826)	(5,845)	(2,750)	(1,514)

SOURCE: 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample: 5% State Sample.

* Includes duplexes.

Yet educational background and economic opportunity did not correlate across racial lines. Race channeled former southerners into separate labor and housing markets. The remaining tables demonstrate and clarify this divergence. By 1970 most African Americans in the Great Lakes states and California were part of a precariously positioned inner-city working class; most White southerners had joined the ranks of the new suburban working class.

Table 8 provides another reason to shed the Uptown stereotype of southern Whites locked in urban poverty. In the Great Lakes states, fewer than one-third of southern Whites lived in the big cities, and fewer than 9 percent resided in the multifamily structures that are one of the marks of inner-city living. In contrast to Blacks and Latinos and also at rates considerably higher than foreign-born Whites and White migrants from other regions of the United States, White southerners avoided the cities; they became the most suburbanized of all the identified population groups. In the Great Lakes region, 46.6 percent of southern White families resided

in suburban communities ringing major metropolitan areas, and another 22.5 percent lived in small cities and rural areas. In California the trend was even stronger: 60.4 percent lived in suburbs, 10.5 percent in small city and rural settings. Only Whites native to those states showed a similar aversion to big-city living.¹⁶

Yet this suburban residential pattern was supported largely on blue-collar incomes. White southerners spread widely across the labor market, filling jobs from bank president to janitor, with a not inconsiderable showing in the white-collar sector. But the white-collar representations of both male and female southerners lagged behind the rest of the White population. In both areas southern Whites remained significantly more working class than Whites of other backgrounds. The pattern was sharpest in the Great Lakes states, where 66.1 percent of employed southern-born White males held blue-collar jobs, in contrast to 51 percent of the locally born Whites and 44.5 percent of Whites born elsewhere in the United States (table 9). Similarly, more than 52 percent of employed southern White females worked blue-collar or service jobs (rarely domestic) compared to 38 percent of White women born in the region. California, with its less industrial economy, shifted all these distributions toward white collar, but there too southerners remained distinctively more blue-collar than the rest of the White population.

Only African Americans and Latinos matched the southern White blue-collar distributions. But a closer look at employment patterns reveals important differences in the *kind* of blue-collar jobs: southern Whites enjoyed concentrations in such advantageous sections of the economy as skilled, craft, and foreman positions, where in both regions 25 percent of all employed southern-born White males found their livelihoods (table 10). PUMS also allows us to see that key industries provided favorable job niches. In the Midwest, where southern Whites (males and females) were 6 percent of the overall labor force, they were 18 percent of the employees in the rubber industry, 15 percent in aircraft, 12 percent in autos, 11 percent in steel and trucking, 10 percent in electrical and chemicals. In California, where they were 8 percent of the labor force, they made up 23 percent of the employees in oil, 15 percent in trucking, 14 percent in steel, and 13 percent in aircraft and the construction industry. Thus in both regions many of the leading industries, featuring unionized, highly paid, and often secure jobs, hired disproportionate numbers of southern Whites. From that same list, only steel and the auto industry provided similar access to Blacks and Hispanics.

The favorable market position of southern Whites in the blue-collar economy showed up in the pay envelope. Among males holding blue-collar jobs, southern Whites reported the largest individual wage and salary earnings of any of the regional and racial groups: slightly higher than other Whites, considerably higher

¹⁶ High rates of home ownership accompanied the suburban trend. In the Great Lakes states, 63% of households headed by a southern-born White owned or were buying a home, compared to 72% of Whites native to the region, 63% of Whites born elsewhere, and 41% of Black households. The suburban distribution of southern Whites in Cincinnati is emphasized in Philliber, *Appalachian Migrants in Urban America*, 21-25. Bennett M. Berger also came across the affinity of southern-born Whites for suburban settings; see his classic study, Bennett M. Berger, *Working-Class Suburb: A Study of Auto Workers in Suburbia* (Berkeley, 1960). A large minority of his sample families in the California suburb were from Oklahoma and Arkansas.

