

THE LINKAGE BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOOD AND VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION
PATTERNS: A COMPARISON OF BLACK AND WHITE URBAN POPULATIONS *

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The literature on organizational participation of blacks and whites has been focused on several divergent and apparently contradictory themes. All of these approaches analyze participation among blacks in comparison and contrast to that which occurs among white Americans. This method of analysis has recently come under attack as being a major factor in limiting our understanding of the sociological processes which operate within black America.

The Black Underparticipation Thesis

One widely held view of social participation among blacks is that there is a low level of participation in contrast to whites. In a number of studies an almost amorphous picture of black Americans is presented. Blacks are viewed as having few organizational resources. Collective action is seen as having only minimal importance. In studies by Wright and Hyman (1958), Janowitz and Marvick (1956), and Almond and Verba (1965) evidence of significant black underparticipation is reported. Wright and Hyman, for example, found that while 63 percent of white adults belong to no voluntary associations, for blacks nonparticipation exceeds 73 percent of adults. It is interesting to note that in this study, as well as most others, participation in the church and church-related associations is not considered. Similarly, in comparing black and white samples, no evidence is presented that factors such as socio-economic status or age were controlled.

Generally, however, it is believed that primary causation for this underparticipation can be attributed to the lower socio-economic status of blacks. There is also the belief that blacks simply lack past organizational experience, verbal and social skills, and other personal qualities which are supposed prerequisites to partici-

pation. Other factors such as lesser age variation in the black population, alienation and anomie, and general "civic apathy" among blacks have also been considered as causative forces (Ross and Wheeler 1971).

Given this analysis of participation in black communities, the response with respect to program planning has called for an increase in organization efforts. Notions of "organizing the unaffiliated" presented by Cloward and Ohlin (1960), Brager (1965), Smith (1971), and Piven (1966) have at least made a tacit commitment to belief in the validity of the underparticipation thesis. Brager, for example, is very explicit in his support for this thesis:

If community oriented organizations are to be successful in their efforts to combat social ills they must involve significant numbers of representative lower-class persons. However, as we have noted, membership in community organizations is not very common among the lower class.

Brager then goes on to describe a number of strategies designed to make organizational membership "more common" in low income and black communities. The maximization of social participation through the development of new community associations is the primary mechanism utilized by adherents to the underparticipation thesis. The organization of the unaffiliated black is predicted upon the assumption that voluntary associations are important in reducing apathy, fostering individual and group problem solving, and promoting social integration. Since much of the success of white

*The materials reported in this paper are drawn from a soon-to-be published book by the author, Black Neighborhoods: A Study In Community Power.

ethnic Americans has in part been attributed to the proliferation of ethnic organizations, it is argued by many that increased black organization will similarly lead to increased assimilation and influence.

The Compensatory Overparticipation Thesis

A second approach to the issue of black participation has evolved from the notion that blacks are in fact "exaggerated Americans" (Myrdal 1944). This argument, then, sees blacks in their efforts to become mainstream Americans as "over-doing" those aspects of the larger society that are visible signs of acceptance and assimilation. The early works of Drake and Cayton (1945), Hunter (1963) and Babchuk and Thompson (1962) have tended to confirm this position.

The further argument made by Frazier (1957) and Hare (1965) is that mimicry of white Americans has created a situation of hyperactivity with respect to social participation. The black middle class is seen as being especially guilty of this overparticipation. The holding of membership in a variety of clubs and civic organizations is seen as a major determinant of one's position in the internal stratification system of black communities. From this view, then, organization occurs within the black community because of its capacity to confer social prestige and power.

While both Frazier's and Hare's works are polemical in nature, much support for their position can be found in Myrdal's monumental work on the race problem in America. For Myrdal, the exclusion of blacks from American society has been compensated for by excessive affiliation with voluntary organizations. In his analysis it was not uncommon to find blacks who belonged to a great many voluntary groups. This type of participation is seen to be dysfunctional in the sense that it tended to separate blacks from other blacks. Status groups resulting from this overparticipation were found to be rigid and thus a severe impediment to black assimilation.

Moreover, Myrdal (1944: 952-53) saw this over participation as dysfunctional in the sense that it tended to further isolate blacks from mainstream America. He argues that:

Membership in their own segregated association does not help Negroes to success in the larger society. The situation must be seen as pathological.

Further evidence for this view of pathological overpopulation is found in a study by Babchuck and Thompson conducted in

Lincoln, Nebraska in 1960. These researchers confirmed Myrdal's contention that blacks were more likely to participate in voluntary associations than whites: "We found this true for Negroes of all social class levels when compared to their white counterparts but it was especially true for lower class Negroes" (1962: 654).

This compensatory overparticipation thesis has also played a role in the development of action strategies. Generally, strategies based upon this analysis have called for the development of racially integrated associations whose goal has been fostering better relations between the races. The integration of civil rights groups of the early 1960's is an example of organization based on this thesis.

A second strategy based upon this theory of overparticipation has been especially supported by the works of Frazier and Hare and has called for the total rejection by new organizations which do not differentiate among blacks on the basis of class or prestige. This approach has constituted a major thrust in efforts of black nationalists in organizing communities. Once again this approach rests upon the assumption that increased black identity can replace social class and status characteristics as a major factor in promoting association membership.

Recent Synthesizing Efforts

In an effort to understand the roots of the conflict between the underparticipation and overparticipation arguments, a number of recent studies have attempted to control for those factors that have been proven to be the best predictors of voluntary association participation. This has been made necessary in part by the increasing visibility of black organizations, whose existence call into question both the underparticipation and overparticipation theses.

