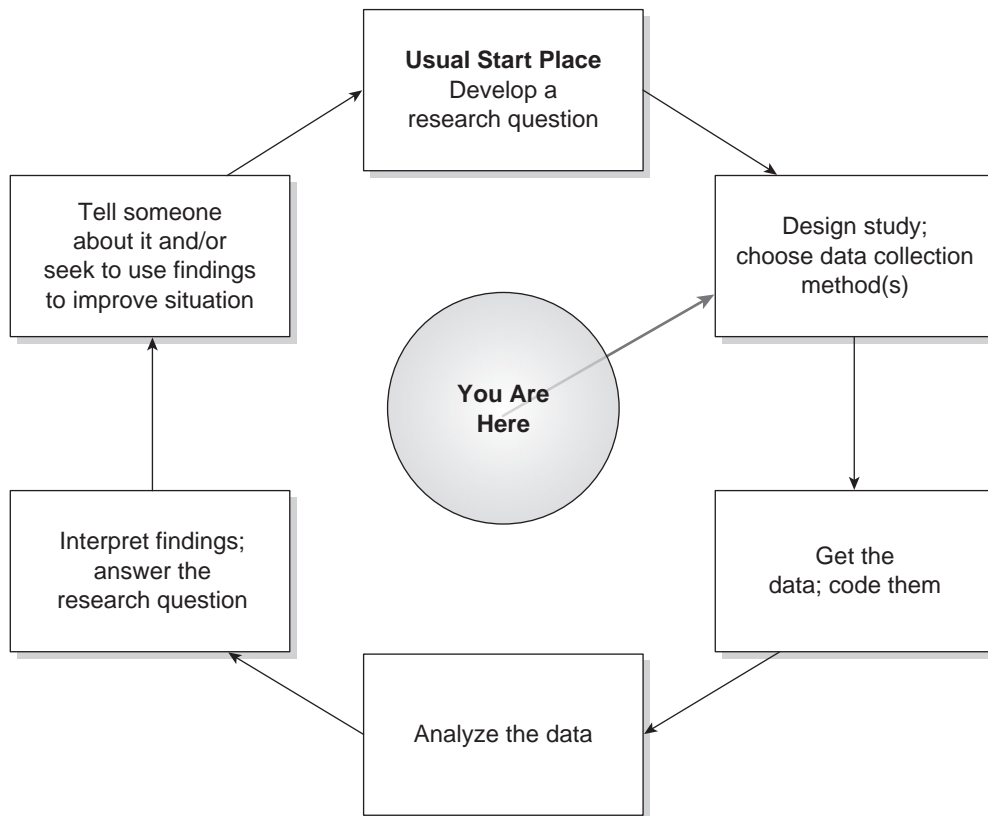# Section II

RESEARCH DESIGN

FIGURE 2.1   The Road Map (again)

After developing and explaining our research question, the next step is to figure out how we are going to answer the question given the complex mess of actions, interactions, data sources, motivations, etc., we call reality. This step is called **research design**. Research design is the point where researchers define the scope of the research—the limits and content of the data investigated. The research design is a detailed plan that specifies the kind of data needed (measurement), the strategy for collecting the data (the research method), the subjects (sampling, if needed), and the research site (when and where to get the data).

When we write about our work, we usually present the research as if it flowed exactly as in the map in Figure 2.2. That is, we start with the stuff in the first box and move along carefully to the last box. But here's the part you should know if you wish to get good grades: The figure is a lot neater than reality. We often actually start with

an interest in particular data, or an opportunity to conduct a particular kind of data collection, and we work the rest of the design around that. Even so, you will need a good plan to get from the research question to the answer.

We design our research plan around our specific research questions. Once we are clear on what we want to learn and our concepts are carefully defined, we look for specific indicators we can measure to reflect or capture these concepts. That is, we decide exactly what measures we will use to represent each concept. For example, if the concept is inebriation, we might count the number of alcoholic drinks consumed in an evening, or one's blood alcohol level, or one's ability to speak clearly. Whichever one (or combination of the above) we choose as our measure, that becomes the working definition of that variable for the research project.

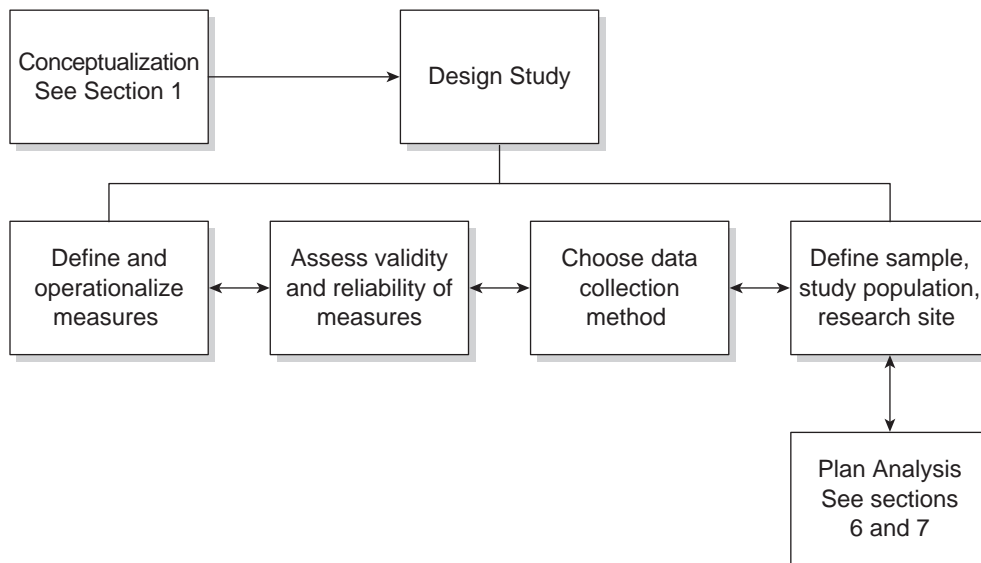Following Sherlock Holmes or any good detective, choosing the best technique for

FIGURE 2.2   Research Design Detail Map

gathering evidence depends to a great extent on knowing what kind of information we are supposed to be looking for. As we break down abstract ideas into empirically observable attributes and events, we are able to find ways of measuring our concepts in spite of the complexity of social relations. Thus, if we were studying reckless behavior, including drunk driving, we might measure inebriation as the blood alcohol levels at which subjects decided that they were too drunk to drive. If, instead, we were interested in small group interactions, we might measure inebriation as the point at which one's friends report that one has had enough. The two measures are very different from each other and we need to choose deliberately between them *according to the needs of our research.*

From Ideas to Measurable Indicators

As discussed in the previous section, conceptualization consists of defining and specifying the ideas that our variables have to represent. The next task is to figure out how to measure these variables. The first stage in the design process, **operationalization**, does just that. Operationalization is the bridge that carries us from concepts to measures. It converts information (things we observe) into data (things we can record and analyze). There is an intricate relationship between operationalization and measurement since the attributes we identify when we operationalize a concept determine to a great extent the levels of measurements we shall employ.

As Ellen Wratten discusses in her analysis of the various approaches to studying urban poverty, measurements are not without controversy. The operationalization of ideas varies depending on our theoretical positions, our assumptions, and even on our values and ideologies. Hence, as Wratten shows, the field of **development economics** had defined poverty in terms of income. This operationalization might seem straightforward

enough, but such an approach contains assumptions about life, work, and the very reasons that we would measure economic data in the first place. While the *concept* of poverty was tied to other concepts, such as "human welfare," the operationalization of poverty left those other considerations out. Further, the use of "income" as a measure of one's economic resources and socioeconomic status really works only under the conditions of an industrial society in which most people have defined "jobs." Worldwide, people rely on a variety of exchanges and nonmarket behaviors to "make a living." Viewed from a broader perspective, then, income as a measure of social deprivation became increasingly untenable because of both the imprecise measurements of income and the **spurious** relationship between income and quality of life. In response, many international institutions have adopted a different **paradigm** that accounts for poverty by examining social indicators that provide a more encompassing picture of social deprivation. In Bhutan, for example, one of the factors currently accounting for social development is the rate of happiness.

There is an interesting irony about how our knowledge affects the measurements we select. Although it is generally the case that the more we know about a topic, the more easily we can identify the many meanings embedded in its conceptualization, it is also true that the more we think we know about a topic, the less precise our measures might be. Because we are confident in our prior knowledge, we may be less critical of our initial ideas and therefore less likely to recognize their limitations.

In short, one consideration to bear in mind is that although the idea of measurement may seem mechanical, it is fraught with opportunities for confusion and contention because theoretical constructs shape our perspectives on reality. Thus, we as researchers need to identify our assumptions clearly when designing our measures.

Box 2.1 Max Weber (1864–1920)

Weber is considered one of the early pillars of the social sciences. A prolific writer, he made several major methodological contributions to the social sciences. Concepts such as "bureaucracy," "power," "charisma," and "social status," to name a few, are still routinely perceived and measured in the form in which they had been defined by Weber. In addition, he made essential contributions to the field of comparative and historical sociology with his work on economics and society. Perhaps his most notable book, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1905), argued for the importance of ideas and beliefs over material conditions in creating subsequent economic success, challenging sociologists to attend as much to the qualitative dimensions of economic life as to the numbers.

Validity and Reliability: Getting It Right

Researchers have developed two key criteria with which to evaluate our designs. These are **validity** and **reliability**. The former calls attention to, among other things, the need for accuracy of measurements. In essence, it asks whether we are really measuring what we think we are measuring, or merely discussing something sort of similar. This question has two essential dimensions: Do the measurements we construct accurately reflect the contextual meaning of our variables? And have we accounted for everything? To put it simply, when we identify **indicators** to measure ideas, we need to show that they truly reflect the meaning of an idea in its proper time and context. (Are we placing enough limits on our measures?) And we need to show that these indicators account for all the definitional dimensions of variables. (Are we placing too many limits on our measures?)

Reliability, on the other hand, relates more closely to consistency and repeatability. The reliability question asks whether the data we're collecting mean the same thing each time we get it, across different times and places. If a question is vague, or if it relies on situational knowledge, then the answers we get will depend on what respondents think we're talking about at that moment. To continue our earlier example, the question "Do you drink?" might mean one thing to a casual social drinker, another to a recovering alcoholic, a third thing to someone who's religion forbids alcohol, and something else entirely to a teenager with a fake ID. Depending on whom we ask, the pattern of our answers can vary dramatically. In contrast, the more precise, less conversational "Have you consumed at least one alcoholic drink within the past 30 days?" is extremely reliable.

When designing studies that rely on **self-reports**, we have to bear in mind that subjects won't always be able to tell us what we want to know. This is not about honesty, but rather a matter of awareness. Certain kinds of questions require a deep level of self-awareness that we generally don't possess. For example, the question "How do advertisements affect your purchasing decisions" seems simple enough, but advertising actually works because it affects us at both the conscious and unconscious levels. So we can't answer that. Some questions require speculation about things we can't know, such as "Is there tension between the immigrant workers and the native-born workers at your job?" If there is obvious tension, the subjects may be able to answer. If the tension is relatively hidden, then they won't. And, of course, some topics are sensitive, and some people would rather make up an answer than share the real details. Money, for example, is often too sensitive a matter. All

of these types of questions are inherently unreliable.

It is all too easy to concentrate our attention on only one or two indicators of any complex matter, thereby overlooking the bigger picture. This is one of the principal concerns of the Grzywacz and Carlson review of the ways in which we study the balance between work and family. As their study illustrates, the academic literature on this topic has been very active in recent decades. However, the authors show that most of the measures of "balance" have either lacked validity—because they were really measuring some other concept such as "equality" rather than balance—or they have lacked reliability—because they were inconsistently applied, yielding different results with each study.

Grzywacz and Carlson demonstrate that we need to think in terms of multidimensional measurements to understand the complexity that governs the balance between work demands and family responsibilities. They therefore identify several relevant dimensions of "balance" that are often overlooked, including different measures of stress and satisfaction in both home and work environments. With these, the authors recommend a "comprehensive" approach to measurement wherein researchers can identify and measure each of the major components of their concept independently, and then characterize the variety of ways that each component affects the larger concept. That is, the different measures can't be considered just good or bad for work–family balance. Some things have positive effects on some aspects of the concept and negative consequences for other aspects. Thus, by measuring several different attributes and different effects of both family and work, they achieve a valid and reliable measure of work–family balance.

Data Collection Overview

Validity and reliability are commonly perceived to go hand in hand. Nonetheless, we should keep in mind that certain data collection strategies tend to be stronger in one than in the other. Deep, contextually sensitive studies may be highly valid, but the findings may not reliably reflect different contexts, while a more generalizable approach with a broader range of data may sacrifice some validity in exchange for great reliability. The next stage of design, **data collection**, must therefore recognize the trade-off between breadth and depth as well as cost versus efficiency.

Qualitative research can take the context of a study into account, which typically strengthens the validity of the measures. This is the case because qualitative studies tend to emphasize more in-depth analysis of specific situations and populations. This type of research also prides itself on its ability to decipher hidden meanings and latent structures in addition to the obvious observations. Yet this emphasis on context may actually reduce the reliability of qualitative results. Comparable studies in different times and places may yield different findings. **Quantitative research**, on the other hand, assembles large populations, and these methods more often than not follow standard procedures that can be consistently replicated. Such studies look for **generalizable** measures that retain their meanings even outside of their original settings. This work is highly reliable, though it may lose some depth in exchange for such consistency.

Quantitative data collection strategies entail measuring whatever we're interested in on some scale that can be represented numerically. You may have answered, or written, a **survey** with *fixed format* answer categories, for example. Surveys typically involve many short-answer questions in which answers may be selected from a set of choices, usually labeled as numbers. Each question represents one variable, and each answer is one value in a database. The database may then be analyzed using any statistical software package.

With **secondary analysis** the researcher performs new statistical analyses on data previously collected for other purposes. There is so much information already out there that an enterprising researcher does not actually need to collect new data in order to do new research.
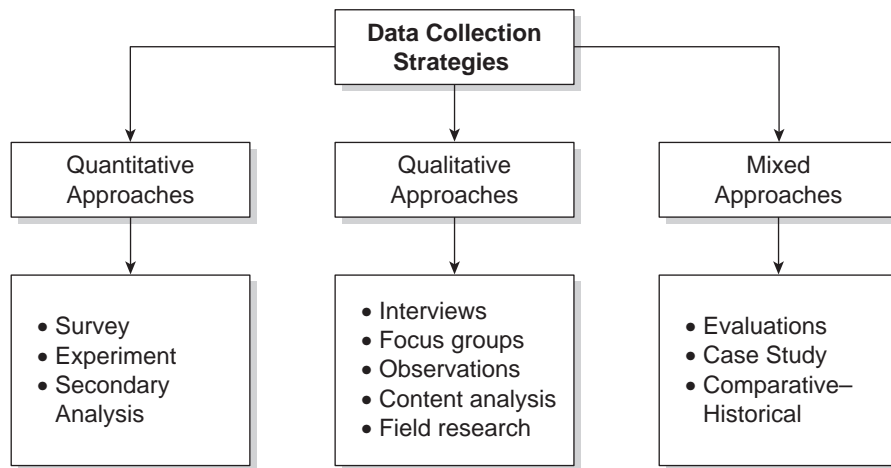
FIGURE 2.3 Data Collection Detail Map

And much of these data are compiled over far more time and distance than any one of us could manage. Data are collected about nations, communities, and continents, as well as birth and death rates, the spread of illnesses, and rates of accidents and injuries. All of this can be recorded numerically and analyzed statistically.

There are also limitations to using secondary analysis. We cannot always find data that are conceptualized or operationalized exactly as we would have wanted them to be. We can, however, assess the validity and reliability of secondary data by carefully reading the methodological notes in these studies before we use the data. Secondary analysis is discussed further in Section VI.

Experimental research often makes use of numeric outcome measures, such as one's response time or measurable physiological changes. Experiments may also be conducted with groups of subjects, in which case one may use measures such as the percentage of subjects who respond in a particular way. Experiments tend to be very focused on a single relationship (like, "a change in X causes a change in Y"), and very controlled. Experiments are often

conducted in a laboratory setting where the researcher can control for the effects of any other variable by isolating the study from its environment, and subjects are typically chosen to limit the amount of variability among them. These artificial conditions improve the reliability of the findings, since the results pretty much have to be caused by the experiment itself. But experimental results are not always the most valid measures of how people behave under natural conditions.

Qualitative data collection strategies focus on the particular qualities of events and circumstances that cannot be reduced to numbers. **Interviews**, for example, might record subjects' recollections of certain events, in their own words, with an emphasis on how they feel about those events now. Whatever meaning can be found in actual words, distinct from what can be put on a scale from good to bad, is qualitative. Consider the description: "After my morning of capturing bees, I spent the afternoon in the peach stand out on the highway, selling T. Ray's peaches. It was the loneliest summer job a girl could have, stuck in a roadside hut with three walls and a flat tin roof."[1] Clearly, there is much

more information contained in such a description than in a quantitative scale ("degree of loneliness 1. . . 5"). Other qualitative data collection techniques include participant and nonparticipant **observations**, **content analysis** of text or imagery from various cultural artifacts, and combinations of techniques, such as **focus group interviews** and **ethnographies**. These are discussed in more detail in Section V.

Qualitative data collection strategies are often, though not always, associated with **fieldwork**. Getting out into the research setting, such as the community under study, the homes of our informants, or the public hearings or private meetings where our issues are discussed, provides us with a deeper and more tangible feel for the social context in which our topic plays out. We can interview bartenders or shopkeepers anywhere, but imagine how much more we can learn by speaking to them in their bars or shops. Rather than reducing the data to simple codes or patterns, we explore and elaborate on the data with rich narrative descriptions of the physical layout and emotional ambiance of the research setting.

Mixed methods are discussed in detail in Section VIII. As the term implies, mixed method studies draw on combinations of the techniques discussed so far. **Case studies,** for example, generally entail extensive fieldwork at a single study site, possibly conducting observations and interviews, often backed by quantitative measures such as survey or secondary data analysis. This approach is particularly appropriate for exploratory questions and situations where a great many variables might have different kinds of effects. **Comparative historical** research, by contrast, rarely involves fieldwork or observations. Yet, as there are many different kinds of historical records available, but rarely as much of it as you want, a researcher seeking historical data must be prepared to work with an assortment of data gathering, coding, and analysis techniques.

Evaluation Research may be thought of as a particular kind of case study, typically one that is concerned with the impact of a specific program or policy change. The question underlying most evaluations is whether or not the study subject is having the desired effect or meeting its goals. But program goals are often defined rather vaguely, and the question of success may be very open to interpretation. As well, evaluation research is generally **longitudinal**, since some change has to be demonstrated over time. The evaluation researcher, then, must creatively combine techniques and data sources to come up with a definitive answer.

Sampling

Whether you are choosing a neighborhood for field research, a set of television ads for content analysis, or a pool of subjects for survey research, you must address how to get the *right* neighborhood, ads, or people. This is the problem of sampling, the three key components of which are (1) defining your study population; (2) defining a subset of that population that is **representative** of it; and (3) getting the cases. A sample is the right sample if it validly represents the larger study population.

We call a sample **biased** if there is something about the cases you chose that is different from the population that they are supposed to represent. In medical research, for example, clinical drug trials are intended to indicate drug safety for everyone who might use the medicines. But many studies limit trial access to healthy men of a particular age range who are not taking any other medicines. This makes the study easier, but it tells us nothing about the health risks to older populations, pregnant women, or teenagers on psychiatric medicines. In popular use, a bias is a kind of prejudice. But for research

---

[1]Sue Monk Kidd, *The Secret Life of Bees,* p. 15.

purposes, it is any leaning or tendency among a set of cases that makes it unique.

There are a large number of sampling strategies to choose from, depending on the size and accessibility of your population. Remember that the goal is to draw a sample that can stand in for the study population. If your population is very large and well defined, such as all residents of the state of Nebraska, every school child in southern Italy, or every undergraduate at your college, then the best approach is usually a **random** sample. The crucial attribute of a random sample is that the population can be more or less listed, by name, or address or e-mail or something. Then you can use a random number generator, or a big hat, to select some percentage of them for inclusion in your study. Having a truly random process literally means that every case in the population has an equal chance of being selected, and that neither anything that you do nor anything that you want will bias the selection.

Random sampling strategies are not always feasible. Many populations are small, or hidden, or hard to define. They may be defined by some hidden characteristic, such as a shared childhood experience or stigmatized condition. You could not, for example, use random sampling to select an adult group of formerly convicted juvenile criminal offenders. Your study population may also be a minority group in a larger population, such as college-educated first-generation immigrants in New York City who have had to change their careers in order to find work. Such populations are neither large nor well defined. You must seek them out through one of the targeted, or **purposive,** sampling strategies.

Random sampling needs to be contrasted with haphazard sampling. The typical haphazard approach is to walk up to strangers in a mall or bus station and ask them to participate in your survey. This approach introduces numerous sampling biases that make it unrepresentative of almost any population. For one thing, the pools of people available at one mall versus another are likely to be different in ways that would affect your results. You would certainly have an easier time getting people who are shopping alone rather than in groups, which introduces additional biases. Regardless of your intentions, you will have an easier time approaching people who are similar to yourself, and therefore undersample people who are different. At the same time, and for the same reasons, the less someone is like you, the less likely they are to agree to participate, further biasing your sample. Haphazard sampling is low in both reliability and validity, containing numerous hidden biases. To put that in less technical terms: It's a bad idea. Just because you don't know who your subjects are, that doesn't make them a random set.

In our next selection, Katherine Irwin uses a combination of sampling strategies to compare adolescents' experiences of violence across different socioeconomic settings. She begins by noting that the leading theories of adolescent violence attribute violent behaviors and encounters to neighborhood factors. Some of these factors are perceived as cultural, including the idea that in places where jobs and other paths to upward mobility are scarce, toughness can help one not only to get by but also to prove one's worth. Other factors are economic, as much of the increase in youth violence during the 1990s corresponded to the spread of illegal drug markets and the use of teens in the drug business. Yet, while so much of the research in this area assumes that youth violence occurs as it does because of the neighborhoods, almost no comparable research has occurred in more economically advantaged neighborhoods. Not only is this a conspicuous failure to empirically test the neighborhood effects, but, as Irwin shows, it allows people in "better" neighborhoods to define the violence that they see as somehow imported by youths from other areas.

The first level of Irwin's study, then, is a stratified sample of neighborhoods, each of

TABLE 2.1   Popular Sampling Strategies

Strategies	*Description*	*Advantages*	*Disadvantage*
Random			
Simple Random	Everyone in the population has an equal chance of being selected.	It is economical and very representative.	Must have some sort of population list available.
Systematic	Involves using a simple formula, such as "every fifth person" to select your cases.	It is practical and easy to use.	It may compromise the representativeness of the sample.
Stratified	Divide the population into groups that are likely to be different, and then select cases at random from within each group.	It reflects the diversity of the population.	The choice of groups affects the outcomes; must be carefully considered with respect to the research question.
Multistage Cluster	A sample of groups is drawn and then each group is subsampled.	Do not need to be able to define the entire population.	Relatively complex.
Nonrandom			
Snowball	Each member of the sampled is selected by reference from a previous participant.	It is very useful when we do not know our population well.	It can be used only with people. There might be some selection bias.
Quota	Divide the population according to groups and then pick equal numbers from each group using the same selection strategy.	It works well for diverse populations where the groups are of unequal size.	Time consuming, potentially expensive. Nonrandom criteria for selecting cases within each group.
Deviant	Select cases/individuals outside the norm.	Identifies uncommon and/or hidden cases.	Must identify what counts as the norm.

which represents a characteristic that is seen as crucial to the popular models of youth violence. Each neighborhood is then treated as its own social world. Within each, she uses targeted sampling strategies, such as snowball sampling, to collect a sample pool of families with shared experiences and backgrounds. Due to their social ties and similarities, it would be difficult to generalize from a single one of these targeted samples to a wider population. But as each cluster represents only their social spaces, this similarity becomes a strength of the design. The author is then able to find the patterns of data that characterize each group and compare them.

