RELATIVE DEPRIVATION AND SELF-REPORTED HAPPINESS OF BLACKS: 1946-1966

APPROVED BY SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:
RELATIVE DEPRIVATION AND SELF-REPORTED
HAPPINESS OF BLACKS: 1946-1966

by

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

There have been indications in recent years of a general discontent among black Americans—especially since the early 1960's. The question has arisen in the minds of many as to why this discontent should be manifested at this time, since, it is argued, blacks are increasingly "better off" than at any previous time in our history. One answer to this question has been that improvement in absolute conditions has become somewhat beside the point, since blacks have begun to measure improvements in their situation by white standards—that is, they are experiencing relative deprivation.

This presentation is an attempt to test the relative deprivation hypothesis. The argument will be that blacks in general and some sub-categories of blacks more particularly, have shifted reference groups. Whereas before the 1940's the social separation of Negroes from whites was conducive to blacks using the Negro community, or portions thereof, as points of comparison, increasing contacts of blacks with whites encouraged blacks to use white middle-class standards for evaluating their own positions. From the point of view of blacks as a whole, the factors encouraging this shift include mass migration of Negroes to urban and non-Southern areas, the spread of mass communication, and an ideological factor. However, while blacks as a group have been thus encouraged, particular sub-groups or categories of blacks have been even more encouraged to use middle-class whites as comparative reference groups. These sub-groups include those individuals who, because of increased education, occupation, and income levels, have assumed that their levels of achievement have placed them on a near equal footing with whites at similar levels of achievement. And, too, they, more than those of lower education, occupation, and income levels, have interacted with whites and have thus been brought more directly into contact with white middle-class culture.

It can be shown that for most blacks living conditions have improved in the past twenty or thirty years, when such improvements are measured in absolute terms. That is, when conditions of blacks today are compared with those of the pre-1940 era, one can point to gains that have been made. If blacks continued to compare their present positions with those of yester-year, or if those blacks who have advanced economically, educationally, and occupationally compared their current positions with those of the vast majority of blacks, one might expect a degree of satisfaction on the part of blacks in general and of higher status blacks in particular. However, if they have shifted from the use of the Negro community to that of the white community as a reference group, then it can be shown that the absolute gains have been made pale in comparison. This shifting of reference, groups, combined with the gap in
Life situations of blacks and whites, could have led to a feeling of relative deprivation on the part of blacks. Rather than having a sense of satisfaction over absolute-gains accomplished, blacks have experienced an increasing sense of dissatisfaction, because of their standing relative to whites. It will be argued that a feeling of relative deprivation is likely to occur when individuals take as their reference group a group to which the social structure denies their admission. As a consequence of this, such individuals experience a feeling of dissatisfaction which is reflected in their state of psychological well-being. Using the work of Bradburn (1965), an attempt will be made to show that this dissatisfaction, reflected in state of psychological well-being, can be ascertained through the analysis of responses to the following question: "In general, how happy would you say you are?" This particular question has been included verbatim in several AIPO surveys between 1946 and 1966.

The suggested hypothesis is that between the years 1946 and 1966, the percentage of blacks responding "very happy" to the above question declined relative to the percentage of whites so answering; furthermore, that particular sub-categories of blacks, who have had greater contact on a near equal basis with whites, have experienced a greater decline in happiness than those sub-categories having less contact. To be more specific, the percentage of those responding "very happy" declined among the black population, during this period, as one ascended the education, occupation, and income levels, while the same was not true for whites.

The use of relative deprivation as an underlying explanatory factor in the growing black unrest is not new in sociological literature. Particularly since urban rioting reached a peak in the summer of 1967, investigators have frequently posited the relative deprivation hypothesis as at least a partial explanation. In some cases, their data have supported relative deprivation; in others, they have not. However, in most cases the subjective element of relative deprivation is either ignored or disregarded (for elaboration of this point see McPhail, 1971. And yet, by its very nature, the concept includes a subjective factor; for if a person's behavior is to be affected, he must not only be aware of the position in which he stands relative to some other group, but he must experience some feeling of having been deprived of that to which he is entitled. In examining black as compared to white responses to the happiness question, this dissertation is an attempt to get at the subjective factor. If the data support a difference in reported happiness between blacks and whites during this period under examination when conditions were conducive to blacks' taking whites as their comparative reference group, we will have added some evidence that blacks have internalized the effects of relative deprivation. We will have also added some support to those who contend that relative deprivation is the root cause of growing black unrest.
CHAPTER II
REFERENCE GROUPS AND RELATIVE DEPRIVATION

In order to place the concept "reference group" in a context which will highlight, its usefulness in explaining behavior patterns," it may be helpful to relate it to Symbolic Interactionism, one of the schools of thought most influential in Sociology. As developed by Mead, Cooley, Dewey, Paris, and others, this school of thought offers an explanation as to how an individual's behavior patterns (including attitudes) toward others and toward himself are shaped in interaction with others. Although exactly who the "others" are in a given situation has not been spelled out as an essential aspect of this approach to understanding human behavior, the fact that interaction takes place has been stressed. This leads to the common assumption that for the individual, contact with others occurs within a group of which the individual is a member. However, since the locus of the "other" is not carefully examined, there is room for speculation that the other who influences the individual's attitudes may not necessarily be apart of the individual's membership groups (Kuhn, 1964a).

Robert Merton (1968:286-287) seems to maintain that this is the point at which "reference group" can be of assistance. It may indeed be a necessary extension of Mead's "other," if this "other" is limited to those with whom the individual interacts.

According to reference group theory, as developed by Hyman (1968), Merton (1968), Newcomb (1950), Shibutani (1955), Turner (1956), Sherif (1953) etc., much of the behavior of individuals can be understood in terms of the groups to which they relate themselves. These may be groups to which the individual belongs, or they may be groups to which he aspires to belong. Or, they may not be groups at all in the formal sense of the term, implying continued social interaction between members, but rather social categories with which the individual identifies. This last distinction is important if reference group theory is to add anything new to an old insight. For, as Merton has pointed out:

That men act in a social frame of reference yielded by the groups of which they are a part is a notion undoubtedly ancient and probably sound. Were this alone the concern of reference group theory, it would merely be a new term for an old focus in sociology, which has always been centered on the group determination of behavior. There is, however, the further fact that men frequently orient themselves to groups other than their own in shaping their behavior and evaluations, and it is the problems centered about this fact of orientation to non-membership groups that constitute the distinctive concern of reference group theory [Merton & Rossi, 1968:288].

A reference group, whether or not it is a membership group for the individual, may serve one of the following three functions (Kelley, 1968; Shibutani, 1955): it may be the source of the individual's norms and values; it may provide an individual's basic definition of the situation which establishes his cultural perspective; or it may provide standards to which an individual compares, and by which he
evaluates, his current situation. It is possible that one group could serve all three functions for an individual, but it is important that a distinction be made between them, at least analytically. For an individual may accept the norms and values of one group and, at the same time, have aspirations which cause him to compare his situation with that of a different group. When an individual does take as a comparative reference group one which he considers socially superior to his own membership groups, he will find his current situation lacking in some respects and can be expected to experience a sense of dissatisfaction. This is especially likely to be the case if the social structure is such that he is denied admission to this group and is prevented from partaking in the privileges which they enjoy (Merton & Rossi, 1968:319).

In recent years the concept of relative deprivation has been employed to explain this dissatisfaction, to explain why it is that various groups in our society have not held the same view of their position as would be held if they objectively evaluated where they stood in terms of some external, absolute standard.

Usage of the concept can be traced to Marx, who contended that an increase in wages cannot be a source of satisfaction to the worker so long as he views his position as unfavorable when compared to that of the capitalist. A house may be large or small; as long as the surrounding houses are equally small it satisfies all social demands for a dwelling. But if a palace arises beside the little house, the little house shrinks into a hut. The little house shows now that its owner has only very slight or no demands to make; and however high it may shoot up in the course of civilisation, if the neighboring palace grows to an equal or even greater extent, the dweller in the relatively small house will feel more and more uncomfortable, dissatisfied and cramped within its four walls: . . . .

Our needs and enjoyments spring from society; we measure them, therefore, by society and not by the objects of their satisfaction. Because they are of a social nature, they are of a relative nature (Marx, 1933:268-269).

In more recent years, the term "relative deprivation" has been applied to the social phenomenon of which Marx wrote and to similar phenomena. Among the various usages of the term, the basic common denominator is in the distinction made between deprivation viewed in an objective or absolute sense and that which is viewed in relative terms. There is further, agreement that dissatisfaction is more likely to be manifested when the individual has found his position lacking relative to something else. However, there is less than full agreement on just what this "something else" is. It seems a worthwhile endeavor, therefore, to review some of the definitions of relative deprivation which have found their way into sociological literature and to indicate which will be used in this paper.

Merton and Rossi (1968), in their examination of the empirical studies reported on in The American Soldier, indicate that reference groups can be useful in explaining the deprivation that individuals actually feel. Although the concept of relative deprivation is not formally defined by the authors of The American Soldier, the idea is frequently used in reconciling data. Merton and Rossi (1968:282)
then list nine instances in which the concept is used. In each case, the individual or group which experienced dissatisfaction or felt deprived, did so when comparing himself with another group or category which was better off and with whom he had some reason for comparing himself. Thus, for Merton and Rossi, the comparative reference group (used in the sense outlined above) becomes the "something else" with which an individual compares his current position." Merton and Rossi have made relative deprivation an integral part of reference group theory. Runciman (1966:10) is in agreement with Merton and Rossi on this:

. . . relative deprivation means that the sense of deprivation is such as to involve a comparison with the imagined situation of some other person or group. This other person or group is the "reference group," or more accurately, the "comparative reference group."

Runciman then presents a more formal definition than is found in Merton's work:

We can roughly say that A is relatively deprived of X when (1) he does not have X, (2) he sees some other person or persons, which may include himself at some previous or expected time, as having X (whether or not this is or will be in fact the case), (3) he wants X, and (4) he sees it as feasible that he should have X (Runciman, 1966:10).

It will be noted that in the phrase "which may include himself at some previous or expected time," Runciman appears to be adding something to the concept as developed by Merton, and in so doing, he has moved us in the direction of expectational theory. Among those who have made use of the relative deprivation concept, there is disagreement as to whether it includes an individual's making comparisons between his present and expected future position. David Matza uses the more inclusive definition:

Relative deprivation refers to the idea that subjective feelings of deprivation depend on how one's own experiences compare to those close at hand, to what one has become accustomed in the past, or to what one anticipates -(Matza, 1966:622).

Caplan and Paige (1968:20) also use a broader definition maintaining that relative deprivation can be based on rising expectations or the discrepancy between the "deprived" and a comparative reference group. However, others have made a conceptual distinction between rising expectations and relative deprivation. For example, Spilerman (1970:640), in keeping with the Merton and Rossi usage, argues that a relative deprivation explanation of civil unrest is incomplete until a reference group is specified. While a reference standard is employed in expectational theory, it is usually "some desired state of affairs in the future such as the living standard one expects to attain" (Spilerman, 1970:640). An additional difference between the expectational and the relative deprivation explanation of civil unrest is found by Spilerman in the determination of degree of discontent. In relative deprivation, discontent is generated by the size of the gap between the individual's actual position and that of his reference group—the larger the gap, the greater the discontent. In expectational theory, discontent
is generated because the situation is improving—the gap, in effect, is being narrowed, causing hopes to soar and frustrations to mount.

