Poverty in the American Metropolis
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Pre-requisites: Intro to Sociology

Target: Upper-division sociology course; cross listed with other behavioral sciences
Course Goal and Objectives

- To generate discussion and provide more clarity to the causes of urban poverty in the United States
- To highlight the lived experience and consequences of poverty in the metropolis, with a particular emphasis on place and space
- To engage critically with social policy interventions aimed at ameliorating poverty
Poverty: Introduction and Overview

- Descriptives:
  - What is poverty?
  - Who is poor?
  - How do we measure it?

- Concentrations of poverty and the urban context
  - Suburbanization of poverty

- Myths regarding the causes of poverty
Slums and Racial Segregation in the United States

- Constructing the ghetto
- Early US studies
  - Chicago School
- Colored properties
  - Policies and practice
- The race/poverty connection through housing
Economic Transformation, Globalization, and the Labor Market

- Wilson and The Truly Disadvantaged
  - Concentration effect, joblessness

- Globalization
  - Deregulation and Financialization
  - Immigration and the global city
  - The new joblessness
Financing the Poor: From Exclusion to Extraction

- Dual credit markets
  - FHA and inner city financing
  - Fannie and Freddie

- The “democratization” of credit
  - Securitization
  - Selling the risk
  - Forms of predation
    - Payday lending
    - Subprime
    - Loan modifications
Poverty, Space, and Neighborhood Effects

- The geography of opportunity structures
  - Where do you live?
  - Place Matters
  - Distribution of social goods
  - Impact on life outcomes
    - MTO
Race, Class, and Urban (Mis)education Systems

- Education as the equalizer?
- Ideology
  - Boot straps and meritocracy
  - Mobility
  - A tale of two schools
Crime, Policing and Incarceration in the Metropolis

- The rise of incarceration
  - From school to prison
  - Space-based policing
  - Zero-tolerance

- Who’s in jail?

- Effects on life chances
  - The New Jim Crow
    - Employment, housing, family

- The CBA of incarceration
Partnership, Family, and Managing Private Life

- Income inequality → Family structure
  - Community contexts and the sex ratio
  - “Eligible” men for marriage
  - Economic barriers to marriage
- Family structure → Income inequality
  - Making Ends Meet (as a single mom)
- Unequal childhoods
  - Cultural component to childrearing by class
  - Parenting in the hood
The Future Poverty as Prospective Process

- Distressed cities as collective poverty
  - Predatory municipal finance
  - Unfunded liability
- The defended community
  - “Sacrifice zone” planning for the public good
  - School closures and privatization of education
- Sustainable Communities
  - Regional equity or market segmentation
  - Fragmentation
  - The illusion of inclusion