There are several benefits to this approach. For one thing, this comparative research improves our understanding of neighborhood effects, by

treating the neighborhoods as a variable rather than just background. Further, Irwin is able to relate the types of violent encounters that are more or less likely to occur in each setting to the residents' perceptions of these events. Since each group has a different understanding of the nature and causes of the violence around them, each has adopted different coping strategies. These strategies themselves have consequences. Completing the picture, Irwin notes that both residents and researchers tend to view the different consequences as characteristics of the neighborhoods, as though they reflected different values. Instead, as Irwin finds, most of the adolescents prefer to avoid violence, or take steps to minimize its impact. Given their perceptions of their circumstances, they all enact these same goals in very different ways.

CONCLUSION

Measurement in social research consists of defining theoretical concepts and identifying empirical indicators that would guide our search for evidence to support our assertions. There are many design strategies in social science research, each with its own strengths and limitations. Researchers choose a particular design or a combination of two or more strategies, according to the content of their research topic. The underlying question of any research design is, "What is the best way to answer my research question?" The design should provide a map from the question to the data collection to the analysis, ending with the answer. The more detail you can put into your design before you begin your research, the fewer unpleasant surprises will await you.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does the way you measure almost anything (e.g., wealth, attitudes, actions, dreams, memories, family size, spending) so affect what you find? Do you consider this a threat to the validity of social research?

2. Give *three* different measures of *each* of the following concepts. Explain the ideas behind what each measure would capture.

   a. a "happy family"
   b. a "good city"
   c. a "good friend"

3. How does the definition of, and research on, work–family balance affect the way social scientists might influence management practice in the workplace?

WEB RESOURCES

The following links can provide you with more detailed information on the topics discussed in this section. You may also go to www.sagepub.com/lunestudy where you will find additional resources and hot-links to these sources.

Yale's Center for Comparative Research: http://www.yale.edu/ccr
UCLA Center for Comparative History: http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/issr/cstch
Social Science Research Council: http://www.ssrc.org

Conceptualizing Urban Poverty (1995)

Ellen Wratten

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper[1] is to review the different ways in which urban poverty has been understood, and to assess the implications of such an understanding for the measurement of poverty and the design of antipoverty programmes.

For economic and demographic reasons, during the 1980s and 1990s poverty has become increasingly concentrated in urban settlements. Economic crisis and structural adjustment policies introduced in the Third World have had a disproportionate impact on the urban poor, due to rising food prices, declining real wages and redundancy in the formal labour market, and reduced public expenditure on basic services and infrastructure.[2] As a result of rapid urbanization, within the next two decades the proportion of the world's population living in towns and cities is set to overtake the proportion living in rural areas for the first time.[3] Thus, the numbers of urban people in poverty are likely to be g rowing at a faster rate—and in parts of the world are already greater in absolute terms[4]—than the numbers of poor rural people. Whereas in 1980 there were twice as many poor rural households as poor urban ones, by the year 2000 more than half of the absolute poor will live in towns and cities.[5] While the global demographic shift to urban areas is undisputed, predictions about the urbanization of poverty are based on a multitude of controversial assumptions regarding the definition of urban areas, the nature of poverty and our capacity to measure it. Analysis of the problems of the "urban poor" often glosses over, or disregards, these important facts. Rarely is the meaning of poverty (and the criteria used to identify the poor) made explicit, or the usefulness of urban poverty as a distinct conceptual category challenged.

[1] An earlier version of this paper was presented at the CROP International Workshop on Urban Poverty in Bergen, Norway, 6–9 October 1994. I am grateful to Christine Whitehead for her helpful comments on the manuscript. Any errors remain my own.

[2] Moser, Caroline O N, Alicia J Herbert and Roza E Makonnen (1993), "Urban poverty in the context of structural adjustment: recent evidence and policy responses," TWU Discussion Paper No 4, Urban Development Division, World Bank, Washington DC, May; also, World Bank (1991), *Urban Policy and Economic Development: An Agenda for the 1990s,* World Bank Policy Paper, Washington, DC.

[3] According to "best estimates," the percentage of the world's population living in urban areas was 29.3 per cent in 1950, 37.7 per cent in 1975 and 43.1 per cent in 1990. It is predicted to pass the 50 per cent level at some point between 2003 and 2020—the date being dependent on the rate at which countries urbanize which, in turn, for all but the most urbanized countries, is strongly associated with the strength of their economic performance; personal communication with David Satterthwaite, Human Settlements Programme, IIED.

[4] Over half of the population of the following regions already live in urban areas: Northern and Western Europe; North, Central and South America and the Caribbean; the Middle East and North Africa; Southern Africa; Western Asia; and Australasia.

[5] Beall, Jo (1993), "The gender dimensions of urbanization and urban poverty," paper prepared for the Division for the Advancement of Women, United Nations Office in Vienna, and presented at the Seminar on Women in Urban Areas, Vienna, 8–12 November.

This paper explores three issues. It first examines how, and by whom, poverty has been defined and measured, contrasting conventional economic and participatory anthropological approaches. Second, it questions the extent to which "urban poverty" differs conceptually fro m poverty in general. How far is analysis of the urban–rural divide helpful in understanding the underlying causes of poverty? Finally, the paper reviews the principal ways in which urban poverty has been understood in the South and the North, and the policy prescriptions which flow fro m such an understanding. It concludes by identifying the linkages between alternative definitions of poverty, different urban anti-poverty policy approaches, and the choice of measurement techniques.

II. DEFINING AND MEASURING POVERTY

What is poverty and who should define it? Most definitions associate poverty with a "lack" or "deficiency" of the necessities required for human survival and welfare. However, there is no consensus about what basic human needs are or how they can be identified. Two main approaches are discussed here: conventional economic defi-nitions which use income, consumption, or a range of other social indicators to classify poor groups against a common index of material wel-fare; and alternative interpretations developed largely by rural anthropologists and social plan-ners working with poor rural communities in the Third World, which allow for local variation in the meaning of poverty, and expand the defini-tion to encompass perceptions of non-material deprivation and social differentiation.

III. CONVENTIONAL DEFINITIONS

a. Definitions Based on Income or Consumption

Few economists would argue that human welfare can be adequately described by income alone. Yet, in practice, income (or consumption) is the most frequently used proxy for welfare. The justification is that (in market-based economies) lack of income is highly correlated with other causes of poverty and is a predictor of future problems of deprivation.

Underlying the economists' concept of poverty is the idea of merit goods: goods that society agrees are necessary, and is prepared to ensure that members of society can achieve. This is less problematic in the North, where poverty is generally a minority problem, than in the South, where it can be argued that the majority fail to achieve the minimum acceptable standard of living and that society lacks the capacity to make good the deficit.

Income is defined as command over resources over time or as the level of consumption that can be afforded while retaining capital intact.[6] People are classified as poor when their income (or consumption) is less than that required to meet certain defined needs. For example, the World Bank's World Development Report[7] uses two income cut-off points or poverty lines: those with an income per capita of below US$370 per year (at 1985 purchasing power parity) are deemed poor, while those with less than US $275 per year are extremely poor.[8] In 1994, 1,390 million people were estimated to fall into the "poor" category.[9] Within countries, income and consumption data have been used by the Bank to distinguish different

[6]Piachaud, David (1993), "The definition and measurement of poverty and inequality" in Barr, Nicholas and David Whynes (edi-tors), *Current Issues in the Economics of Welfare,* Macmillan, Basingstoke and London, pages 105–129.

[7]World Bank (1990), *World Development Report* 1990 , Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York.

[8]In comparison, the USA' s official poverty threshold for a family of three was US$8,277 in 1984 (see Portes, Alejandro, Manuel Castells and Lauren A Benton (editors) (1989), *The Informal Economy: Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries,* Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, page 128.

[9]van der Hoeven, Rolph and Richard Anker (editors) (1994), *Poverty Monitoring: An International Concern,* UNICEF publica-tion, St Martin's Press, Basingstoke and London.

groups such as the "new poor" (the direct victims of structural adjustment), the "borderline poor" (those on the brink of the poverty line, who are pushed under it by austerity measures) and the "chronic poor," who were extremely poor even before adjustment began. In addition to calculating the headcount index (the proportion of the population below the poverty line), the Bank assesses the severity of poverty by calculating the poverty gap index (the ratio of the gap between the poverty line and the mean income of the poor expressed as a ratio to the poverty line).

Income-defined poverty lines are problematic for a number of reasons. Income is a useful indicator if we want to identify which people are likely to lack the resources to achieve a socially acceptable standard of living. However, it does not measure accurately their capacity to achieve access (which may be influenced by other factors such as education, information, legal rights, illness, threatened domestic violence or insecurity).

Incomes are commonly analyzed at the household level. Yet, individual members of a household do not have equal command over resources, and those with low entitlement to consume resources (due, for example, to their age, gender or social status) may be hidden within relatively prosperous households.[10] Moreover, adjustments have to be made in order to compare households of different size. Which is poorer: a family with two adults and five children living on US$2,500 per year, or a single adult with an annual income of just US$400? Using the World Bank criterion of US$370 per capita, all seven members of the larger family would be classified as poor, whereas the single adult would not. Per capita incomes take no account of the economies of scale which benefit the larger household (such as savings on cooking fuel by preparing food in bulk) or the particular needs of people of different ages or different gender roles.[11] Nor is it easy to value home production or earnings from self-employment, which are generally assumed to be important income sources for the "urban poor."

Needs are equally difficult to define in a standardized way. The items which people regard as essential are influenced by culture and personal preference, and vary from individual to individual. Warm clothing and heating may be required to keep an old person alive in a London winter but these would be unlikely priorities in Mombasa.

Both needs and living costs may vary considerably between rural and urban areas, and between urban settlements of different sizes. Certain basic items—including fuel, freshwater and building materials—have to be purchased in most urban areas, but can be obtained free (apart from the opportunity costs of time and labour spent in collection), or are much cheaper, in many rural areas in the South. Rural dwellers can, in addition, obtain some of their food free from common lands, forests, rivers, lakes or coastal waters—although subsistence agriculture is widespread in urban areas, rent is often payable for the land used. Dietary preferences are likely to vary according to location: in cities there is greater availability of imported foods, promoted through advertising; different working patterns (including, in many countries, higher female participation in the paid labour force), which makes it convenient to purchase prepared meals and snacks; less space at home in which to cook and entertain friends and relatives, reinforcing the need to purchase prepared foods from outside; and possibly, some variation in calorific requirements. It has been estimated that urban food costs are generally 10–15 per cent higher than those in rural areas.[12]

Typically, housing costs are far higher in cities and are a major expense of urban households. In larger cities, people who work in or close to the centre face a trade-off between living in cheaper housing on the periphery and the high monetary and time costs of transport from the suburbs. The

[10]Sen, A K (1981), *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation,* Clarendon Press, Oxford.

[11]Moser, Caroline O N (1993), *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training,* Routledge, London and New York.

[12]Ravallion, Martin (1992), *Poverty Comparisons: A Guide to Concepts and Methods,* Living Standards Measurement Study Working Paper No 88, World Bank, Washington, DC.

poor tend to pay proportionately more for their housing than the better-off, since the unit cost of renting small areas of accommodation in overcrowded, unserviced and dangerous neighbourhoods near the centre can exceed the costs of renting the same amount of accommodation in a higher-quality area (the problem for the poor is that accommodation in up-market areas is available in larger, non-divisible units or in locations inaccessible to those relying on their feet or public transport to move around).

In recognition of these differences, it is common to use separate cut-off levels for urban and rural poverty. However, this is a crude refinement, and cannot capture accurately the diversity of needs and entitlements coexisting within urban and rural populations.

b. Absolute and Relative Definitions of Poverty

If poverty is defined in absolute terms, needs are considered to be fixed at a level which provides for subsistence, basic household equipment, and expenditure on essential services such as water, sanitation, health, education and transport. The absolute definition is in common use by the World Bank and governments. However, it does not describe the extent of income inequality within society nor the fact that needs are socially determined and change over time. The absolute definition has to be adjusted periodically to take account of technological developments such as improved methods of sanitation.

The concept of relative poverty is more flexible, and allows for minimum needs to be revised as standards of living in society alter. It reflects the view that poverty imposes withdrawal or exclusion fro m active membership of society: people are relatively deprived if they cannot obtain "... *the conditions of life—that is the diets, amenities, standards and services—which allow*

them to play the roles, participate in the relationships and follow the customary behaviour which is expected of them by virtue of their membership of society."[13] Under this definition, there could in theory be a higher incidence of poverty in London, New York or Tokyo than in Delhi, Lusaka or Rio de Janeiro. In contrast, very few of the destitute and homeless people living on the streets of London could scrape under the World Bank's absolute poverty line, which is set well below the minimal social security benefit level for UK citizens.

c. Definitions Based on Social Indicators

Because many aspects of well-being cannot be captured adequately by income or consumption-based measures, supplementary social indicators are sometimes used to define poverty, such as life expectancy, infant mortality, nutrition, the proportion of the household budget spent on food, literacy, school enrollment rates, access to health clinics or drinking water. Again, the idea is to have a standard scale so that different population groups may be compared. Such indicators are often used to contrast the welfare of rural and urban populations since they avoid the problem of rural–urban price differences.

Where a range of indicators are used to describe poverty, as in the World Bank's *World Development Report,*[14] the different variables may tell conflicting stories about the pattern of deprivation. Thus, in practice, income and consumption measures remain the key way in which poverty is defined, despite the grave deficiencies of using any single indicator of well-being.

To overcome this, composite poverty indices have been developed which combine several weighted variables. For example, the UNDP's Human Development Index aggregates income, literacy and life expectancy into a single measure

[13]Townsend, Peter (1993), *The International Analysis of Poverty,* Harvester Wheatsheaf, Hemel Hempstead, page 36.

[14]See reference 7.

of the standard of living with a scale of values ranging from zero to one, along which countries can be ranked.[15] Other examples include the Physical Quality of Life Index,[16] the Food Security Index and the Relative Welfare Index.[17] Such measures are arbitrary and "*aggregate what we should wish to disaggregate.*"[18] They inevitably miss out important aspects of well-being, since a limited number of variables can be brought into the calculation. Moreover, they view poverty from the perspective of external professionals rather than from that of the poor.

BOX 1 DEFINING POVERTY USING SOCIAL INDICATORS: EXAMPLES FROM TANZANIA

Two recent studies of poverty in Tanzania used different social indicators to identify the poorest groups. In Sender and Smith's research[a] in Tanga region, an index of material well-being was compiled by listing 14 different possessions (such as a metal roof, a bicycle and a coat) and counting the number of items that each surveyed household owned. Out of 100 households, just over half (53) had scores of 0–2, and only 15 had scores of over 10. The possessions scores showed strong correlation with access to the major means of production, work in the formal sector, female education and child mortality.

Households with scores of 10–14 held six times the land acreage of households with scores of one or zero, were far less likely to sell (and far more likely to buy) land, were 30 times more likely to contain an enumerated sector employee, were twice as likely to have at least one literate family member, and their children were ten times less likely to die.

In Mbeya District, Tanzania, the Health and Nutrition District Support (HANDS) Project[b] used nutritional status among children under the age of five to define urban and peri-urban poverty. Child malnutrition was found to be associated statistically with mothers who had no education and no monthly salary, families who had to sell maize from the last harvest, and families with poor housing and lack of assets.

Both research studies found correlation between their chosen indicators and other aspects of poverty, such as landholding and access to education and health services. However, this is not necessarily the case. Ownership of possessions may be a matter of taste rather than a sign of constrained opportunity.

As Piachaud points out, people who do not buy meat may be wealthy vegetarians (see debate in Townsend,[c] Chapter 6). Similarly, small children may become malnourished for reasons other than a lack of material resources. Children over the age of one, left in the care of siblings while their parents work, are particularly at risk because of insufficiently frequent

(Continued)

---

[15]For a discussion of the method used to compile the Human Development Index, see Kanbur, Ravi (1994), "Poverty and development: the Human Development Report (1990), and the World Development Report (1990)" in van der Hoeven and Anker (1994), see reference 9, pages 84–94.

[16]Morris, M D (1979), *Measuring the Condition of the World's Poor: The Physical Quality of Life Index,* Frank Cass, London.

[17]Jazairy, Idriss, Mohiuddin Alamgir and Theresa Panuccio (1992), *The State of World Rural Poverty,* IT Publications, London.

[18]Streeten, Paul (1994), "Poverty concepts and measurement" in van der Hoeven and Anker (1994), see reference 9, pages 15–30.

(Continued)

feeding. Malnutrition may be more the result of the unequal gender division of labour and long working hours of mothers in Tanzania than of low income levels *per se* (see Wratten[d]).

Notes

a. Sender, John and Sheila Smith (1990), *Poverty, Class and Gender in Rural Africa: A Tanzanian Case Study*, Routledge, London.

b. Mbeya Health and Nutrition District Support (HANDS) (1992), "Malnutrition in Mbeya town. Report of a nutrition and socioeconomic survey," HANDS Project, Mbeya, Tanzania, June–July.

c. Townsend, Peter (1993), *The International Analysis of Poverty*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, Hemel Hempstead.

d. Wratten, Ellen (1993), "Poverty in Tanzania," report prepared for the Overseas Development Administration, London, February.

IV. PARTICIPATORY DEFINITIONS

Standardized definitions are useful to policy makers because they provide a uniform scale against which comparisons can be made of the incidence of poverty in different sub-populations (urban and rural; urban populations living in different parts of the city; male- and female- headed households; old and young, etc.) or of the same population over time. Comparative data are essential in order to target resources to the poorest groups. However, the standard of living of an individual or a household is a multi-dimensional concept involving, in principle, every aspect of direct consumption as well as non-consumption activities and services.[19] The quantification of poverty invariably restricts the number of criteria used to describe it, so that the data provide only a partial picture of the reality of being poor. Attempts to use universal indicators (such as an income defined poverty line) can also be counter-productive in masking the structural causes of poverty.[20]

Equally important, the use of a common index implies an external decision about who is poor. As Rahnema states: *"There may be as many poor and as many perceptions of poverty as there are human beings."*[21] Any poverty line is inherently a subjective judgement about what is an acceptable minimum standard of living in a particular society. While it is possible to set an income-defined poverty line in a participatory way by asking survey respondents what they consider to be the minimal income level necessary to make ends meet and averaging the results, the requirement to judge each person using the same standard means that their individual definition of their own needs is subordinated. The "poor" are labelled as poor by outsiders, not according to their own criteria.

Anthropological studies of poverty have shown that people's own conceptions of disadvantage often differ markedly from those of professional "experts." Great value may be attached to qualitative dimensions such as independence,

---

[19]Sen, A K (1987), *The Standard of Living,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

[20]Francis, Paul A (1991), "Poverty in Bangladesh: profile and policy implications," report prepared for the Overseas Development Administration, May.

[21]Rahnema, Majid (1992), "Poverty" in Sachs, Wolfgang (editor), *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power,* Zed Books, London and New Jersey, pages 158–176.

security, self-respect, identity, close and nonexploitative social relationships, decision-making freedom, and legal and political rights. This has led Francis and others to argue that to obtain an adequate definition of poverty requires involvement of the "poor" themselves.[22]

The genesis of gender planning during the 1980s has focused attention on the different poverty outcomes deriving from the socially constructed roles and responsibilities of women and men, and the gender relations between them. Socially constructed roles also constrain the opportunities of other population sub-groups—such as the young and old, ethnic minorities and majorities, recent rural migrants and established urban residents, and different social classes—and their experience and perceptions of poverty are differentiated accordingly.[23]

From the 1970s, the conventional view that poverty can be defined in terms of income has been further challenged on the grounds that the environmental consequences of economic growth result in reduced human welfare, and that "traditional" frugal and self-reliant lifestyles are not inferior.[24]

a. Vulnerability and Entitlement

Participatory investigations have highlighted two concepts—vulnerability and entitlement—which add rigour to the conceptualization of poverty and greatly extend our understanding of the process by which people become and remain poor.

Box 2 Participatory assessment of poverty: an example from Pakistan

A participatory poverty research study was undertaken recently in Pakistan, where people in ten low-income communities were asked about their perceptions of poverty. Poor households were identified by respondents as those with no adult males and a large number of dependents; widows, especially those with young children; sick or disabled adults unable to engage in paid work; households with a large number of unmarried daughters (dowry costs are considerable for poor families and were identified as a major factor in perpetuating poverty); households where men are unemployed or engaged in irregular and poorly paid casual work; and households with debt bondage to landowners, employers, commission agents or informal money lenders. Powerlessness, helplessness, insecurity, absence of choice and lack of faith in official mechanisms and poverty alleviation programmes were common themes raised by respondents. Although using a different methodology, the findings of the study corresponded with those of a quantitative poverty assessment undertaken simultaneously by the World Bank in Pakistan. The results are therefore complementary, with the qualitative research adding in-depth insights into the nature of poverty in different localities, while the quantitative poverty assessment shows the extent of poverty throughout the country.

SOURCE: Beall, Jo et al. (1993), "Social safety nets and social networks: their role in poverty alleviation in Pakistan," report prepared for the Overseas Development Administration, two volumes, Development Planning Unit, University College London.

---

[22]See reference 20.

[23]See reference 5.

[24]The Ecologist (1993), *Whose Common Future? Reclaiming the Commons,* Earthscan, London.

Vulnerability is not synonymous with poverty, but means defencelessness, insecurity and exposure to risk, shocks and stress. It is linked with assets, such as human investment in health and education, productive assets including houses and domestic equipment, access to community infrastructure, stores of money, jewelery and gold, and claims on other households, patrons, the government and the international community for resources in times of need. While poverty (measured by income) can be reduced by borrowing, such debt makes the poor more vulnerable. Chambers points out that poor people have a horror of debt, and are more aware than professionals of the trade-offs between poverty and vulnerability.[25] Failure to distinguish between the two concepts is harmful because it prevents disaggregation of the experience of poverty and maintains stereotypes about the undifferentiated mass of the poor. An understanding of how people deplete household assets or resources is helpful in explaining how the well-being of urban households can decline, even when there are improvements in labour market or production opportunities.[26]

Entitlement refers to the complex ways in which individuals or households command resources.[27] These ways vary between people and over time, in response to shocks and long-term trends. They may include wage labour, sale of assets, own production, reduced consumption and public provision of goods and services. Although the concept of entitlement was originally applied in the rural sector to the study of famine and hunger, it is useful in explaining how poverty affects different people—even within the same household—in different ways. This disaggregation is central to the analysis of household survival strategies during periods of stress, and their implications for the work burdens of women, men and children and intra-household re source allocation.[28]

Participatory investigation is useful in identifying what increases the risk of poverty and the underlying reasons why people remain in poverty. It allows different types of poverty to be distinguished by drawing on the life experience of poor people. An in-depth understanding of the process by which people become deprived is not an inferior substitute for a large-scale exercise to quantify poverty: it is a pre requisite to devising antipoverty programmes which address root causes of poverty and meet people's perceived needs. Not least, concentrating on poor people's priorities challenges a dominant view of the poor as passive or irresponsible, and the patronizing assumption of experts that poor people are there to be planned for.