This position was also taken by James Geschwender (1964) in his classification of hypotheses which have been used to explain the Negro revolution. According to him, two of the five hypotheses are (1) "The Rising Expectations Hypothesis" and (2) "The Sophisticated Marxist Hypothesis" or "Relative Deprivation Hypothesis," defined as follows:

"Rising Expectations"
As a group experiences an improvement in its conditions of life it will also experience a rise in its level of desires. The latter will rise more rapidly than the former, leading to dissatisfaction and rebellion (1964:249).

"Sophisticated Marxist" or "Relative Deprivation"
As a group experiences an improvement in its conditions of life and simultaneously observes a second group experiencing a more rapid rate of improvement, it will become dissatisfied with its rate of improvement and rebel (1964:249).

Bowen and Massotti (1968) list four major themes that have been employed to explain civil unrest, one of which is relative deprivation, another being expectational theory. In discussing the relative deprivation explanation, they point out that there has been disagreement among theorists as to what it is that makes men feel deprived. On the one hand, "some suggest that one feels deprived when invidious comparisons are possible with the achievements of other salient individuals or reference groups" (1968:23). On the other hand, "other theorists have suggested that men feel deprived when they make comparisons between their present and anticipated levels of achievement and their past experience" (1968:23). Expectational theory is considered to be distinct from relative deprivation and is related to the revolution of rising expectations. "Expectational theory results from comparison between what one currently enjoys and what one aspires to" (Bowen and Masotti, 1968:24).

Pettigrew relies mainly on the comparative reference group, apparently agreeing with Merton that relative deprivation is a companion concept to reference group theory (1971:3), but he also relates aspirations and expectations of Negroes in recent years to relative deprivation (1964:179; 1971:94). While recognizing the conceptual distinction made by Bowen and Massotti between deprivational explanations and expectational theory, Pettigrew says this is a fine theoretical distinction which is generally lost in real life (1971:157), and that he has blended the two to present his own explanation of black unrest.

In all the above definitions, the comparative reference group has been considered at least a part of the answer when the question is asked: what is the "something else" relative to which the individual has found his position lacking? There are, however, those who completely omit the comparative reference group. Ted Gurr (1968:51) says that relative deprivation is, in effect, "a perception
of thwarting circumstances." And while it could be argued that one may feel thwarted when comparing his position with that of a reference group, his definition of relative deprivation does not necessarily imply this: . . . it is a state of mind that can be defined as a discrepancy between people's expectations about the goods and conditions of life to which they are justifiably entitled, on the one hand, and on the other, their value capabilities—what they perceive to be their chances for getting and keeping those goods and conditions (1968:51).

No mention is made of a comparative reference group in the following definition:

The common assumption ... is that the deprivation which leads to unrest is that which is relative to some other standard. Sometimes dissatisfaction is thought to be the result of deprivation relative to increased aspirations which are part of a "revolution of rising expectations" or of "demonstration effect." For other theorists, dissatisfaction is the result of deprivation relative to an individual's own experience—e.g., downward mobility [Bowen, Bowen, Gawiser, & Masotti, 1968:20].

To summarize the preceding survey of definitions: relative deprivation is that feeling of dissatisfaction generated by an individual's comparing his current and actual position with something else. That "something else" may be (1) a comparative reference group, (2) an individual's past experience or expected future position, (3) that to which an individual aspires and on which he bases his expectations. These three elements can be seen to have appeared by themselves or in combination in the definitions surveyed.

We will try to follow Pettigrew's usage (see above, page 12), emphasizing the comparative reference group, but at times blending this with expectational theory. For it would appear that there is some overlapping between relative deprivation, when the standard of comparison is a reference group, and expectational and aspirational theory, when the standard of comparison is some situation to which the individual aspires or which he expects to achieve. The congruence is to be found when aspirations or expectations arise because of a reference group to which an individual compares his current situation. Or, a reference group may be chosen because of the person's aspirations. Spilerman contends that one chief difference between relative deprivation explanations and expectational theory lies in what happens when the gap between actual conditions and the reference standard begins to close. But this may very well be a question that has to be answered empirically. For an individual begins to close the gap between his actual situation and that of his comparative reference group, it might be found that his expectations (regarding the feasibility of attaining his desired situation within a reasonable length of time) are altered and his dissatisfaction increased.

This is not to say that expectational theory can be completely subsumed under relative deprivation—reference group explanations; rather, that there are times when the two cannot be clearly distinguished.
We propose to take a look at the role which relative deprivation has played in contributing to the growing discontent among blacks in the United States. In order to do this, it seems necessary to deal with several questions. First, what evidence is there that during this period (mid 1940's to mid 1960's) absolute deprivation was not at the root of the general and growing unrest? What evidence exists to support our claim that relative deprivation was present?

We are suggesting that for relative deprivation to be experienced by blacks, there had to be some social forces at work which encouraged a shift in comparative reference groups. This brings us to a second question: what justification can be offered for the contention that this time period was one in which blacks were increasingly encouraged to shift their comparative reference groups from those of fellow blacks to white America in general?

Thirdly, assuming the first two questions are answered satisfactorily, how do we know that relative disadvantages, which come to the fore because of this shift in reference groups, are actually experienced as deprivation by blacks? We hope to be able to demonstrate that from an objective point of view blacks experienced disadvantages relative to whites; but in order to be translated into unrest, these disadvantages had to be felt—taken into account—by blacks themselves.

The next chapter will be an attempt to answer the first two of these questions. Chapter III will deal with question three and outline the approach to be used in examining our hypotheses.
Between the mid 1940's and the mid 1960's absolute gains were made by blacks in many areas. The median family income for Negroes rose from $2,660 in 1947 to $4,001 in 1960 to $6,191 in 1969. These figures are in 1969 dollars, adjusted for price changes (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1971:26).

The median wage and salary income of gainfully employed nonwhite males rose from $460 in 1939 to $3,023 in 1962. In actual buying power, in constant (1962) dollars, the increase was threefold—from $995 in 1939 to $3,023 in 1962 [Broom & Glenn, 1965:105].

While only 3 percent of nonwhite families had an income of $10,000 or more in 1947, by 1966 this had increased to 17 percent (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1971:28).

This increase in income was due largely to improved occupational standing of Negroes.

. . . Negroes who were once highly concentrated in Sharecropping and farm labor have now moved up to unskilled and semi-skilled factory jobs. Appreciable numbers have moved into white-collar employment. This change has raised the skills of the Negro labor force, it has increased their productivity and it is in large measure responsible for the vast improvement in their levels of living [Miller, 1966:109].

The percent of employed Negro workers in white-collar or skilled manual occupations increased from 8.5 percent in 1940 to almost 20 percent in 1960 (Broom & Glenn, 1965:105. See also U.S. Department of Labor, 1966:116, 4 Pettigrew, 1964:181-182).

During this period, educational gains were also made by Negroes. In 1940, 64.4 percent of Negroes aged five to twenty were attending school; by 1960, this figure had increased to 78.7 (Broom & Glenn, 1965:82). Median years of school completed increased, the percentage with four or less years of formal schooling declined, and the percentage who had completed high school rose appreciably, as did the percentage who had attended college (Broom & Glenn, 1965:84, 89; Pettigrew, 1964:183-184; U.S. Department of Labor, 1965:116).

In addition to improvements realized in the areas of income, occupation and education, blacks advanced in other areas. Life expectancy was increased within this twenty-year period, due in part to a lower rate of infant mortality (Miller, 1966:109; Broom & Glenn, 1965:165-169; Pettigrew, 1964:181). Housing conditions were improved, as the percentage of homeowners and the median value of these homes increased and as the percentage of blacks in substandard housing decreased (U.S. Department of Labor, 1966:116; Pettigrew, 1964:183).
During this same period, whites also experienced absolute gains in the areas mentioned above, to the extent that the gap between black and white levels was in no instance eliminated. In some cases, the gap apparently widened. Pettigrew (1971:23) maintains that in housing quality "gains among Negroes . . . have not kept pace with gains among whites, and these gains have not eradicated the dual housing market" (see also U.S. Department of Labor, 1966). The ratio of nonwhite to white unemployment rates increased fairly steadily between 1949 and 1956 and then fluctuated between 2.0 and 2.2 between 1957 and 1966 (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1970:48).

. . . the differential between white and nonwhite unemployment rates has widened during the post War period. From 1947 to 1953, the unemployment rate for nonwhite workers averaged 71% greater than for white workers. This differential has risen to an average of 112% in the past decade (U.S. Department of Labor, 1966:120).

When other factors, such as underemployment and Negroes' dropping out of the labor market, are taken into consideration, these figures probably underrepresent the true discrepancy in unemployment rates (U.S. Department of Labor, 1966:116; Pettigrew, 1971:36).

As far as income is concerned, the ratio of non-white to white median family income remained virtually the same (Broom & Glenn, 1965:116? Pettigrew, 1964:189; U.S. Department of Commerce, 1970:25,26,28) during this period. The percent of nonwhite families with income of $10,000 or more fluctuated between one and four until 1956, at which time it began to increase fairly steadily. But in every year in which this percentage increased, the percent of whites at this income level increased at a greater rate, so that the gap between whites and nonwhites at high income levels constantly widened (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1970).

Gaps in occupational achievement and level of education between whites and nonwhites were reduced, but not eradicated. At some occupational levels, blacks' gains were more significant than at others.

The greatest gains for both Negro males and females from 1940 to 1960 were in intermediate-level occupations, such as clerical workers, craftsmen, foremen, and operatives [Broom & Glenn, 1965:109].

There was virtually no increase in representation of Negro males in the highest level occupations during this period.

When measured in terms of years of education completed, the gap between blacks and whites narrowed in the years under consideration. However, education may be in a different category from occupation, income, housing, etc. For, traditionally education has been seen as a means to an end—the end being better living conditions. Broom and Glenn (1965:102-104)* point out that quality of education is perhaps more important than quantity in preparing students for occupational and income gains, and the quality of education for blacks has remained notably inferior to that of whites. While in terms of quantitative measures, the gap in education between blacks and whites has narrowed,
there remains an appreciable gap in the quality of education. The
narrowing of the education gap serves to increase discontent when
such gains are not translatable into concomitant gains in more
salient areas, such as occupation and income (Broom & Glenn,

In general, the gains made have not been sufficient to stifle
discontent, but they have been such as to make feasible the
comparison of the black situation to that of whites (Broom & Glenn,
1965:81-156; Lenski, 1966:397; Masotti, et al., 1969:19; Miller,
1966; Miller & Roby, 1970:70, 123-127; Pettigrew, 1964:178-201;

After reviewing occupational and educational advances of
blacks, Broom and Glenn point out:

Improved occupational and educational status has made keener
the Negro's perception of his relative disadvantage. For
the first time, many Negroes have a vantage point from which
to estimate with some accuracy their relative condition. . . .
Negroes now are not only more able but also more inclined to
gauge their standing relative to whites because more of them
have contacts with whites on an equal footing [1965:106].