In virtually every study of social participation in the United States the best predictor of participation in voluntary associations has been socio-economic status (Payne et. al. 1972). Studies by Warner and Lunt (1941), Wright and Hyman (1958), Scott, (1957), Hausknecht (1962) and Axelrod (1953) have been especially supportive of this contention. Wright and Hyman's national sample shows:

...fully 76 percent of the respondents whose family income falls below 2,000 dollars do not belong to any organizations in contrast to only 48 percent of those whose income is 7,500 dollars or more. Furthermore, there is an increase in the percentage of persons

who belong to several organizations as social status increases. (1958: 293)

In an effort to discover other predictors of participation, Freeman, Novak, and Reeder (1957) are forced to conclude that socio-economic status is still the best predictor of affiliation in their sample. Thus, by controlling for socioeconomic status a better representation of the phenomenon of social participation might be obtained.

Orum (1966) conducted one of the first studies that attempted to synthesize the two contradictory theses by controlling for socio-economic status. In studying social and political participation of blacks and whites in three cities, Orum found that lower class blacks were more active participants in voluntary associations than their white counterparts. He also discovered that middle and upper class whites were more active than their black counterparts. He concludes that social class is simply not as great a factor in predicting participation for blacks as it is for whites.

While Orum's work does validate some of the arguments posited by Myrdal, Frazier and Hare in that he finds that by controlling for socio-economic status, blacks are more active than whites; he attaches clearly different interpretations to this pattern. Orum concludes that voluntary associations are major foci in the lives of black Americans. He says that "Associations are a means of *collective membership* for Negroes, whereas they are means of *collecting memberships* for whites" (1966: 45).

Orum's thesis thus contradicts both the underparticipation argument as well as the pathological overparticipation argument. In Orum's view, black participation might be seen as compensatory, in that it is a contemporary response to the historical and barriers to social opportunities for blacks. Yet this is not necessarily pathological. Rather, it can be inferred from Orum's analysis that whites are more "compulsive" in their affiliation than blacks.

A replication of Orum's study by Olsen (1970) supports this analysis. Olsen controlled for age as well as class and added the dimension of ethnic identity to account for the variance within the black sample. Moreover, in using data from Detroit in the 1940's and Indianapolis in the 1960's, Olsen finds a tendency for black participation to increase. A recent replication of their earlier work by Hyman and Wright (1971: 203) shows a similar pattern. The author states that:

Examination of both pairs of surveys... suggests that there has been a sharp increase in the memberships of Negroes. In the instance of the trend from 1955 to 1962, the differential (between

whites and blacks) in membership, has, as a result almost vanished, whereas the comparison of 1953 and 1958 still reveals a difference, albeit smaller, with whites more likely to report such memberships...and especially to show a pattern of multiple memberships in associations.

Olsen's study shows that those blacks who had high ethnic identity tended to show higher levels of association participation than blacks. The pattern of his findings leads Olsen to a modification of the "compensation" thesis:

An alternative explanation which he termed the 'ethnic community' thesis has been suggested ... In essence this thesis suggests that members of ethnic minorities -- whether based on race, religion, or nationality -- may become active in social and political affairs because of social pressures exerted upon them within their ethnic community ... Members of such an ethnic community are often more aware of their common bonds, and hence are more socially cohesive, than are white(s) .. largely because of discrimination As a consequence, their ethnic community serves as a salient reference group for them. If the norms of this community stress social and political activism, these people will tend to exert pressures (both informal and formal) upon one another to conform to these norms by taking part in a variety of activities aimed at improving their common conditions (1970: 684).

Olsen concludes his discussion by arguing that the "ethnic community thesis" is a "complementary not contradictory explanation of the tendency for blacks to participate more actively than whites of comparable socio-economic and age levels in many social and political activities."

Olsen's effort represents one of the few attempts to explain different rates of social participation within the black population. Ross and Wheeler (1971) have also taken such an intra-community approach and hypothesize that:

The amount and kind of participation of Negroes in voluntary associations can be predicted from knowledge of their formal and informal social relations at work and from community and personal factors related to them (1971: 36).

Neighborhood As A Focal Point of Voluntary Association Analysis

Previous studies of black participation as well as those concerned with participation of all Americans have primarily focused upon individual characteristics that are correlated with affiliation with voluntary associations. As we have seen, the result in viewing all Americans has been that social class is primary predictor, while for blacks the key predictor is less easily determined. The neighborhood as a determinant of participation has not been utilized as a systematic source of explained variance.

In an effort to meet this requirement we propose that voluntary participation can be explained by viewing it as a product of both individual and neighborhood variables. The studies cited earlier have generally chosen to deal with the phenomenon of participation as either individually determined or determined by the neighborhood. *Essential to our formulation, then, is that participation not only can be seen as determined by characteristics of the individual and/or neighborhood acting separately, but moreover, that participation can be better understood by viewing it as the product of the interaction between the individual and his neighborhood.*

One effort to view participation as a product of neighborhood characteristics can be found in a study by Bell and Force (1956) of four neighborhoods in San Francisco. One of the primary hypotheses of their study was:

...that the social type of neighborhood in which an urbanite lives is an efficient indicator of his social participation and may be a significant factor in its own right in shaping his social participation (1956: 25).

Bell and Force went on to differentiate their four neighborhoods on the basis of family characteristics, socio-economic status, and age. Race was assumed to be constant in the sense that there were very few non-whites.

They were able to go beyond individual socio-economic class as the best predictor of participation. In reporting their findings the authors note that:

...the socio-economic characteristics of the neighborhood population as a unit may be an important indicatory of the socio-economic reference group for those living in the neighborhood and may define a set of general societal expectations with respect to associational behavior for the residents (1956: 33).