V. The Concept of Urban Poverty: An Historical Perspective

The urban poverty debate is conducted on different planes in the Southern and Northern world. Historically, the development literature has focused on inequalities between poor rural and better-off urban populations, and the linkages between urbanization, the spread of capitalism and poverty. By contrast, poverty analysis in the North has been concerned with the problems of inner-city or peripheral urban social housing estates, or with regional and sectoral unemployment and income inequality. Far less attention has been paid to the urban–rural divide.

In the colonial period, it was widely assumed that poverty in the South could be solved through urbanization and the transfer of labour from low-productivity subsistence agriculture to

---

[25]Chambers, Robert (editor) (1989), special issue on "Vulnerability: how the poor cope," *IDS Bulletin* Vol 20, No 2.

[26]See reference 5.

[27]See reference 10.

[28]Moser, Caroline O N (1993), "Women, gender and urban development: challenges for the 1990s," paper prepared for the Final Workshop of the Ford Foundation Research Project on Urban Research in the Developing World: Towards an Agenda for the 1990s, Cairo, 14–18 February.

high-productivity modern industry.[29] Development planners started to question the assumptions of this two-sector growth model during the 1970s. After decades of modernization policies, the benefits of growth had not trickled down to the rural areas where the mass of the population still lived. Lipton's influential "urban bias" thesis blamed rural poverty on inequitable government taxation and expenditure policies which favoured city élites: rather than solving the problem of poverty, urban centres were depriving rural areas of infrastructure and resources.[30]

Urban bias became a mainstream view among development agencies in the 1970s and 1980s. In many Third World countries, poverty alleviation strategies (including sectoral strategies for primary health care, water supply and education) were reoriented to improve living conditions in rural areas. From the mid-1980s, structural adjustment policies have reinforced these efforts by removing subsidies given to urban consumers and raising prices to market levels to favour rural producers.

However, recent research in the 1980s and 1990s has revealed great diversity in the extent and depth of poverty within the urban sector in the Third World. This has supported a backlash, with some writers counter-arguing that the depth of poverty is worse in deprived city slums than in rural communities.[31] The availability of disaggregated urban poverty data, coupled with the recognition that urban growth is inevitable (and attributable more to the increase in the existing urban population than to a preventable process of rural–urban migration) is finally pushing urban poverty up the development agenda. The World Bank's latest policy paper for the urban sector acknowledges that "... *by the late 1980s, urban per capita incomes in some countries had reverted to 1970 levels and in some countries to 1960 levels.*"[32]

The urban bias of the 1980s' economic crisis is revealed in ECLA estimates for urban and rural poverty in ten Latin American countries. While the proportion of Latin America's rural households living in poverty remained static or declined between 1981 and 1986, the proportion of poor urban households increased. In the late 1980s, the percentage of rural households in poverty was higher than the corresponding percentage of urban households. However, Table 1 shows that in terms of the absolute numbers of people involved, urban poverty was a greater problem in seven of these countries. For all ten countries, whereas in 1980, 48 per cent of the poor (53 million persons) lived in urban areas, in 1986 this had risen to 58 per cent (80 million people).[33] The narrowing of the rural–urban differential is also recorded in Costa Rica and

[29]Lewis, Oscar (1958), *Five Families,* Random House, New York.

[30]The urban bias argument has classical roots and can be traced back to Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776). Michael Lipton's thesis—see Lipton, Michael (1976), *Why Poor People Stay Poor—Urban Bias in World Development,* Temple Smith, London—has been developed by Bates, Robert H (1981), *Markets and States in Tropical Africa,* University of California Press, Berkeley to construct a theory of "urban bias" for tropical Africa. For further discussion of the urban bias debate, see Moore, M and J Harriss (editors) (1984), *Development and the Rural-Urban Divide,* Frank Cass, London.

[31]Harpham, Trudy, Tim Lusty and Patrick Vaughan (editors) (1988), *In the Shadow of the City: Community Health and the Urban Poor,* Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York; also Amis, Philip and Peter Lloyd (editors) (1990), *Housing Africa's Urban Poor,* Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York.

[32]See reference 2, World Bank (1991), pages 45–46; also, according to the Bank's calculations, in 1988 there were some 330 million urban poor, comprising about 25 per cent of the total urban population. While this estimate gives recognition to the widespread extent of urban poverty, it implies that three-quarters of the South's urban population were not "poor." This assumption ignores the relative deprivation of urban communities in developing countries, including the lack of access to basic services and environmental hazards suffered by the majority of city residents.

[33]Feres, Juan Carlos and Arturo León (1990), "The magnitude of poverty in Latin America," *CEPAL Review* Vol 41, August, pages 133–151.

[34]Rottenberg, Simon (1993), *Costa Rica and Uruguay: The Political Economy of Poverty, Equity and Growth,* a World Bank comparative study, Oxford University Press, New York.

Uruguay.[34] African data indicate a real decline in urban wages since the early 1970s, with a halving of real income levels in many cases and a general deterioration in urban employment security and benefits such as employer housing. The urban–rural income differential has sharply reduced and, in some nations (Tanzania, Uganda and Ghana), has actually been reversed.[35] Falling

urban living standards and a narrowing gap between poverty in rural and urban areas is also documented in Bangladesh.[36]

In industrial Europe and North America, the majority of the population (and also most of the poor) have lived in towns and cities since the early twentieth century. Consequently, a longer tradition of poverty research in urban areas exists

TABLE 1   The rural–urban distribution of poverty in ten Latin American countries, 1986–88

	Urban population as a percentage of the total 1986–88[b]	*Percentage of households in poverty 1988[a]*		*Ratio of poor urban: poor rural population households[c]*
Country		*Urban*	*Rural*	
Argentina	86	12	17	4.34: 1
Venezuela	83	25	34	3.59: 1
Uruguay	85	14	23	3.45: 1
Colombia	69	36	42	1.91: 1
Brazil	75	34	60	1.70: 1
Peru	69	45	64	1.57: 1
Mexico	71	23[d]	43[d]	1.31: 1
Panama	54	30	43	0.82: 1
Costa Rica	45	21	28	0.61: 1
Guatemala	33	54	75	0.34: 1

SOURCES: a. ECLA estimates quoted in Feres, Juan Carlos and Arturo León (1990), "The magnitude of poverty in Latin America," *CEPAL Review* Vol 41, August, page 143.
b. World Bank (1990), *World Development Report 1990,* Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, Table 31, pages 238–239.
c. Author's calculation.
d. ECLA estimates for Mexico are based on 1984 data.

[35]Weeks, J (1986), " Vulnerable segments of the labour market: urban areas of the African region," paper for the ILO, mimeo, cited in Amis, Philip (1990), "Key themes in contemporary African urbanization" in Amis, Philip and Peter Lloyd (editors), *Housing Africa's Urban Poor,* Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, pages 1–34.

[36]See reference 20.

[37]Rowntree, B Seebohm (1901), *Poverty: A Study of Town Life,* Macmillan, London.

(see, for example, Rowntree[37]). Perhaps because urban images have been influential in shaping perceptions of poverty, "urban poverty" is seldom regarded by Northern researchers to be conceptually distinct from poverty in general. In the UK and USA, the term "urban poverty" is often used specifically to refer to concentrations of deprivation in inner-city areas or peripheral social housing estates. However, Mangen's comparative study of social deprivation in inner cities suggests that this is not the case in mainland Europe, where inner-city poverty is viewed as *"a component of the overarching issue of marginalization"* rather than as a separate issue.[38]

VI. Is a Distinction Between Urban and Rural Poverty Useful?

Conceptualizing urban poverty as a separate category from rural poverty is problematic for two reasons. First, the definition of the categories is arbitrary. And second, a dualistic spatial classification may have the undesirable effect of straight-jacketing discussion about the structural causes of poverty and diverting attention from national and international level (rather than city level) solutions.

If "poverty" is hard to define, then "urban" is just as difficult. There are no common criteria for deciding whether a settlement is a town or a rural village. The yardsticks include inconsistent population thresholds (settlements with over 1,000 people qualify as towns in Canada, but the lower limit is 2,000 in Kenya, 10,000 in Jordan, and 50,000 in Japan); the density of residential building; the type and level of public services provided; the proportion of the population engaged in non-agricultural work; and officially designated localities.[39] Villages can be reclassified as urban areas when they reach a given threshold size, without any change in the lifestyles of the people who live there.

Furthermore, there is great heterogeneity in the nature of urban areas, their functions and the lifestyles of their people. Only one-third of the urban population in the Third World lives in cities with one million or more inhabitants.[40] Do the people of a small Mexican town have more in common with the inhabitants of Mexico City (population 15 million in the 1991 census) than with those in surrounding villages? In China (which has an enormous impact on global urbanization statistics due to its population size), vast tracts of countryside are included in the catchment area of cities in order to provide reservoirs and hydroelectric power supplies for urban dwellers. Should peri-urban areas be classified as urban, rural, or neither category?

A strong case can be made for treating the urban–rural divide as a continuum rather than as a rigid dichotomy. First, human settlements clearly comprise a wide spectrum which cannot easily be reduced to two categories. The cut-off point for any such division is bound to be chosen arbitrarily. More over, there are linkages between the functions of cities, small towns and rural areas, which imply that the problems of one "sector" cannot be treated in isolation from the other. Interdependence between town and countryside exists in areas such as rural–urban migration and population growth, seasonal labour, the markets for food, industrial goods and services, water supply and demand, facilities for education, health care and recreation, flows of remittance income and family support networks. Individuals may cross back and forth between the sectors during their lives and extensive trading arrangements exist between the two. Intervention in one part of the system will have a range of repercussions,

[38]Mangen, Steen (1993), "Marginalization and inner-city Europe," Cross-National Research Papers, 2nd series, No 7 "Dualistic Europe," page 60.

[39]UNCHS (Habitat) (1987), *Global Report on Human Settlements 1986,* Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York.

[40]Hardoy, Jorge E, Diana Mitlin and David Satterthwaite (1992), *Environmental Problems in Third World Cities,* Earthscan, London, page 31.

affecting other parts of the "same sector" as well the "other sector."[41]

Second, concentrating on whether urban poverty is worse or more extensive than rural poverty diverts attention from structural determinants which affect the life chances of the poor in both sectors. These are likely to include the distribution of land, assets and human capital; socially constructed constraints to opportunity based on class, gender, race, age and disability; government social and macro-economic policies; external shocks such as famine and war; and external relationships which shape exchange rates, the terms of trade, economic sanctions (for example, during and after the Gulf War), debt repayments and the scope for domestic economic policies. Many of these fundamental causal factors cannot be tackled adequately by urban level interventions alone.

Third, the acknowledgement of diversity in life-chances within urban settlements means that we have to disaggregate within the city in order to analyze and explain poverty. Once the city is studied as a series of interrelated but heterogeneous neighbourhoods or districts, the dichotomous categories of urban and rural become less relevant. It may be more useful to focus on different spatial categories such as inner-city, suburb and peri-urban, or other types of categories such as tenure type, household type, social class, race, age, gender or level of education.

Bearing in mind these caveats, certain characteristics of poverty are closely identified with urbanization. These attributes of urban poverty can be grouped into four interrelated areas

Urban environmental and health risks. The special environmental and health problems faced by the urban poor result from the spatial juxtaposition of industrial and residential functions; competition for land, high living densities and overcrowded housing in hazardous areas; the speed of urban growth and the inadequate pace at which clean water supply, sanitation and solid waste disposal services are expanded; and risks of traffic congestion and the inability to implement effective controls over pollution and accident prevention.

Urban settlements develop in order to group capitalist enterprises in a cost-effective spatial configuration.[42] Many people are attracted to cities mainly by the opportunities for work. However, the externalities of urban production are borne disproportionately by the poor. Cheap housing areas and heavy industry both tend to be located on lower-cost land in cities and, in the absence of effective planning controls, this proximity can cause special environmental problems. The Bhopal industrial catastrophe in India, which killed over 3,000 people, seriously injured 100,000 and caused 200,000 to be evacuated would not have affected so many people had the factory been situated in a sparsely populated rural area or a non-residential planning zone. For people with very low earning levels, living on cheap land adjacent to economic opportunities is a rational choice, despite the risk. Yet, such disasters have enormous implications for the vulnerability of the poor, who may lose their homes, belongings, source of income and previous social networks if relocated.[43]

---

[41]This argument has parallels with the debate over the usefulness of the formal and informal sector concepts in the analysis of employment and production (see Bromley, Richard (editor) (1978), "The urban informal sector: critical perspectives," *World Development* No 6, Vol 9/10, pages 1031–1198). Multiple criteria have been used to define the informal sector, and activities fall into different sectors depending on which is used. Moreover, there are complex inter-relationships between producers and consumers across the formal–informal spectrum, involving the articulation of different modes of production through subcontracting, and the same individual may be involved in both sectors simultaneously (see Portes, Castells and Benton (1989), reference 8).

[42]Harvey, David (1975), *Social Justice and the City,* Edward Arnold, London.

[43]See reference 40.

Box 3 Urban pollution and poverty: the example of Alexandria, Egypt

Alexandria, the second city of Egypt, contains 40 per cent of Egypt's heavy industry. In the 1980s, the city's sewage was pumped, untreated, through a series of short outflows running from the beaches into the Mediterranean Sea and into the freshwater Lake Maryut. Over half of the wastewater came from industrial sources, creating serious problems of heavy metal pollution and causing contamination of fish. Infections relating to untreated sewage were common. One consultancy report referred euphemistically to "identifiable floatables"—raw faeces visible in the seawater. While this affected both rich and poor sea bathers, the poor were worse affected as they could not escape to less polluted private beaches outside the city and had no alternative source of bathing water. Air pollution from the government-owned asbestos plant was a further major health hazard for residents of the surrounding poor neighbourhood.

SOURCE: Wratten, Ellen (1985), Unpublished background research for the Alexandria Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategy, Governorate of Alexandria, Egypt.

Hardoy, Cairncross and Satterthwaite estimate that at least 600 million of the urban residents of the Third World live in what might be termed life and death-threatening homes and neighbourhoods.[44] Risks include typhoid, diarrhoeal diseases, cholera, and intestinal worms from contaminated water and food; diseases associated with poor drainage and garbage collection such as malaria; disease vectors associated with overcrowded, poor quality housing and insufficient water for domestic hygiene such as lice, fleas, scabies, rats and cockroaches; tuberculosis, influenza and meningitis, associated with overcrowding and poor ventilation; high lead blood levels which retard children's mental development; respiratory infections related to poor ventilation and open fires ; landslides, flooding and earthquake damage on marginal sites; injury in fire and domestic accidents—particularly affecting children who have no safe play areas; and lack of mobility for disabled people in overcrowded neighbourhoods with poor accessibility.[45]

The quality of the environment has been deteriorating in many Third World cities during the last decade. For example, trend data for Chawama, Lusaka for the period 1978–88 show that the proportion of the population with access to piped water has declined from 99 per cent to 83 per cent, while the proportion with collected rubbish has dropped by two-thirds, from 11 per cent to just 4 per cent.[46] At the household level, this has increased the amount of time women and children must spend fetching water daily.

Vulnerability arising from commercial exchange. In general, cities are characterized by a greater degree of commercialization than rural areas:

---

[44]Hardoy, Jorge E, Sandy Cairncross and David Satterthwaite (editors) (1990), *The Poor Die Young: Housing and Health in Third World Cities,* Earthscan, London.

[45]See reference 31, Harpham, Lusty and Vaughan (1988); also Surjadi, Charles (1993), "Respiratory diseases of mothers and children and environmental factors among households in Jakarta," *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 5, No 2, pages 78–86; and Tabibzadeh, I, ARossi-Espagnet and R Maxwell (1989), *Spotlight on the Cities: Improving Urban Health in Developing Countries,* WHO, Geneva.

[46]Moser, Caroline O N et al. (1994), "Poverty and vulnerability in Chawama, Lusaka, Zambia, 1978–1992," research project on Urban Poverty and Social Policy in the Context of Adjustment, draft paper, TWURD, Urban Development Division, World Bank, Washington, DC, May.

production tends to be more highly specialized and people are reliant on market exchange to buy basic goods and services and to earn money. Obviously, subsistence production (including agriculture) and unpaid productive and domestic work do exist in cities,[47] and commoditization is also a feature of rural areas in many parts of the world.[48] Nevertheless, commercial exchange is more ubiquitous in the urban context. It affects all three aspects of the "trinity of deprivation" identified by Mangen as crucial determinants of poverty in European inner-city areas: the local economy, housing and education.[49]

Urban households require money in order to buy basic items such as water, food and rent, which might be free (or at least cheaper) in rural areas, and to pay for goods and services which might not be available in rural areas but are normally consumed in the city (such as electricity and hospital fees). This increases pressure to earn a money income. Like landless rural labourers, the main asset the urban poor can sell in order to command income is their own labour, and the choice of work open to them is constrained by a lack of formal educational qualifications. With limited choice, the experience of employment in the urban context ". . . is often not a form of independent existence at all, but an outcome of a comprehensive dependency relationship with an employer who is also a social superior."[50]

Those without savings or saleable capital assets are extremely vulnerable to changes in the demand for labour and the price of basic goods. Low-grade formal-sector jobs are increasingly insecure due to subcontracting and accompanying casualization.[51] In African cities, retrenchment of low-grade civil service jobs and public sector wage freezes have occurred at the same time as removal of government subsidies on food and the introduction of user charges for education and health services. Consequently, there has been an expansion in working hours, particularly among women in the unregulated informal sector.[52] Earnings in the urban informal sector are typically irregular and often low. Research has shown that illness-induced loss of employment is disproportionately borne by the poorest households and, in the absence of sickness insurance, re p resents a major risk to the ability to command re sources.[53] Unemployment is another important source of vulnerability: even a few days without work can represent a serious financial blow.

The commoditization of housing is now widespread in cities and even small towns in

[47]In Tanzania, the economic crisis has increased the incentive for city residents to engage in subsistence agriculture. During the 1980s, real urban wages fell sharply. The minimum wage earner was able to buy only 1.3 kilos of maize flour with a day's wages in 1990, compared to 2.9 kilos in 1989 and 8 kilos in 1982–84. In Dar es Salaam, a study by Lugalla (Lugalla, Joe L P (1989), "The state, law and urban poverty in Tanzania," *Law and Politics in Africa, Asia and Latin America* Vol 22, No 2, pages 131–157) found that 85 per cent of households were cultivating land, 17 per cent raised poultry and 17 per cent kept dairy cattle. Extensive urban agriculture has been documented in China, India, Kenya, Mexico and Taiwan: see Freeman, D B (1991), *City of Farmers,* McGill/Queens University Press, Montreal; also Smit, J and J Nasr (1992), "Urban agriculture for sustainable cities: using wastes and idle land and water bodies as resources," *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 4, No 2, pages 141–52; and Hardoy, Mitlin and Satterthwaite (1992), see reference 40.

[48]Marsden, Terry et al. (1993), *Constructing the Countryside,* UCL Press, London.

[49]See reference 38.

[50]Pryer, Jane and Nigel Crook (1988), *Cities of Hunger: Urban Malnutrition in Developing Countries,* Oxfam, Oxford.

[51]Rakodi, Carole (1993), "Planning for whom?" in Devas, Nick and Carole Rakodi (editors), *Managing Fast-growing Cities: New Approaches to Urban Planning and Management in the Developing World,* Longman, Harlow, pages 207–235.

[52]Wratten, Ellen (1993), "Poverty in Tanzania," report prepared for the Overseas Development Administration, London, February.

[53]Corbett, Jane (1989), "Poverty and sickness: the high costs of ill-health," *IDABulletin* Vol 20, No 2, pages 58–62; also Harriss, John (1989), "Urban poverty and urban poverty alleviation," *Cities,* August; Pryer, Jane (1989), "When breadwinners fall ill: preliminary findings from a case study in Bangladesh," *IDS Bulletin* Vol 20, No 2, pages 49–57; and Pryer, Jane (1993), "The impact of adult ill-health on household income and nutrition in Khulna, Bangladesh," *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 5, No 2, pages 35–49.

certain Third World countries.[54] Between one-third and two-thirds of the residents of cities in the South are housed in sub-standard or illegal accommodation. In the 1960s, low-income urban residents built their own housing on vacant land but in 1990s their children are increasingly renting accommodation within the same squatter settlements. Due to intense competition for land, real rents tend to rise sharply in rapidly growing cities. Renting creates an additional set of dependency relationships between tenant and landlord, particularly where rooms in a house are sub-let by an owner-occupier. In many cities, the poor are vulnerable to eviction at short notice, with possible loss of their possessions. In Nairobi, for example, fires have been used to clear rented housing in central squatter areas, in order to allow redevelopment of commercially valuable land. The decline in home ownership—from 60 per cent to 37 per cent in Chawama, Lusaka over the period 1978–92[55]—reduces the chances for the poor to hold an appreciating asset, and increases urban vulnerability.

Education is a major item of household expenditure for urban households in many countries. In the Third World, economic crisis has led to increased user charges for school fees, books and uniforms. Evidence from Ecuador suggests that the simultaneous intensification of women's work, resulting from cuts in real urban wages and community services, has led to girls being taken out of school in order to look after their younger siblings, thus reducing the chances of the next generation to escape poverty.[56]

A number of authors have contended that the instability associated with the commoditization process reinforces inequality. Adelman and Morris, in a comparative review of poverty in the mid-nineteenth century, suggest that commercialization tends to increase poverty among the poorest members of the population.[57] If commercialization is concentrated within cities, this may lead to a greater widening of intra-urban income differentials.

Social diversity, fragmentation and crime. Cities are heterogeneous "melting pots." They attract rural migrants and refugees with different ethnic, cultural and linguistic origins. Poor urban neighbourhoods contain a diversity of household types. The proportion of female-headed households is often higher than in surrounding rural areas: in Latin America there are greater opportunities for women's work in cities,[58] while in parts of Africa customary law excludes women from owning rural land in their own right, and the city offers a means for their independent survival after marital separation.[59] Due to the socially constructed gender division of labour and high dependency ratios, these households tend to have fewer income-earning opportunities and are generally poorer than male-headed and jointly headed

[54]See reference 31, Amis and Lloyd (1990); also see reference 46; Gilbert, Alan and Ann Varley (1991), *Landlord and Tenant: Housing the Poor in Urban Mexico,* Routledge, London; and Wratten, Ellen (forthcoming), "Self-help housing, the World Bank and the urban poor: a study of the impact of multilateral lending on government policy and the housing allocation process in Kenya," PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge.

[55]See reference 46.

[56]Moser, Caroline O N (1989), "The impact of recession and adjustment policies at the micro level: low-income women and their households in Guayaquil, Ecuador" in *The Invisible Adjustment: Poor Women and the Economic Crisis,* UNICEF, Santiago, Chile.

[57]Adelman, Irma and Cynthia Taft Morris (1978), "Growth and impoverishment in the middle of the nineteenth century," *World Development* Vol 6, No 3, pages 245–273.

[58]Brydon, Lynne and Sylvia Chant (1989), *Women in the Third World: Gender Issues in Rural and Urban Areas,* Edward Elgar, Aldershot.