Table 9
Occupations of Individuals in the Civilian Labor Force
1970

	<i>South- Born Whites</i>	<i>Locally Born Whites</i>	<i>Other US-Born Whites</i>	<i>Foreign- Born Whites</i>	<i>Hispanics</i>	<i>South- Born Blacks</i>	<i>Other Blacks</i>
Great Lakes area residents							
Males:							
% Professional/ technical	15.1	21.2	30.3	23.4	12.0	6.7	8.6
% Clerical/sales	10.1	14.3	14.9	10.9	9.4	7.9	13.3
% Blue collar	66.1	51.0	44.5	53.6	66.6	70.0	61.2
% Service/farm	8.6	13.4	10.3	12.2	12.1	15.5	17.0
Total	99.9	99.9	100.0	100.1	100.1	100.1	100.1
N	(9,328)	(80,552)	(13,274)	(5,299)	(2,291)	(4,759)	(4,379)
Females:							
% Professional/ technical	12.1	15.7	21.8	15.4	9.4	10.2	10.0
% Clerical/sales	35.1	46.5	43.9	35.8	36.1	22.5	36.7
% Blue collar	28.7	16.6	14.4	24.3	33.7	24.2	18.5
% Service/farm	24.1	21.2	19.9	24.5	20.8	43.1	34.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.9
N	(7,250)	(63,271)	(10,220)	(3,692)	(1,735)	(4,362)	(4,164)
California residents							
Males:							
% Professional/ technical	25.0	26.1	34.0	33.1	9.2	10.7	13.3
% Clerical/sales	13.2	17.0	17.8	15.0	9.9	11.0	15.4
% Blue collar	49.1	42.2	38.4	39.6	58.8	57.2	49.8
% Service/farm	12.7	14.8	9.9	12.3	22.2	21.0	21.5
Total	100.0	100.1	100.1	100.0	100.1	99.9	100.0
N	(6,335)	(14,944)	(23,222)	(3,553)	(6,074)	(2,027)	(1,360)
Females:							
% Professional/ technical	17.0	18.1	23.0	19.2	6.7	12.2	13.4
% Clerical/sales	42.3	51.9	48.9	43.8	30.6	26.2	40.3
% Blue collar	15.9	9.5	10.6	15.9	34.6	19.8	15.4
% Service/farm	24.8	20.5	17.4	21.0	28.0	41.7	30.9
Total	100.0	100.0	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	100.0
N	(5,237)	(12,533)	(18,873)	(3,125)	(4,743)	(1,985)	(1,235)

SOURCE: 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample: 5% State Sample.

Table 10
Occupations of Males in the Civilian Labor Force,
Highlighting Blue-Collar Work
1970

	<i>South- Born Whites</i>	<i>Locally Born Whites</i>	<i>Other US-Born Whites</i>	<i>Foreign- Born Whites</i>	<i>Hispanics</i>	<i>South- Born Blacks</i>	<i>Other Blacks</i>
Great Lakes area residents							
Males:							
% Blue collar	66.1	51.0	44.5	53.6	66.6	70.0	61.2
% Skilled, craft, foreman	24.8	21.9	19.8	26.9	17.2	16.6	14.0
California residents							
Males:							
% Blue collar	49.1	42.2	38.4	39.6	58.8	57.2	49.8
% Skilled, craft, foreman	25.0	17.5	20.0	21.6	19.6	18.3	14.6

SOURCE: 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample; 5% State Sample.

than Black and Hispanic blue-collar workers (table 11). That is part of the reason why family incomes of southern Whites approached the White norm despite educational disadvantages.

Was there also a multiple-income advantage? Southern White families were slightly larger on average than other White groups (though smaller than Black and Hispanic families), but second incomes were no more common. In the Great Lakes region, 39 percent of all southern White women age 14 and older held paying jobs, earning an average salary of just under \$3,600 (table 11). Both figures compared closely to the standards of the rest of the White population and did not greatly differ from minority group patterns, though African American women were somewhat more likely to be in the labor force. Despite different occupational distributions (see table 9), average female incomes were surprisingly uniform.