Studies by Litwak and his colleagues (1963, 1968) continue to support the contention that the neighborhood is an important in dealing with the issues of socializa-

tion and social control, as well as mutual aid. These functions alone constitute, for Litwak, reason enough to continue to investigate the role of neighborhood as a determinant and consequence of human behavior.

A second group of studies which rebut the demise of neighborhood thesis, concern themselves with the importance of neighborhood as a basis for social change. Davies' (1966) work in citizen response to urban renewal clearly demonstrates the ability of neighborhoods to resist and reform governmental policies. Davies' study is also important in that he is able to elucidate some of the factors which produced the differential success of several neighborhoods in resisting renewal. Clearly his work, like that of Gans (1962) is a testimony to the potential of the neighborhood to be a meaningful entity in times of crisis.

Similar studies, particularly in the field of education, offer more credibility to the assertion that the neighborhood remains an important unit of the social organization of industrial society. The belief in the importance of neighborhood in the education of children is shared by large numbers of analysts, activists, planners, and consumers of varied political and social persuasion. For example, both white opponents of school busing and black advocates of community controlled schools utilize this conviction in the neighborhood as the basis and/or rationale of their positions.

Black Participation: A Community Structure Approach

With a commitment to the thesis that neighborhood characteristics are important determinants of voluntary participation, we move next to the consideration of black neighborhoods. In searching the literature one is pressed to find efforts to deal with this phenomenon. More generally, little has been done in the way of analyzing the social dynamics of the black neighborhood itself. Logically, such an approach appears to hold promise for explaining more of the variance regarding participation in voluntary associations. At the same time, however, it is apparent that sole focus on the neighborhood approach *per se* can be yet another example of fragmentation in sociological analysis. A primary fallacy of the individually focused studies of organizational involvement in a black community context is that the very factors of racial differentiation -- of ghettoization -- have been left unexamined. No effort of "controlling" for SES or other individual attributes can address the role of ecological structure

within which organizational involvement occurs.

To understand behavior in the black community, it is first necessary to realize that "from a sociological perspective, black urban ghettos are structurally complex" (Warren 1971). Black behavior, like the behavior of all Americans, is a product of a myriad of forces acting singly and collectively, sequentially and simultaneously. Such forces then are best understood utilizing a multidimensional perspective.

Hypotheses Linking Neighborhood and Associational Participation

As a consequence of our conceptual discussion we may now formulate a series of predictions regarding black community patterns using a comparative approach. Essentially, we are focusing on the attributes of ghettoization viewed in social structural terms. In particular, the local neighborhood as the context for black organizational participation has enhanced significance given the exclusion and isolation which is imposed by ghettoization itself. The following hypotheses may be stated:

- I. Participation in voluntary associations among blacks will be more often centered in the local neighborhood than for whites.
- II. Given the restrictive movement of blacks in urban space, local neighborhoods in the black community will more often be characterized by socio-economic heterogeneity than equivalent white neighborhoods.
- III. Organizational participation by blacks in socio-economically *homogeneous* neighborhoods will be greater than by whites in comparable neighborhoods, while that for blacks in *heterogeneous* neighborhoods will be lower than for whites living in comparable areas.

The interrelation of the above set of hypotheses must be seen as an outgrowth of the ghettoization process. In this view the social compression of the urban black ghetto is evidenced by the forms of organizational participation, especially in terms of the linkage between the local neighborhood and the larger black and white community.

Given population growth, social differentiation, and the restrictive expansion of the black ghetto, local neighborhoods come to have characteristics derived from these larger processes. In particular, class and status divisions become less distinct in the black community if one uses the same geographic unit for both whites and blacks. Thus, local residential areas serve as arenas of special significance to black

ghetto members. The local neighborhood serves as the center for efforts at social change and expressive relations in a way not required by the structure of white communities. *With more ready access to non-neighborhood centers of social participation, whites need not utilize the local area as the significant functional unit which it may represent for blacks.*

The paradox of black ghettos is that the local neighborhood is potentially a more crucial unit for social life but is often structured in such a way as to make such a role especially problematic. We are speaking here of the fact of status heterogeneity. Where residential movement is artificially determined by the preferences and values of the surrounding white population, black ghettos tend to be socio-economically more diverse--particularly at the boundaries of the community--than are white areas. Neighborhoods in the ghetto are products of little "natural" community change. Instead imposed homogeneity based on public housing or concentrated poverty exists alongside often rapidly changing, high turnover, and status diverse neighborhoods. This pattern provides a unique set of contextual factors for the emergence, functioning and effectiveness of black community organizations.

An Empirical Test in a Single Urban Center

We have employed in this paper data obtained from a larger study of neighborhoods in the Detroit, Michigan metropolitan area. This study was directed by the author and was supported by a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health (MH 16403).

The major concern of the parent study was the utilization of the concept of status crystallization and its differential applicability to blacks and whites. A major contention of this larger study was that the degree of status congruity or incongruity of an individual was a better predictor of behavior than traditional social class characteristics. The notion of status congruence was defined as the degree of congruence among various social statuses held by individuals. Among these statuses education, income, and occupation were posited to be the critical components of an individual's overall status.

Among blacks, particularly, it was felt that higher levels of incongruence of statuses would be found. Racism provides limited opportunities for blacks at all educational levels. A number of studies, for instance, have indicated that black college graduates have roughly the same income as white high school graduates. At the same time, blacks and whites involved in skilled

and semi-skilled jobs in high wage industries are believed to experience some degree of strain in their lives.

In the attempt to examine the concept of status congruence the parent study utilized two related research strategies. First, a large survey of blacks and whites in *racially homogeneous neighborhoods* was conducted; and secondly, individuals who had been identified as community leaders by respondents in the first survey were interviewed in depth. The data derived from the second group of respondents is not included in the present analysis.