[59]Schlyter, Ann (1988), *Women Householders and Housing Strategies: The Case of George,* Zambia, National Council for Building Research, Gävle, Sweden; also Schlyter, Ann (1989), *Women Householders and Housing Strategies: The Case of Harare, Zimbabwe,* National Council for Building Research, Gävle, Sweden.

households (though not all female-headed households are poor). Typically, women have lower levels of education (a rational response by poor families wishing to maximize earnings is to send sons rather than daughters to school), long working hours (including domestic work such as water collection and fuel-gathering), responsibility for child care as well as productive and community management roles, poorer diets and more restricted physical mobility than men. The growing phenomenon of urban "street" children—either unaccompanied by adults or, more commonly, living with their families at night and working on the streets by day—is also strongly associated with poverty and family breakdown.[60]

Social diversity is likely to create new tensions and survival strategies. Relationships in the urban context may be more impersonal. Lifestyles, kinship and neighbourhood support networks are different from those in rural areas, though links with a rural extended family can remain an important part of an urban household's survival strategy. In Latin America, urban social movements, based on the recognition of collective class interests, are important means by which the poor lobby for land rights and infrastructure.[61] Community-based organizations also provide a means of saving and arranging income-earning opportunities.

The extent of relative poverty is at its most conspicuous where the rich and the poor live side by side. Cities contain wealthy, poor and inbetween neighbourhoods, often in close proximity. A single bus journey in Nairobi can take one from the shanty of Mathare Valley, through the modern city centre, to lush tree-lined roads and the irrigated lawns of guarded mansions. The temptation and opportunities for crime may be greater in cities, but the poor rather than the well-off are most often the victims. Fear of personal safety—real or imagined—restricts mobility after nightfall in low-income areas.

The vandalism of community infrastructure by alienated youth is costly to the poor and leads to scarce resources being spent on measures to improve security. For example, in Lusaka, parent–teacher associations raised funds to build perimeter walls around school grounds rather than spend the money on books and equipment.[62] Drug and alcohol abuse, AIDS, domestic violence, female depression and family breakdown, while not exclusive to urban areas, have all been associated with urban poverty.

Vulnerability arising from the intervention of the state and police. Finally, the urban poor are likely to have more contact with state agents and the police than their rural counterparts. While government policies can have an important positive impact on poverty alleviation, many poor people experience the state in negative ways—as an oppressive bureaucracy which attempts to regulate their activities without understanding their needs,[63] or as corrupt policemen, demanding money in order to turn a blind eye to illicit income-generating activities such as brewing or prostitution[64]—rather than as servants of the public.

[60]Boyden, Jo (1991), *Children of the Cities,* Zed Books, London; also Dimenstein, Gilberto (1991), *Brazil: War on Children,* Latin America Bureau, London; and Patel, Sheela (1990), "Streetchildren, hotel boys and children of pavement dwellers and construction workers in Bombay: how they meet their daily needs," *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 2, No 2, pages 9–26.

[61]Castells, Manuel (1983), *The City and Grass Roots: A Cross-cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements,* Edward Arnold, London; also Gilbert, Alan and Peter Ward (1984), "Community action by the urban poor: democratic involvement, community self-help or a means of social control," *World Development* Vol 12, No 8; and Friedmann, J (1989), "The Latin American *barrio* movement as a social movement: contribution to a debate," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* Vol 13, No 3, pages 501–510.

[62]See reference 46.

[63]de Soto, Hernando (1992), "Combating urban poverty in Latin America: the Peruvian case" in Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Urban Poverty Alleviation in Latin America,* Development Cooperation Information Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague, pages 31–38.

[64]Nelson, Nici (1988), "How women and men get by: the sexual division of labour in a Nairobi squatter settlement" in Gugler, Joseph (editor), *The Urbanization of the Third World,* Oxford University Press, Oxford, pages 183–203.

Policing in poor areas is particularly problematic when it is associated with racial antagonism, and has provoked riots in inner-city areas in the USA, France and Britain in recent years.

Rakodi asserts that "... planners have little understanding about how the poor survive.[65] As a result, urban plans and policies generally have little relevance to the situation which the poor face and may well make it far worse." One way this can impact badly on the poor is where a rigid constraint is placed on the supply of serviced land and housing. Residents of squatter settlements live in terror of official clearances in which they may lose their few capital assets and personal possessions. In Brazil, where the state pursued a policy of eradicating favelas (squatter settlements) in the1960s and 1970s, Portes comments that subsequent government neglect was "not an unwelcome event."[66] Lee-Smith argues that it is in the interests of the ruling élite to continue to prevent easy access to land by the urban poor because control of land provides a source of cash income and political support.[67] This is likely to reinforce the official ideology of maintaining high building standards and ensuring that petty commodity production, including building, remains in the informal sector.

Castells argues that the state plays a central role in mediating class interests in urban areas by subsidizing the cost of reproducing labour.[68] Where governments have intervened in favour of the poor, the withdrawal of this assistance may be devastating. The removal of state subsidies on basic foodstuffs has greatly increased the vulnerability of the urban poor in Africa, causing rapid price rises and falling real incomes. In Zambia, for example, the majority of low-income households in Lusaka changed their diets following government auctioning of foreign exchange from 1985, substituting mealie-meal for protein, while the poorest cut down their consumption of mealie-meal. Extensive rioting broke out in the Copperbelt towns in December 1986 following an attempted doubling of the price of mealie-meal by the government. As a result of devaluation and removal of price controls, the official price of mealie-meal increased seven-fold between 1985 and 1989.[69] The price has continued to spiral steeply since 1989, trebling in 1992–93.[70]

The importance of these four, interlinked features of urban poverty–environmental and health risks, vulnerability arising from commod-itization, social fragmentation and crime, and negative contact with the state and police—is not that they are only found in the poor parts of towns and cities. None of them are associated exclusively with the urban sector: they may be found to some degree in rural areas, and not every town will exhibit all the features. However, it is significant that in poor neighbourhoods in the city, these characteristics may be uniquely combined in ways that intensify the insecurity and life-threatening health risks experienced with poverty, and influence the coping strategies adopted by the poor at the household and community levels.[71]

[65]See reference 51.

[66]Portes, Alejandro (1979), "Housing policy, urban poverty and the state: the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro, 1972–1976," *Latin American Research Review* Vol XIV, No 2, pages 3–24.

[67]Lee-Smith, Diana (1990), "Squatter landlords in Nairobi: a case study of Korogocho" in Amis, Philip and Peter Lloyd (editors), *Housing Africa's Urban Poor,* Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, pages 175–189.

[68]Castells, Manuel (1977), *The Urban Question,* Edward Arnold, London.

[69]Kalinda, Beatrice and Maria Floro (1992), "Zambia in the 1980s: a review of national and urban-level economic reforms," INURD Working Paper No 18, Urban Development Division, World Bank, Washington, DC.

[70]Wratten, Ellen (1993), "Zambia peri-urban self-help project," report prepared for the Overseas Development Administration, London, October.

[71]Edwards, J (1989), "Positive discrimination as a strategy against exclusion: the case of the inner-cities," *Policy and Politics* Vol 17, pages 11–24.

The effects of poverty at the urban level are therefore likely to be different, even if the basic underlying causes are common.

Is there a conceptual difference between urban and rural poverty? Urban poverty, as experienced in New York ghettos or Nairobi's squatter settlements, certainly feels qualitatively different. Yet, location within the city is not a sufficient predictor of poverty: *"Inner-city and marginalization are not coterminous. Mere location within the core does not marginalize, since not all the heterogeneity of communities housed there conforms to this label, neither are political responses to them uniform since plainly some are regarded as the deserving poor. There have to be other factors attached to individuals and groups for the marginalization process to congeal"*[72]

The social constructs of race, class, gender and age affect poverty in both urban and rural contexts, as do national and international policies and external shocks. It is also important to remember that a key distinguishing feature of rural poverty—accessibility—can also be a problem for people living in poor urban communities. While there may be a greater volume and quality of community services in cities, the urban poor are invariably denied access to them: isolation is determined by political clout as well as spatial location.

To get a complete picture of poverty, we need methods of analysis which examine these similar features as well as the differences. Rural and urban human settlements are linked economic and social systems, and it is unhelpful to restrict our vision to only one part of the system or to use poverty data to set one arbitrarily defined part against another.

VII. WHY ARE THE POOR POOR? ALTERNATIVE PERCEPTIONS AND THEIR POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The analysis of poverty has been dominated by two broadly opposed perspectives, each of which leads to an alternative set of policy prescriptions. On the one hand, poverty is attributed to the personal failings of the individuals concerned, which leads to self-perpetuating cycles of social pathology. On the other hand, it is viewed as the inevitable outcome of an unfairly structured political and economic system which discriminates against disadvantaged groups. The former perspective is intellectually rooted in laissez-faire individualism and the legitimisation of racial discrimination.[73] It tends to lead to free-market economic policies coupled with residual social policies which focus on the psychological rehabilitation of the poor.[74] The alternative radical view draws from Marxist theory and is closely associated with the developmentalist or basic needs tradition. Policy prescriptions involve a more interventionist role for the state in promoting equity, analysis of poverty as a social construct rather than an individual problem, and the redistribution of assets and decision-making power at international, national, regional, community, household and intra-household levels.

a. Low- and middle-income societies

In the Third World country literature (much of which has been written by Northern researchers), these two views are typified by the "culture of poverty" thesis of Oscar Lewis, in which the poor

---

[72]See reference 38.

[73]See reference 13.

[74]Hardiman, Margaret and James Midgley (1989), *The Social Dimensions of Development,* 2nd edition, Gower, London.

are assumed to be marginal to urban development due to innate and culturally determined personal characteristics and resulting deviant behaviour;[75] and the alternative "marginalization" thesis, which ascribes a more positive role to the activities of poor urban communities and emphasizes the structural barriers which exclude their participation in formal economic, political and social institutions.[76] Oscar Lewis's anthropological studies of poor families in Mexico City and San Juan, Puerto Rico led him to the conclusion that those trapped in poverty had characteristically different behaviour patterns and values from the dominant society and culture. He argued that: *"The culture of poverty is both an adaptation and a reaction of the poor to their marginal position in a class-stratified, highly individuated, capitalistic society. It represents an effort to cope with feelings of hopelessness and despair which develop from the realization of the improbability of achieving success in terms of the values and goals of the larger society."*[77] The hypothesis of the separate "sub-culture" was used to explain the perpetuation of their poverty from generation to generation. Children born into poor families grew up with a weak family structure, ineffective interpersonal relations, a present-time orientation and unrestrained spending patterns. This environment engendered values such as helplessness, dependence, a sense of inferiority, resignation and fatalism. Such children would be less interested in education, the value of work or self-improvement. They would have a low ability to plan ahead or to identify and react to changing opportunities.

These adaptive responses to economic deprivation and social marginality would, in turn, make the disadvantaged position of the poor yet more entrenched. Characteristics such as male machismo, sexual promiscuity, teenage pregnancy, illegitimacy and female-headed households, a rigid division of family responsibilities between men and women, alcohol and drug abuse, and poor educational performance serve as "own goals," preventing the poor from rising out of their situation and precluding economic, social and political integration into the mainstream culture.[78] Lewis further claimed that the basic attitudes and values of the debilitating sub-culture are absorbed *". . . by the time slum children are age six or seven,"* thus ensuring that the traits causing poverty are passed on to the next generation.[79] Appropriate remedies would include removing children from their home environment in order to rehabilitate them and encourage a change in their values.

Lewis' work has provoked widespread debate and criticism. Concern has been expressed with the research methods used, the lack of representativeness of the families studied, and the ethnocentricity with which Lewis judged other people's lives. Valentine argued strongly that the lifestyle of the poor is not based on deviant values but is instead a rational response to having insufficient money.[80] Perlman's classic study of urban poverty in Rio de Janeiro provided empirical evidence to challenge Lewis'

---

[75]See reference 29; also Lewis, Oscar (1961), *The Children of Sanchez: Autobiography of a Mexican Family,* Penguin, Harmondsworth and Vintage Books, New York; and Lewis, Oscar (1965), *La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty—San Juan and New York,* Random House, New York.

[76]Perlman, Janice E (1976), *The Myth of Marginality: Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de Janeiro,* University of California Press, Berkeley and London; also Moser, Caroline O N and David Satterthwaite (1985), "Characteristics and sociology of poor urban communities," mimeo, London.

[77]See reference 75, Lewis (1965), page xiv.

[78]Burton, C Emory (1992), *The Poverty Debate: Politics and the Poor in America,* Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut and London.

[79]Lewis, Oscar (1966), "The culture of poverty," *Scientific American* Vol 215, No 4, pages 19–25.

[80]Valentine, Charles A (1968), *Culture of Poverty: Critique and Counterproposals,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London.

TABLE 2   Urban poverty: meaning, measurement and policy implications

Meaning of Urban poverty	Implications for Measurement	Implications for Urban Poverty Programmes
Conventional economic definition: poverty is a lack of income (or consumption), defined in absolute or relative terms.	Quantitative approach, using a common scale of measurement (usually a poverty line based on household budget surveys); measurement of the extent of poverty (number affected) and the depth of poverty (how far incomes are below the poverty line).	Focus on redistribution at the macro level. Increase urban productivity and incomes through job creation; deal with residual poverty through transfer payments, social safety nets, subsidies on basic items.
Participatory social development definition: poverty is multi-faceted and its definition varies between individuals.	Qualitative analysis of the processes underlying poverty and the ways in which poverty affects different subgroups among "the poor" (such as young and old people, women and men, different household types, castes and ethnic groups). Uses a range of "bottom-up" participatory methods such as focus groups, life histories, wealth-ranking and mapping to examine people's perceptions of poverty, vulnerability, and intra-household and community level entitlements.	Focus on micro-level support to enable individuals to participate socially and economically and strengthen their ability to stay out of poverty. May include community-level interventions to strengthen health, education, communications, credit for small enterprises, people's capacity to make decisions affecting their own lives, political participation and legal literacy; decentralization of decision-making to local levels (the poor know best how to use resources in their own neighbourhoods); and the differentiation of special needs of particular groups among "the poor."
Integrated development approach: causes of poverty are interlinked (environment, housing, health, income generation, education, etc.) and must be tackled in a coordinated way.	Quantitative and qualitative assessments are complementary. Quantification includes social indicators such as life expectancy, incidence of disease, education levels, as well as income and expenditure. Need to understand the spatial distribution of poverty at the citywide level in order to target resources at the poorest groups; within poor areas, need to understand priorities of different sub-groups.	Holistic, integrated approach to urban development and poverty alleviation—redistribute resources to provide for basic needs of the poor, coordinating interventions in primary health care, water and sanitation, pollution control, housing, income generation, education, crime control, domestic violence, leisure facilities. Acknowledge linkages between national economic and social policies and poverty in urban and rural areas.

stereotype.[81] Far from being marginal to urban development, the poor made an important contribution to the city's informal economy. They did not have the attitudes and behaviours supposedly associated with marginal groups, were socially well organized and cohesive, culturally optimistic, aspired to improve their houses and their children's education, and were neither politically apathetic nor radical. Poverty resulted from discriminatory structures which denied the non-privileged the means to realize their aspirations. Moser and Satterthwaite reinforced this view.[82] They pointed out that although squatter settlements are built in peripheral areas, where there is less competition for land from high-income groups, squatters are usually established urban residents who are well integrated into the city economy. In fact, squatter settlements are highly heterogeneous and contain middle-income as well as low-income residents.

The dispute over the validity of the culture of poverty hypothesis, and the shift towards a structural explanation of poverty, reflects wider shifts in development thinking. In the 1970s, modernization theory—which prescribed a blueprint development strategy based on rapid economic growth and accorded a residual role for social policy[83]—was challenged by dependency theorists who claimed that urban and rural poverty in the Third World was intrinsically linked to the process of capital accumulation in the North, and by proponents of basic needs strategies who called for a redefinition of the goals of development to emphasize equity and democracy as well as growth.[84] In the 1980s, the growth models re-emerged in new forms, with pressure from the World Bank and bilateral development agencies for macro-economic reforms which would facilitate private sector development.

This approach is mirrored by the World Bank's latest policy paper for the urban sector, which attributes the causes of urban poverty largely to "... *structural constraints and inefficiencies in the urban economy including excessive protection of capital-intensive industry, ineffective public policies and weak public institutions,*" and argues that "... *poverty reduction is possible in part through improving productivity at the individual, household, firm, and urban levels.*"[85] The previous emphasis on housing and infrastructure projects (outlined by the World Bank Task Force on Poverty[86]) has given way to interventions designed to strengthen citywide economic management, deregulation of the private sector, increased social sector expenditure for human resource development of the urban poor by providing basic services in education, health, nutrition, family planning and vocational training, and support for the voluntary sector.

There is now widespread recognition that structural adjustment programmes have exacerbated poverty, particularly among lower middle-class and low-income groups in cities.[87] In 1987, UNICEF called for greater targeting of public expenditure to benefit the poorest groups, and compensatory measures to lessen the impact

---

[82]See reference 76, Moser and Satterthwaite (1985).

[83]See reference 74.

[84]Streeten, Paul (editor) (1978), special issue on "Poverty and inequality," *World Development* Vol 6, No 3; also Streeten, Paul (1981), *First Things First: Meeting Basic Human Needs in Developing Countries,* World Bank publication, Oxford University Press, New York and Oxford; and Wisner, Ben (1988), *Power and Need in Africa: Basic Needs and Development Policies,* Earthscan, London.

[85]See reference 2, World Bank (1991), page 45.

[86]World Bank Task Force on Poverty (1983), *Focus on Poverty,* World Bank, Washington, DC.

[87]See reference 2, World Bank (1991).

on their health and productivity.[88] These measures included public works employment schemes and nutrition interventions such as selective food subsidies and direct feeding for the most vulnerable. However, UNICEF have since expressed concern that adjustment programmes need to focus on the structural aspects of poverty:

> . . . restructuring the economy in order to reach a reasonable growth path should not be the only major objective of adjustment programmes but also a speedy elimination of structural poverty. . . compensatory programmes and the establishment of the safety nets which often accompany structural adjustment programmes can. . .—in high income countries— contribute to reducing poverty. In general, however, these programmes do not. . . attack the root causes of structural poverty.[89]

Safety nets (including food for work schemes and transfer payments to those below the poverty line) are unlikely to be an effective or sustainable solution to urban poverty in the poorest countries where a majority of the population are living below the subsistence income level. In Zambia, for example, where 80 per cent of the national population and 40 per cent of the urban population fall beneath the official poverty line, food for work projects in Lusaka's squatter compounds have benefited as few as 5 per cent of eligible households, and their continuation is dependent on foreign food aid.[90]

The structural approach to poverty demands more radical redistributive measures (such as land and tax reform, changes in the legal rights of women, and the coordinated provision of infrastructure and basic services to all parts of the city), in order to increase there sources of the poor and improve their long-term ability to earn a decent livelihood, and increase popular participation in decision-making. It also stresses the links between poverty in Third World cities and unequal global trading relationships, requiring change in the international economic order (particularly a moratorium on debt repayments and the curbing of multinational corporate power).[91]

In an interesting work bridging the analysis of poverty in the North and the South, Townsend proposes a structural theory of poverty based on three elements: the economic and social influence of global institutions and transnational corporations; analysis of the ways in which human needs are socially created—by the state in defining the rights and obligations of "citizenship," and by other sub-national associations such as communities, families and commercial organizations; and by gender preference, which is ". . . *a prime determinant of the construction of society and hence of unequal privilege and the unequal distribution of income and other resources in society.*"[92] The policy implications of this theory are a restructuring of world trade and international action to regulate and change the pattern of ownership of transnational corporations; a more positive approach to social planning, with the coordination of social and economic policies, and a creative or preventative role for social policy rather than a casualty treatment role; a fairer distribution of wealth (rather than an emphasis on social security transfer income) and withdrawal

---

[88]Cornia, Giovanni A, Richard Jolly and Frances Stewart (1987), *Adjustment with a Human Face: Protecting the Vulnerable and Promoting Growth,* Oxford University Press for UNICEF, Oxford.

[89]See reference 9, page 122.

[90]See reference 70.

[91]Hoogvelt, Anke M M (1982), *The Third World in Global Development,* Macmillan, London; also Hayter, Teresa (1981), *The Creation of World Poverty,* Pluto Press, London.

[92]See reference 13, chapter 5.

of the right to inherit vast wealth; the introduction of maximum as well as minimum wages and the extension of wages to women in unpaid work; and the enlargement of the rights of citizens to participate in community institutions.

b. Industrial Societies

The idea that the poor are to blame for their poverty is a recurrent theme in social policy in the North. In Britain, it is enshrined in the concept of the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor which is used to justify the differential treatment of those deemed to have brought their condition on themselves through socially irresponsible behaviour (such as teenage girls who have become pregnant "just so as to qualify for social housing"[93]) and innocent, "decent" and hard-working citizens who have fallen on hard times (such as war widows with young children).

This view is mirrored by Jenks, writing about poverty in the USA: "*A growing fraction of the population is poor because they have violated rules that most Americans regard as reasonable.*"[94] The culture of poverty was debated extensively in the USA and UK in the 1960s and 1970s, but in the 1980s and 1990s discussion has shifted to the notion of "underclass." This concept parallels the culture of poverty but is narrower in focus. It is applied to those trapped in the geographic and social isolation of the ghetto rather than to the majority of the "deserving" or "respectable" poor.

According to Wilson, there are three aspects to the creation of a ghetto underclass: concentration, social isolation and spatial mismatch.[95] Urban poverty in the USA has become increasingly concentrated among ethnic minorities in the poorest neighbourhoods of major cities. Of the 2.4 million ghetto poor, 65 per cent are black and 22 per cent are Hispanic.[96] As middle-class families have moved out of the inner-city, a distinct local social milieu has been created where teenage pregnancies, school drop-outs, crime, violence and welfare dependency are normal behaviour rather than a disgrace. Simultaneously, industrial transformation has resulted in job losses in inner-city areas, leaving the urban underclass with few opportunities. The physical isolation of the ghetto poor has been reinforced by highway and housing projects which have segregated the black population and isolated them from employment outside the inner-city.

Thus, the underclass hypothesis emphasizes that marginalization is the outcome of an interaction between personal and group cultural characteristics and a complex web of demographic and economic changes, and government policy, which combine to create a poverty trap for ghetto residents.[97] The poor are both the victims of the system which binds them in the ghetto and a cause—through the criminal and antisocial activities that some of them are alleged to engage in—of the deteriorating quality of life in their neighbourhoods.

The concepts of universal basic needs and social exclusion have also been important in framing alternative approaches to poverty in the twentieth century. Neo-Keynesian analysis views the problem as one of cyclical macro-economic

---

[93]A view epitomized in the speech by Peter Lilley, Secretary of State for Social Security, to the British Conservative Party conference in October 1993.

[94]Jenks, Christopher (1991), "Is the American underclass growing?" in Jenks, Christopher and Paul E Peterson (editors), *The Urban Underclass,* The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, pages 28–100.

[95]Wilson, W J (1987), *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner-city, the Underclass and Public Policy,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

[96]Wilson, W J (1991), "Studying inner-city social dislocations: the challenge of public agenda research," *American Sociological Review* Vol 53, pages 1–14.

[97]See reference 95.

demand management, and stresses job creation through reflation of the economy and training of the unemployed. In Britain, nationalization of industry, greater state control of employment, regional assistance,[98] the strengthening of the town and country planning system and nationalization of the right to develop land, the opening of universal access to education and health services, and legislation to diminish racial and gender discrimination between 1945 and 1979 fitted with a structural understanding of the causes of poverty. However, this was mixed with subsistence-level, means-tested social security benefits which echo the idea that the long-term unemployed should not enjoy the same entitlement to income as those in work.