This provides an example of the way in which rising aspirations and
choice of reference groups can be mutually reenforcing.

The continuing relative disadvantages of blacks is not in
itself adequate explanation for the growing unrest. But there is
evidence that during this period blacks were increasingly encouraged
to use white Americans as a comparative reference group, thus
shifting their attention from absolute gains made to the disparity
which continued to exist between black and white standards and
levels of achievement.

It seems reasonably certain that the living conditions and
other external attributes of white Americans serve as
comparison levels for black Americans more today than
formerly. This is not to imply that white comparisons did
not serve an evaluative function previously; but white
comparisons are now perceived as the appropriate standards to
which Negroes are entitled as American citizens. . . . Note
that this subtle shift in the use of levels of whites as
standards for comparison could be occurring without any
significant increase in contact as equals between Negroes and
whites. . . . The shift does require greater knowledge by
Negroes since 1940 of the external attributes of white Ameri-
cans; and this condition appears to be met through the
somewhat higher social positions of many Negroes as well as
the explosion in white-oriented mass communication since 1940

In addition to the increasing availability to blacks of mass media
of communication, factors contributing to the adoption of whites as
a comparative reference group would include: the mass migration
of blacks to non-Southern and urban areas, where patterns of racial
etiquette have not been so firmly ingrained; the civil rights
movement and the general push for legal equality; and other,
ideological factors, including changing white attitudes and the

Pettigrew cites Hyman and Sheatsley's analysis of nationwide surveys from 1942 to 1963 as evidence that white's opinions about the Negro were changing:

Thus, the belief of the white public in the equal intelligence of Negroes rose from 21 to 59 percent in the South; and from 50 to 80 percent in the North; support by whites of desegregated public transportation climbed from 4 to 51 percent in the South, and from 57 to 88 percent in the North; and approval by whites of desegregated neighborhoods increased from 12 to 51 percent in the South, and from 42 to 70 percent in the North [Pettigrew, 1971:185].

Although no nationwide data on blacks' perception of changing white attitudes is available covering this twenty year period, data on Negro troops presented in The American Soldier and a survey conducted by Louis Harris indicate that perceptions were changing. In the survey of Negro troops, conducted in 1943, the question was asked: "Do you think that after the war you will be treated better or worse by white people than before the war?" Thirty percent answered "better" (Stouffer et al., 1949:515). This can be contrasted with the results of a nationwide Harris survey conducted in 1963. When asked to assess white attitudes now versus five years ago, 52 percent of the rank and file blacks and 89 percent of black leaders answered that White attitudes were better now. When asked about their expectations of white attitudes five years from now, 73 percent of the rank and file and 93 percent of the leaders indicated that they felt white attitudes would be better (Brink & Harris, 1963:130,136). A comparison of the 1943 and 1963 responses provides some evidence that blacks have been aware of the change in attitudes of whites.

The above refers to blacks in the United States in general. While Pettigrew makes the point that "the shift in the use of levels of whites as standards for comparison could be occurring without any significant increase in contact as equals between Negroes and whites" (1971:153-154), it has also been noted that the resulting relative deprivation's more acutely felt by those blacks who have an opportunity to evaluate their situation through interaction on an equal or near equal basis with whites. So while it would be expected that blacks in the United States in general would have increasingly experienced relative deprivation during the twenty year period under consideration, it would also be expected that certain categories of blacks would be more subject to this feeling' than would other categories.

"Where Negro social isolation has decreased and egalitarian social contacts have increased, one effect undoubtedly has been a rise in aspirations and a heightened sense of deprivation" (Broom & Glenn, 1965:106). Lessening of social isolation can be expected as Negroes move out of a rural, Southern setting and are less sensitive to the
rational etiquette dominant in such a situation. Therefore, blacks most subject to a feeling of relative deprivation might be expected to include the urban as opposed to the rural, those residing outside the South as opposed to those within, the younger as opposed to the older age groups (assuming rational etiquette is less ingrained in the young). Egalitarian social contacts have increased for the middle-class Negro, "middle-class" being determined by occupational, income, and educational levels. Therefore those Negroes who rank high in occupation, income, and education, relative to other Negroes, might be expected to experience a greater feeling of relative deprivation (Banfield & Wilson, 1966; Broom & Glenn, 1965:38-80, 172-192; Essein-Udom, 1966: Frazier, 1957: Gittell & Krupp, 1968; Pettigrew, 1964:27-55; 178-201; Pettigrew, 1971: 261-290; Williams, 1964:143-222).
Throughout the literature, on relative deprivation, allusion is made to the fact that deprivation has to be experienced as such in order to affect behavior (Centers, 1949; 1949; Davies, 1962; Merton & Rossi, 1968; Runciman, 1966). Thus, in explaining unrest, it is not enough to be able to point objectively to the discrepancy in privileges enjoyed by different groups within a society. It is necessary to know whether the relative disadvantages we might objectively observe have a psychological effect on the individuals involved.

What we propose to do in an attempt to measure this subjective factor is to take a look at a question which has appeared in Gallup polls across a number of years. The question, "In general, how happy would you say you are?" has appeared verbatim in such surveys from the mid 1940's through the mid 1960's. The contention will be that the state of psychological well-being of a people, as reflected in responses to this question, can be seen as an indicator of relative deprivation. Thus we would expect for the years under consideration that a smaller percentage of blacks than of whites would answer "very happy," and the differences in percentage between the two groups would increase between the mid 1940's and the mid 1960's. And, in comparing those segments of the black population which are more likely to suffer from relative deprivation with other segments, the former would experience a greater decline in the percent responding "very happy" over this twenty year period. However, this would not be true for comparable white segments.

Use of self-reports on happiness for assessing the state of psychological well-being is not unknown (see Wilson, 1967, for a comprehensive review of such studies). Davies (1962) cites an instance in which a cross-cultural study made use of such a question, and more recently Bradburn (1965) used self-reports of happiness in a survey of five samples (four drawn from different communities and one drawn from ten combined metropolitan areas). The focus of his study was on the interaction between the individual's sense of psychological well-being, as indicated by self-reported happiness, and his life situation. He found that whether a person would report himself as being "very happy," "pretty happy," or "not too happy" was dependent on his position in the income, occupational, and educational hierarchies. Those reporting themselves as "not too happy" were more likely to rank low in all three of these hierarchies. Bradburn (1965:46) contends that this particular finding is really not new, since social scientists have for some time relied on evidence that those individuals most involved in their social environment are the ones most likely to experience satisfaction with
their situation, to have better "mental health," etc.; furthermore, that involvement in the social environment is directly related to level of income, occupation, and education. The finding may, however, serve to give us some confidence in the ability of self-reports of happiness to indicate state of psychological well-being. Both Bradburn (1965) and Wilson (1967) offer further evidence to support the validity of this type of question. Bradburn cites his own findings, as well as those of earlier studies, which "have all found that self-reports of happiness are meaningfully correlated with other indicators of psychological well-being that are either well grounded in other empirical research or have strong face validity on the basis of everyday experience" (1965:39).

But how do we know that state of psychological well-being as reflected in self-reported happiness is not due to something other than the presence of absence of relative deprivation? At the present time, there may be no way of being sure. A definitive answer to this would probably involve a comprehensive list of all other sources of happiness and unhappiness and a means of determining whether these sources were present during the years under consideration. Such data do not appear to be available. However, the question can be dealt with in a limited manner. Let us suppose that happiness is related to one particular aspect of blacks' life situation, rather than to the more general condition of relative deprivation--some particular aspect such as housing, income, children's education, or occupation. If such were the case, those blacks reporting themselves satisfied with the particular aspect under investigation, would also report themselves as being "very happy." It is possible to check this, because in the same survey (#735) in 1966, Gallup asked the happiness question and a series of questions relating to specific satisfactions. Of the blacks polled (N=327) 164 reported themselves satisfied with their housing situation; 199, with the work they do; 91, with their family income; and 157, with their children's education or (if childless) the education children are getting today. Of those who were satisfied with their housing situation, 29 percent reported themselves "very happy." Thirty-two percent of those satisfied with their work, 52 percent of those satisfied with their family income, and 38 percent of those satisfied with children's education reported themselves "very happy." The results of this particular survey do not show a strong relationship between happiness and satisfaction with any one of the factors investigated--factors which are generally assumed to be important in affecting a person's life situation. Perhaps satisfaction with a combination of these factors, possibly plus others, would produce happiness. Relative deprivation can be seen as dissatisfaction with one's life situation, a combination of several such factors, when compared to a salient reference group. There may be other conditions as general as relative deprivation which might be shown to be more closely and directly related to happiness. But if the data to be presented indicate that when external conditions which have been associated with relative deprivation are also associated
with a decrease in happiness, there is some justification for using
happiness to assess the subjective aspect of relative deprivation,
with the full realization that other causes for a decline in
happiness have not been ruled out.

HYPOTHESES

Using responses to the happiness question as an
indicator of the subjective aspect of relative deprivation, the
following hypotheses will be examined:

A. The level of psychological well-being of blacks in the
United States, as compared to that of whites, declined between 1946
and 1966.

B. The higher the educational level of blacks, the greater the
decline in level of psychological well-being over this twenty year
period. On the other hand, this relationship did not hold for
comparable whites.

C. The higher the occupational level of blacks, the greater the
decline in level of psychological well-being over this twenty year
period. This relationship did not hold for comparable whites.

D. The higher the income of blacks, the greater the
decline in level of psychological well-being over this twenty year period.
This relationship did not hold for comparable whites.

E. Blacks residing in non-Southern areas, as compared to those
in the South, experienced a greater decline in level of
psychological well-being over this twenty year period. This
relationship did not hold for comparable whites.

F. Blacks residing in larger cities, as opposed to those in
smaller, experienced a greater decline in level of psychological
well-being over these twenty years. This relationship did not hold
for comparable whites.

G. Younger age groups of blacks, as opposed to older,
experienced a greater decline in level of psychological well-being
over this twenty year period. This relationship did not hold for
comparable whites.

Secondary analysis of AIPO polls will be the means through
which these hypotheses will be examined. In all, ten different
surveys* have been used: one for the year 1946, two for 1947, two
for 1948, three for 1956, and two for 1966. The data from the
surveys conducted within the same year are combined in order to give
one total for that year. In addition, the data from 1947 and 1948
are combined with those from 1946, because the black N's from some
of the earlier surveys are somewhat small.

One difficulty encountered in the use of these opinion polls
lies in the sampling technique used. In 1946 and 1947, Gallup
used quota sampling:

The foremost problem with the quota samples used by Gallup .
during the 1930's 1940's and into the 1950's is that they
systematically underrepresented

*American Institute of Public Opinion Surveys #369 (April, 1946),
#399 (June, 1947), #410 (December, 1947), #418 (May, 1948), #425 (August,
1948), #569 (August, 1956), #570 (September, 1956), #571 (September, 1956),
#735 (September, 1966), #736 (October, 1966).
certain segments of the population. The extent and nature of this error can be assessed by comparing data from the quota samples and from census reports on various population characteristics [Glenn, 1970:83'].