The Sample

The study employed a purposive and multi-stage sampling strategy. It was purposive in the sense that major attention was to be given to blacks and, thus, their representation in the sample was disproportionately greater than their actual representation in the population. The sample was multi-stage in that the study analyzed the behavior, attitudes, and characteristics of persons residing in racially homogeneous areas of the urban space, in order to eliminate effects of racially mixed residential patterns. Appendix Tables A through D describe the response rate and sample characteristics.

This was achieved by *operationally defining neighborhoods as elementary school districts. From this list of "neighborhoods" only those that were either 95 percent black or 95 percent white were included in the study.* The universe of this study, then, included all persons residing in predominantly black or white elementary school districts representing neighborhoods.

Utilizing a random numbers table, 16 black and 12 white "neighborhoods" were selected for the study. To insure the validity of using school district boundaries as neighborhood boundaries, field visits were made to each of the 28 selected neighborhoods. Field observers, racially matched to neighborhoods, attempted to gain information regarding boundaries from two sources: 1) their observation of the area for determination of natural boundaries such as major thoroughfares, rivers, or industrial areas, and 2) suggestions made by residents, local merchants, and school personnel. Based on this information some modifications were made regarding the boundaries of the neighborhoods.

The next stage of sampling involved utilizing the Polk City Directory and random numbers table to select a five percent sample of dwelling units in each neighborhood. Eighty addresses per neighborhood were selected. The final stage of sampling was left to the interviewers. They were instructed to

interview married or single heads of households twenty-one years of age or older at each pre-selected address. Interviewers made two call backs in order to secure completed interviews. The final sample constituted 1,496 completed interviews.

Data Analyses and Findings

Utilizing the grouping of black and white neighborhoods, an extensive personal interview was completed on neighborhood and organizational participation in the spring and summer of 1969. Table 1 shows the distribution of responses to a question about the names of groups you "belong to or participate in." *We found that the patterns within the black and white samples are not significantly different.* In each instance, about seven out of ten respondents reported at least one organizational involvement, with some tendency for whites to more often report at least three such groups. The Detroit data, therefore, indicates no differential by race in voluntary association participation when we are simply comparing individual differences.

TABLE 1 - Total Number of Organizational Membership for Black and White Respondents

Belong to:	Black	White
0	31.4%	30.5%
1	30.1	27.4
2	18.1	17.4
3	8.8	9.2
4	4.9	7.0
5 or more	6.8	8.6
Total	100.1% (N=864)	100.1% (N=632)

As part of the interview, we obtained extensive information on the variety of groups people participated in, whether such groups were located near to the respondents, and what role the neighborhood played in the participation pattern. Specifically we asked: "Do you see people from this neighborhood there (at organizational meetings?)". *Blacks were significantly more likely to belong to at least one organization where*

neighbors are seen. At the same time, there was a trend in which whites--if they do see neighbors at all--belong more often than blacks to at least two organizations where neighbors are seen.

TABLE 2 - Organizational Participation in Relation to Seeing Neighbors at Meetings by Race of Respondent

	Black	White
See neighbors in all or some organizations	29.3% + *	19.5%
Sometimes see neighbors, sometimes not	21.1	20.9
See neighbors at none of the organizations	18.3	29.1+
Don't belong to any organizations	31.4	30.5
Total	100.1% (N=864)	100.1% (N=632)

* Plus indications indicate that percentages are significantly higher using .05 level with direction predicted for values in same row. The same notation is followed in subsequent tables. In addition asterisks in subsequent tables indicate percentage value is significant at .05 level direction not predicted.

In Table 2 we have indicated four key patterns which have pertinence to our analysis. The first is the case where a respondent indicates that in all the groups they belong to they see neighbors. A second pattern is where they belong to organizations, some of which include neighbors and some which do not. A third pattern is organizations in which the respondent does not see neighbors in any instance, and finally, where the respondent does not belong to any voluntary association. Using this set of patterns, Table 2 indicates a significantly higher proportion of black respondents exclusively neighbor-linked voluntary associations as compared to whites.

Table 2 also indicates that whites are significantly more likely than blacks to have a pattern of voluntary association participation which does not include neighbors.

There is a very similar proportion of blacks and whites with a mixed neighborhood/non-neighborhood pattern or who are not organizational members at all. The findings of Table 2, therefore, support Hypothesis I, which implies the greater significance of neighborhoods in relation to voluntary association participation in the black versus white community.

The Detroit study also provides a way to particularize the patterns of neighborhood versus non-neighborhood participation within specific demographic groupings for both black and white sample populations. Table 3 provides such an analysis for the age and sex of the survey groups. Several trends of this table are worth noting. First of all, as far as membership in at least one organization (the reverse of participation in no organization, which is what the table actually shows), the highest levels are found among whites in the age group of 30 - 59. The lowest level is found among black women under the age of 30. The respective figures are 85.4% and 46.0%.

Another trend found in Table 3 focuses on exclusive neighborhood-linked participation in organizations. Here the largest percentage with this type of pattern are black females over the age of 60 -- 42%. By contrast, the group least likely to display such a pattern are white females under age 30 -- 75% -- and white males under age 30 -- 8.3%. Thus, young whites, of either sex, are least tied to their neighborhoods for voluntary association activity.

Some additional trends of Table 3 should be noted. If we look at organizational involvement which excludes neighbors, we find this pattern most frequently occurs for white males under age 30 and it is least frequent for black females age 60 or older. Another important trend of Table 3 is that the mixed pattern of seeing neighbors at some organizational meetings and not at others is more significantly prevalent in the age group under 30 for both black and white males as compared with black and white females in the younger age group. At the same time, we find that males under 30 -- regardless of race -- are far more likely to have a pattern of organizational membership which does not include neighbors compared with females in the same age category.