It was not the rate of female employment or the size of female contributions, but the stability of male-headed households that gave southern Whites their major family income advantage. Households headed by males in their prime earning years (25-59) enjoyed average incomes above \$10,000 for all of the reported groups, including African Americans, but the prevalence of such households varied significantly. As table 12 shows, 65 percent of southern White households in the Great Lakes states were in this economically advantageous condition, compared to 57 percent of the remaining White population and 49 percent of Black households. The table summarizes much of what we have already seen while simplifying the population categories. Southern Whites in 1970 enjoyed an age advantage compared to the combined population of other Whites, and that compensated in some measure for the preponderance of blue-collar occupations. Relative to minorities, they en-

Table 11
Average Wage and Salary Income for Individuals
in the Civilian Labor Force
1969

	<i>South- Born Whites</i>	<i>Locally Born Whites</i>	<i>Other US-Born Whites</i>	<i>Foreign- Born Whites</i>	<i>Hispanics</i>	<i>South- Born Blacks</i>	<i>Other Blacks</i>
Great Lakes area residents							
Males: blue collar	\$7,183	\$6,440	\$6,868	\$5,943	\$6,239	\$5,945	\$4,953
Females: all occupations	\$3,594	\$3,479	\$3,753	\$3,728	\$3,254	\$3,458	\$3,306
Percentage of females in labor force	39.1%	39.9%	41.2%	31.4%	42.1%	47.8%	42.9%
California residents							
Males: blue collar	\$7,645	\$6,271	\$7,598	\$7,437	\$6,219	\$6,214	\$5,385
Females: all occupations	\$3,974	\$3,571	\$4,373	\$3,886	\$3,029	\$3,679	\$3,340
Percentage of females in labor force	44.1%	40.4%	41.4%	35.6%	37.6%	49.2%	44.0%

SOURCE: 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample: 5% State Sample.

Table 12
Head of Household and Family Income
1969

	<i>South-Born Whites</i>		<i>All Other Whites</i>		<i>Hispanics</i>		<i>All Blacks</i>	
	<i>%</i>	<i>Average Income</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Average Income</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Average Income</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Average Income</i>
Great Lakes area residents								
Male age 25-59	64.8	\$11,938	56.7	\$13,300	64.8	\$10,817	49.2	\$10,107
Female age 25-59	8.2	\$5,822	7.8	\$6,620	10.0	\$5,611	22.2	\$4,524
M/F age 60 +	19.0	\$6,912	28.7	\$6,956	13.9	\$6,476	19.7	\$4,863
M/F under 25	8.0	\$7,315	6.9	\$7,085	11.3	\$6,742	9.0	\$5,569
All households	100.0	\$10,111	101.1	\$10,533	100.0	\$9,232	100.1	\$7,429
N	(10,022)		(100,465)		(2,181)		(10,688)	
California residents								
Male age 25-59	59.9	\$12,712	54.5	\$14,242	62.4	\$9,725	49.8	\$9,671
Female age 25-59	10.2	\$5,867	10.5	\$6,691	13.1	\$4,909	23.3	\$4,283
M/F age 60 +	23.8	\$6,599	26.5	\$7,589	14.1	\$5,593	17.4	\$4,420
M/F under 25	6.1	\$6,195	8.5	\$5,962	10.4	\$5,414	9.4	\$4,880
All households	100.0	\$10,163	100.0	\$10,983	100.0	\$8,062	99.9	\$7,049
N	(7,550)		(46,337)		(5,845)		(4,179)	

SOURCE: 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample: 5% State Sample.

joyed labor market advantages; relative to Blacks, they also enjoyed family structure advantages. The combination resulted in much higher average incomes.

Those data tell a story different from the conventional one that has remained in vogue from John Steinbeck to Jacqueline Jones. Distracted by certain highly visible episodes of southern White poverty, generations of writers have stressed the difficulties of northern resettlement while often finding equivalences in the struggles of White and Black migrants. But when the experiences of the two groups are broadly compared, as those census data allow, the story becomes one of sharp divergence, of two groups of ambitious southerners finding distinctly different sets of opportunities: one in marginal sectors, the other in the newest work and home settings that a booming economy could provide.