In executing this comparison, Glenn (1970) found that variance of sample percentages for the Gallup quota samples is 1.5 times that of the variance with/srs samples. For the area probability samples of the latter and 1950's and 1960's he found the variance to be 1.4 times that of a srs. This will be taken into account in computing tests of significance.

Although the happiness question remained the same throughout all the surveys under consideration, the response categories varied. In some cases, three alternatives were offered; in other cases, four. In some cases, the final category was "not at all happy"; in others, "not very happy" or "not happy." But the "very happy" response alternative is consistently offered. It is for this reason that the following evidence cites percentages for only those responding "very happy."

That the "very happy" response category is not significantly affected by whether there are two or three additional categories is indicated by a comparison of three different surveys conducted in August and September of 1956. Data is for whites, because of the larger N's. AIP0 Survey #569 (August, 1956) contained four response categories, and the percent answering "very happy" was 51.2. Surveys #570 and #571 (both September, 1956) each contained three response categories. In #570, 54.9 percent answered "very happy," while in #571, 52.9 so responded.

Thus there is a greater percentage point difference between the 570 and 571 responses, each of which contained three categories, than between those in 569 and 571, which contained four and three categories respectively.

It cannot be assumed that a decrease in "very happy" responses implies an increase in the number of those definitely unhappy. Between 1956 and 1966, the "very happy" responses for blacks decreased by ten percentage points. The "fairly happy" responses increased by seventeen points. In 1956, 13 percent of the three combined black samples were either "not very happy" or "not at all happy." In 1966, 6 percent fell in the "not happy" category. This data for blacks, as well as that for whites, is given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Very Happy</th>
<th>Fairly Happy</th>
<th>Not Very Happy</th>
<th>Not at All Happy</th>
<th>Not Happy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>N=566</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>N=603</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>N=5879</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>N=6386</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Category not included.
If we could assume that "not very happy" and "not at all happy" in 1956 were together the equivalent of "not happy" in 1966, we might conclude that the "fairly happy" category absorbed not only the ten percentage drop of "very happy" responses for blacks between 1956 and 1966, but the seven percentage point drop in "not happy" as well. However, in neither of the 1966 surveys is there a "not very happy" category, and it may well be that the "fairly happy" includes some who would have been "not very happy" had that response been offered. Comparable data for whites indicate that the decrease in "very happy" responses was accompanied by an increase in those "fairly happy" as well as the "not happy." A pattern different from that for blacks. But, as in the case of blacks, we don't know whether the distribution in 1966 of these two responses would have been the same had the "not very happy" category been present.

Means for checking the effect of eliminating the "not very happy" category are limited, other than those of 1966, the only, survey omitting this category was #399 in 1947. It might be helpful to compare the distribution of responses in this survey with those in #410, which was conducted six months later and in which the "not very happy" and "not at all happy" alternatives were both included. This has been done, below, for both blacks and whites:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Very Happy</th>
<th>Fairly Happy</th>
<th>Not Very Happy</th>
<th>Not at All Happy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#399 N=566</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#410 N=50</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#399 N=2861</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#410 N=1335</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It would appear that when the "not very happy" response is omitted, the contents of this category spread in both directions and are not necessarily absorbed by the least happy category. So we can't be sure that the increase in "fairly happy" responses in 1966 is a clear reflection of what happened to the decrease in, "very happy" responses. The most that can be said is that in 1966 there was a smaller percent of self-reported "very happy" blacks.

The confusion created by the inconsistency of the last two response categories, and the effect that this may have on the "fairly happy" response, is another reason for relying on the "very happy" response for making comparisons across the twenty-year period under consideration. It further emphasizes our earlier caution about assuming that a drop in "very happy" responses necessarily implies an equivalent rise in unhappy responses.
CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

The first hypothesis, that the level of psychological well-being of blacks as compared to that of whites declined between 1946 and 1966, is borne out by the data presented in Table 1. At all three time periods, the percentage of Negroes responding "very happy" to the question "In general, how happy would you say you are?" is lower than the percentage of whites so answering. The percentage of Negroes reporting themselves "very happy" rose slightly between 1946 and 1956, but fell in 1966 to a point below that of 1946.* White percentages followed a similar pattern, but not to the same degree. The rise in percentage of those answering "very happy" between 1946 and 1956 was greater, and the drop was less between 1956 and 1966, with the net effect that in 1966, the percentage of whites reporting themselves "very happy" was greater than in 1946. The most pertinent finding for our purposes, however, is that over the years the difference in

*This difference is significant at the .05 level. For this and other tests of significance used throughout this dissertation, difference of proportions tests have been used, relying on tables that have been adjusted for the larger standard error found in this type of sampling.

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**TABLE 1**

PERCENT RESPONDING "VERY HAPPY" BY RACE AND YEAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>% Black</th>
<th>% White</th>
<th>% Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1946-48</td>
<td>38 (N=447)</td>
<td>40 (11,738)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>40 (566)</td>
<td>53 (5,879)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>38 (603)</td>
<td>48 (6,384)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
percentages between blacks and whites did increase. While in 1946 the percentage of whites answering "very happy" was only two percentage points greater than the percentage of blacks, by 1966 it was eighteen points greater.

Hypothesis B states that the higher the educational level of blacks, the greater the decrease in level of psychological well-being over this twenty year period; that the same relationship, however, did not hold for whites. To test Hypothesis B, Table 2a presents a breakdown of the percent responding "very happy" by race and years of school completed.

Only at the "college graduate" and "high school graduate" levels are the decreases in percentages of blacks responding "very happy" consistent over the twenty year period. However, when 1946 percentages are compared with those of 1966, there is a decrease in those responding "very happy" at every level except among those answering "college incomplete." Furthermore, with the exception of the "college incomplete" group, the higher the educational level, the greater the decrease in those responding "very happy." The same is not true for whites. Within any of the three time periods, the percent of whites responding "very happy" increases as level of education increases. When the percent of whites responding "very happy" is traced across the three time periods for any one level of education, there is a consistent increase between 1946 and 1956 and an equally consistent decrease between 1956 and 1966. This fluctuation can be seen at certain

<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th grade or less</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=257)</td>
<td>(N=291)</td>
<td>(N=295)</td>
<td>(N=3446)</td>
<td>(N=1850)</td>
<td>(N=1732)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incomplete</td>
<td>(90)</td>
<td>(122)</td>
<td>(116)</td>
<td>(1246)</td>
<td>(1346)</td>
<td>(1122)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graduate</td>
<td>(49)</td>
<td>(76)</td>
<td>(140)</td>
<td>(2839)</td>
<td>(1614)</td>
<td>(1849)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incomplete</td>
<td>(26)</td>
<td>(45)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(1367)</td>
<td>(531)</td>
<td>(627)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graduate</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(1332)</td>
<td>(474)</td>
<td>(700)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
educational levels for blacks. It is also reflected in the data presented in Table 1 and in some data to be presented subsequently, perhaps there was some factor at work in the mid-fifties which affected the happiness level of both blacks and whites, a possibility which will be dealt with later. When percentages for whites in 1946 are compared with those in 1966, it can be seen that there is a consistent increase and that this increase is greater at the higher educational levels. Thus it would appear that more years of schooling "paid off" for whites, in terms of those things contributing to happiness, at all three time periods. To a lesser extent this might also be said of blacks in 1946, in that a greater percent of those who were at least high school graduates were reportedly "very happy" than of those who had failed to complete high school. But by 1966, this was not true for blacks. In 1946, the lives of those blacks with higher education were probably still separate from whites of those same levels, and in comparing their position with that of other blacks, they might be able to feel a sense of satisfaction in their advancements. In 1966, it was these same blacks at the higher levels who would be more likely to have greater and near-equal contact with whites at similar levels and to be able to perceive that education had not "paid off" for them as it had for whites. Thus Table 2b indicates that between 1946 and 1966, the percent of blacks responding "very happy" generally decreased to a greater degree at the higher educational levels: the percent of whites so responding increased to a greater degree at these levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8th grade or less</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+7*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school incomplete</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>+7*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>-16*</td>
<td>+9*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College incomplete</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+9*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>-29*</td>
<td>+13*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level.
The percent of blacks at the "college incomplete" level is puzzling in terms of this interpretation. Perhaps there is another factor at work. Let us suppose, for example, that having failed to finish college, these individuals had expectations no higher than high school graduates, feeling that the next level of achievement after getting a high school diploma is getting a college degree. Suppose also that in actuality, benefits were derived from some years in college. This could mean that for them the levels of expectations and realisations were more nearly equal than for either the high school graduates or the college graduates. Or, the high percentage of "very happy" responses at the "college incomplete" level may be attributable to a statistical distortion due to the small number of college-incomplete-blacks included in the sample.

Table 3a presents data for testing Hypothesis C: that the higher the occupational level of blacks, the greater the decrease in level of psychological well-being over this twenty year period, and that this relationship did not hold for comparable whites.

When various occupational categories of blacks are compared within any one time period, it seems clear that no consistent relationship exists between occupational level and percent responding "very happy." For whites there is a relationship between occupational level and happiness, with the exception of "farmers and farm laborers, for 1946 only. Across the years, there appears to be no regular pattern followed by all occupational categories of

### TABLE 3a

PERCENT "VERY HAPPY" BY RACE AND OCCUPATION; 1946-1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prof'ls and semi-prof'ls</td>
<td>47 (19)</td>
<td>39 (28)</td>
<td>16 (19)</td>
<td>46 (1216)</td>
<td>59 (525)</td>
<td>54 (799)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business executives</td>
<td>33 (12)</td>
<td>35 (20)</td>
<td>11 (36)</td>
<td>46 (1105)</td>
<td>63 (605)</td>
<td>56 (848)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White collar</td>
<td>32 (44)</td>
<td>38 (32)</td>
<td>24 (45)</td>
<td>42 (2478)</td>
<td>54 (683)</td>
<td>52 (677)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled workers</td>
<td>35 (20)</td>
<td>39 (71)</td>
<td>38 (58)</td>
<td>40 (1258)</td>
<td>57 (1109)</td>
<td>53 (1090)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi- and unskilled workers</td>
<td>45 (154)</td>
<td>43 (174)</td>
<td>30 (189)</td>
<td>34 (2329)</td>
<td>39 (1177)</td>
<td>39 (1122)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers and farm laborers</td>
<td>32 (148)</td>
<td>32 (112)</td>
<td>25 (105)</td>
<td>33 (888)</td>
<td>45 (332)</td>
<td>41 (310)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
blacks. Only "semi- and un-skilled workers" showed a consistent decrease in the percent responding "very happy" from 1946 through 1966. In comparing the percentage differences within the various occupational categories between 1946 and 1966, Table 3b shows that the greatest decrease in level of psychological well-being is found in the top two categories. The same is not true for whites.