Among the most important patterns that differ by race is the tendency for white males in the age group of 30 - 59 (as well as older and younger age groups) to be far more likely not to have a neighbor-linked participation pattern as compared with blacks of the same age. Given that this middle-age group is among the largest in

in the sample and is the most traditionally active group in organizations, the neighborhood emphasis among blacks in their participation has particular importance for our analysis. We also find that an emphasis on neighborhood-linked participation in the age group of 30-59 for black males is matched

by the black female sample. At the same time, Table 3 also shows that the middle and older age groups of white women have a roughly similar neighborhood boundedness in their participation patterns to both the male and female black respondents of the same age.

TABLE 3 - Age, Sex, and Race of Respondent in Relation to Organizational Participation

		Male				
Age		See Neighbors at all	See Neighbors at some	Don't see Neighbors	Don't belong to organization	
Under age 30	black	21.6%*	19.6%	29.4%	29.4%	(N=051)
	white	8.3	23.4	48.3 *	20.0	(N=060)
Age 30 - 59	black	27.5*	28.8	21.2	22.4	(N=291)
	white	16.3	36.9	32.2*	14.6	(N=233)
Age 60 or older	black	35.4 *	19.7	14.9	29.8	(N=127)
	white	20.3	21.2	22.1	32.3	(N=118)
		Female				
Under age 30	black	20.6%*	6.4%	19.0%	54.0%	(N=063)
	white	7.5	12.5	27.5	52.5	(N=040)
Age 30-59	black	27.4	25.6	16.2	30.3	(N=277)
	white	26.9	25.9	19.4	27.8	(N=201)
Age 60 or older	black	42.2*	17.9	7.4	32.6	(N=095)
	white	29.2	17.0	15.1 *	38.6	(N=106)

Overall, Table 3 shows that regardless of age, the black respondent is more likely to have an exclusively neighborhood-linked participation pattern as compared with whites in the sample. Among black female respondents, this is true of the younger age group (under 30) and the older age group (60 and over) but not for the middle-age group. With this one exception, the heightened focus on neighborhood groups in the black participation pattern tends to cut across both age and sex groupings.

Because so much of the existing literature on voluntary association membership has stressed the importance of differences of socio-economic status (Payne, et. al. 1972), our Detroit data needs to be addressed in terms of such "control" variables. Table 4 develops a comparison within family income groups. In terms of belonging to at least one organization, there is only one statistically significant difference by race: the income group is under \$4,000. Here we find that blacks are more likely to have at least one organizational involvement. The trend in the income group of over \$15,000 is in a similar direction, so

there is some evidence from Table 4 that black participation at the extremes of the income ladder do appear to be higher than comparable white levels.

Additional trends emerge if we look at the issue of neighbor participation in organizations. Table 4 shows that for all of the income groups in the under \$10,000 categories, blacks are significantly more likely to have an exclusively neighborhood-linked participation pattern than are whites (with weaker trends in the same direction in the higher income categories). In three out of six cases of income groupings there is a complementary pattern of whites significantly more often having an exclusively non-neighborhood pattern of participation. In addition we find that higher income blacks are significantly more likely to have a mixed organizational pattern -- sometimes seeing neighbors, sometimes not. At the same time, both white and black higher income respondents are more likely to have this mixed participation pattern than lower income respondents.

TABLE 4 - Family Income in Relation to Organizational Participation

Family Income		See Neighbors at all	See Neighbors at some	Don't See Neighbors	Don't Belong to Organization	
Over \$15,000	black	16.1%	64.5%*+	9.7%	9.7%	(N=073)
	white	15.1	48.0	21.7*+	15.1	(N=148)
\$12,500 - \$15,000	black	22.4	36.7	24.8	14.7	(N=107)
	white	20.1	37.8	26.8	15.3	(N=124)
\$10,000 - \$12,500	black	28.6	32.2	22.3	18.7	(N=112)
	white	23.0	25.2	28.7	23.1	(N=143)
\$7,000 - \$9,999	black	32.1*+	20.6	18.1	29.2	(N=243)
	white	19.8	22.2	32.6*+	25.4	(N=153)
\$4,000 - \$6,999	black	31.6*+	14.9	14.9	38.4	(N=161)
	white	20.2	12.8	27.6*+	39.4	(N=094)
under \$4,000	black	34.0*+	16.7	14.1	35.2	(N=156)
	white	21.7	14.5	16.5	47.3*+	(N=097)

TABLE 5 - Respondent Education in Relation to Organizational Participation

Education		See Neighbors at all	See Neighbors at some	Don't See Neighbors	Don't Belong to Organization	
Over 4 years college	black	11.2%	69.5%	16.7%	2.8%	(N=036)
	white	9.5	59.5	23.8	7.1	(N=042)
3-4 years college	black	12.2	51.2+	19.5	17.1	(N=041)
	white	8.4	42.3	31.0*+	18.3	(N=071)
1-2 years college	black	23.9	27.3	19.3	18.2*	(N=088)
	white	25.8	43.3*+	23.7	8.0	(N=097)
High school graduate	black	25.5	27.6	18.9	28.0	(N=243)
	white	23.9	26.7	27.1*+	22.2	(N=247)
9-11 years	black	28.7*+	21.4	15.9	34.0	(N=233)
	white	20.4	18.2	27.0*+	34.4	(N=137)
0-8 years	black	38.0*+	12.6	16.2	33.1	(N=277)
	white	19.1	9.9	23.7*+	47.3*	(N=152)

Table 5 carries forward our analysis based on the educational level of respondents in the sample. Here we find that those with four years or more of college are more likely to have at least one organizational membership and in two instances race differences are statistically significant. In the first case, blacks with one to two years of college are more than twice as likely not to belong to at least one organization as are whites with

the same education. At the same time, blacks with eight years or less of education are significantly less likely to have at least one organizational membership compared with whites in the same educational category. For blacks who have not completed their high school education there is a significantly greater probability of having an exclusively neighbor-linked pattern of organizational involvement.