Did this pattern survive past the flush years of the postwar period? The 1970s and 1980s complicated the economy of the nation and especially of the Great Lakes region that had attracted so many southerners in the half century before. Did southerners lose economic position as the steel belt became the rust belt and shed millions of blue-collar jobs? A look at the 1980 and 1990 Census Public Use Samples suggests that the answer is no. As table 13 indicates, the changing political economy seems not to have had a differentiating impact on White former southerners. In both 1980 and 1990 southern White households continued to track White norms in family income, while poverty remained as infrequent as it had been in 1970. Compare this to the pattern in African American households in the Great Lakes area, where the poverty rate climbed significantly in the past twenty years and by 1990 claimed more than 30 percent of all Black households—including 35 percent of those headed by nonsoutherners.

California was experiencing something different in these decades, as evidenced by the huge income gap revealed in table 13. Compared to the Great Lakes region, California shows substantially lower poverty rates and substantially higher average incomes for every population group except Hispanics (whose numbers in the state had tripled in twenty years). The difference was particularly striking for African Americans: their poverty rates declined in California, while rising alarmingly in the Midwest. Improvement was also the story for California's White southerners, whose growing incomes kept pace with the rest of White California.¹⁷

But the southern-born populations were changing in ways that are not evident in these aggregate income figures. The economic reorganization that privileged California also benefited much of the South, now rechristened the sun belt. Creating jobs much faster than the northern states, the dynamic southern economy was also acquiring and reacquiring population as the migration patterns of two generations went into reverse. Now the big story was the North moving South, and among the movers were large numbers of former southerners. Table 14 shows the impact

¹⁷ Since 1990 some and perhaps a good deal of California's income advantage has been lost as it struggles with its own regional recession.

Table 13
Household Income and Poverty Status
1989

	<i>South- Born Whites</i>	<i>All Other Whites</i>	<i>Hispanics</i>	<i>South- Born Blacks</i>	<i>Other Blacks</i>
Great Lakes area residents					
1989 average family income	\$35,379	\$36,902	\$30,643	\$25,833	\$23,055
% below poverty: 1989	10.5	9.0	17.9	26.9	35.0
1979	8.8	8.4	18.2	23.9	29.9
1969	11.1	10.9	13.3	23.6	26.9
N (1989)	(9,829)	(125,260)	(2,208)	(5,745)	(6,147)
California residents					
1989 average family income	\$42,195	\$45,980	\$31,141	\$31,638	\$31,136
% below poverty: 1989	6.6	6.8	18.5	16.2	19.2
1979	8.2	8.0	17.3	20.0	23.9
1969	10.7	10.3	19.0	23.3	26.1
N (1989)	(7,530)	(61,379)	(16,151)	(3,304)	(2,928)

SOURCES: 1980 Public Use Microdata Sample: Sample B; 1990 Public Use Sample: Sample B

Table 14
Estimated Population of Former Southerners Residing in Great Lakes
States and California
1970-1990

	<i>South- Born Whites</i>	<i>South- Born Blacks</i>	<i>Total South Born*</i>
Great Lakes area residents			
1970	2,496,500	1,296,000	3,792,500
1980	2,307,800	1,535,700	3,843,500
1990	2,148,050	1,307,027	3,455,077
Percentage change 1970-1990	- 14%	+ 1%	- 9%
California residents			
1970	1,683,800	570,600	2,254,400
1980	1,572,700	720,300	2,293,000
1990	1,504,932	689,416	2,194,348
Percentage change 1970-1990	- 11%	+ 21%	- 3%

SOURCES: 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample: 5% State Sample; 1980 Public Use Microdata Sample: Sample B; 1990 Public Use Microdata Sample: Sample B.

* Southern-born Hispanics, Asians Americans, and Native Americans not included.

NOTE: Sample Ns are 1% of estimates, except for 1990 where an additional weighting variable changes the ratio slightly.