In continental Europe, unemployment benefits are set at a more generous level based on average wages and reflecting the concept of equal citizenship. The French second-generation national assistance scheme (the *revenu minimum d'insertion*) and its counterpart programme operating in many of the Spanish regions attempts permanent rehabilitation of the poor through job retraining. Mangen found the underclass concept was not applied widely to inner-city areas in mainland Europe.[99] While interpretations of poverty varied between the European countries studied, the central notion was found to be "social exclusion superimposed on material and cultural deprivation." For example van Parijs distinguishes between "outsiders" who are permanently excluded from a job, wage and welfare benefits including future

pension rights, and "insiders" who have secure jobs.[100] European policy responses typically include employment, training and education programmes coupled with physical regeneration strategies for deprived inner-city areas and "problem" housing estates, which aim to remove marginalized people permanently from poverty and "reinsert" them into society.

In contrast, the current emphasis of employment policy in Britain and the USA reflects a concern with the welfare dependency of the poor, with short-term "work experience" being offered rather than training schemes which lead to permanent jobs and van Parijs' "insider" benefits. "Workfare" schemes have been introduced in the USA under the Family Support Act 1988, whereby welfare-dependent mothers are required to undertake low-paid community service work rather than receive benefits. Wilson has proposed universal child care to allow poor working parents access to education, training and employment.[101] Again, state child care provision is far more extensive in continental Europe than in either the UK or USA, where private provision is the main form.

Urban poverty alleviation strategies are different in the South and the North, not only because state resources vary but also because the conceptualization of urban poverty differs. In the North, where urban poverty is not generally treated as a separate category, the emphasis of policy has been on national and regional interventions, with selective assistance at intra-city level to targeted deprived areas or groups. In

---

[98]Regional policy has had mixed results. Doreen Massey's research suggests that changes in the local gender division of labour was more important than government incentives in attracting new industries to the assisted regions. Following male redundancy, women no longer had to provide round-the-clock domestic services for husbands and sons on shift work, and became freer to take up paid employment themselves (LSE Gender Institute public lecture, 1992).

[99] See reference 38.

[100]Van Parijs, Philippe (1992), "Introduction: competing justifications of basic income" in Van Parijs, Philippe (editor), *Arguing for Basic Income: Ethical Foundations for a Radical Reform,* Verso, London and New York, pages 3–43; also Van Parijs, Philippe (1995), *Real Freedom for All: What (If Anything) Can Justify Capitalism?,* Clarendon Press, Oxford.

[101]See reference 95.

the South, where urban poverty has been neglected until recently, policies have focused on raising incomes and improving access to services in the rural sector. Given the interrelated determinants of urban and rural poverty, what is required is an integrated approach which simultaneously addresses ways of increasing the opportunities and reducing the inequalities of people in both sectors. As Stren states, writing about the urban crisis in Africa:

> It is not a question of determining whether the rural sector or the urban sector is the most important; an understanding of their symbiotic relationship is required. . . .One cannot let the urban system crumble to the point that it cannot support rural development, while channelling all available funds into the rural sector. . . (page 2)

> [But nevertheless] It is now widely appreciated that rural conditions are even worse than urban conditions, and this is the root cause of the urban management problem. (page 305)[102]

The magnitude of poverty is such that its solution is unlikely to involve any one agency acting alone. But governments do have the responsibility, jointly and severally, of setting a policy context within which discriminatory social and economic structures are removed. Moreover, urban policy must be defined less narrowly than a preoccupation with the provision of infrastructure or economic management to raise productivity, and give equal emphasis to social and political structures which influence people's well-being and the ways in which they a reaffected by adversity.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS: THE LINKAGE BETWEEN DEFINITIONS, POLICY AND THE MEASUREMENT OF URBAN POVERTY

Perceptions about the nature of poverty, and the policy responses which follow from these perceptions, are central in deciding how best to study, measure and analyze the phenomenon. Different kinds of information are demanded by different approaches. For example, if poverty is understood as the product of a deviant subculture, then priority might be given to identifying and collecting information about behavioural problems such as family instability, alcoholism and drug abuse. Alternatively, if anti-poverty policies are designed to deal with structural causes, information would be required about not only access to employment, housing and educational opportunities at the city level but also social and institutional structures which discriminate against the poor at international and national levels.[103]

The first section of this paper identified two principal ways in which poverty has been defined: conventional definitions which use income or other social indicators as a proxy for welfare, and participatory definitions which allow for flexibility in local perceptions of poverty and view it in non-material as well as physical terms. The conventional approach lends itself to quantitative measurement and allows individuals or households to be ranked along a common, externally defined scale which serves as a surrogate measure of poverty. This is useful in so far as it is necessary to understand general patterns of deprivation and to compare different groups or countries in order to target

---

[102]Stren, Richard E and Rodney R White (editors) (1989), *African Cities in Crisis: Managing Rapid Urban Growth,* Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado and London.

[103]Hirschfield, Alexander (1993), "Indices of deprivation: study approaches, data sources and analytical techniques," mimeo, Department of Civic Design, University of Liverpool.

resources in the most effective way.[104] Comparative measurement is essential in designing and monitoring redistributive policies and social safety nets.

However, if we accept that poverty is an inherently subjective concept, then such measurements can only give us an accurate picture of its incidence if everyone holds an identical view of what poverty is—which, as we have shown, they do not. The contribution of the anthropological approaches to poverty measurement is that they recognize the diversity of perceptions of poverty and enable us to build up an understanding of its many dimensions for particular poor groups. This type of analysis is extremely important in designing "enabling" strategies which help to overcome the structural constraints to economic, social and political participation by the poor. In order to "help the poor to help themselves"—the mainstream of current anti-poverty thinking in the Third World and an idea which is superseding the welfare state approach in some Northern countries—we need to understand the nature of entitlements and vulnerability at a disaggregated level.

Recent work in developing participatory rural research in the South has much to offer the analysis of poverty in the urban context in both the South and the North.[105] The use of multiple measures to observe any phenomenon, including poverty, is in theory superior to the use of just one or two measures. Yet, there are drawbacks. Participatory analysis requires greater time input (from ordinary people as well as professionals) and, while it can further the objective of involving the poor in decision-making, it is by nature a highly localized exercise and tends to lead to micro-level solutions rather than challenge the broader national and international structures which shape poverty.

Statistics about the incidence of "urban poverty" and "rural poverty" a re frequently used as ammunition to capture resources by those on either side of the urban–rural divide. This paper has challenged the usefulness of treating urban poverty as a separate conceptual category. Any such classification is intrinsically arbitrary. More importantly, from a structural perspective, the determinants of urban and rural poverty are interlinked and have to be tackled in tandem.

Within cities, certain of the problems associated with poverty—poor environmental conditions, vulnerability arising from commercialization, social stress and conflict with state authority—occur in unique combination and defy solution by vertical sectoral interventions. An integrated strategy, which aims to deal with social, economic, political and environmental problems in a coordinated way, offers more hope. The integrated development approach requires both quantitative poverty indicators—to "best guess" the distribution and depth of deprivation within cities and countries—and qualitative analysis of social structures and the process by which poverty affects different groups. As a tool to guide the planning and monitoring of policy, both quantitative and qualitative approaches to measurement therefore have a place. Neither is sufficient alone.

---

[104]The cost-effectiveness of expenditure has to be considered as well as equity in determining the best use of resources to combat poverty. For example, would preventive measures directed at the general population (such as mass immunization or the provision of universal, good quality child care) reduce poverty more than selective interventions targeted at the very poor? The trade-off between such choices is political as well as economic, since popular support for anti-poverty policies may be dependent on how the benefits are distributed.

[105]For an account of the application of rural PRA methodologies in urban participatory poverty assessments, see Norton, Andy (1994), "Observations on urban applications of PRA methods from Ghana and Zambia: participatory poverty assessments," *RRA Notes* No 21, special issue on Participatory Tools and Methods in Urban Areas, pages 55–56.

Conceptualizing Work–Family Balance

Implications for Practice and Research (2007)

Joseph G. Grzywacz and Dawn S. Carlson

The idea of work–family balance has generated substantial interest in the academic, applied, and popular press. Academicians argue that work–family balance contributes to individual well-being and that it is a lynchpin for a healthy and well-functioning society (Halpern, 2005). Applied professionals in business and policy arenas struggle to find solutions to the "challenge" workers face in combining their work and family lives. Work–family balance, or more aptly difficulty achieving balance, is highlighted in popular periodicals such as *Fortune, Wall Street Journal,* and *Newsweek* (Caminiti, 2005; Chao, 2005; Dwyer, 2005), and bookstores are replete with books providing tips and suggestions for individuals and couples to achieve work–family balance.

Interest in work–family balance is well deserved. In nearly two thirds of couples with children younger than 18, both partners are employed (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006), 35% of workers currently provide care for an aging parent or family member and the proportion of workers providing eldercare will likely increase (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002), and 60% of working adults report difficulty balancing work and family (Keene & Quadagno, 2004). Evidence also suggests that the absence of work–family balance, typically defined in terms of elevated work–family conflict, may undermine individual health and well-being (Frone, 2000; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1997; Grzywacz & Bass, 2003; Major, Klein, & Ehrhart, 2002), and organizational performance (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). Indeed, some suggest that the ability to balance work and family is one of the primary social challenges of our era (Halpern, 2005).

Work–family balance is at the core of issues central to human resource development (HRD). Indicators of balance have been associated with greater employee commitment, job satisfaction (Allen et al., 2000; Kossek & Ozeki, 1999), and organizational citizenship behavior (Bragger, Rodriguez-Srednicki, Kutcher, Indovino, & Rosner, 2005). The absence of balance, notably high levels of work–family conflict, has been linked to greater turnover intention (Allen et al., 2000; Kossek & Ozeki, 1999) and greater sickness absence (Jansen et al., 2006). In addition, work–family balance has been linked, albeit modestly, to employee performance (Allen et al., 2000; Kossek & Ozeki, 1999). This evidence indicates that, implicitly or explicitly, work–family balance is at the core of HRD's major functions and that it may be a powerful leverage point for promoting individual and organizational effectiveness. Indeed, a recent report by a consortium of Fortune 100 companies concluded that organizational strategies that help employees better balance their work and family

lives are simply good business (Corporate Voices for Working Families, 2005).

Unfortunately, the ability to capitalize on work–family balance as a leverage point for HRD practice is impaired because theorizing and conceptualizations of the construct have not kept pace with interest. The "balance" metaphor is widely used but rarely defined in specific terms (Greenhaus & Allen, 2006). When scholars do define balance, the definition is rarely situated in theory. The first notable exception was Marks and MacDermid's (1996) handling of "role balance," which was offered as an alternative to the dominant view that individuals prioritize roles hierarchically for organizing and managing multiple responsibilities (Lobel, 1991; Thoits, 1995). Most recently, Greenhaus and Allen (2006) articulated a thoughtful analysis of the balance construct. In this article, we develop a conceptually based definition of work–family balance that parallels but narrows previous handlings of the concept. Following this development, we turn to practical issues surrounding our view of work–family balance: issues related to measurement as well as issues related to HRD research and practice. We conclude our article with directions for future research.

WORK–FAMILY BALANCE: BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUALIZATION

Work–family balance is inconsistently defined despite widespread academic and applied interest. Historically, and most frequently, researchers view work–family balance as the absence of work–family conflict, or the frequency and intensity in which work interferes with family or family interferes with work. Greenhaus, Collins, and Shaw (2003), drawing on role balance theory (Marks & MacDermid, 1996) and previous nominal definitions (Clark, 2000; Kirchmeyer, 2000), defined work–family balance as "the extent to which individuals are equally engaged in and equally satisfied with work and family

roles" (p. 513). Voydanoff (2005) drew on person–environment fit theory and suggested that work–family balance is "a global assessment that work resources meet family demands, and family resources meet work demands such that participation is effective in both domains" (p. 825). Most recently, Greenhaus and Allen (2006) defined work–family balance as "the extent to which an individual's effectiveness and satisfaction in work and family roles are compatible with the individual's life priorities." Although helpful, some of these definitions do not adequately capture adults' commonsense representations of work–family balance. Role balance, as conceptualized by Marks and MacDermid (1996), was offered as an organizational strategy rather than as a characterization of an adult's work and family life per se. We see little evidence in the literature suggesting that people seek "equality" or even "near equality" in their work and family lives as suggested by Greenhaus et al. (2003). Indeed, role balance theory suggests that people seek full and meaningful experiences in their work and family lives (Marks, Huston, Johnson, & MacDermid, 2001; Marks & MacDermid, 1996). It is important to note that role balance theory makes no prescription for equality, in part because it is questionable whether work- and family-related activities have comparable worth and that they can be effectively monitored (S. M. MacDermid, personal communication, April 5, 2006; S. R. Marks, personal communication, April 6, 2006). There is also little empirical evidence suggesting that working adults think of balance as a transaction between work-related resources and family-related demands, or vice versa, as conceptualized by Voydanoff (2005).

Greenhaus and Allen's (2006) definition of work–family balance is compelling; however, it overemphasizes individual satisfaction in work and family. Satisfaction within and across life domains is important, but defining balance in terms of satisfaction is conceptually problematic. The primary problem is that defining balance in terms of satisfaction isolates individuals in their

workand family-related activities from the organizations and families in which these activities are performed. The fundamental issue raised here is whether work–family balance is a psychological or social construct. By claiming that work–family balance is "inherently in the eye of the beholder," Greenhaus and Allen situate balance as a psychological construct. However, is work and family balanced if an individual is satisfied and feels "effective" in both domains but this satisfaction and appraisal of effectiveness is at the expense of another (e.g., a working wife who picks up the slack at home as her husband climbs the corporate ladder)? Decontextualized views of balance focused on introspective, and to a certain degree hedonistic, elements of daily work and family life such as satisfaction do not adequately capture the fundamental meaning of work–family balance.

Defining balance in terms of satisfaction also raises practical problems. Developing effective and sustainable interventions to enhance satisfaction within and across domains is challenging because it, like other concepts that have little observable meaning outside of the individual, is inherently retrospective and under constant reconstruction based on recent and accumulated experiences (Gergen, 1973; Spence, 1944). If work–family balance is, in fact, in the eye of the beholder, an extreme view would argue that there is little that can be done to create systematic strategies to help individual workers balance work and family, because the experience of work–family balance is inherently idiosyncratic. Even more concerning, is the potential for reducing work–family balance down to an individual-level problem. Viewing work–family balance as an individual-level problem borders on victim blaming because individuals shoulder the burden of the work–family challenge; yet the challenge itself is the consequence of demographic transitions in the workforce and the American family, and transitions in how work is performed (Bianchi, Casper, & King, 2005). Of course, work–family balance is likely shaped by both individual and contextual factors, thereby

necessitating a view of the construct that is not exclusively psychological. This is not to say that the psychological perspective should be abandoned; rather, alternative perspectives are needed, and we propose that a social perspective of work–family balance is valuable.

We define work–family balance as accomplishment of role-related expectations that are negotiated and shared between an individual and his or her role-related partners in the work and family domains. Several features of this definition warrant specific comment. First, our focus on accomplishing role-related activities across roles and life domains is consistent with role balance theory (Marks & MacDermid, 1996) and the argument that full engagement in both work and family is both viable and fulfilling. It is also consistent with emerging developmental theory, suggesting that successfully managing multiple responsibilities is a developmental task for contemporary adults (Lachman & Boone-James, 1997). Next, by focusing on accomplishment of role-related activities as opposed to satisfaction with life roles, work–family balance is viewed as a social rather than a psychological construct and it takes on meaning outside of the individual. Giving work–family balance meaning outside the individual has significant implications for validating measures and for designing studies to test and refine theories of work–family balance. Further, by uncoupling accomplishment of role-related expectations (what Greenhaus and Allen have referred to as "effectiveness") and satisfaction, researchers can build additional layers of theory around the balance construct. Researchers could, for example, elaborate the individual and contextual circumstances shaping how and for whom accomplishment of role-related expectations leads to satisfaction across the work and family domains. This type of layering is essential for developing rich theories of work and family (MacDermid, Roy, & Zvonkovic, 2005) and for informing the design and implementation of effective interventions within organizations. Finally, our definition focuses on

accomplishing role-related expectations that are socially negotiated and shared. This focus is consistent with long-standing views that individuals both "take" and actively "make" roles (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964; Thomas & Biddle, 1966), but it is also consistent with the view that "work" and "family" are shorthand labels for a myriad of ongoing and spontaneous daily interactions that individuals have with other people (Darrah, 2005). Focusing on the inherently interactional aspects of daily work and family life is essential for accurately characterizing work–family balance.

IMPLICATIONS FOR HRD RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Our conceptualization of work–family balance has several implications for HRD research and practice, some of which are reviewed next. We begin with measurement, because high-quality measures are essential to theory enriching as well as practical research. Measurement is equally important in practice because, if it is to become a leverage point for HRD managers, valid measures are needed to monitor the effectiveness of programs targeting balance.

Measurement

Documenting levels of work–family balance is a necessity for both researchers and practitioners, in part because "what gets measured gets done." Unfortunately, an instrument for assessing work–family balance, as it is conceptualized here has not been published. Developing and validating a measure of work–family balance is a critical element for advancing research in this arena, but it is not the focus of this article. Nonetheless, we feel compelled to point out some key factors that should be considered in developing a balance scale based on our definition. First, the items should emphasize accomplishment of work and family role-related expectations rather than

satisfaction with work and family roles. Second, because we focus on work–family balance, items should focus on accomplishment of expectations in these domains only (vis-à-vis work–life balance). Further, to the extent possible, items should focus on general relationships that accompany a role (e.g., important others at home) rather than specific relationships (e.g., spouse) so that the instrument will have broad utility. Finally, items in the measure need to capture the extent to which individuals are accomplishing socially negotiated role-related expectations. An example item might be, "It is clear to me, based on feedback from coworkers and family members, that I am accomplishing both my work and family responsibilities."

Until such an instrument is developed and published, HRD professionals and practicing managers have two primary alternatives for assessing work–family balance in their organizations. The first alternative is the use of overall appraisals of work–family balance that have been used in previous studies, such as, "How successful do you feel at balancing your paid work and your family life?" (Keene & Quadagno, 2004). Although it focuses on individuals' role-related activities across life domains and is therefore useful for descriptive purposes, this approach to measuring work–family balance has several problems. The primary concern is whether a single item elicits an accurate summary of individuals' performance in complex life domains like work or family. Both "work" and "family" involve multiple roles and responsibilities thereby necessitating gross generalization on the part of individuals asked to summarize performance within and across domains. It is questionable how well individuals perform such complex cognitive tasks (MacDermid, 2005). Furthermore this and other items emphasize affective elements of work and family (e.g., how successful do you feel...) raising questions about the degree to which performance in work and family are accurately appraised. The validity of global, single-item approaches is further undermined by the fact that

work- and family-related role configurations can vary substantially from person to person, and it is simply unknown if individuals use comparable notions of "success" and "balance" when responding to single-item questions.

A compelling second alternative is to measure components of work–family balance, namely, work–family enrichment and work–family conflict (Frone, 2003). Work–family conflict captures the degree to which the responsibilities of work are incompatible with family life or vice versa (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), whereas enrichment refers to the extent to which individuals' involvement in one domain benefits their participation in another life domain (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Frone (2003) argued that work–family balance results from high levels of work–family enrichment and low levels of work–family conflict, suggesting that work–family balance may be a "formative" rather than "reflective" latent construct (Edwards & Bagozzi, 2000). Likewise, Greenhaus and Allen's (2006) model also suggests that balance is a formative latent construct. Consistent with these views, rather than conceptualizing conflict and enrichment as observable consequences of work–family balance, we submit that they give meaning and form to individuals' evaluations of how well they are meeting shared and negotiated role-related responsibilities, thereby serving as useful indicators of work–family balance as it is conceptualized here.

This second approach, which we characterize as a "components approach" because it uses work–family conflict and work–family enrichment scales to measure work–family balance, offers HRD researchers and practitioners several advantages. First, validated measures of work–family conflict (Carlson, Kacmar, & Williams, 2000; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996) and work–family enrichment (Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne, & Grzywacz, 2006) exist. These measures capture a variety of types of work–family conflict and enrichment, and they capture both directions of the linkage (i.e., work-to-family and family-to-work). Although criticisms have been leveled about typical

measures of work–family experiences (MacDermid, 2005), the existence of comprehensive measures helps ensure adequate coverage of the experiences that contribute to work–family balance and lessens the necessity of individuals to summarize abstract concepts. Next, in contrast to monolithic measures, a components approach enables greater precision and clarity in delineating antecedents of work–family balance (Edwards, 2001). It is highly unlikely that work–family conflict and work–family enrichment have identical antecedents (Frone, 2003; Grzywacz & Butler, 2005). Likewise, it is highly plausible that work–family conflict and work–family enrichment may have different consequences (Wayne, Musisca, & Fleeson, 2004), or that unique combinations of conflict and enrichment may be pivotal in understanding salient outcomes like employee health (Grzywacz & Bass, 2003). By studying the constituent elements, researchers can develop a comprehensive understanding of how to promote work–family balance and how to use it as a strategic tool for accomplishing desired organizational goals. Although some eschew the approach of measuring work–family balance via conflict and enrichment (Greenhaus & Allen, 2006), others argue that it is a viable and useful strategy (Tetrick & Buffardi, 2006). Until there is a well-established direct measure of the construct, we advocate that HRD researchers study work–family balance by measuring experiences of work–family conflict and work–family enrichment.

To illustrate the value of a components approach to measuring work–family balance, we analyzed data from the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce (Bond, Galinsky, & Swanberg, 1998). We examined a general measure of balance as well as the four components of balance (work-to-family conflict [WFC], family-to-work conflict [FWC], work-to-family enrichment [WFE], family-to-work enrichment [FWE]) in relation to three work-related outcomes (job satisfaction, attitude toward employer, and job stress) and three nonwork-related outcomes (family satisfaction, marital satisfaction, and overall stress). These results comparing the

percentage of variance explained across the two methods are reported in Table 1. The components approach consistently explains more variance in work and nonwork outcomes than does the general measure of balance. For example, when predicting the dependent variable job stress, the single item measure of balance explained 18% of the variance. However, when the four components of balance were examined in relation to job stress, 45% of the variance was explained. In the case of each of the six dependent variables, the four components of balance explained more of the variance in the dependent variable than did the global balance measure alone.

Research

Our conceptualization of work–family balance and recommendations for measuring balance via a components approach has important implications for HRD research. One salient implication is the need for a definitive strategy for modeling the four components of balance (i.e., WFC, FWC, WFE, FWE). Based on our conceptualization, we submit that work–family balance meets the basic criteria for a direct formative latent construct (Edwards & Bagozzi, 2000). That is, work–family balance has low to moderate correlations with work–family conflict (–.5 and–.3 for WFC and FWC, respectively) and work–family enrichment (.4 and.3 for WFE and FWE, respectively; Butler, Grzywacz, Bass, & Linney, 2005), suggesting that work–family balance is distinct from conflict and enrichment. In addition, evidence suggests that work–family conflict and enrichment precede and contribute to appraisals of work–family balance (Butler et al., 2005), suggesting that a temporal association consistent with a formative latent construct is plausible. Although there are other analysis strategies, such as Edwards' (1995) polynomial regression approach (see Tetrick & Buffardi, 2006), we suggest that researchers begin by modeling work–family balance as a direct formative latent construct (Edwards & Bagozzi, 2000) because it is most consistent with the conceptual definition offered in this article.