For white respondents in all educational groups there is a larger proportion who have an exclusively non-neighborhood pattern of participation (the differences are statistically significant in four out of six comparisons, with the other two trends in the same direction). Blacks with at least three years of college more often have a mixed neighborhood and non-neighborhood pattern of participation compared to whites. The reverse is true for blacks who have one to two years of college.

The patterns we have found for educational and income groupings suggest that the emphasis on neighborhood involved associational participation in the black sample tends to cut across status lines. At the same time, *the exclusively neighborhood related pattern of participation tends to occur disproportionately for blacks mainly in the lower education and income categories and does not extend consistently to higher status groups.*

The overall patterns we have found do not support a hypothesis that higher status blacks are significantly more likely to have organizational memberships than whites who are in that particular status level. Instead, what we find is that the role of neighborhood-linked participation tends to be the critical basis of differentiating black from white patterns of associational activism.

One of the basic outcomes of our focus on the neighborhood element in black-white participation is the "social compression" of black ghettos. In this view, many local neighborhoods in the black community tend to be much more diverse internally with regard to socio-economic status, even though they may be rather uniform relative to race. In the Detroit study we differentiated local neighborhoods that were sampled according to whether a modal income, educational or occupational grouping was found in that neighborhood. In this procedure we employed a set criteria regarding the percentage of the sample falling into the modal category which was established across all neighborhoods. For each socioeconomic response category and the pair of adjacent categories a total of 60% of the neighborhood sample is required to establish a "qualifying neighborhood mode." This measure of dispersion as applied is therefore distinct for each neighborhood. If each sample from a neighborhood was sufficiently concentrated on income or the other two variables, then it was given a score for a "qualifying mode." Using this procedure, a neighborhood could thus qualify for a score from zero to three. The most heterogeneous neighborhoods would be those which did not have any qualifying modes.

Table 6 shows the distribution of sampled neighborhoods according to the degree of socio-economic diversity within each area. More than twice the proportion of black neighborhoods did not have any qualifying socio-economic modes. At the same time, while one out of four white neighborhoods had three qualifying modes, none of the sixteen black neighborhoods had this degree of homogeneity. *The distribution shows a significant trend in which black neighborhoods in the Detroit sample more often fall toward the socio-economically heterogeneous end of the scale than did white neighborhoods. This tends to support Hypothesis II indicated earlier in this paper.*

TABLE 6 - Distribution of Neighborhoods by Race and Number of Qualifying Modal Patterns of Socio-economic Homogeneity*

	Black		White	
no qualifying modes (heterogeneous)	6	37.5%	2	16.7%
One qualifying mode	5	31.3	4	33.3
Two qualifying modes	5	31.3	3	25.0
Three qualifying modes (homogeneous)	0	0.0	3	25.0
Total	16	100.0%	12	100.0%
Black	White		t-value	Sig.
\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	
1.770	.973	1.619	.783	3.111 .002

*Qualifying modes refer to the criteria established for income, education, and occupation clustering in each neighborhood. Where diversity on each of the factors resulted in too small a percentage of persons with similar attributes (the modal # criteria), that neighborhood was "disqualified" for homogeneity.

What are the effects of neighborhood socio-economic diversity on the patterns of black and white participation in organizations? Table 7 shows a pattern where neighbors are seen in at least some instances. If we read across this table on the types of

of patterns, we find that black socio-economically homogeneous neighborhoods are most likely to involve a neighborhood-linked pattern and white heterogeneous areas are least likely. Both black and white heterogeneous neighborhoods have a larger proportion of people with no organizational participation at all. Black neighborhoods, regardless of the socio-economic diversity issue, are less likely to have an exclusively non-neighborhood participation pattern.

TABLE 7 - Neighborhood and Non-Neighborhood Patterns of Associational Memberships in Relation to Neighborhood Socio-Economic Heterogeneity.

	Black (socio-economically)		White	
	Hetero- geneous	Homo- geneous	Hetero- geneous	Homo- geneous
See neighbors in all or some organizations	51.1%	58.3%	42.7%	52.0%
See neighbors at none of the organizations	16.9	19.4	23.9	27.8
Don't belong to any organizations	32.0	22.3	33.4	20.2
Total	100.0% (N=612)	100.0% (N=252)	100.0% (N=324)	100.0% (N=308)
Ratio of seeing neighbors to not seeing:	3.02:1	3.00:1	1.79:1	1.87:1

If we take the ratio of some neighborhood participation to none at all, we find heterogeneity does not seem to effect the situation. Three times as many people have some linkage to the neighborhood when they belong to organizations in the black community while this is true of slightly under two out of three white respondents. Table 7 suggests is socio-economic diversity does anything at all, it simply reduces the likelihood that either a black or a white individual will be active in an organization, whether it includes or does not include neighbors. Thus, Hypothesis III is not confirmed.

Yet there is another way to consider the effects of heterogeneity as shown in Table 7. As we look at the large N's of the table, we are reminded that a higher proportion of the black respondents live in heterogeneous

neighborhoods as was also noted in Table 6. Thus, heterogeneity and status as dichotomized in Table 7 includes neighborhoods which have zero or one qualifying mode versus two or three. Eleven of the sixteen black neighborhoods are, therefore, heterogeneous compared to six of the twelve white areas. Consequently, the patterns of Table 7 in terms of non-membership in organizations is more important than even the percentage figures suggest. If, in fact, there is a general tendency toward neighborhood status diversity in the black community, some of the studies which have shown lower participation by blacks of similar status can be explained by the more status heterogeneous character of the local black neighborhood. Such local community variables must, therefore, be taken into account as intervening variables of an independent variety in examining rates of organizational participation.