Table 15
 Estimated Number of Southern-Born Newcomers to and Departees
 from Great Lakes States and California
 1975-1980 and 1985-1990

	<i>South- Born Whites</i>	<i>South- Born Blacks</i>	<i>Total South Born*</i>
Great Lakes area residents			
1975-1980 newcomers	280,000	95,000	375,000
1975-1980 departees	340,400	83,200	423,600
1985-1990 newcomers	294,609	73,594	368,203
1985-1990 departees	262,759	73,848	336,607
California residents			
1975-1980 newcomers	240,000	95,000	335,000
1975-1980 departees	237,000	41,400	278,400
1985-1990 newcomers	267,722	84,721	352,443
1985-1990 departees	200,829	58,178	259,007

SOURCES: 1980 Public Use Microdata Sample: Sample B; 1990 Public Use Microdata Sample: Sample B.

* South-born Hispanics, Asians Americans, and Native Americans not included.

NOTE: Sample Ns for 1975-1980 are 1/200 of estimates; the 1985-1990 calculations involve a weighting variable, but Ns are approximately 1/100 of estimates.

on the expatriate populations. In the five Great Lakes states the number of southern-born Whites declined by 14 percent in the twenty years after 1970, while the population of southern-born Blacks rose slightly in the 1970s and then fell in the 1980s, ending with virtually no gain for the twenty-year period. The California experience was slightly different: an 11 percent decline in the population of White southerners and a 21 percent increase for southern-born Blacks between 1970 and 1990.

Southern outmigration had not stopped after 1970, and indeed had not greatly slowed, but now the flow of newcomers to the North and West was overbalanced by the combined volume of deaths and return migration. We get some sense of the pattern in table 15. The census asks respondents where they lived five years earlier, a question that yields a half-decade snapshot of population movements. In the last half of the 1970s, 423,600 southerners left the Great Lakes region, most to return South. But they were replaced by 375,000 newcomers of southern birth. This population turnover continued through the 1980s. Between 1985 and 1990, 336,607 southerners left the region while 368,203 arrived. California experienced a somewhat higher rate of inflow over outflow, especially of Black southerners, but turnover was the main story there too.

This population churning helps explain the economic standing of what otherwise would have been a rapidly aging population of former southerners. Average age increased but not much more than in the general population. In the Great Lakes region, southern White household heads averaged two years older than other Whites in 1990; in California, five years older. Newcomers also brought new job skills, as

Table 16
Occupations of Individuals in the Civilian Labor Force, 1990
and Net Change by Category, 1970-1990

	<i>South-Born Whites</i>		<i>Other Whites</i>		<i>South-Born Blacks</i>		<i>Other Blacks</i>	
	1990	(Change 1970-1990)	1990	(Change 1970-1990)	1990	(Change 1970-1990)	1990	(Change 1970-1990)
Great Lakes area residents								
Males:								
% Professional/technical	23.8	(+ 9)	26.0	(+ 3)	13.8	(+ 7)	15.6	(+ 7)
% Clerical/sales	13.3	(+ 3)	16.6	(+ 2)	12.9	(+ 5)	17.4	(+ 4)
% Blue collar	52.1	(- 14)	43.9	(- 6)	54.7	(- 15)	40.9	(- 20)
% Service/Farm	10.8	(+ 2)	13.4	(0)	18.6	(+ 3)	26.1	(+ 9)
Total	100.0		99.9		100.0		100.0	
N	(7,343)*		(103,357)*		(3,785)*		(7,415)*	
Females:								
% Professional/technical	26.4	(+ 14)	27.4	(+ 11)	21.9	(+ 12)	20.6	(+ 11)
% Clerical/sales	35.7	(+ 1)	40.8	(- 5)	30.0	(+ 7)	43.6	(+ 7)
% Blue collar	16.6	(- 12)	12.0	(- 5)	18.7	(- 5)	12.8	(- 6)
% Service/farm	21.4	(- 3)	19.8	(- 1)	29.4	(- 14)	23.1	(- 12)
Total	100.1		100.0		100.0		100.1	
N	(6,525)*		(91,950)*		(4,393)*		(7,932)*	
California residents								
Males:								
% Professional/technical	38.7	(+ 14)	36.8	(+ 7)	22.9	(+ 12)	20.5	(+ 7)
% Clerical/sales	18.4	(+ 5)	20.4	(+ 3)	18.6	(+ 8)	24.1	(+ 9)
% Blue collar	31.3	(- 18)	31.9	(- 8)	39.7	(- 17)	35.5	(- 14)
% Service/farm	11.6	(- 1)	10.9	(- 1)	18.9	(- 2)	19.9	(- 2)
Total	100.0		100.0		100.1		100.0	
N	(5,416)*		(53,115)*		(2,353)*		(3,684)*	
Females:								
% Professional/technical	36.6	(+ 20)	36.0	(+ 15)	29.2	(+ 17)	25.7	(+ 12)
% Clerical/sales	42.4	(0)	43.8	(- 6)	39.2	(+ 13)	49.2	(+ 9)
% Blue collar	6.9	(- 9)	5.8	(- 5)	7.9	(- 12)	8.2	(- 7)
% Service/farm	14.1	(- 11)	14.4	(- 4)	23.7	(- 18)	16.9	(- 14)
Total	100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0	
N	(4,648)*		(46,335)*		(2,310)*		(3,487)*	