Although there is not a pure linear relationship between occupational level and decrease in the percentage of blacks responding "very happy," it does seem clear that in general lower occupational levels experienced less of a decrease than did higher levels. Semi- and un-skilled workers constitute the only exception. The greater decrease in their self-reported happiness can be partially explained by the decline in their absolute, as well as in their relative, economic standing (Broom and Glenn, 1965: 173). This is the occupational group whose opportunities have been declining, as advancing technology requires an ever greater level of skill of its working force. The Kerner Commission cited the declining need for unskilled workers as one of the reasons Negroes haven't followed the pattern of earlier immigrants in moving out of the ghetto. In 1960 and 1970, the unemployment rates for unskilled laborers were the highest of any occupational category (United States Bureau of the Census, 1960: Table 205; United States Department of Commerce, 1971: 62).

### Table 3b

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prof'ls and semi-prof'ls</td>
<td>-31*</td>
<td>+ 8*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, executives</td>
<td>-22*</td>
<td>+10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White collar</td>
<td>-12*</td>
<td>+10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled workers</td>
<td>+ 3</td>
<td>+13*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi- and un-skilled workers</td>
<td>-15*</td>
<td>+ 5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service workers</td>
<td>- 7</td>
<td>+ 8*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers and farm laborers</td>
<td>+18*</td>
<td>+11*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level.
The difference between the lower and the higher occupational groupings can be seen more clearly if the seven categories in Tables 3a and 3b are collapsed into "manual" and "non-manual." This has been done in Tables 4a and 4b, with the dividing line between "white collar" and "skilled workers."

For both blacks and whites there is an increase in the happiness response between 1946 and 1956 at both the manual and the non-manual levels. Between 1956 and 1966, there is a decrease for blacks and whites at both levels. However, for blacks this decrease represents a drop below 1946 for both levels; while for whites, the decrease is not so drastic. Table 4b presents a comparison between the 1946 and the 1966 data.

It can be noted that the decrease for black non-manuals is greater than that for black manuals, while both categories of whites experienced an increase to the same degree.

According to Hypothesis D, the higher the income of blacks, the greater the decrease in level of psychological well-being over this twenty year period, but this relationship did not hold for whites. Income categories are difficult to compare across the years. In the first place, the 1956 surveys contain no information on income. In 1946, the Gallup interviewer rated respondents according to the following scale: "wealthy," "average plus," "average," "poor," "on Old Age Assistance," "on relief." In 1966, the respondent was asked to place himself into

TABLE 4a

PERCENT "VERY HAPPY" BY RACE AND OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL, 1946-1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-manual</td>
<td>36 (75)</td>
<td>38 (80)</td>
<td>18 (100)</td>
<td>44 (182)</td>
<td>59 (1813)</td>
<td>54 (234)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual</td>
<td>38 (369)</td>
<td>41 (424)</td>
<td>32 (401)</td>
<td>36 (6249)</td>
<td>52 (3414)</td>
<td>46 (2861)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
one of eleven categories, ranging from a low of "under $1,000" to a high of $15,000 and over." In order to give some degree of comparability to the 1946 and 1966 data, it was considered advisable to collapse categories for both years into three major divisions; greater than average, average, and less than average. The $5,000-$7,000 category was taken as the average for 1966, based on the median income figure of $6,882 (Miller a Roby, 1970:36) for 1965. Table 5a indicates that in 1946 blacks and whites followed the same pattern in responding to the happiness question: the highest income category for both contained the highest percentage responding "very happy," the average income category contained a lower percentage responding "very happy," and the lowest category in each contained the least percentage so responding.

Furthermore, percentages for blacks and whites were just about the same at each income level. However, by 1966, the pattern had changed for blacks. The relationship between income and happiness had reversed, due to an especially large decrease in percent responding "very happy" at the highest income level. Table 5b indicates that the percentage of blacks responding "very happy" responses at this level decreased by 37 percentage points between 1946 and 1966, from 50 percent to 13 percent.

There were also decreases at the other two income levels, but to a lesser extent. During this same period, the percent of whites reporting they were "very happy"
### TABLE 5a
PERCENT "VERY HAPPY" BY RACE AND INCOME, 1946-1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Black 1946</th>
<th>Black 1966</th>
<th>White 1946</th>
<th>White 1966</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greater than average</td>
<td>50 (18)</td>
<td>13 (32)</td>
<td>52 (1525)</td>
<td>56 (2951)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>40 (65)</td>
<td>28 (72)</td>
<td>44 (3809)</td>
<td>49 (1338)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than average</td>
<td>35 (441)</td>
<td>32 (435)</td>
<td>34 (6095)</td>
<td>38 (1993)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 5b
CHANGE IN PERCENT BLACK AND PERCENT WHITE RESPONDING "VERY HAPPY" BETWEEN 1946 AND 1966, BY INCOME LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greater than average</td>
<td>-37*</td>
<td>+4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>-12*</td>
<td>+5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than average</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>+4*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level.
increased at each income level and by virtually the same amount. Thus, to the extent that the 1946 and 1966 data are comparable, Hypothesis D is supported.

In Tables 6a and 6b, happiness responses are viewed according to region. According to Hypothesis E, blacks residing in non-Southern areas, as compared to those in the South, experienced a greater decline in level of psychological well-being over this twenty year period, but this relationship did not hold for comparable whites. There is no consistent percentage decrease across the twenty year span in either region or in either racial category. It may be noted that the pattern of an increase between 1946 and 1956 and a decrease between 1956 and 1966, which appeared earlier, is also evident here for both races in both regions. However, when 1946 and 1966 data are compared, as in Table 6b, blacks in the South can be seen to have experienced an increase in "very happy" responses, while those outside the South experienced a slight decrease. Thus in 1946 the percentage responding "very happy" was the same for both regions; by 1966, there was a difference of six percentage points. Whites in both regions had the same percentage of "very happy" responses in 1946, but between 1946 and 1966, the percentages of these responses increased in both regions. In the non-South the percentage of black "very happy" decreased more than in the South, while white percentages increased more in the non-South than in the South.

We have also hypothesized that over the years, blacks residing in larger cities, as opposed to those in

**TABLE 6a**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>1946</th>
<th>1956</th>
<th>1966</th>
<th>1946</th>
<th>1956</th>
<th>1966</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(60)</td>
<td>(253)</td>
<td>(314)</td>
<td>(1429)</td>
<td>(1345)</td>
<td>(1627)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-South</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(389)</td>
<td>(291)</td>
<td>(270)</td>
<td>(10,031)</td>
<td>(4440)</td>
<td>(4760)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
smaller, experienced a greater decline in level of psychological well-being and that this relationship did not hold for comparable whites. Tables 7a and 7b do not appear to support the hypothesis.

The greatest decreases fall at the two middle levels; and at the next to the highest level, there is an increase of three percentage points. No pattern emerges from Table 7a for blacks, and the only pattern for whites is the one noted earlier: an increase between 1946 and 1956 in every category in the percent reporting themselves "very happy," a decrease in almost every category between 1956 and 1966, with a net increase between 1946 and 1966 at every level.

The reasoning behind this hypothesis was that blacks moving into urban areas would be more likely to have the type of contact with whites which would lead them negatively to evaluate their situation. Thus it was assumed that the larger the urban areas, the more likely would be this type of contact. Perhaps the size of a community is less important than some other characteristic--e.g., the size of the black population within that community. Spilerman (1970) concluded that the disorder-proneness of a community can be explained in terms of this factor--"the larger the Negro population, the greater the likelihood of a disorder" (Spilerman, 1970:645). Perhaps the prevalence of relative deprivation is also related to the size of the Negro population and to its degree of concentration. Or perhaps what is really needed is for a distinction to be made between those cities in which the older racial etiquette
### TABLE 7a
PERCENT "VERY HAPPY" BY RACE AND CITY SIZE, 1946-1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(26)</td>
<td>(71)</td>
<td>(23)</td>
<td>(1838)</td>
<td>(975)</td>
<td>(428)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural nonfarm and</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 2500</td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>(47)</td>
<td>(111)</td>
<td>(1137)</td>
<td>(1305)</td>
<td>(1551)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2500-9999</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(80)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(2608)</td>
<td>(428)</td>
<td>(590)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000-99,999</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(86)</td>
<td>(43)</td>
<td>(33)</td>
<td>(2310)</td>
<td>(774)</td>
<td>(898)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000-499,999</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(91)</td>
<td>(210)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(1403)</td>
<td>(747)</td>
<td>(1048)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500,000 and over</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(147)</td>
<td>(176)</td>
<td>(334)</td>
<td>(2431)</td>
<td>(1571)</td>
<td>(1872)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 7b
CHANGE IN PERCENT BLACK AND PERCENT WHITE RESPONDING "VERY HAPPY" BETWEEN 1946 AND 1966, BY CITY SIZE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City Size</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+12*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural nonfarm and</td>
<td>-14*</td>
<td>+4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 2500</td>
<td>-38</td>
<td>+12*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2500-9999</td>
<td>-15*</td>
<td>+10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000-99,999</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+11*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000-499,999</td>
<td>-13*</td>
<td>+10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500,000 and over</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level.
patterns have broken down and those in which they-prevail. We had assumed this distinction could be made in terms of city size, but our data indicate that this is not the case. The question merits further study.

The final hypothesis (G) deals with age: younger age groups of blacks, as opposed to older, experienced a greater decline in level of psychological well-being over this twenty year period, but this relationship did not hold for comparable whites. Assuming that younger blacks are less likely to have been conditioned by a traditional racial etiquette, we would expect them to feel more justified than older blacks in comparing their situation with that of whites. If this were true, they would have been more likely to experience relative deprivation. Thus, if this hypothesis is supported, our data would show a greater decrease in the percent responding "very happy" at the younger age levels across the twenty year span. It will be noticed that very few patterns emerge from Table 8a.