TABLE 8 - Participation Pattern Regarding Exclusive Versus Arenas of Involvement in Relation to Neighborhood Socio-economic Heterogeneity

	Black (socio-economically)		White	
	Hetero- geneous	Homo- geneous	Hetero- geneous	Homo- geneous
Exclusive Pattern: see neighbors at all organizations or do not see neighbors at any organization	47.1%	45.8%	44.2%	48.0%
Mixed Pattern: Sometimes sees neighbors in organizations, sometimes do not see	20.9	31.9*+	22.4	31.8*+
Respondent does not belong to any organizations	32.0*+	22.3	33.4*+	20.2
Total	100.0% (N=612)	100.0% (N=252)	100.0% (N=324)	100.0% (N=308)
Ratio of Exclusive to Mixed patterns of partici-				

Table 8 further explores the role of neighborhood status heterogeneity. Here we are concerned with the choice the individual may face of developing a purely neighborhood or non-neighborhood based community participation pattern versus a mixed one--seeing neighbors in some groups and not in others. The question is one of the degree to which one type of neighborhood has linkage with a broader community or is relatively "parochial" or lacks local participation. What does Table 8 indicate? We find that in black socio-economically heterogeneous neighborhoods there is more likely to be a pattern where people either belong only to groups where they see neighbors or only to groups where they do not see neighbors. The 2.25:1 ratio compares with the 1.44:1 ratio for black homogeneous neighborhoods. *There is significantly greater likelihood that a person, regardless of race, located in a homogeneous neighborhood has both neighbor and non-neighbor linked participation in organizations.*

One way to interpret the trends as shown in Table 8 is that status diversity in a neighborhood makes it more difficult for that local area to be socially integrated through its members' participation in voluntary associations. This point is further underscored if we examine some data drawn from a special sample of officers of voluntary associations. In the Detroit sample we asked these active members of organizations to act as participant-observers regarding their group. One of the questions we asked was: "Would you say that the people in your group are generally active in other groups outside of the neighborhood or not?" We then asked them: "About what percentage are active outside of your neighborhood -- 75%, 50%, 33%, 25% or less?"

Table 9 shows the responses obtained from the group officers. *A significantly larger proportion of both the black and white officers in homogeneous neighborhoods saw at least 75% of the members as being active outside of the neighborhood. Only one out of nine officers in black heterogeneous neighborhoods said 75% or more were active. At the same time, about two thirds of the officers from groups in black status diverse neighborhoods said less than half of the members were active outside of the neighborhood. This compares with 40.6% of officers in white heterogeneous neighborhoods and 19.4% of white homogeneous neighborhoods. The response patterns summarized in Table 9, therefore, further indicate the isolating tendency of status heterogeneous neighborhoods.*

TABLE 9 - Leader-Respondent Report of Members of Organization Active Outside the Neighborhood by Race and Neighborhood Heterogeneity

	Black (socio-economically)		White	
	Hetero- geneous	Homo- geneous	Hetero- geneous	Homo- geneous
75% or more active	11.1%	54.5%	21.9%	53.7%
50 to 75% active	20.7	12.1	37.5	26.8
Less than 50% active	68.2+	33.4	40.6	19.4
Total	100.0% (N=64)	100.0% (N=36)	100.0% (N=45)	100.0% (N=56)

TABLE 10 - Leader Reported Change in Organizational Participation by Race and Neighborhood Heterogeneity

	Black		White	
	Hetero- geneous	Homo- geneous	Hetero- geneous	Homo- geneous
More members have joined than left group	33.3%	55.6%+	26.2%	29.6%
Number of members has remained the same in the last year	42.9	22.2-	45.2	44.4
Number of members has remained the same but a lot of turnover	6.3	11.1	14.3	11.1
More members have left than joined in last year	15.9	8.3	14.3	14.8
Don't know, not ascertained	1.6	2.8	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0% (N=64)	100.0% (N=36)	100.0% (N=45)	99.9% (N=56)

As we have indicated the role of neighborhood status patterns appears to importantly affect the way in which people participate in voluntary associations. This factor is especially critical to black communities. Since so much of the debate in current sociological literature about black participation deals with recent changes, it is useful to check any projection implicitly in the Detroit study we have been analyzing.

The leaders of groups we spoke to were asked the following question:

"Which of the following is true for the participation of people in your group:

- More members have joined than left in the past year;
- More members have left than joined in the past year;
- The number of members has remained pretty much the same in the past year; and
- The number of members has remained pretty much the same but a lot of turnover has occurred in the past year."

In Table 10 we have summarized the responses by race and neighborhood type. *In the black homogeneous neighborhoods there is a clear trend toward officers saying that their groups have expanded in size.* About twice the number make this statement compared to whites in status homogeneous neighborhoods. In the same black homogeneous areas only 8.3% of the leaders say their groups have lost more members.

The trends from Table 10 offer some hints as to the likely future character of black participation. *To the degree that we focus on socio-economically homogeneous neighborhoods within the black community, we may anticipate growing levels of future associational participation.* To the extent that black areas are confined to the traditional ghetto settings, where a large degree of status diversity is built into the local neighborhoods, the projection of black participation becomes more uncertain and more similar to white rates of change in participation.