SOURCES: 1990 Public Use Microdata Sample: Sample B; 1970 Public Use Microdata Sample: 5% State Sample.

* These are approximate sample Ns. The 1990 PUMS employs a weighting variable to compensate for oversampling of certain household types.

we can see in table 16. In both settings southern Whites generally kept up with the sectoral restructuring that replaced manufacturing jobs with white-collar and service sector employment. In California by 1990 southern White occupational distributions were heavily white collar and almost exactly parallel to the rest of the White population. In the Great Lakes, blue-collar work still occupied 52 percent of

southern White males compared to 44 percent of other Whites, but that had come down from 66 percent twenty years earlier.

There had been other changes in those decades—changes in family composition, in the patterns of female employment, in male and female earning power—but none of those had differentially affected southern Whites, whose behavior in virtually all measurable categories followed closely that of the rest of the White population.

The African American experience was more complicated. The decades after 1970 opened up the already substantial differences between White and Black socioeconomic position, but, even more, they opened up large variations within the Black population. The expansion of the Black middle class (evident in the white-collar occupational figures of table 16) coincided with the expansion of Black poverty (table 13). And there is another pattern worth noting. The sharply bifurcated opportunity system seems to have affected northern-born Blacks more than southern-born. Age is probably the chief culprit. Southern-born Black household heads were on average fourteen years older than their northern-born counterparts and often part of a different labor market. Less likely to hold white-collar jobs, the aging migrant generation in some cases held on to manufacturing jobs to which younger Blacks no longer had access.

Those data do not begin to resolve the riddles of late-twentieth-century urban poverty. No matter how many ways we slice and dice them, aggregate population statistics are too limited to get us very far into the tough questions of modern social behavior. What these PUMS data can do is clarify some of the empirical issues: in this case, establishing that the two groups of southerners traced very different pathways outside their home region. Those findings in turn speak to some of the arguments and theories that have sought to explain recent patterns of socioeconomic inequality. The argument implicit in many of the 1960s and 1970s studies, that the Vietnam War-era economy had ceased to provide the sort of jobs that poorly educated newcomers could use to attain middle-class standards of living, is probably undercut by this portrait of southern White economic mobility. On the other hand, the more current segmented labor market theory associated with David M. Gordon and his colleagues may find support in these numbers. At least until recently, we did indeed see two racially distinct groups of similarly prepared migrants finding different occupational and housing niches within a largely blue-collar spectrum.¹⁸

Is there also support for the updated culture-of-poverty thesis that Nicholas Lemann employs alongside his analysis of federal policy failures? Or for the arguments of the new eugenicists who increasingly capture public attention with various ethno-essentialist constructions? I certainly hope not. In fact this exercise should

¹⁸ David M. Gordon, Richard Edwards, and Michael Reich, *Segmented Work, Divided Workers: The Historical Transformation of Labor in the United States* (Cambridge, Eng., 1982).

raise large doubts about such formulations. Not long ago, theories of cultural and even biological inadequacy were used to explain the difficulties of Appalachians and other White rural southerners. Yet it turned out that what was really inadequate were the structures of opportunity. In today's pessimistic policy environment, that may be the most valuable lesson we take from this demonstration.¹⁹

APPENDIX: USING PUMS

Steven Ruggles has published several articles on the virtues and limitations of the Public Use Samples. Cited below, they are must reading for anyone planning to use PUMS. What follows is a brief introduction.