Researchers will need to expand their repertoire of potential antecedents of work–family balance, particularly if they are using a components

TABLE 1 Explained Variance of Work and Family Outcomes Through Different Conceptualizations of Work–Family Balance

	Explained Variance	
Work-related outcomes	*General Measure of Balance*	*Four Components of Balance*
Job satisfaction	.04	.10
Attitude toward employer	.01	.04
Job stress	.18	.45
Family-related outcomes		
Family satisfaction	.08	.12
Marital satisfaction	.05	.07
Overall stress	.11	.23

NOTE: Estimates based on data from the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce (Bond, Galinsky, & Swanberg, 1998).

approach for measuring balance. Work–family research to date has identified a plethora of potential antecedents of work–family conflict (for recent reviews, see Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Frone, 2003; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 2002). Although this research identifies some of the "barriers" to work–family balance, it says little about the factors that enable work–family balance. Consistent with the enabling factors and barriers metaphors for work–family balance, evidence suggests that the negative and positive experiences that shape individuals' appraisals of balance (i.e., work-family conflict and work-family enrichment) have unique individual and contextual antecedents. Extraversion, for example, has been associated with greater work–family enrichment but was unassociated with work–family conflict (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Wayne et al., 2004), whereas neuroticism was more strongly associated with work–family conflict than indicators of work–family enrichment. Likewise, contextual variables at work and in the family have different relations with work–family conflict and enrichment. In the workplace, decision latitude was positively related to enrichment but not related to conflict (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). On the other hand, pressures such as psychological demands and unscheduled extra work hours have been found to be strongly related to conflict and not related to enrichment (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Voydanoff, 2004). Collectively, this information suggests that researchers interested in identifying the antecedents of balance to inform HRD practices will need to consider individual and contextual antecedents that serve as barriers to work–family balance, as well as those that enable balance.

An implication of greater relevance to intervention researchers interested in documenting the value of work–family balance to HRD is the need to think multidimensionally in evaluating strategies for promoting work–family balance. Underlying this issue is the possibility that some antecedents may affect work–family balance in different yet competing ways. This possibility is illustrated by research suggesting that work–family conflict and work–family enrichment occasionally share antecedents that have similar rather than opposite effects. For example, Wayne et al. (2004) suggested that limiting work hours may benefit workers' level of work–family balance because fewer work hours was associated with less work–family conflict. However, fewer work hours was also associated with less work–family enrichment. Similarly, Grzywacz and Butler (2005) found that substantively complex jobs and those that demand a variety of skills may contribute to work–family enrichment (presumably because individuals are acquiring skills than can be applied outside the workplace), but they also may contribute to work–family conflict (presumably because substantively complex jobs are inherently more demanding). The results of these studies suggest that organizational interventions designed to help workers balance work and family, like curbing work hours or enriching jobs with greater complexity or task diversity, may not produce the desired effect. In essence, the intervention would have the potential of both enabling work–family balance (e.g., cutting back on work may help meet family-related expectations) and concurrently serving as a barrier to balance (e.g., it may be difficult to meet work-related expectations if hours are cut). Researchers need to consider the possible competing effects of different antecedents of balance and target those antecedents that have mutually reinforcing effects on work–family balance via multiple mechanisms (e.g., worker control; Grzywacz & Butler, 2005). If an intervention focuses on an antecedent that can exert competing effects on balance, then the researcher needs to be prepared with adequate methods to evaluate the strategy.

The implications outlined in this section hold regardless of whether researchers use a components or a direct approach to measuring balance. If researchers reject the components approach, they will need to overcome the absence of a conceptually based measure of work–family balance. So, although the nature of the measurement problem changes, the need for basic

research as to how best configure a measurement model remains. If researchers favor a direct measurement approach of work–family balance, they will need to supplement their conceptual and empirical models of work–family balance with a broader array of antecedents: Existing literature can offer insight into the individual and contextual factors that undermine balance (via work–family conflict), but it offers little insight into those factors that help people effectively meet their daily work- and family-related responsibilities. Finally, intervention researchers in any domain and focused on any outcome need to consider the potential unanticipated consequences of their intervention and they need to determine if the probability and significance of these consequences is problematic (Stokols, Grzywacz, McMahan, & Phillips, 2003).

Practice

The view of work–family balance offered in this article has implications for HRD and management practitioners, many of which parallel the implications for researchers. If HRD embraces work–family balance as a leverage point for practice, professionals will need to make informed decisions about how they will monitor work–family balance in their organizations. General indicators are simple and useful for describing and documenting continuity and change in work–family balance. Unfortunately, as previously described, it is not clear how well general indicators effectively assess work–family balance. Moreover, to the extent that work–family balance is a multifaceted construct as we and others have argued (Frone, 2003; Greenhaus & Allen, 2006; Tetrick & Buffardi, 2006), it is difficult to interpret descriptions of, particularly changes in, work–family balance. If balance reflects the combination of several experiences, how are practitioners to interpret their data? If practitioners monitor components of balance, as we suggest, interpretation is clearer, but the primary disadvantage is the relative inability to summarize work–family balance among workers.

The conceptualization of balance in this article has important implications for practitioners interested in promoting balance as a means to achieving other valued outcomes like greater employee commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors. Our definition of balance guides practitioners' attention to potential targets for change within the organization. If work–family balance is shaped by socially negotiated role expectations, HRD practitioners should use their skills in managing organizational change to identify explicit and implicit expectations placed on workers that are unnecessary, or create new resources that help workers satisfy the expectations of their career. This is the basic framework outlined in the dual-agenda approach (Rapoport, Bailyn, Fletcher, & Pruitt, 2002). Rapoport et al. (2002) suggested that organizations frequently adhere to taken-for-granted policies and practices, such as mandatory early morning or late afternoon business meetings or a reactionary project management culture, that undermine organizational performance and interfere with workers' ability to balance work and family. Practitioners seeking to promote work–family balance should consider these types of work processes as high-priority targets for change.

Practitioners also need to be careful when selecting potential targets for promoting work–family balance. For example, as previously discussed, curbing work hours may not yield meaningful improvements in work–family balance, because gains to work–family balance resulting from (presumably) greater ability to satisfy family-related expectations may be attenuated by greater difficulty meeting work-related expectations. Practitioners therefore need to think systemically when identifying potential targets for improving work–family balance. If they select a target that has the potential for competing effects on work–family balance, like curbing hours, then the overall intervention needs to include secondary and tertiary elements (like reducing work load, staff expansion, etc.) to circumvent potential negative consequences of the intervention.

However, individuals also play a role in shaping their work–family balance because they participate (actively or passively) in the social negotiation of role-related expectations. This suggests that practitioners responsible for promoting work–family balance should devise multilevel interventions. Working at multiple levels within the organization is consistent with standard HRD practice as well as other organizational functions like health promotion/wellness (McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, & Glanz, 1988; Stokols, 1996), and they would likely be effective for promoting work–family balance. The basic approach involves creating coordinated activities at the individual and organizational level that are mutually supportive. Recognizing that worker control or authority is a strong candidate for promoting work–family balance (Grzywacz & Butler, 2005), an HRD-led multilevel intervention might include implementation of schedule flexibility, redesign of workflow procedures to accommodate flexible work arrangements, time management seminars, and structured protocols for remediation of inappropriate personal use of the flexible work arrangements. This coordinates both organization-level (i.e., implementation of schedule flexibility, workflow redesign) and individual-level elements (i.e., time management, personal-level remediation) that are focused on enabling workers to allocate their time effectively, thereby fostering greater levels of control and work–family balance. Practitioners are encouraged to explore and evaluate comparable multilevel strategies in their organizations.

The current conceptualization of work–family balance also has strategic implications for HRD and management practice. Most important, practitioners should be cautious in making claims about the virtues of what accomplishment of work- and family-related role responsibilities (i.e., work–family balance) will yield. Arguably, promoting work–family balance likely yields a variety of benefits for organizations (Corporate Voices for Working Families, 2005), yet it is not a panacea. The role of work–family balance in employee health provides a cogent example. There is good theoretical reason to believe that work–family balance may contribute to

well-being (Marks & MacDermid, 1996; Thoits, 1983), or the subjective side of employee health (Keyes, 2002), but the evidence linking work–family balance to morbidity is less clear. Although studies have linked indicators of balance to psychiatric and physical morbidity (Frone, 2000; Frone et al., 1997; Grzywacz & Bass, 2003), they did not account for the reciprocal relationship between subjective well-being and objective morbidity, thereby confounding the interpretation of observed associations (Grzywacz & Keyes, 2005). Ultimately, the significance of work–family balance to well-being and morbidity is an empirical question; however, in the meantime, HRD and management professionals should not base the value of programs designed to promote work–family balance on health cost containment. Instead, base the value of work–family balance on enhancements to employee well-being and the added value it provides to organizations (Harter, Schmidt, & Keyes, 2002; Keyes & Grzywacz, 2005).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

The goal of this article was to refine previous conceptualizations of work–family balance to provide a definition that could guide research as well as HRD and management practice. We define work–family balance as accomplishment of role-related expectations that are negotiated and shared between an individual and his or her role-related partners in the work and family domains. This definition focuses on accomplishing role-related responsibilities at work and in the family, it is theoretically based in role theory, and it emphasizes the inherently social nature of individuals' role-related responsibilities.

The definition of work–family balance proposed in this article overcomes key limitations of previous definitions. First, whereas previous definitions combined both accomplishment and satisfaction in work and family, our definition has a purer focus on accomplishment of role-related responsibilities. This refinement makes the construct clearer and easier to interpret, and it will

contribute to richer theories of work and family. Next, the proposed definition moves the construct out of the "eye of the beholder" into the social domain. This feature of the definition has important implications for validating the construct and for identifying the organizational circumstances that contribute to work–family balance. Further, shifting work–family balance from a psychological to a social construct minimizes the potential of reducing work–family balance to an individual problem resulting from poor choices.

We maintain that HRD professionals and practicing managers should operationalize work–family balance using a components approach until a validated measure of the construct is created. The components approach helps ensure adequate coverage of possible universe of the experiences that contribute to work–family balance. Nevertheless, the final selection of a work–family balance measure should be shaped by the goal of the research being conducted. If, for example, the purpose of the research is to monitor overall levels of work–family balance within an organization, then a well-crafted global measure would likely be sufficient. On the other hand, if the goal is to determine how to improve work–life balance because it is impacting important organizational outcomes, then using the components approach would likely be best because it would provide more refined insight into the manifestation of work–family balance as well as potential unanticipated consequences of promoting work–family balance.

Work–family balance is an omnipresent factor in contemporary organizations and society. Unfortunately, theoretical and conceptual development of work–family balance has not kept pace with popular interest. In this article, we offer a refined, focused, and theoretically based definition of work–family balance. Substantial research needs to be done to fully develop a complete understanding of this important construct; yet, with a solid conceptualization in place, HRD professionals have a foundation upon which to begin creating strategies that contribute to organizational goals by helping workers achieve work–family balance.

REFERENCES

Allen, T. D., Herst, D. E., Bruck, C. S., & Sutton, M. (2000). Consequences associated with work-to-family conflict: A review and agenda for future research. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 5,* 278–308.

Bianchi, S. M., Casper, L. M., & King, R. B. (2005). Complex connections: A multidisciplinary look at work, family, health, and well-being research. In S. M. Bianchi, L. M. Casper, & R. B. King (Eds.), *Work, family, health and well-being* (pp. 1–17). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bond, J. T., Galinsky, E., & Swanberg, J. E. (1998). *The National Study of the Changing Workforce.* New York: Families and Work Institute.

Bond, J. T., Thompson, C., Galinsky, E., & Prottas, D. (2002). *Highlights of the National Study of the Changing Workforce: Executive Summary.* Retrieved May 24, 2006, from http://www.familiesandwork.org/summary/nscw2002.pdf

Bragger, J. D., Rodriguez-Srednicki, O., Kutcher, E. J., Indovino, L., & Rosner, E. (2005). Work–family conflict, work–family culture, and organizational citizenship behavior among teachers. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 20,* 303–324.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2006). *Families with own children: Employment status of parents by age of youngest child and family type, 2004–05 annual averages* (Table 4). Retrieved May 24, 2006, from http://www.bls.gov.news.release/famee.t04.htm

Butler, A. B., Grzywacz, J. G., Bass, B. L., & Linney, K. D. (2005, November). *Predicting work–family balance from work–family conflict and facilitation among couples.* Poster presented at the 67th Annual Conference of the National Council on Family Relations. Phoenix, AZ.

Caminiti, S. (2005, September 19). Work-life: What happens when employees enjoy flexible work arrangements? They are happier and more productive (Supplement). *Fortune,* pp. S2–S7.

Carlson, D. S., Kacmar, K. M., Wayne, J. H., & Grzywacz, J. G. (2006). Measuring the positive side of the work–family interface: Development and validation of a work–family enrichment scale. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 68,* 131–164.

Carlson, D. S., Kacmar, K. M., & Williams, L. J. (2000). Construction and validation of a multidimensional measure of work–family conflict. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 56,* 249–276.

Chao, L. (2005, November 29). What GenXers need to be happy at work. *The Wall Street Journal,* p. B6.

Clark, S. C. (2000). Work/family border theory: A new theory of work/family balance. *Human Relations, 53,* 747–770.

Corporate Voices for Working Families. (2005). *Business impacts of flexibility: An imperative for expansion.* Boston: WFD Consulting.

Darrah, C. N. (2005). Anthropology and the workplace–workforce mismatch. In S. M. Bianchi, L. M. Casper, & R. B. King (Eds), *Work, family, health and well-being* (pp. 201–214). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.

Dwyer, K. P. (2005, December 4). Still searching for equilibrium in the work-life balancing act. *New York Times,* section 10, pp. 1, 3.

Eby, L. T., Casper, W. J., Lockwood, A., Bordeaux, C., & Brinley, A. (2005). Work and family research in IO/OB: Content analysis and review of the literature (1980–2002). *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 66,* 127–197.

Edwards, J. R. (1995). Alternatives to difference scores as dependent variables in the study of congruence in organizational research. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 64,* 307–324.

Edwards, J. R. (2001). Multidimensional constructs in organizational behavior research: An integrative analytic framework. *Organizational Research Methods, 4,* 144–192.

Edwards, J. R., & Bagozzi, R. P. (2000). On the nature and direction of relationships between constructs and measures. *Psychological Methods, 5,* 155–174.

Frone, M. R. (2000). Work–family conflict and employee psychiatric disorders: The National Comorbidity Survey. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85,* 888–895.

Frone, M. R. (2003). Work–family balance. In J. C. Quick & L. E. Tetrick (Eds.), *Handbook of occupational health psychology* (pp. 143–162). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Frone, M. R., Russell, M., & Cooper, M. L. (1997). Relation of work–family conflict to health outcomes: A four-year longitudinal study of employed parents. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 70,* 325–335.

Gergen, K. J. (1973). Social psychology as history. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 26,* 309–320.

Greenhaus, J. H., & Allen, T. D. (2006, March). *Work–family balance: Exploration of a concept.* Paper presented at the Families and Work Conference, Provo, UT.

Greenhaus, J. H., & Beutell, N. J. (1985). Sources of conflict between work and family roles. *Academy of Management Review, 10,* 76–88.

Greenhaus, J. H., Collins, K. M., & Shaw, J. D. (2003). The relation between work–family balance and quality of life. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 63,* 510–531.

Greenhaus, J. H., & Powell, G. N. (2006). When work and family are allies: A theory of work–family enrichment. *Academy of Management Review, 31,* 72–92.

Grzywacz, J. G., & Bass, B. L. (2003). Work, family, and mental health: Testing different models of work–family fit. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 65,* 248–261.

Grzywacz, J. G., & Butler, A. B. (2005). The impact of job characteristics on work-to-family facilitation: Testing a theory and distinguishing a construct. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 10,* 97–109.

Grzywacz, J. G., & Keyes, C. L. M. (2005, November). *Work–family balance and health: Broadening the conceptualization of health.* Paper presented at the 67th Annual Conference of the National Council on Family Relations. Phoenix, AZ.

Grzywacz, J. G., & Marks, N. F. (2000). Reconceptualizing the work–family interface: An ecological perspective on the correlates of positive and negative spillover between work and family. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 5,* 111–126.

Halpern, D. F. (2005). Psychology at the intersection of work and family: Recommendations for employers, working families, and policymakers. *American Psychologist, 60,* 397–409.

Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Keyes, C. L. M. (2002). Well-being in the workplace and its relationship to business outcomes: A review of the gallup studies. In C. L. M. Keyes & J. Haidt (Eds.), *Flourishing: Positive psychology and the life well-lived* (pp. 205–224). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Jansen, N. W., H., Kant, I. J., van Amelsvoort, L. G. P. M., Kristensen, T. S., Swaen, G. M. H., & Nijhuis, F. J. N. (2006). Work–family conflict as a risk factor for sickness absence. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 63,* 488–494.

Kahn, R. L., Wolfe, D. M., Quinn, R. P., Snoek, J. D., & Rosenthal, R. A. (1964). *Organizational stress: Studies in role conflict and ambiguity.* New York: Wiley.

Keene, J. R., & Quadagno, J. (2004). Predictors of perceived work–family balance: Gender difference or gender similarity. *Sociological Perspectives, 47,* 1–23.

Keyes, C. L., & Grzywacz, J. G. (2005). Health as a complete state: The added value in work performance and health-care costs. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 47,* 523–532.

Keyes, C. L. (2002). The mental health continuum: From languishing to flourishing in life. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 43,* 207–222.

Kirchmeyer, C. (2000). Work-life initiatives: Greed or benevolence regarding workers' time? In C. L. Cooper & D. M. Rousseau (Eds.), *Trends in organizational behavior* (Vol. 7, pp. 79–93). Chichester, UK: Wiley.

Kossek, E. E., & Ozeki, C. (1998). Work–family conflict, policies, and the job-life satisfaction relationship: A review and directions for organizational behavior-human resources research. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 83,* 139–149.

Kossek, E. E., & Ozeki, C. (1999). Bridging the work–family policy and productivity gap: A literature review. *Community Work & Family, 2,* 139–149.

Lachman, M. E., & Boone-James, J. (1997). Charting the course of midlife development: An overview. In M. E. Lachman & J. Boone-James (Eds.), *Multiple paths of midlife development* (pp. 1–20). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Lobel, S. A. (1991). Allocation of investment in work and family roles: Alternative theories and implications for research. *Academy of Management Review, 16,* 507–521.

MacDermid, S. M. (2005). (Re)Considering conflict between work and family. In E. E. Kossek & S. Lambert (Eds.), *Work and family integration in organizations: New directions for theory and practice* (pp. 19–40). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

MacDermid, S. M., Roy, K., & Zvonkovic, A. (2005). Don't stop at the borders: Dynamic and contextual approaches to theorizing about work and family. In V. L. Bengtson, A. C. Acock, K. R. Allen, P. Dilworth-Anderson, & D. M. Klein (Eds.), *Sourcebook on family theory and research methods* (pp. 493–516). Thousand Oaks, CA : Sage.

Major, V. S., Klein, K. J., & Ehrhart, M. G. (2002). Work time, work interference with family, and psychological distress. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87,* 427–436.

Marks, S. R., Huston, T. L., Johnson, E. M., & MacDermid, S. M. (2001). Role balance among White married couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 63,* 1083–1098.

Marks, S. R., & MacDermid, S. M. (1996). Multiple roles and the self: A theory of role balance. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 58,* 417–432.

McLeroy, K. R., Bibeau, D., Steckler, A., & Glanz, K. (1988). An ecological perspective on health promotion programs. *Health Education Quarterly, 15,* 351–377.

Netemeyer, R. G., Boles, J. S., & McMurrian, R. (1996). Development and validation of work–family conflict scales and family–work conflict scales. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 81,* 400–410.

Parasuraman, S., & Greenhaus, J. H. (2002). Toward reducing some critical gaps in work–family research. *Human Resource Management Review, 12,* 299–312.

Rapoport, R., Bailyn, L., Fletcher, J. K., & Pruitt, B. H. (2002). *Beyond work–family balance: Advancing gender equity and workplace performance.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Spence, K. W. (1944). The nature of theory construction in contemporary psychology. *Psychological Review, 51,* 47–68.

Stokols, D. (1996). Translating social ecological theory into guidelines for community health promotion. *American Journal of Health Promotion, 10,* 282–298.

Stokols, D., Grzywacz, J. G., McMahan, S., & Phillips, K. (2003). Increasing the health promotive capacity of human environments. *American Journal of Health Promotion, 18,* 4–13.

Tetrick, L. E., & Buffardi, L. C. (2006). Measurement issues in research on the work–home interface. In F. Jones, R. J. Burke, & M. Westman (Eds.), *Work-life balance: A psychological perspective* (pp. 90–114). Hove, UK: Psychology Press.

Thoits, P. A. (1983). Multiple identities and psychological well-being: A reformulation and test of the social isolation hypothesis. *American Sociological Review, 48,* 174–187.

Thoits, P. A. (1995). Identity-relevant events and psychological symptoms: A cautionary tale. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 36,* 72–82.

Thomas, E. J., & Biddle, B. J. (1966). Basic concepts for classifying the phenomena of role. In B. J. Biddle & E. J. Thomas (Eds.), *Role theory: Concepts and research* (pp. 23–63). New York: Wiley.

Voydanoff, P. (2005). Toward a conceptualization of perceived work–family fit and balance: A demands and resources approach. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 67,* 822–836.

Wayne, J. H., Musisca, N., & Fleeson, W. (2004). Considering the role of personality in the work–family experience: Relationships of the big five to work–family conflict and facilitation. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 64,* 108–130.

<div style="background:#888;color:#fff;padding:2px 8px;display:inline-block;">Reading</div>

THE VIOLENCE OF ADOLESCENT LIFE

Experiencing and Managing Everyday Threats (2004)

Katherine Irwin

By the mid-1990s, the grim statistics regarding adolescent violence gained national attention. At the same time that the United States witnessed relatively stable crime rates, the juvenile arrest rates for violent offenses exploded between the early 1980s and mid-1990s, leading some to call this era the "epidemic of youth violence" (Cook & Laub, 1998).

Among the more shocking statistics were the tripling of homicide-victimization rates for Black youths between the ages of 13 and 17 years (Cook & Laub, 1998), an approximately 70% increase in youth arrest rates for violent offenses, and a nearly 300% growth in youth homicide arrest rates from 1983 to 1994 (Snyder & Sickmund, 1999). Although some researchers painted a stark picture of the early 2000s should these rates have continued (see Snyder, Sickmund, & Poe-Yamagata, 1996), arrest statistics revealed a significant waning in violence rates by 1999 (see Blumstein & Wallman, 2000). Thus, the dramatic increase in youth violence looked more like a momentary escalation than the establishment of a new, more violent type of adolescence in America.

This article examines the violence epidemic from the perspective of youths living in five different Denver, Colorado, neighborhoods from 1994 to 1996. During a qualitative study of 43 youths, the statistics regarding the violence epidemic seemed to emerge as a palpable threat as the majority of youths interviewed expressed concerns about and attempted to manage pervasive violence. More interesting, although concerns about violence were common, adolescents' accounts suggested that individuals had different experiences with violence. Corresponding with differences in violent experiences, youths also used different management strategies, which, in some cases, potentially increased the violence problem for themselves and others. As an exploration of inner-city youths' experiences with violence during the 2 years preceding the peak in the violence epidemic, this article attempts to bridge the gap between the statistics and theories regarding youth violence, and the reality of violence for a range of youths. In fact, as an examination of youths' everyday experiences with and attempts to manage violence, this article offers an interactional perspective of youth violence that builds on and expands some of the dominant theories used to explain youth violence in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Two perspectives of the violence epidemic prevailed in the late 1990s and early 2000s, including the illicit economy explanation (Blumstein, 1995; Blumstein & Cork, 1996; Blumstein & Wallman, 2000) and street culture explanations (Anderson, 1999; Bourgois, 1995, 1996). The illicit economy perspective suggests that the introduction of crack markets in inner cities encouraged a dramatic increase in youth homicide rates in many urban centers in the 1980s and early 1990s. As the escalating juvenile drug arrest rates from 1985 to 1992 indicate (Blumstein, 1995; Blumstein & Cork, 1996), juveniles served as "front-line" drug dealers in these new crack markets. To regulate this unstable industry, young drug dealers increasingly used guns to resolve disputes and protect themselves. The deadly use of guns, according to Blumstein (1995), was diffused from young drug dealers to their non-drug-dealing friends rather quickly because juveniles are "tightly networked with other young people in their neighborhoods" and with whom they "attend the same schools or . . . walk the same streets" (p. 30). Thus, we see that gun-related violence, and concomitant increase in gun-related homicides, began within the drug trade and was diffused to other youths living in the same neighborhoods or attending the same schools (see also, Blumstein & Cork, 1996).