No one age group of blacks was consistently lowest nor highest in decrease of percent responding "very happy." The greatest decrease between 1946 and 1966 is found in the 60-69 age group. However, there may be some justification for excluding this age group, as well as those 70 and over, since at these age levels personal factors may well outweigh social factors in determining responses to the happiness question (Bradburn, 1965:20). Even so, in the remaining age groups no clear relationship emerges. However, when black responses are compared to those of whites, some interesting facts emerge. The youngest age group for
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(101)</td>
<td>(109)</td>
<td>(144)</td>
<td>(2505)</td>
<td>(962)</td>
<td>(1039)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(127)</td>
<td>(137)</td>
<td>(138)</td>
<td>(2804)</td>
<td>(1413)</td>
<td>(1300)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(97)</td>
<td>(117)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
<td>(2388)</td>
<td>(1355)</td>
<td>(1285)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(57)</td>
<td>(76)</td>
<td>(32)</td>
<td>(1904)</td>
<td>(936)</td>
<td>(1112)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(40)</td>
<td>(74)</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(1233)</td>
<td>(738)</td>
<td>(928)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 and over</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(41)</td>
<td>(22)</td>
<td>(723)</td>
<td>(446)</td>
<td>(675)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
whites at all three time periods has the largest percentage of "very happy" responses. Furthermore, if the "70 and over" age group is disregarded, there is a general decrease in "very happy" responses as one goes up the age hierarchy in all three time periods. Neither of these is true for blacks, indicating that age does not affect the happiness response for blacks in the same way as for whites. This provides slim support for our hypothesis, however, since happiness is not shown to increase with age for blacks in any one time period, nor is the decrease between 1946 and 1966 higher in the younger age groups. On the other hand, when cohorts are traced across the three time periods, it can be seen that the youngest age group of blacks experienced the greatest decrease in level of psychological well-being. In 1946, 44 percent of the youngest cohort (i.e., those 20-29) reported themselves "very happy." In 1956, such responses by this cohort (i.e., those 30-39) had decreased to 30 percent; and in 1966, to 19 percent. This decrease of 25 percentage points is greater than that for any other black cohort which can be traced across the entire time period. Furthermore, it is a decrease not experienced by the comparable white cohort. In 1946, there was only one percentage point difference between blacks and whites in the 20-29 group. Between 1946 and 1956, the percent of this white cohort responding "very happy" increased, while there was a decrease for the black cohort. Between 1956 and 1966, there was a decrease for both groups, the net effect being that the gap between the black and white cohorts of one percentage point in 1946 had increased to 32 percentage points in 1966, when the cohorts were in the 40-49 age group.
Living conditions for blacks in the United States have improved over the past twenty or thirty years. Yet a gap remains between conditions for blacks and whites, even though a number of events have encouraged blacks to increasingly use middle-class whites as a comparative reference group. It has been suggested that such a situation leads to the development of a feeling of relative deprivation, which is reflected in the level of psychological well-being of all blacks, but especially of those blacks who would be most likely to use whites as a comparative reference group. To assess changes in level of psychological well-being, we have examined responses to the question "In general, how happy would you say you are?" for three time periods: 1946-48, 1956, and 1966.

In examining the data throughout this presentation, many times a comparison has been made only between the 1946 data and the 1966 data in order to get a picture of the happiness response among the various categories over the twenty year period. The 1956 data represent something of an aberration. In general, there is an increase in those reporting themselves "very happy" between 1946 and 1956, with a subsequent decrease between 1956 and 1966 (see Table 1). This is consistent for whites in all categories at all levels with the exception of the occupational category of "farmers and farm laborers" and two of the city size categories. For blacks, it is a pattern that is found in two of the five educational levels, three of the seven occupational levels, both the non-manual and manual occupational levels, both of the regions, two of the six city size categories and two of the six age levels. For whites, there is a further pattern which appears, with the exception of "farmers and farm laborers" and those residing in farm areas, in all of the tables. There is a decrease in percent responding "very happy" between 1956 and 1966—not to the extent of returning to the 1946 level, but to a point between the 1946 and 1956 levels. This suggests that there was some factor at work in the mid-fifties which affected both blacks and whites. We can only speculate that this was a fairly general society-wide phenomenon. During the decade of the fifties in the United States, there was a period of relative peace and prosperity, and it is possible that the general level of psychological well-being rose, only to subside when new problems began to develop.

The fear of many that the end of World War II would bring depression proved unfounded, as 1945 ushered in a period of unprecedented economic expansion which lasted into the early 1960's. The years from the end of the Great Depression to the inauguration of John F. Kennedy were, by and large, a time of such growth in industry, wealth, and income
as the American people had not hitherto experienced, even during the boom times of the 1920's [Link and Catton, 1963:592].

This entire period did have its minor ups and downs, but 1956 in particular marked a plateau for most segments of the American economy— a period between two downward fluctuations (Friedel, 1970:522-524). Noneconomic forces could also be expected to have an effect, and these did not consistently contribute, during the decade of the 1950's, to a sense of psychological well-being among the American people. The uncertainty and fear produced by the Korean War, the witch hunting of the McCarthy era, the fear of Communist expansion in Europe, and the threat of a nuclear holocaust combined to make the early part of the fifties a somewhat uneasy time, but by 1955 these problems had been resolved or temporarily abated. Goldman (1960:292) writes of "the coming of a general attitude of equilibrium in the summer of 1955 ..." The period covering 1955 and 1956 appears to have offered a respite to the American public, to be followed by uncertainty created by conditions abroad and at home. Russia launched Sputnik I in 1957, and the United States found its dominant position in technology threatened and its educational system questioned. Conditions in Cuba and the restlessness of Communist China were added factors. But during the middle years of this decade, Americans seem to have sat back and enjoyed their affluence and a relatively peaceful world situation. (Goldman, 1960:261-306).

Perhaps it is in terms of these general conditions in the United States that the dramatic rise in happiness between 1946 and 1956, and the subsequent drop between 1956 and 1966, can be explained. It would appear that the period 1946-1966 was one in which level of psychological well-being rose consistently for whites, with the 1956 response representing a temporary upward departure from the general trend. To a lesser extent, this departure can also be seen for blacks, but from a general downward trend. When the 1956 data are omitted, our findings can be summarized as follows:
CHANGES IN PERCENT RESPONDING "VERY HAPPY BETWEEN 1946 AND 1966"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall samples</th>
<th>Black Decrease: 38% to 30%</th>
<th>White Increase: 40% to 48%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>According to education</td>
<td>Decrease: greater higher levels</td>
<td>Increase: greater at higher levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>According to occupation</td>
<td>Decrease: greater non-manual level</td>
<td>Increase: same at non-manual and manual levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>According to income</td>
<td>Decrease: greater higher levels</td>
<td>Increase: little difference between levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>According to region</td>
<td>Increase in South, decrease in non-South</td>
<td>Increase: greater in non-South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>According to city size</td>
<td>No relationship</td>
<td>Increase: little difference between city sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>According to age</td>
<td>Greatest decrease for youngest cohort</td>
<td>Increase for youngest cohort</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In regard to the first finding, it will be noted that the discrepancy in "very happy" responses between blacks and whites was only two percentage points in the earlier time period. But between 1946 and 1966 a number of things happened which taken together had the effect of leading blacks to believe they had a right to expect more of white America. In the rural areas and small towns of the South, whites had been successful in keeping blacks "in their place."

Within the parochial, paternalistic, and oppressive context of the rural South, many blacks went on from year to year without acute consciousness of race. Perplexed by their poverty when it became acute and taking such satisfactions as they might find them from their group, they adjusted to life and the racial system as they found it. In this isolated setting, the racial situation usually was not generalized but conceived in terms of personal relationships with "good" or "bad" landlords [Vander Zanden, 1972:314].

With the increased migration of blacks from rural to urban areas and from the South, the established patterns of behavior between the races were no longer applicable or&4 Glenn, 1965:174-175; Pettigrew, 1964:180). Our findings in regard to region (#5 above) indicate that the "very happy" responses increased in the South for blacks, but decreased outside the South. In 1946, black percentages were the same for the two regions. Broom and Glenn (1965:175) suggest that early black migrants from the South compared their situation with conditions they had left behind and felt a degree of satisfaction. Their children and grandchildren, however, lacking experience with these earlier conditions, have been more inclined to compare their situation with that of Northern whites.

Mass media of communication, especially television, were increasingly available to stress the idea that there were alternatives to knuckling under to dominant whites:

. . . mass communication . . . makes it obvious to the Negro that his problems of race are not local. The mass media also keep him well informed about what others have that he does not. Thus, the Negro may feel relatively more deprived because he is exposed to a continuing bombardment of stimuli glorifying life in an affluent society. . . . Although critics of "mass society" often descry the "leveling-down" effects of the mass media, we would suggest that the media also generate pressures toward a "leveling up" in standards of living and life styles [Murphy & Elinson, 1966:4].

Not only did television bring news about what blacks were missing out on in affluent America; it brought information on gains made in the realm of civil rights. Beginning with the Supreme Court ruling on school desegregation in May, 1954, the message from white America to black America for the next decade was that blacks were legally the equal of whites (Masotti, 1969:13-37).

All of the above are factors which could encourage blacks to break away from old patterns and expectations and to increasingly compare their situation with that of whites. With such a switch in comparative reference groups, black expectations might be expected to rise. In an RFOR Survey conducted in September, 1946, blacks were asked, "Do you think the years ahead seem to hold for you personally
(1) a good chance for advancement, or (2) the probability of little improvement?" Forty-two percent answered "a good chance for advancement." In a Harris poll, conducted in 1963, when blacks were asked to assess where they would be in five years, over 60 percent of the total rank and file indicated they expected to be better off in respect to pay, work situation, and housing accommodations. Over 50 percent expected to be better off in terms of being able to get children educated with white children and being able to eat in any restaurant (Brink & Harris, 1963:238).

With a shift in comparative reference groups and the concomitant rise in expectations, the situation as perceived by blacks in 1966 left a great deal to be desired, and the discrepancy between blacks and whites in "very happy" responses had grown to eighteen percentage points.

In regard to our findings on education, occupation, and income (#2#3, 4 above), it will be noted that the greatest decrease in "very happy" responses occurred among those blacks at the higher levels. According to Vander Zanden (1972:35), it is these blacks who most often respond to dominance by seeking assimilation, because "such individuals have been quite prone to identify themselves with similarly situated dominant group members." There is quite a bit of evidence that blacks at this level have the same set of values as middle class whites (Pettigrew, 1964:33). Higher status blacks are more favored for and favorable to interaction with whites, and they have had more interaction with whites (Pettigrew, 1971:270-272; Williams, 1964:144-152). At the higher educational levels, blacks are more exposed to middle-class life styles (Gittel & Krupp, 1968:76-77) and tend to "compare their own conditions with that of their white counterparts" (Broom & Glenn, 1965:177). Middle class Negroes have been more likely than lower class ones to belong to liberal interracial organizations and to be appointed to human relations boards and organizations (Banfield & Wilson, 1966:390-393). They are more likely to furnish leaders for desegregation organizations and to take advantage of desegregated facilities (Pettigrew, 1964:32). In short, the higher status black has had even more cause than the rank and file black to use middle class whites as a reference group and to experience relative deprivation. Our findings in regard to happiness responses are consistent with such an interpretation.

What emerges from our findings is a picture of decreasing "very happy" responses for blacks within those educational, occupational, income, regional, and—to a certain extent—age categories where they could have been most susceptible to relative deprivation. In some instances, the black N's are small enough as to cast some doubt on the relationship between self-reported happiness and the particular variable under investigation. But the overall pattern is such that it can be said with a degree of confidence that there is an association between self-reported happiness and relative deprivation, and that responses to the happiness question could conceivably be used as an indicator of the subjective aspects of relative deprivation.

As such an indicator, changing happiness responses lend support to a relative deprivation interpretation of
black unrest. But is this the only interpretation which they support? During the past several years a variety of explanations of growing black unrest have been suggested, many of them being attempts to explain increased rioting. Some of these alternative explanations are given below, followed by an evaluation of them in light of our findings on happiness. No claim is made that this represents a comprehensive survey of possible interpretations, but they are the ones which appear to be the most salient.