The Census Bureau produced the first computer-readable sample from the 1960 census and has issued more and more elaborate versions with each subsequent census (simultaneously cutting back on its published volumes). In addition the bureau has cooperated with several groups of demographers and historians who over the past fifteen years have produced samples from earlier decades. These now cover 1880, 1900, 1910, 1940, and 1950. The University of Minnesota Social History Research Laboratory, which just completed the 1880 sample, is also producing samples for 1850 and 1920, both soon to be available.

University demography laboratories often possess some of the samples, and the rest can be borrowed from the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) in Ann Arbor, Michigan, at no cost if your campus is one of the 370 member institutions. It has not been particularly easy to use these data sets. They are all massive data files, and a mainframe computer has been one of the essentials. Familiarity with a statistical program like SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) or SAS (Statistical Analysis System) is another.

If this sounds intimidating, there is good news on the horizon. The newest desktop computers are capable of handling some of the earlier PUMS files or major data extractions from the later censuses, and downloading will soon be relatively easy. The University of Minnesota Social History Laboratory has compiled a massive Integrated Public Use Microdata Sample (IPUMS) that combines all eleven censuses. The files have been partly reformatted, both to facilitate use and to improve the comparability of data from one census to the next. Moreover, they can be accessed via the internet, eliminating many of the complications of working with ICPSR computer tapes.

A different approach has been pioneered by Albert Anderson at the University of Michigan's Center for Population Studies. In conjunction with the Consortium for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) in University Center, Michigan, he is testing a system that allows users direct interactive access to PUMS without any of the data preparation and software learning steps normally involved. Users obtain an account at the consortium and log in via the internet. A concise manual shows how to request cross-tabulations and some other basic statistics. It is refreshingly simple. I spent an hour or two reading the manual and with little difficulty generated the data that appear here in tables 13–16. In the test version only the 1980 and 1990 PUMS are available. If something similar becomes available for the other PUMS they will truly be a source that cannot be ignored.

The best introduction to the Public Use Samples is the special issue of *Historical Methods*, 28 (Winter 1995) devoted to "The Minnesota Historical Census Projects." Steven Ruggles also prepared a briefer report, "Comparability of the Public Use Files of the U.S. Census of Popula-

¹⁹ The ethno-essentialist perspective is found in Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray, *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life* (New York, 1994), which extends the public policy pessimism in an earlier book by Charles Murray, *Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950–1980* (New York, 1984). Contrary arguments are advanced by Christopher Jencks, *Rethinking Social Policy: Race, Poverty, and the Underclass* (New York, 1992); and Michael B. Katz, *The Undeserving Poor: From the War on Poverty to the War on Welfare* (New York, 1989).

tion, 1880-1980," *Social Science History*, 15 (Spring 1991), 123-58. Each of the samples is described in Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, *Guide to Resources and Services 1993-1994* (Ann Arbor, 1994). Also useful: Michael A. Strong, Samuel H. Preston, and Mark C. Hereward, "An Introduction to the Public Use Sample of the 1910 U.S. Census of Population," *Historical Methods*, 22 (Spring 1989), 54-56; Brian Gratton, F. Arturo Rosales, and Hans DeBano, "A Sample of the Mexican-American Population in 1940," *Historical Methods*, 21 (Spring 1988), 80-87; and Steven Ruggles and Russell R. Menard, "A Public Use Sample of the 1880 Census of Population," *Historical Methods*, 23 (Summer 1990), 104-15. Sources for PUMS: Social History Research Library, Department of History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455; e-mail: ruggles@atlas.ocsci.umn.edu
Consortium for International Earth Science Information Network, 2250 Pierce Road, University Center, MI 48710; telephone (517) 797-2622; e-mail: ciesin.info@ciesin.org
Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, P. O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI 48106; telephone (313) 764-2570