The street culture perspective departs from the illicit economic explanation provided by Blumstein by locating violence within poor, inner-city, neighborhood cultures (rather than within underground economies). Several structural conditions (joblessness, rampant drug sales and use, lack of public services, global economic shifts, and racism) plagued poor inner-city neighborhoods and denied individuals, usually men of color, legitimate means to achieve positive identities. As particular populations became more estranged from legitimate resources—as some have argued was the case in the 1980s and early 1990s (Wilson, 1996)—men were caught in a bind. They were culturally expected to take on traditional masculine roles but had no resources to

adopt legitimate male identities (Anderson, 1999; Bourgois, 1995). The solution came by creating and participating in an alternative and violent street culture—a system of values and norms that Anderson (1999) called "the code of the streets." The street culture offered men the chance to establish dominance, power, respect, and status through the use or threat of violence (see Decker & VanWinkle, 1996) against other men and often against women in the form of partner abuse and rape (Bourgois, 1996).

These analyses paint a particular image of the context of violence. By focusing almost exclusively on poor neighborhoods that are (for one reason or another) prone to drug use, drug sales, and oppositional street cultures, these perspectives suggest that poor or "disadvantaged communities" play an important role in the violence epidemic—perhaps an even more important role than resource-rich communities. Within the illicit economy perspective, we see that neighborhoods have two functions in the youth violence epidemic. First, poor neighborhoods are places where crack markets are likely to flourish. Second, neighborhoods are locations where young drug dealers "diffuse" such violent norms as gun use.

What is missing in these analyses are explanations of the experiences of juveniles across a range of neighborhoods and contexts. Working with Blumstein's diffusion hypothesis (Blumstein, 1995; Blumstein & Cork, 1996), youths interact within tightly woven networks. As Warr (2002) noted, adolescent peer groups comprise moral universes that are created through interaction in multiple locations, such as schools, parks, recreation centers, and popular "hangouts." Little is known, however, about the role of these contexts and violence. Therefore, explanations of youth violence have focused rather exclusively on disadvantaged communities and ignored the ways that violent norms can become diffused across multiple neighborhoods and social contexts.

This article fills this gap in our understanding of juvenile violence by examining the everyday experiences of juveniles living in neighborhoods ranging in disadvantage, violent crime, and poverty rates. The youths in the current study not only lived in different neighborhoods but also attended different schools, belonged to different peer groups, confronted different violent "risk factors" (see Hawkins et al., 1998; Lipsey & Derzon, 1998), and had different violent experiences. By examining the dimensions of youths' experiences and attempts to cope with the threat of violence, this article highlights the ways that youths interact within and across different contexts. It demonstrates how Denver adolescents' social networks and contexts predict their everyday experiences of violence. In addition, the current study closely examines the ways that proviolence norms can become diffused across multiple contexts and, thus, add more detail to the image of youth violence provided by the illicit market and street culture perspectives.

To examine how adolescents experienced and managed violence in their everyday lives, this article first discusses how the current study was designed, adolescents were selected, and violence was measured. Next, a typology is employed to describe the different dimensions of teens' experiences with, fears of, and attempts to manage violence. Because not all teens in the current study experienced violence similarly, three groups are identified: a high-risk group, whose members confronted violence regularly; a moderate-risk group, whose members confronted violence occasionally; and a low-risk group, whose members never reported experiencing violence. In addition to noting the differences among these groups in terms of their direct experiences with violence, this article outlines the types of violence prevention strategies used by adolescents. The discussion of this article examines how these different experiences with and attempts to manage violence may theoretically increase opportunities for violence. Specifically, it is argued that the threat of violence was diffused across multiple contexts and encouraged protective interaction patterns among youths.

Building on the illicit economy and street culture perspectives, a hypothesis is offered that these protective interaction patterns not only place some individuals at greater risk for violence but also help sustain violence rates. The article concludes by outlining a new agenda for violence research and prevention that targets exclusionary interaction patterns leaving some youths with very few choices but to become violent.

METHOD

Study Design and Neighborhood Selection

These data presented here are derived from a 2-year qualitative study of adolescents and parents living in five Denver neighborhoods. From 1994 to 1996, a team of University of Colorado researchers conducted face-to-face, in-depth interviews with 43 adolescents (ages 10 to 20 years) and 42 parents to assess individuals' perceptions regarding the role of neighborhood, family, peers, and school in adolescent development. The original design of the current study was to examine the way that neighborhood contexts influenced adolescents' transition into adulthood.[1]

At the onset, the current study was designed to focus on the experiences of families in different types of neighborhoods. The five neighborhoods in the current study ranged in disadvantage measures—measures used to indicate the ability of neighborhoods to control criminal, delinquent, and problem behavior (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Sampson, 1985; Simcha-Fagan & Schwartz, 1986). Theoretically, neighborhoods with greater cohesion would have lower crime, high-school dropout, teen pregnancy, drug use, and violence rates and, thus, would present fewer contextual challenges to adolescent development. Components of the disadvantage measures were compiled from the 1990 census and included poverty (percentage of neighborhood families living in poverty), mobility (percentage of neighborhood families living in a different location in 1985), household structure (percentage of single-parent households), and racial mix. These measures were combined into a variable called neighborhood disadvantage, in which a high disadvantage score indicated that the neighborhood had high poverty, resident turnover, single-parent household, and racial/ethnic heterogeneity rates. After this statistic was compiled for several neighborhoods in Denver, a collection of high-, medium-, and low-disadvantage neighborhoods were selected to be included in the current study.

Two neighborhoods in the current study, South Creston and Westside, represented advantaged neighborhoods (low resident turnover, single-parent household, poverty, and heterogeneity rates).[2] These neighborhoods were predominantly White, middle-class communities in which residents shared a common sense of community pride. According to the neighborhood effects literature, such characteristics predict that neighbors will be able to exert informal social control over the neighborhood that, in turn, reduces the delinquency rates among neighborhood adolescents. Northside and Martin Park were the most disadvantaged neighborhoods in the current study (high resident turnover, single-parent

---

[1]This qualitative study is a smaller part of the MacArthur Research Program on Successful Adolescent Development in which a collection of urban neighborhoods are quantitatively and qualitatively assessed to determine the role of neighborhood in adolescent development (see Elliott et al., 1996). Although a team of researchers collected this data, the sole author analyzed and wrote up the findings. Thus, the Methods section discusses the efforts of the research team, while the remainder of the article discusses the analysis and hypotheses of the sole author.

[2]To preserve the confidentiality of study participants, the names of people, neighborhoods, streets, parks, and businesses are pseudonyms.

household, poverty, and heterogeneity rates). Northside was a middle-class neighborhood containing a densely populated, racially diverse, and low-income housing development called Allenspark. During the current study, it became clear that Allenspark represented a highly disadvantaged neighborhood within a larger advantaged to moderately advantaged neighborhood. One neighborhood, Parkview, represented a moderately disadvantaged neighborhood and had medium poverty, mobility, and single-parent household rates. Parkview was, however, racially and ethnically heterogeneous.

Interviews

To recruit interviewees, researchers contacted neighborhood boards, attended neighborhood meetings, and went door-to-door to describe the research and inquire whether parents or adolescents were interested in participating in the current study. Researchers also employed snowball sampling techniques (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981) by asking participants to refer other neighborhood youths and parents to the current study. Interviews were tape-recorded and conducted in participants' homes or in local coffee shops and restaurants and lasted anywhere from 1 to 2 hr. During the interviews, researchers asked adolescents and parents to describe how neighborhoods, schools, families, and peer groups can help or get in the way of adolescents' "chances for success" (i.e., chances for successful transition into adulthood). In addition, researchers also used open-ended interview guides that directed interviewers through a list of subjects to discuss with interviewees and included such topics as definitions of and experiences within neighborhoods, school experiences, family contexts and parenting practices, and adolescents' career and family aspirations.

Analysis

Once tape-recorded interviews were transcribed, researchers coded the interviews for common themes. During the coding of initial interviews, researchers noted that violence was mentioned during many adolescent interviews, even though the original design of the current study was not to investigate neighborhood violence. Because the topic emerged early in the current study, violence was added to the list of codes and probed for during later interviews. This emergent analysis method closely resembled the constant comparative analysis techniques articulated by Glaser and Strauss (1967).

The groups discussed in this article (high, medium, and low risk for violence) reflect adolescents' reports regarding their violent experiences. Individuals described being victims and perpetrators of violence. In addition, a number of youths in the current study described witnessing violence. Thus, the term *violent experiences* is used to represent perpetration, victimization, as well as witnessing violence. Because parents were often unaware of their children's exposure to violence, the 42 parent interviews were analyzed to provide more information about the adolescents' family and neighborhood contexts.[3]

---

[3]Because the original design of the research was not to investigate violence in the lives of Denver adolescents, this study confronts some limitations. First, the types of violence mentioned by adolescents are limited. Researchers never asked about sexual, family, or dating violence, and given their personal nature, these topics were unlikely to be mentioned by interviewees. Thus, this study is limited to analyzing the types of violence that adolescents were most willing to describe. Second, because questions about violent experiences were not asked during every interview, violence might be under reported. In fact, if individuals did not mention violence during their interviews, researchers occasionally failed to bring it up. The timing of the interviews presents another study limitation. Conducted soon after the summer dubbed by the media as the "summer of violence," individuals' concerns tended to reflect the media's reports of gang shootings, deadly fights with weapons, and to a lesser extent, kidnappings. Had the interviews been conducted after the 1999 Columbine High School shootings, the types of violence mentioned during interviews might have differed dramatically.

EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE

The most common forms of violence that individuals mentioned were fistfights, fights or threats with weapons (guns, knives, or bats), and drive-by shootings. Analysis of the adolescent interviews revealed that most youths in the current study feared these sorts of conflicts. Despite this pervasive fear, adolescents had vastly different violent experiences. Some individuals worried about local news stories of violence (see Barzagan, 1994; Chiricos, Eschholz, & Gertz, 1997; Chiricos, Padgett, & Gertz, 2000; O'Keefe & Reid-Nash, 1987) and secondhand stories of victimization (see Lavrakas, 1982) but reported facing very little violence in their own lives. Other adolescents described experiencing violence regularly and worried that they, similar to their friends and siblings, might be hit, shot, or stabbed while walking in their neighborhoods or spending time with friends at local hangouts.

To capture the range of these adolescents' experiences, the current study explored the accounts of individuals in three different groups: high, medium, and low risk. The high-risk group comprised adolescents who noted experiencing violence regularly (an average of twice a month), and the moderate-risk group included youths who reported experiencing violence occasionally (a few times a year). The low-risk group was made up of individuals who did not mention experiencing violence.

High-Risk Group

Approximately one fourth of the adolescents interviewed ($n = 11$) reported confronting violence regularly. While going to school, walking in their neighborhoods, and hanging out with friends, they expected to confront violence. Their expectations often came to brutal fruition, forcing them to negotiate frequent conflicts. Benny, a 14-year-old Latino living in Allenspark, illustrates the experiences within this group.

Benny's family moved into Allenspark 2 years before the interview. According to Benny, the move was bittersweet. Benny and his older brother were initially happy to live in a neighborhood that housed a collection of teens. In fact, the two boys quickly found themselves in the center of a large group of friends who attended the same school. Benny soon grew leery of his new lifestyle. He complained that there was much more violence among youths in his new neighborhood and, although he did not mind the fistfights occurring in Allenspark (usually fights between Latino and Vietnamese American youths), he feared occasions when outsiders entered the neighborhood carrying weapons. He described this type of violence:

> The kids are the worst. There's gangs, like the NSMs [North Side Mafia] and the Untouchables and stuff. The westsiders [teens from the west side of Denver] will come over here and they'd start shooting. They just start shooting at each other. And we have to hear it all the time—all the gunshots and everything. . . . One week it'll just be crazy and the next week it'll be calm. Sometimes there'll be good times where everybody just has a good time without anything happening. But then there's other times. It's mostly people that come from out of Allenspark that start the trouble. When they start shooting you have to run.

Such incidents as shootings and fights with weapons, according to Benny, were rare. The everyday kinds of violence, such as fistfights with peers in school or the neighborhood, tended to be less extreme. Benny, like most individuals in this group, described fistfights as unavoidable, and in fact, some teens boasted that fighting was an important part of maintaining status. For example, Benny explained, "There's a lot of Vietnamese that live here. And then they'll start talking stuff to everybody. They'll start talking stuff. You have to fight 'em. But after you knock a couple of them out, then they leave you alone."

Benny's story illustrates the experiences of individuals living in high-violence neighborhoods. Some adolescents who lived in more advantaged, less-violent neighborhoods also reported experiencing violence regularly. Many of these youths described their neighborhoods as quiet, peaceful areas of the city. They also noted that they did not spend much time in their own community. Instead, they usually hung out with friends in public parks and parking lots of stores and restaurants. It was in these venues that they were most likely to experience violence.

Hector, a 16-year-old Latino living in Parkview, reported experiencing very little violence in his neighborhood, however he often confronted violence while spending time with school friends. He described how fights were likely to start:

> Right there by Fatso's [a local fast-food restaurant] that's where, oh, I can't even explain how many fights happen there. I've gotten in fights at those places, different places. Well, I'm not the kind that just fights over a word. But, it's that they keep on saying stuff, and I'll tell 'em "Shut up," and whatever. But, it's like I won't up there and hit them. Once they hit me, THAT's when I'll fight.

Hector noted that these fights often included weapons. He explained, "When we start fighting, then his friends want to jump in, then it turns into a battle. That's when they start whipping out bats and knives and all that." Although not afraid of knives and bats, Hector expressed concern about guns. Not only had he been grazed by a stray bullet on one occasion but also he witnessed a fatal shooting a year before the interview. He described the event:

> We were just standing against the wall and some guys, they just drove up and shot some dude. I was right there on his side. It happened over there by High Park. There's like this park and there's this wall. We were just kicking it right there on that wall. And all you heard is just a loud bang and the guy hit the wall and came back forward.

While boasting that he would not avoid bats or knives, Hector claimed that he would run if a gun were brandished, even if it meant leaving a friend to fight alone. He explained that "well, it's better if one goes down than both of us."

As Benny's and Hector's narratives suggest, teens in this group were surrounded by violence. They were usually enmeshed in a group of peers who engaged in and were targets of regular fistfights. Occasionally, they experienced more serious conflicts, such as drive-by shootings or fights with weapons. Some teens were introduced to these violent social networks in their neighborhoods. Other individuals who lived in peaceful communities, such as Hector, were introduced to violence while hanging out with school friends.

Moderate-Risk Teens

One third (n = 15) of the adolescents in the current study reported confronting violence a few times a year. Similar to high-risk youths, individuals in the moderate-risk group experienced fistfights as well as fights with weapons. Some adolescents in this group lived in peaceful communities but faced numerous conflicts at school. Other youths told us that they liked the quiet atmosphere at school but worried about being hassled, threatened, or challenged to fight while walking in their neighborhoods.

Eduardo, a 16-year-old Latino, provides an example of individuals in this group. Eduardo lived in a less densely populated section of Northside located several blocks from the Allenspark apartment complex. In the following, Eduardo compared his section of Northside to Allenspark:

> Well this part of the neighborhood here, it's pretty decent—it's a nice area to grow up in. The houses are really nice. In this part of the town, there's not really too much violence, whereas you get closer to Allen Lane and down in that area, that's where you kind of run into some problems. But here, in this area, it's more calm, and kind of relaxed, and not too much violence goes on around here. I think maybe just living in that part of town would cause a little more fear

in a person. There's always the possibility of getting in a fight because you don't know if some people are crazy. You can get hurt whether it be in a fight or whether somebody be drunk and slam into you. I know a lot of people who that has happened to, and I just don't want that to happen to me.

Although living in a peaceful section of Northside, Eduardo attended the same school as Benny and other Allenspark teens. At school, Eduardo befriended several teens who fought regularly. After school, Eduardo participated in youth group activities organized through his parents' church or played basketball with his next-door neighbor. When spending time with his neighbor or members of his church group, Eduardo rarely confronted violence. When hanging out with his school friends, he occasionally witnessed fistfights.

Other youths in the moderate-risk group described their neighborhoods as places riddled with violence. Phan, a 16-year-old Vietnamese American living a few apartments away from Benny, corroborated accounts of violence in Allenspark, especially between Asian and Latino teens. Despite his efforts to avoid teens who fought regularly, he was occasionally targeted. He described his first fight:

I sit there with my friend. I look at [this person from the neighborhood] and I think he's drunk or something. And he go by me and he saw his brother over there and [his brother] just tell him to hit me. After that, his brother came by and he knock me down. This is my first time fighting. I never fight. When he knocked me down, they say something to me and let me go.

After this incident, Phan spent as little time as possible in Allenspark. This was not a hardship for Phan or his best friend, who lived nearby. They walked to and from school, attended classes, and met for lunch to study together every day. In the evening, after finishing their homework and household chores, they played basketball at a local recreation center. A recreation coordinator supervised the activities in the center

and strictly forbade fighting. This safe routine was occasionally disrupted, however, when they or their friends were targeted and threatened in the neighborhood.

As these narratives illustrate, the teens in the moderate-risk group managed to dodge regular violent confrontations one way or another. For some youths, such as Phan, sidestepping neighborhood antagonisms required constant vigilance and careful orchestration. These data also demonstrate that the neighborhood was not the only force introducing violence to adolescents' lives. Teens such as Eduardo, who reported living in tranquil communities, should—according to common wisdom—have been able to avoid violence. Eduardo, who attended school with a number of violent teens, illustrated how school and peer factors can overcome the advantages of growing up in a peaceful community.

Low-Risk Group

Approximately 40% (*n* = 17) of the adolescent sample reported experiencing no violence. The vast majority of these individuals lived in South Creston and Westside, the two advantaged communities in the current study. Despite their lack of experience with violence, most individuals worried about gangs, weapons, and kidnappings. In many cases, their fears stemmed from a few highly publicized, yet isolated, events near their neighborhoods and schools.

Cory, a 12-year-old White South Creston resident, exemplifies the experiences of many individuals in this group. Although describing his neighborhood and school as "safe" places, he had heard stories about dangerous schoolmates and neighbors that worried him. He described the source of his school concerns by saying "There's one kid that used to go to our school who was in a gang. He was expelled for bringing a gun to school or something, a weapon—some sort of weapon. It was last year. It's like the first time it's ever happened at our school." Later in the interview, Cory noted that he feared students wearing gang

colors. When we asked Cory what he would say to individuals moving into South Creston, he touched on his neighborhood anxieties:

> The kids around the neighborhood are nice. I'd just tell them to look out for the bad people. I'd just tell them how nice the neighborhood is and that they made a good decision to move into the house. There's a lot of things to do. It's fun to live here. Well, I don't feel comfortable in the dark. Some people have been kidnapped, and I don't want to be either.

Although never directly experiencing violence, Cory acknowledged that his neighborhood and school were not immune to weapons, gangs, and kidnappings. Regarding school violence, most members of the low-risk group were similar to Cory. They could recount occasions when fights occurred or weapons were brought to school. Individuals' knowledge of these events, however, was gleaned from secondhand stories. Evan, a 17-year-old White teen living in Westside, described why he was unlikely to witness school violence:

> All my classes since my freshman year have been accelerated classes. So in the accelerated classes, it is not the type of kids that would be carrying weapons. So you don't really see or talk to those type of kids. I know that a kid—a gun dropped out of his pocket in some class. You just hear about stuff like that.

Another source of information, and consequently worries, about violence for members of this group was the media. In 1993, 1 year before the current study, Denver experienced "the summer of violence," which was, according to local news reporters, a wave of gang and youth violence that swept through the city. Some of the publicized incidents occurred in North Creston, a predominantly African American, low-income neighborhood abutting South Creston. Stories about gang-related shootings and kidnappings received sensational attention and became part of a common lore about neighborhood violence.

Sophia, a White 16-year-old living in South Creston, described the coverage of one incident: "So a drug dealer was killed there. The shooting went on like way out in North Creston, and there's a lot of stuff in the newspaper about how awful Creston is and everything, but everything happened down past Division Street, which is technically not our neighborhood."

Although most South Creston residents interviewed noted that the violence occurred outside of their community, most individuals felt that these incidents encroached on their sense of safety.

Cory's and Evan's narratives highlight some of the reasons that adolescents were protected from violence. Low-risk individuals lived in peaceful neighborhoods segregated from more violent areas of the city. These youths were also separated from violence in school through a sort of "tracking" process (Kelly, 1974; Oakes, 1985) whereby delinquent or at-risk students tend to be enrolled in the less advanced and noncollege track classes. This suggests that although low-risk youths often attended the same schools as teens from more dangerous areas of the city, they were unlikely to interact with violent youths in their classes.

MANAGING VIOLENCE

Although juveniles in the current study had different experiences with violence, most worried about and attempted to manage violence. Adolescents' violence prevention strategies differed. For example, members of the high-risk group were not necessarily attempting to avoid violence. As Benny and Hector explained, the willingness and ability to fight were considered necessary tools for maintaining respect. Fights with guns, however, were problematic and became the focus of their violence prevention strategies. Teens in the moderate risk category, in contrast, usually avoided fisticuffs as well as fights with weapons. Low-risk youths held more vague and

abstract concerns and were not necessarily focused on one type of violence over another. Therefore, kidnappers, gun-toting schoolmates, and strangers in the neighborhood garnered similar responses from members of this group.

In general, individuals described three types of management strategies: turning to friends, avoiding places, and avoiding people. Although these strategies are described as being distinct, individuals combined different approaches at different times in their everyday lives. In addition, individuals in the varying risk groups relied on and employed these strategies in different ways.

Turning to Friends

Most individuals in the moderate and high-risk groups turned to friends to manage violence. In fact, no adolescent in the low-risk group discussed friends as a source of violence prevention. For individuals in the high- and moderate-risk groups, peers (especially older teens and gang members) were viewed as street-savvy individuals who knew when conflicts were likely to occur and who could identify dangerous individuals. They also possessed valuable information about how to talk, act, and dress to avoid inviting trouble.

For example, most adolescents in the current study noted that there were historic rivalries among Denver youth groups. As Benny described, some of these schisms were race based (Vietnamese American vs. Latino youths, for example). Other conflicts were geographic. Latino and Latina youths living on the west side of Denver, called "westsiders," disliked Latinos and Latinas from north Denver, called "northsiders." As in many other U.S. cities, animosities also existed among urban gangs. Managing violence, and especially avoiding deadly encounters, for members of high- and moderate-risk groups meant understanding these historic antagonisms. Most felt that this information allowed them to predict, prepare for, or avoid dangerous confrontations.