1. The Rise and Drop Hypothesis. According to this, social discontent is the product of an abrupt decline in conditions which previously had been improving. Davies (1962:6) contends that "Revolutions are most likely to occur when a prolonged period of objective economic and social development is followed by a short period of sharp reversals." Our data do not appear to support this interpretation. For, although in some cases, the percent of blacks reporting themselves "very happy" did increase and then drop, there is no indication that this was the result of a sharp reversal between 1956 and 1966 of living conditions which had improved prior to 1956. Furthermore the increase and subsequent drop in "very happy" responses was more consistent for whites than for blacks. Absolute conditions did improve for most segments of the black community throughout this entire period. And for those segments in which there may have been a decline, i.e., the lower socioeconomic levels, the decrease in those responding "very happy" was less than the decrease in other segments.

2. Absolute Deprivation. According to this position, which has been labelled the "Riff-raff Theory" by Caplan and Paige (1968) and the "Vulgar Marxist Hypothesis" by Geschwender (1964), the most discontented are those who fall at the very bottom of the social and economic hierarchies and suffer the greatest deprivations. If absolute deprivation is the source of black discontent and if response to the happiness question is a measure of this discontent, then we would expect that those blacks at the lower occupational, educational, and income levels would have experienced the greatest decline in "very happy" responses over this twenty year period. But our data indicate that such is not the case. The greatest decreases in "very happy" responses were found among the higher educational, occupational, and income levels.

3. Status Inconsistency. This explanation places the source of dissatisfaction in that discrepancy which exists between the various status-positions which an individual occupies. Thus the black who has achieved a high status in education, occupation, and income, but still retains a low ascribed status because of race, would be the one who is the most dissatisfied. Since we found the greatest decline in "very happy" responses among blacks at the higher educational, occupational, and income levels, this explanation is consistent with our findings. However, this may be a special case of deprivation felt relative to a comparative reference group, for it is difficult to see how the low ascribed status would be relevant if those blacks with higher achieved status continued to use other blacks as a comparative
But when whites are used as a comparative reference group, then blacks who have attained high levels in education, occupation, and income feel dissatisfied because they find that, due to their low ascribed racial status, they are denied the privileges which are associated with these high levels among whites. So although this explanation is consistent with our findings, it is not inconsistent with the relative deprivation explanation that we have employed.

4. Blocked Opportunity. Caplan and Paige maintain that survey data gathered in Newark and Detroit support this theory, which stresses exclusion of Negroes from white society; our data suggest that Negroes who riot do so because their conception of their lives and their potential has changed without commensurate improvement in their chances for a better life. In addition to abandoning the traditional stereotype that made non-achievement and passive social adaptation seem so natural, they have developed a sense of black consciousness and a desire for a way of life in which they can feel the same pride and sense of potency they now derive from being black. Negroes are still excluded from economic opportunity and occupational advancement, but they no longer have the psychological defenses or social supports that once encouraged passive adaptation to this situation (1968:20). This would appear to be another form of status inconsistency, only in this case the ascribed racial status is not perceived as being low and thus is not consistent with a low economic position. Again, this is related to relative deprivation, for it says that blacks no longer accept the idea that their life situation should be different from whites. Whites now become a pertinent reference group and relative deprivation follows, because the position of blacks relative to the whites with which they compare themselves leaves something to be desired. Our findings for the total black samples, with no controls for education, occupation, or income, would appear to support this interpretation, as would our findings according to region. In the case of region, it would be expected that the greatest inconsistency between ascribed and achieved status would be found outside the South, in those regions where blacks would be more likely to escape those established racial patterns which automatically assign them an inferior status. We did find that "very happy" responses decreased in the non-South between 1946 and 1966, while within the South, they increased. However, when happiness responses for blacks are broken down according to education, occupation, and income, it can be seen that it was not within the lowest levels that the greatest percentage decrease in "very happy" responses was experienced. If refusal to accept a low ascribed status were equally distributed among the various socioeconomic levels, then it would be expected that the greatest decrease in "very happy" responses would be found within the lower levels, this being the locus of the greatest status discrepancy. Lacking evidence to the contrary, we might assume that it would be those blacks at the higher socioeconomic levels who would be most likely to refuse a low ascribed status; but since their achieved status is...
high, they would not necessarily be status inconsistent. In order to be able to say with any degree of certainty whether our data support this interpretation of black discontent, some indication is needed of how rejection of low ascribed status is distributed among blacks and of whether this rejection is an all-or-nothing proposition or a matter of degree. On the face of it, however, our data do not support the "Blocked Opportunity Theory."

5. Rising Expectations. This is perhaps the explanation most frequently offered, especially when the main concern is with violent manifestations of black discontent. Those who take this approach find discontent generated by the failure of actual achievements to keep up with rising expectations. There is disagreement, however, as to what causes the rise in the first place. Some argue that it is due to an individual's basing his expectations on the achievement of others, while some contend that rising expectations are based on the individual's own achievements. In the former case, something external to the individual's situation causes him to believe that he has a right, and that it is feasible, to expect improved conditions. In the latter case, expectations rise because the individual's situation is actually improved, and the improvement itself generates hope and desire for still further improvement. In other words, the impetus comes from the advancements already made; whereas in the former case, the impetus is derived from a comparison that is made. Earlier the point was made that there is an overlap between relative-deprivation-based-on-reference-groups and rising expectations.

The overlap is found when the expectations rise because of a comparative reference group by which the individual measures his own deprivation. Thus our findings which support a relative deprivation/reference group explanation of black unrest also support this interpretation of the rising expectations position.

In order to test the alternate explanation of rising expectations, it would be helpful to know which of those blacks who were found at the higher socioeconomic levels in 1966 actually experienced an improvement of their situation over the previous twenty years. This would require information on social mobility which we do not have. However, earlier information was presented which indicated that between 1946 and 1966 the position of blacks in general improved, when improvement is measured against the situation of blacks at an earlier time period. In terms of the occupational hierarchy, for example, blacks moved into non-manual positions during this period which they had not previously occupied. So it would seem that a greater percentage of those at the non-manual level than of those at the manual level represent a degree of upward mobility. If we can assume that those at the non-manual levels would have been more likely to have been upwardly mobile than those at the manual levels, then those at the non-manual levels should have experienced a greater decrease in "very happy" responses than those at the manual levels, if achievement itself is the source of discontent. Also, the percent of blacks responding "very happy" in 1966 should be less at the non-manual than at the manual level. Since
our data show that "very happy" responses did decrease more for non-manuals and were more likely to be found among manuals in 1966 (see Tables 4a and 4b), they do support the rising-expectations-based-on-achievement interpretation of black unrest.

6. Downward Mobility. For some theorists, this is considered a form of relative deprivation, in that "dissatisfaction is the result of deprivation relative to an individual's own experience" (Bowen, et al., 1968:20). For the same reasons that our data are inadequate for checking the effects of upward mobility, they are inadequate for examining discontent attributable to downward mobility. However, if the argument that the situation of blacks in 1966, considered apart from the situation of whites, constituted an improvement over their earlier situation, it is difficult to see how a downward mobility argument could be supported. Even if it could be shown that there were a general downward movement, it would be expected that those at the lower occupational, educational, and income levels in 1966 would have experienced the greatest decrease in self-reported happiness, since they faced the possibility of having fallen farther than those at the upper levels in 1966. There may have been a few instances in which this was supported by our findings. For example, within the occupational hierarchy, semi- and un-skilled workers underwent a greater decline in self-reported happiness between 1946 and 1966 than did white collar workers. By and large, however, our findings show the greatest decline among those blacks at the higher occupational and income levels. Thus they do not appear to support the downward mobility interpretation of black unrest.

Of the alternative interpretations of the source of black discontent examined above, two are supported by the findings which have been presented on self-reported happiness of blacks. Those two are status inconsistency and rising expectations. Status inconsistency and the view of rising expectations which sees expectations as being based on the achievement of others can be fitted into the framework of that interpretation we have used, which places the source of black discontent in the deprivation which blacks continue to experience relative to whites as a comparative reference group. Our findings are not designed to adequately test the other view of rising expectations, i.e., the one which places the source of discontent at the doorstep of the individual's own achievements. But it would appear that our findings are not inconsistent with this interpretation, and they certainly do not show it to be fallacious. Thus, we are left with two possible theoretical frameworks for explaining growing black unrest. On the one hand, it might be argued that this unrest is due to the relative deprivation experienced because blacks have shifted comparative reference groups. On the other hand, black unrest is traced to expectations which begin to rise because of advancements made by blacks and continue to rise at a faster rate than achievements are realized. Is it possible to choose between these alternative explanations? Earlier it was pointed out that one of the distinctions seen between these two explanations (cf. Spilerman, 1970) can be found
in what happens as conditions improve. According to relative deprivation theory, if advancements are made at a fast enough pace to narrow the gap between blacks and whites, then discontent should begin to subside. According to expectational theory, rapid advancements should cause an increase in discontent. Therefore, what is needed to check the relative adequacy of these two explanations is to find what actually does happen when rapid advancements are made and the gap between blacks and whites begins to close. This may turn out to be somewhat complicated. Let us suppose that we are able to establish the degree of discontent among a group of blacks before and after rapid advancements have been made. If those who have made the most rapid advancements are found to be the least discontented, support would have been given to our relative deprivation interpretation. However, if those advancing most rapidly are the most discontented, this could be construed as support for either or both rising expectations and relative-deprivation-based-on-comparative-reference-groups. The latter could be the case, because it may be that those advancing the most rapidly are also the ones who are most likely to have shifted their comparative reference group from fellow blacks to whites. It might be argued that we are in effect saying that either way achievements may lead to discontent. Is the question of the relative merits of these two interpretations purely academic? Why not settle for the rising expectations interpretation? We contend that the relative deprivation hypothesis is worth pursuing because of its potential contribution to policy making in regard to race relations, as well as to the development of social theory.

Policy makers need to know what is required in order to ameliorate the alienation felt by a large proportion of the black population. Leaders of and spokesmen for the black community have for some time contended that the goal is full equality for blacks. Not very many years ago, integration was seen as the major means for achieving that goal. But moves toward integration have been slow and have failed to fulfill the hopes for full equality. Furthermore, some black leaders seem to feel that too often integration has become an end in itself. When this happens, and desegregation is mistakenly viewed as integration, disillusionment follows, because desegregation is not necessarily the equivalent of equality. Many whites seem to equate desegregation and integration, and they can’t understand why blacks are not satisfied with the legal advances which have been made. It would be unfortunate if white America were to become convinced that black demands are unsatisfiable, that if they are "given an inch, they'll take a mile," which is a position the rising expectations explanation appears to support when no comparative reference group is specified.

The explanation of black unrest which attributes felt deprivation to shifting reference groups provides a framework within which the demand for equality can be understood—understood not only in terms of integration, but in terms of whatever it takes to achieve equality in results as well as in opportunities. Not only could this
demand be understood, but means for meeting it might be developed, if it were clear that its source lies in the fact that blacks compare their own situation to that of whites and find that they are prevented from partaking in those privileges which whites enjoy. And those privileges include not only facing an open door, but being able to walk through that door and share what is inside.