Summary and Implications

We began our analysis of black associational participation with a review of the current state of the "art." By remaining within the usual framework of individualistically defined problems of under-or over-participation by blacks vis-a-vis white norms, we cannot adequately examine problems of social structure in black communities. Through a series of hypotheses we have sought to define more precisely some of the elements which go into a consideration of how the black urban

ghetto generates a distinct set of participation patterns. Specifically, we proposed that the social compression of black communities affects the interaction between types of voluntary association memberships and neighborhood milieu. We found that although overall black/white participation levels are nearly identical, blacks tend to participate more in organizations which are local in character and to belong more often to groups where other neighbors are seen. In addition, we found that the extent of socio-economic heterogeneity of local areas is more often extensive in black versus white neighborhoods of the Detroit sample. Moreover, when the local setting is heterogeneous, we found that both whites and blacks participated in fewer locally based organizations; but where areas are homogeneous, blacks in particular had high levels of activism.

The pattern of black respondents' in the Detroit survey being more likely to hold common organizational memberships with neighbors extends widely over the socio-economic spectrum. At the same time patterns of exclusive neighbor-linked memberships were found more consistently and to a greater degree among those blacks with less than a high school education and with incomes under \$10,000. These trends were also evident irrespective of age or sex. At the same time, this neighborhood linkage in participation patterns is found to be more true of white women than of white men.

Black neighborhoods were found to be more often diverse in socio-economic patterns. The areas with this high status heterogeneity (but racial homogeneity) had several consistent participation patterns, whether the areas were white or black. People in such "status heterogeneous" neighborhoods more often did not have any organization memberships, and their participation tend to be more exclusive (either in or out of the neighborhood) rather than mixed (involving some neighbor-linked groups and some where neighbors are not seen). Regardless of neighborhood status diversity, black areas are found to be less often characterized by individuals with exclusively non-neighbor based memberships.

Using data from a sample of organization officers we also find that in black neighborhoods members of voluntary associations are reported less often to contain a majority of the group that is active in other organizations outside of the local area. At the same time, it is in the most status diverse black neighborhoods that such a pattern of isolation from other areas is most evident.

Trends in membership growth and turnover as reported by organization officers

over as reported by organization officers also show differences by neighborhood type. Black status homogeneous areas show a greater tendency toward organization growth compared to either black homogeneous areas or all of the white organizations regardless of neighborhood context.

Our data provide some important clues to the distinctive character of black urban ghettos. They suggest that the local neighborhood plays a more crucial role in the development and form which voluntary association memberships play among black compared to white urban dwellers. Moreover, given the more frequent occurrence of heterogeneous neighborhoods in the context of socially compressed black ghetto, a paradox is generated: the area of associational linkage is the local neighborhood but this unit is often not the "natural" focus of group life.

Black ghetto growth and differentiation occurs within a context of imposed boundaries and artificially induced mobility and residential change. Consequently, reliance on the local neighborhood in the black ghetto often serves to split participation into an exclusively local or an exclusively non-local pattern. The effect may be viewed as often increasing local solidarity at the cost of involvement in a wider black community.

Where black ghettos exist, the use of voluntary associations as a tool for social change or political mobilization must be evaluated in the light of the character of local neighborhoods. While we have seen in recent years extensive use made of newly created or enhanced roles for voluntary associations in black communities, their effectiveness has been often problematic. Our present analysis may provide some insights as to why such tactics often fail, as well as to provide specific guidelines for maximizing their effectiveness.

The traditional role of the voluntary association with its small cadre of dedicated and active members works fairly effectively--so long as the constituency is rather homogeneous. However, under conditions of local neighborhood status diversity, voluntary associations are prone to become the captive of specific cliques and to be unrepresentative of many residents of a neighborhood. This tendency, as evidenced from the analysis we have presented, is probably greater in black compared to white urban areas.

Consequently, there is a need to question the simplistic transfer of models of organization which work effectively under one set of demographic and neighborhood conditions to apply them to other conditions. Selective use of the voluntary association is, therefore, called for. Some unanticipated local

neighborhood leadership conflicts that emerged from Federal citizen participation programs may be linked to the status diversity of black neighborhoods.

Given the special circumstances of the status heterogeneous neighborhood, both the forms of voluntary associations and their functions must be carefully assessed by social actionists and policy makers. By taking into account the need for linkages from such local status diverse neighborhoods to other groups and neighborhoods, more effective coordination of community-wide programs and efforts to create social change may be undertaken. In this analysis we have hopefully identified what are some of the distinctive aspects of urban and particularly black community structures which are critically related to the role of voluntary action by citizens.

Appendix Table A

Rate of Completed Interviews in Relation to Listed Addresses of Original Sample

(includes Activists)

	Black	White
Complete	69.9%	70.3%
No contact - not at home (two call-backs)	11.2	9.8
No contact - Address vacant	3.0	1.5
No contact - reason not specified by interviewer	4.0	0.6
Contact - interview not completed	11.8	17.7
Total	99.9% (N=1387)	99.9% (N=1081)

Appendix Table B

Rate of Completed Interviews Where Contact with Potential Respondent Was Made

(includes Activists)

	Black	White
Completed interview	82.3%	79.8%
Completed interview, wrong race	3.4	0.1
Explicit refusal	9.9	15.0
Failed to keep appointment	1.2	1.6
Other reasons*	3.4	3.5
Total	100.2% (N=1134)	100.0% (N=952)

*includes interview breakoffs, invalid interviews, respondent on vacation, ill, etc.

Appendix Table C

Sample characteristics: Sex of Respondent

	Black	White
Male	52.5%	55.4%
Female	47.5	44.5
Not ascertained	0.1	0.2
Total	100.1% (N=864)	100.1% (N=632)

Appendix Table D

Sample Characteristics: Employment Status of Respondent

	Black	White
Employed	58.7%	56.2%
Unemployed	7.4	3.3
Housewife	16.3	25.6
Retired	14.7	13.3
Student	0.7	0.5
Not ascertained	2.0	0.9
Total	99.8% (N=864)	99.8% (N=632)

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