In addition to providing useful information, friendships with violent youths helped individuals to construct themselves as friendly agents in their communities and schools. Anna, a 13-year-old Latina living in Allenspark, discussed the importance of amicability when interacting with peers:

> Like, if you were to wear a northside shirt and go to the westside, some people who think that they're all bad would start stuff. But, really, if you're cool with everybody, then they're cool with you. I have friends that are eastsiders. I do know westsiders. But, I hang around with the northsiders. . . . If you're cool with everybody you get respect.

High-risk adolescents relied on friends in a different way than members of the moderate-risk group. For example, moderate-risk adolescents attempted to "be cool" with everyone. High-risk teens wanted to do more than be cool: They wanted to use their friendships for protection. Members of the high-risk group reported that it was important to have friends who were willing to fight with or for them. This became one motivation to join gangs. For some youths, joining a gang meant having partners who "watched their backs" and looked out for them. For example, Linda, a 16-year-old Parkview Latina, explained how she confided in a gang member when someone at school threatened to kill her:

> I got so scared. I didn't know what to do. I ran in the house and called my friend Daryl and I was really crying and [said] "I don't know what to do." And Daryl's all, "What's his number? What's his number?" And I gave it to him. Since that day, that same guy will leave me alone because Daryl went up to him and told him he better leave me alone or else something is going to happen to him and his family.

This strategy produced mixed results. Finding friends who were willing to fight for them obligated individuals to return the favor and, thus, ensured that they would confront future violence. Hector recounted his experience as an unwilling participant in a fight:

> They'll come [and] they will be wearing a westside hat, and [my friends] will say, "what's that all

about?" They will just start fighting, over just a HAT. Well, actually, I have gotten into a fight because of a hat. Because my partner, he started fighting with them, and then more people jumped in, and you have to get his back. Just don't run away.

Anderson (1999) and Bourgois (1995) argued that, in neighborhoods plagued by social problems (i.e., joblessness, racism, drug dealing and use), individuals often earn and maintain status by fighting. As we see here, youths using friends for protection were unwittingly drawn into their friends' contests for respect and quickly found themselves fighting regularly.

Avoiding Places

Similar to geographic restrictive practices outlined by Furstenberg, Cook, Eccles, Elder, and Sameroff (1999), many youths in the current study avoided locations where violence was likely to occur (see also, Ferraro, 1995; Liska, Sanchirico, & Reed, 1988; Pain, 1997). Members of all groups used this strategy, however because individuals had different violent experiences, the consequences of this strategy varied. For example, youths in the high-risk group reported pervasive violence. Therefore, avoiding violent places dramatically changed their interactions in the world, and for some youths, it meant rarely leaving their homes.

Anita, a 16-year-old Latina from Parkview who reported confronting violence regularly, stopped attending school, hanging out in her neighborhood, and spending time with friends. She initiated this strategy after two events: the birth of her daughter and witnessing the nearly fatal shooting of her boyfriend. She reported, "We mostly stay home because of what happened. We don't go anywhere no more." Anita explained that her old life was too risky for her and her newborn and said, "I don't really do things that much, because I have a baby. And they [her friends] think of me like I'm tied down and that I can't do things with them. But, it's just that I don't want to."

Where Anita became housebound, other adolescents noted less dramatic uses of this strategy. For example, Benny remained in his apartment when violence was likely to occur and explained, "Some of my friends that are in gangs, they tell me to stay inside or don't leave. If something is going to happen, they will let us know." Individuals in the moderate-risk group steered clear of the dangerous areas in their neighborhoods or schools. Avoiding unsafe areas, however, did not mean staying in the house. Like Phan, many teens living in violent communities found safe places to spend time, such as recreation centers.

Members of the low-risk group also avoided places. This strategy, however, was not a hardship for them. Low-risk youths were likely to see particular neighborhoods, areas of their schools, or teen hangouts as dangerous places. Instead of venturing into these locations, they usually stayed in their own resource-rich communities. South Creston adolescents noted that they rarely journeyed into nearby North Creston. Similarly, one Westside teen reported walking several blocks out of his way to school to avoid traveling through a dangerous neighborhood. As parents and youths from South Creston and Westside reported, these advantaged communities contained ample recreational opportunities for local youths. Therefore, being bound to the neighborhood did not limit their activities or their ability to access the many nearby resources.

Avoiding People

Where some individuals, usually from the high- and moderate-risk groups, befriended violence-savvy youths, other adolescents avoided potentially violent people. This was the most common strategy reported by low-risk adolescents. Perceiving that they could encounter violent individuals almost anywhere, these juveniles carefully looked for threatening signs among adolescents at school and in their neighborhoods. As no one in the low-risk group

experienced violence, their perceptions of threatening characters evolved from stereotypes, hearsay, and media stories. The most common construction of a dangerous teen was a Latino or African American gang member from a lower class neighborhood. Thomas, a 16-year-old White Westside resident, described his feelings about African American students and school violence:

> The students are kind of a problem. If you are walking through the hall and bump into somebody, totally accidental, the hall is crowded. "Oops." And all of a sudden the guy turns around [and says], "What the hell do you think you're doing?" "Sorry man." "Man, if you ever hit me like that again, I swear to God I'm going to kill you." I don't mean to sound mean to anybody, but it tends to be more in the Black community. They all want equal rights and all this other stuff. But, all of a sudden they turn around, like pushing people around, and threatening people, and stuff like that.

Holly, a 17-year-old White Westside resident, also believed that African American students were potentially violent. In fact, she noted that violence segregated particular peer groups at school. She said,

> There's a lot of racial segregation. The ones that hang out with us, they don't care. Their mind is more free and they don't really care if you're a different color. But, if we were to walk into a Black person's party, they would have a fit! They would probably give you crap. And you would leave because you don't want to be around people like that, because they have guns. You don't know who has guns. I'm sure a lot of them have guns, and it is easy for them to get guns.

Although having no firsthand knowledge of weapon distribution among students, Holly guessed that African Americans had access to guns. Thomas attributed contests of respect common within disadvantaged neighborhoods to undesirable behaviors among Black students. Low-risk teens' accounts might be considered misinterpretations of a different peer-based

moral universe (Warr, 2002). Although a seemingly innocent problem, the implications are that low-risk teens avoided and negatively labeled (Becker, 1963) other students.

In addition to identifying and avoiding potentially violent students, several individuals scanned their neighborhoods for troublemakers. Perceptions of dangerous individuals in the neighborhood approximated the stereotypes circulating within school. For example, Westside teens reported that the neighborhood seemed safer in the summer. When asked why, one youth told us that during the summer there were fewer "minority" kids walking through the neighborhood on their way to school. Charles, a 15-year-old White Westside resident, stated,

> It's a real nice neighborhood over here. But, they bus those kids from the bad neighborhoods over. They just kind of like make it real bad. If they miss the bus, they stick around for awhile. I usually know the kids that live around here by the way they act. Kids around here are really nice. [The other kids] are usually Hispanic or Black. My friend who moved away said that a lot of them carry big screwdrivers and stuff, like weapons.

Where low-risk youths avoided dangerous students, they called the police on suspicious characters in the neighborhood. The well-publicized shootings in North Creston inspired the formation of a South Creston neighborhood watch group made up of residents who patrolled the streets watching out for trouble. Terry, a 17-year-old White South Creston resident, described the neighborhood watch group's activities:

> At the end of last summer, it was really active because that was the "summer of violence" and crime. I haven't heard much about it lately, though, except that they supposedly have a group that walks around every night with flashlights and phones, and, if anything goes on, they call the police.

Two South Creston adults stated that they closely monitored strangers in the neighborhood. When

asked who was most likely to start trouble in the neighborhood, these parents noted watching out for Black youths from North Creston during their neighborhood walks. Therefore, in school potential troublemakers were informally shut out of nonviolent groups. In neighborhoods, however, labeling was more formal and potentially resulted in questioning by the police and removal from the neighborhood.

DISCUSSION

As hundreds of violence prevention programs are designed and implemented throughout the nation, we see that youths were busy designing and using their own strategies to cope with violence. The types of everyday management strategies varied according to the amount of violence that youths reported experiencing. The individuals in the low-risk group might be viewed as being "protected" from violence in that they lived in resource-rich, low-crime communities in which neighbors effectively organized themselves against outside threats to their safety. The narratives of these youths also suggested that they were unlikely to confront violence at school as they usually attended "accelerated" classes—courses that tended to exclude teens who regularly experienced violence. Youths in the low-risk group attempted to maintain their safety by avoiding unsafe areas, including other, less-peaceful communities. Their fears of violence also encouraged them to informally or formally exclude potential troublemakers from their peer groups and their neighborhoods. Thus, the image of protected, low-risk teens emerges within the current study as individuals who were raised with several advantages and who maintained these privileges by keeping away from risky places and keeping risky people out of their social circles.

The current study also reveals the experiences of teens who were not necessarily raised in advantaged communities and who—through a network of peer, school, and neighborhood influences—found themselves confronting violence occasionally or regularly. In contrast to low-risk and protected teens, most individuals in this group managed violence by forging ties with other teens: usually the individuals classified as "troublemakers" by the low-risk teens. By becoming friendly with more violence-savvy youths, individuals in the high and moderate-risk groups initiated their own collection of "protective factors," including learning when and where violence was likely to occur, who was likely to be violent, and how to avoid being targeted by other teens. Some youths felt that the best form of protection against deadly conflicts was to join a social group whose members would fight with and for them (i.e., gangs or other violent peer groups).

These everyday violence management strategies employed by Denver teens are problematic in at least two ways. First, these data suggest that these management strategies may be adversely affecting individuals in the current study. In particular, individuals who join violent groups for protection might increase their chances of meeting a violent demise. For instance, having delinquent friends is one of the strongest predictors of juvenile delinquency, including violence (Elliott, 1994; Elliott, Huizinga, & Ageton, 1985; Matsueda & Heimer, 1987; Tittle, Burke, & Jackson, 1986; Warr & Stafford, 1991). Although there is little data available regarding acquaintanceships (as opposed to friendships) among peers (see Warr, 1996), delinquent opportunity theory (Cloward & Ohlin, 1960) suggests that being acquainted with violent individuals, as opposed to being a member of a violent peer group, might increase juveniles' chances of experiencing violence. In this way, turning to friends who are enmeshed in violence might be putting individuals at risk for experiencing violence themselves.

Second, these management strategies may adversely influence violence rates. More specifically, these findings highlight the way that violence rates can escalate to epidemic proportions. Combining the illicit economy and

street culture explanations (Anderson, 1999; Blumstein, 1995; Blumstein & Cork, 1996; Bourgois, 1995), we see how economic and cultural forces increased violence rates during the 1980s and early 1990s. According to the illicit economy perspective, the structural changes in underground economies (i.e., introduction of new crack markets) influenced a spike in violence rates. The spike occurred when young crack dealers eventually diffused the reliance on guns to their school and neighborhood friends. The street culture perspective indirectly suggests that youths entrenched in a violent street ethos were happy to pick up on gun use to establish strong identities— something that they could not obtain through legitimate means. Thus, we see that particular structural conditions can encourage violence rate increases in drug markets. These violence rates are then sustained through cultural norms and diffusion.

The data presented in this article add to the illicit economy and cultural explanations by offering another hypothesis regarding the way that violence rates can be sustained. More specifically, these findings demonstrate how initial violence peaks within disadvantaged communities can instigate a pattern of interactions across multiple contexts. These "across-context" interaction patterns may theoretically sustain violence rates. The process generally begins as a response to increasing threats of violence and ends with a set of violence management techniques that leave many youths with few choices but to become violent.

The findings from the fear-of-crime literature suggests that individuals routinely respond to fears of victimization by employing different management techniques, such as carrying weapons (Arria, Wood, & Anthony, 1995; Bankston & Thompson, 1989) and avoiding dangerous situations or locations (Ferraro, 1995; Liska et al., 1988; Pain, 1997). Thus, given the increasing threat of violence, real or perceived, individuals will respond to manage violence in everyday contexts. The general increase in

violence rates in the early 1990s (the years just before the current study), suggest that the threat of violence was fairly intense for youths.

As rates of violence increase, these threats are also likely to increase. These violent threats, in turn, encourage a pattern of informal protective interactions across several groups, institutions, and contexts. These protective interactions can potentially encourage violence in two ways. First, these interactions may motivate some youths to become violent. As a case in point, low-risk teens' favorite responses to secondary threats were avoiding risky places and people. Those who lived in nonviolent communities vigilantly patrolled their neighborhoods and avoided potential troublemakers. This predicts that if an individual confronting many violent risk factors were to enter nonviolent neighborhoods they will be shunned and reminded that they "do not belong." Certainly this informal and formal chiding provide additional motivations to put on the tough and threatening personas that Anderson (1999) and Bourgois (1995) described. Therefore, individuals living in or near areas where "street ethics" reign had few choices but to join in or isolate themselves.

Second, these interaction patterns may strengthen violence-prone social networks. As Warr (2002) argued, "The fact that adolescents often face the threat of violence at school and elsewhere suggests a mechanism that may encourage group formation in daily life" (p. 83). Youths in the high-risk group were likely to find protection in violent social networks and unlikely to join nonviolent groups whose members offered them no protection against the acrimonious world they regularly confronted. Thus, as Warr (2002) predicted, threats are likely to ensure that individuals confronting multiple violence risks will learn the proviolence norms circulating in the most vicious social circles.

When the threat of violence reaches a particular level, the interaction patterns initiated across multiple contexts can increase the numbers of individuals who are likely to become

violent. Thus, through a collection of structural (drug market), cultural (street culture), and interaction patterns (everyday threats) we see how initial violence peaks inside illicit markets can set off cultural and interaction patterns that lock individuals into a cycle of violence.

More than offering a vision of the way that structural, cultural, and interaction patterns combine to increase violence rates, these data point to a new violence research and prevention agenda. Specifically, the current study suggests that exclusionary interaction patterns across multiple contexts may leave many youths with few opportunities but to become violent. Thus, a new agenda for researchers, practitioners, and stakeholders is to address the patterns of exclusion cutting across multiple contexts. Because gangs are often viewed as a particularly violent type of peer group, gang research provides a concrete example of the way that a multiple context research agenda might be employed. To date, most gang research has been comparative, meaning that researchers have tended to consider two or more gangs from different neighborhoods and, in some cases, different cities. The approach advocated here would not only compare gangs in one context to gangs in another but would delineate the way that gangs (or other violent youth groups) form within a larger peer context. The central goal of this research, therefore, will be to examine the way that systems of exclusion segregate peer groups based on race, ethnicity, area of residence, and socioeconomic status. Without addressing these across-context exclusionary mechanisms research will, at best, fail to show the way that multiple social groups are complicit in social problems and, at worst, continue the perception that violence is a problem isolated to one type of social group (i.e., poor gang members of color living in disadvantaged communities).

Because the current study focused on the connections among different social contexts, it also sheds light on current trends in the field of violence prevention and intervention. In contrast to the "nothing works" era in criminal justice programs during the 1970s and 1980s (Martinson, 1974; Regnery, 1985; Sechrest, White, & Brown, 1979), in the 1990s several researchers argued that some programs work to reduce violence (Gendreau & Ross, 1980; Hawkins et al., 1995; Lipsey & Wilson, 1997; Sherman et al., 1997). The preferred or model programs identified in this literature have been proven effective in reducing violent behavior or the behaviors correlated with violence during research trials. The findings from the current study suggest that not all preferred programs may, in fact, reduce violence rates. The vast majority of outcome evaluation studies has measured success by examining whether the individuals exposed to these programs are less violent than individuals who do not receive the programs. Although some studies have determined whether programs reduce violence rates in one city or neighborhood (Jones & Offord, 1989; Schinke, Orlandi, & Cole, 1992), these large-scale evaluations tend to be extremely costly and, consequently, rare.

Because this research examines the across-context interaction patterns, it suggests that creating changes within individuals may not be enough to stem escalations in violence rates. For example, the question remains whether decreasing violence in one neighborhood may inadvertently lead to an explosion of deadly conflicts in another. Similarly, it is unknown whether steering one adolescent away from a delinquent pathway may propel several youths down a violent road. Therefore, the measure of success for policy makers and practitioners would be to decrease social exclusion and marginalization of youths confronting the brunt of large-scale social problems (joblessness, rampant drug sales and use, lack of public services, global economic shifts, and racism).

Working with this premise, the most promising programs for stemming violence rates might be those that specifically target fear-based segregation among groups. This calls for a shift in violence prevention programming from targeting

one group of youths, such as those considered at risk for violence, to targeting a large cross-section of youths. It also calls for a shift in ways of measuring program effectiveness from locating changes within individuals to changes within a larger social system. The ultimate goal of system changes is to open avenues for meaningful participation in legitimate society for excluded youths.

References

Anderson, E. (1999). *Code of the street: Decency, violence, and the moral life of the inner city.* New York: Norton.

Arria, A. M., Wood, N. P., & Anthony, J. C. (1995). Prevalence of carrying a weapon and related behaviors in urban schoolchildren, 1989 to 1993. *Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine, 149*, 1345–1450.

Bankston, W. B., & Thompson, C. Y. (1989). Carrying firearms for protection: A causal model. *Sociological Inquiry, 59*, 75–87.

Barzagan, M. (1994). The effects of health, environmental, and socio-psychological variables on fear of crime and its consequences among urban Black elderly individuals. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 38*, 99–115.

Becker, H. (1963). *Outsiders: Studies in the sociology of deviance*. London: Free Press.

Biernacki, P., & Waldorf, D. (1981). Snowball sampling: Problems and techniques of chain referral sampling. *Sociological Methods and Research, 10*, 141–163.

Blumstein, A. (1995). Youth violence, guns, and the illicit-drug industry. *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, 86*, 10–36.

Blumstein, A., & Cork, D. (1996). Linking gun availability to youth gun violence. *Law and Contemporary Problems, 59*, 5–24.

Blumstein, A., & Wallman, J. (2000). *The crime drop in America.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bourgois, P. (1996). In search of masculinity: Violence, respect and sexuality among Puerto Rican crack dealers in East Harlem. *British Journal of Criminology, 36*, 412–427.

Bourgois, P. I. (1995). *In search of respect: Selling crack in El Barrio*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bursik, R. J., & Grasmick, H. G. (1993). *Neighborhoods and crime: The dimensions of effective community control.* New York: Lexington.

Chiricos, T., Eschholz, S., & Gertz, M. (1997). Crime, news, and fear of crime: Toward an identification of audience effects. *Social Problems, 44*, 342–357.

Chiricos, T., Padgett, K., & Gertz, M. (2000). Fear, TV news, and the reality of crime. *Criminology, 38*, 755–786.

Cloward, R., & Ohlin, L. (1960). *Delinquency and opportunity*. New York: Free Press.

Cook, P. J., & Laub, J. H. (1998). The unprecedented epidemic in youth violence. In M. Tonry & M. H. Moore (Eds.), *Youth violence. Crime and justice: A review of research* (pp. 27–64). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Decker, S., & VanWinkle, B. (1996). *Life in the gang: Family, friends and violence.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Elliott, D. S. (1994). Serious violent offenders—Onset, developmental course, and termination. The American Society of Criminology 1993 presidential address. *Criminology, 32*, 1–21.

Elliott, D. S., Huizinga, D., & Ageton, S. S. (1985). *Explaining delinquency and drug use*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Elliott, D. S., Wilson, W. J., Huizinga, D., Sampson, R. J., Elliott, A., & Rankin, B. (1996). The effects of neighborhood disadvantage on adolescent development. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 33*, 389–426.

Ferraro, K. F. (1995). *Fear of crime: Interpreting victimization risk*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Furstenberg, F. F., Jr., Cook, T. D., Eccles, J., Elder, G. H., Jr., & Sameroff, A. (1999). *Managing to make it: Urban families and adolescent success.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gendreau, P., & Ross, R. R. (1980). *Effective correctional treatment*. Toronto, Canada: Butterworths.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine.

Hawkins, J. D., Herrenkohl, T. L., Farrington, D. P., Brewer, D., Catalano, R. F., & Harachi, T.W. (1998).A review of predictors of youth violence. In R. Loeber & D. P. Farrington (Eds.), *Serious and violent juvenile offenders: Risk factors and successful interventions* (pp. 106–146). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Jones, M. B., & Offord, D. R. (1989). Reduction of antisocial behavior in poor children by nonschool skill-development. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 30*, 737–750.

Kelly, D. H. (1974). Track position and delinquent involvement: A preliminary analysis. *Sociology and Social Research, 58*, 380–386.

Lavrakas, P. J. (1982). Fear of crime and behavioral restrictions in urban and suburban neighborhoods. *Population and Environment, 5*, 242–264.

Lipsey, M.W., & Derzon, J. H. (1998). Predictors of violent and serious delinquency in adolescence and early adulthood: A synthesis of longitudinal research. In

R. Loeber & D. P. Farrington (Eds.), *Serious and violent juvenile offenders: Risk factors and successful interventions* (pp. 86–105). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lipsey, M.W., &Wilson, D. B. (1997). *Effective interventions for serious juvenile offenders: A synthesis of research.* Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University.

Liska, A. E., Sanchirico, A., & Reed, M. D. (1988). Fear of crime and constrained behavior: Specifying and estimating a reciprocal effects model. *Social Forces, 66,* 827–837.

Martinson, R. (1974, spring). What works? Questions and answers about prison reform. *Public Interest, 35,* 22–54.

Matsueda, R. L., & Heimer, K. (1987). Race, family structure, and delinquency: A test of differential association and social control theories. *American Sociological Review, 52,* 826-840.

Oakes, J. (1985). *Keeping track: How schools structure inequality.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

O'Keefe, G. J., & Reid-Nash, K. (1987). Crime news and real-world blues: The effects of the media on social reality. *Communication Research, 14,* 147–163.

Pain, R. H. (1997). "Old age" and ageism in urban research: The case of fear of crime. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 21,* 117–128.

Regnery, A. S. (1985). Getting away with murder. *Policy Review, 34,* 1–4.

Sampson, R. J. (1985). Neighborhood and crime: The structural determinants of personal victimization. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 22,* 7–40.

Schinke, S. P., Orlandi, M. A., & Cole, K. C. (1992).Boys & Girls Clubs in public housing developments: Prevention services for youth at risk. *Journal of Community Psychology* (OSAP Special Issue), 118–128.

Sechrest, L., White, S., & Brown, E. (1979). *Rehabilitation of criminal offenders: Problems and prospects.* Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences.

Sherman, L.W., Gottfredson, D. C., MacKenzie, D., Eck, J., Reuter, P., & Bushway, S. (1997). *Preventing crime: What works, what doesn't, what's promising: A report to the U.S. Congress.* College Park: University of Maryland.

Simcha-Fagan, O., & Schwartz, J. E. (1986). Neighborhood and delinquency: An assessment of contextual effects. *Criminology, 24,* 667–703.

Snyder, H. N., & Sickmund, M. (1999). *Juvenile offenders and victims: 1999 national report* (NCJ 178257).Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Snyder, H. N., Sickmund, M., & Poe-Yamagata, E. (1996). *Juvenile offenders and victims: 1996 update on violence.* Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Tittle, C. R., Burke, M. J., & Jackson, E. F. (1986). Modeling Sutherland's theory of differential association: Toward an empirical clarification. *Social Forces, 65,* 405–432.

Warr, M. (1996). Organization and instigation in delinquent groups. *Criminology, 34,* 11–37.

Warr, M. (2002). *Companions in crime: The social aspects of criminal conduct.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Warr, M., & Stafford, M. (1991). The influence of delinquent peers: What they think or what they do? *Criminology, 29,* 851–866.

Wilson, W. J. (1996). *When work disappears: The world of the new urban poor.* New York: Knopf.