This relative deprivation explanation also seems worth pursuing from a strictly sociological point of view. Imbedded in reference group theory, it offers the possibility of contributing to what Merton has called a "middle-range theory." To the extent that the goal of Sociology is to provide an ever more general theory of social behavior (to that extent) locating an explanation of black unrest within a broader framework is sociologically useful. Within the framework of the "middle-range theory" of reference groups, our findings may help to clarify some of the confusion associated with the concept of relative deprivation as it has appeared in the literature. "Relative deprivation" is a terra which seems to speak for itself, the only difficulty being that it says different things to different people. As indicated above, in Chapter IV, there is disagreement as to what exactly the deprivation is relative— the past, the future, an ideal, a reality, a group of people, a set of ideas or aspirations. Tying relative deprivation into reference group theory offers the possibility of limiting the concept and thus giving it a more precise meaning. The finding that those categories of blacks who would have been most likely to have shifted comparative reference groups were the least content encourages us to feel that comparative reference groups provide a valid standard according to which the relative aspect of deprivation can be measured. It may be that the custom of using "relative deprivation" in a very loose sense (with many different standards, or none at all, being specified) has become so established that to restrict it to an association with comparative reference groups would be difficult. Perhaps another term, such as "comparative deprivation," should be adopted for relative deprivation in such a restricted sense.

Within the framework of reference group theory, it becomes important to establish what causes certain comparative reference groups to be chosen over others. And if we are to explain how discontent can be generated under improving conditions through a shifting of reference groups, then it also becomes important to know what causes such shifting. Both Merton (1968) and Runciman (1966) maintain that an important condition for this can be found in the institutional structure whose stability is shaken and whose legitimacy is questioned. During the period covered by our data, 1946-1966, there is some indication that this is what was happening in our society. The rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement alone should be ample indication that the legitimacy of existing social arrangements have been in question. However, the Civil Rights Movement can be viewed not only as a factor in the shifting of blacks' comparative reference groups, but also as a consequence to the extent that "comparative deprivation" generated discontent which encouraged protest.
In sum, by viewing black unrest from the vantage point of relative deprivation, as we have used the term, some degree of elaboration or evidence in support of reference group theory may be provided. Such an approach also offers the possibility that an explanation of black unrest can draw on the body of reference group theory which has already been developed.

It would appear to be worthwhile, then, to further check the validity of the interpretation of black unrest which has been used in this dissertation. There may well be better means for checking such validity than the ones we have used. Although the approach taken here has its advantages, it also has its disadvantages, some of which are endemic to secondary analysis. In the first place, since we had no control over sampling, the black N's in many cases were smaller than was desirable. Secondly, the response categories, to the happiness question in particular, were not consistent across the years. As was noted earlier, the nature of the response categories was such that we were unable to trace a least happy response through time and so relied solely on the "very happy" response. Even so, the happiness question appears to be useful in assessing the subjective aspects of relative deprivation. It would be even more useful if the response categories were consistent and if a fairly definite degree of content (or discontent) could be established for each category. If time and money were available, it should prove worthwhile to interview a number of people in the various response categories in an attempt to probe what their responses mean. Time and money are, of course, what are saved when secondary analysis is used. Aside from the expense involved, a study such as this one, which necessarily deals with changes over time, would have been impossible for another twenty years, even if the interviewing were begun tomorrow. But if time and money were of no consequence, it might prove valuable to develop a research design which would make it possible to more accurately establish the relationships between shifting comparative reference groups, relative deprivation, and discontent.

In the approach taken here, using the data available, there was no means of directly establishing whether and which blacks had shifted comparative reference groups and which had experienced relative deprivation. Relying on evidence from a variety of sources, we assumed that this shifting had taken place among certain categories of blacks whose external conditions made them good candidates. We further assumed that the objectively identifiable gap between blacks and whites would indicate relative deprivation. But it should be possible to deal with this more directly, perhaps through a direct question to the respondent asking him who or what he compared himself to (or used for a standard) when evaluating his life situation, and whether he felt he was getting what he deserved when making this comparison. Or, perhaps some device such as the Cantril-Free Self-Anchoraging Striving Scale might be used. The individual could be asked to place himself on one of the ten rungs of the ladder, which is how the Scale is represented, in terms of his present situation. Then
he could be asked whether he is content with this placement, and, if not, where he feels he should be placed. The distance between these two placements could afford a measure of the degree of relative deprivation from the individual's perspective, while a comparison of the individual's actual life situation with the life situation of his indicated comparative reference group could establish the objective discrepancy. Who constitutes this reference group could be discovered through questions designed to find who the individual currently places at that position on the ladder where he feels he should be placed. Wording of the questions is important, of course; and it would be helpful if a pretest of the question could be administered to a sample, which could also be interviewed in depth in order to determine whether information on comparative reference groups and relative deprivation is what we are actually getting.

This type of information plus that derived from a refined happiness question should make it possible to assess the relationship between shifting reference groups and felt deprivation as well as the relationship between the degree of happiness and the size of the deprivational gap. With additional information on mobility, the relative merit of the rising expectations hypothesis might be checked. Bowen, et al. (1968) used the Cantril-Free Self-Anchoring Striving Scale to measure perceived mobility as well as deprivation. This was done by having the respondents place themselves on the ladder five years in the past and five years in the future, in addition to indicating the position on the ladder which they occupied at the present time. When such a procedure is used, it may be possible to establish a time trend through a survey conducted at one point in time. Since our concern would be with establishing a trend in regard to discontent, such a procedure might prove useful. However, it is doubtful that projection of attitude changes is the same as attitude changes themselves (cf. Hyman, 1955) particularly in the case of rising expectations, according to which theory it is the actual experiencing of gains that causes expectations to rise. All other things being equal, it would be far preferable to repeat the questions at several different time periods and, insofar as possible, to the same people. If such a study were to support our findings, we could say with greater assurance that relative deprivation is the source of black unrest.

That blacks have experienced relative deprivation is certainly not a new thesis, nor is the fact that upper-class and middle-class Negroes are more susceptible new. However, the extent to which higher status blacks have been affected is notable. What does this mean for the future of blacks in this country? On the one hand, if the gap between black and white conditions were to be eliminated, we might expect a greater contentment on the part of blacks. On the other hand, as long as the gap remains, we might expect a growing discontent; and indications are that the gap that does remain will be very difficult to eliminate. As de jure equality has been attained in many areas, the extent to which de facto segregation is imbedded becomes more obvious.
Higher status blacks have been inclined to express their discontent through protest organizations and through non-violent approaches (Vander Zanden, 1972:375), and they have achieved a measure of success in the fight against legal discrimination. De facto discrimination can be much more subtle and difficult to combat. Not only have the traditional means used by higher status blacks reached a stalemate, but some ground appears to have been lost. The gains made through the courts toward establishing equal educational opportunities, for example, are in danger of being lost as whites move to the suburbs, leaving blacks concentrated in the central cities. If the discontent of higher status blacks has grown between 1966 and 1972 as it did between 1946 and 1966 and the protest means that they have successfully employed in the past are felt to be no longer effective, what outlet will these blacks seek?

Lower class blacks, by contrast, have been more prone to adopt violent and separatist responses to white dominance (Vander Zanden, 1972:348). Thus they have been more involved in riots and black nationalist movements. Both have lacked the widespread coordination and/or the directional thrust and leadership of the middle-class protest movements. It seems entirely possible that the resources of the two black segments might be combined, with the middle-class providing the leadership and directional thrust, and the lower-class providing the outlet. This is not necessarily to suggest that what will result is a well planned riot, but perhaps a new type of approach, gaining momentum not from our cultural ideals and the means provided within the system for attaining these ideals, but from the volatile energy of the increasingly concentrated and dissatisfied black masses. It might result in a blood bath. It might result in an approach which would be effective in breaking down the barriers which continue to prevent the entrance of blacks into the mainstream of American life. Perhaps the recent shift in emphasis from integration to community control, among some segments of the black community, may be an indication of the direction which will be taken. But whether this or an entirely new approach is taken, it seems highly unlikely that blacks in the near future will settle for the kind of progress which means advancing at a rate which keeps them ten paces behind whites. This is, in effect, what relative deprivation means for the individuals experiencing it. Discontent is not eliminated by improved conditions, no matter how great that improvement is, if conditions for the comparative reference group improve at the same or at a faster rate. The average black looks at the white world around him, as he views television and as he comes into contact with whites who he has increasingly been encouraged to view as equals. In spite of the fact that he may have frequently been told that he and "his people" are much better off today and that many legal barriers have been removed, he sees that his color continues to place him at a disadvantage when it comes to participating fully in what American society apparently has to offer. He does not have the same privileges enjoyed by the white who appears to be at his level of capability. But more than
equality of opportunity is involved, and perhaps it is at this point that relative deprivation theory offers insight into the future of race relations in this country. For, according to this position, individuals experience dissatisfaction because they find their situation lacking when they compare it to that of relevant others. If equality of opportunity provides the means for equalizing the situations, it could be the answer. But what is really important is equality of results. Many whites who maintain that they feel the potential of the black is equal to that of the white believe that all that is required is to provide for equal competition. They believe, for example, that equality in the realm of higher education can be achieved by allowing blacks and whites to compete within the same setting—for entrance into colleges, for grades, for diplomas, etc. But for a people who have been disadvantaged for as long as blacks have been in this country, preferential treatment may be required in the short run in order that equality of opportunity may produce fair results in the long run.

Relative deprivation seems to tell us that blacks will not passively accept less than equality, that discontent will not begin to subside until the gap between the life situations of blacks and whites begins to narrow significantly. Thus far, we have assumed that the gap could be narrowed or eliminated by improving the situation of blacks, and this may be the most desirable answer. But the gap would also be reduced if the conditions for whites were lowered. Theoretically, this could eliminate black discontent; what it would do to the psychological well-being of whites in general is another question. But it might be worth considering the potential of this approach in view of the difficulties which have thus far been encountered in attacking the relative deprivational gap. Such a feat might be accomplished through a peaceful or violent redistribution of wealth. "Any number of sociologists have suggested that the looting accompanying racial outbreaks has constituted a bid for a redistribution of property. ..." (Vander Zander, 1972:173). It might be accomplished within a more revolutionary framework. In his early use of the concept of relative deprivation, Marx drew the analogy of a palace being built beside a small house. Before the palace was built, the small house was adequate and its owner was satisfied. But the palace created feelings of dissatisfaction on the part of the small-house-dweller. In our society, we have traditionally felt that this dissatisfaction serves as a spur to achievement on the part of the small-house-dweller. He should be encouraged to work harder and build a bigger house. But an equally logical answer for dealing with the dissatisfaction might well be to tear down the palace. It seems feasible that this alternative would be appealing to the small-house-dweller, if the means for building a larger house, and a still larger house as the palace grows in size, are not available. This is not to suggest that the black community as a whole is on the verge of open revolution, nor is it to suggest that the alternative of reducing and ultimately eliminating the gap through raising the bottom level is not a viable one. It is to suggest that if this approach should be utterly frustrated, the alternative of attempting to remove the gap through lowering the top level could become increasingly attractive.
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