

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 050 834

RC 005 194

AUTHOR Thomas, Katheryn Ann  
TITLE A Racial Comparison of Developmental Change in Marital-Family Status Projections of Teenage Girls.  
INSTITUTION Texas A and M Univ., College Station, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.  
SPONS AGENCY Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.  
PUB DATE 12 Mar 71  
NOTE 26p.; Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Texas Academy of Science, Nacogdoches, March 12, 1971

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.65 HC-\$3.29  
DESCRIPTORS \*Attitudes, \*Caucasian Students, Cross Cultural Studies, Family Planning, Longitudinal Studies, \*Marriage, \*Negro Students, Racial Differences, \*Rural Youth, Teenagers

ABSTRACT

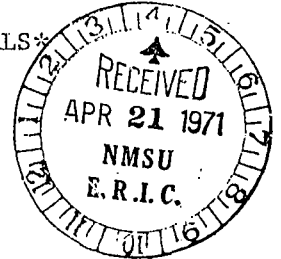
It is hypothesized that the process of development of orientations toward marriage and procreation will differ for Negro and white girls in terms of goal definitions, import accorded the goals, and dynamics of these orientations. Regarding the latter, it is expected that orientations of both groups will become more realistic over time, expectations more so than aspirations. Reported are data from 165 Negro and white girls, residing in economically depressed areas of rural East Texas, who were originally questioned in 1966 (during grade 10) and who were recontacted in 1968 regardless of school status at the time. Results partially substantiate the hypothesized relationship between race and marital-family orientations. In both 1966 and 1968, Negro girls expressed greater desire to work outside the home after marriage--particularly after children--and accorded desire to marry and raise a family less importance relative to other goals than white girls. Also, both groups desired small families. In 1966, Negro girls expressed desires to marry later than whites; no significant racial differences were found in these aspirations in 1968. In both years, marital-family expectations of the girls were distributed similarly to their aspirations, suggesting that girls perceived few barriers to goal attainment. Contradicting the hypotheses regarding dynamics of orientations, the aggregate distributions of the orientations, even expectations, did not change appreciably over the 2 years with either group. However, evidence of marked individual instability of orientations suggests a need for further research. (Author/AN)

ED050834

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE  
OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

A RACIAL COMPARISON OF DEVELOPMENTAL CHANGE  
IN MARITAL-FAMILY STATUS PROJECTIONS OF TEENAGE GIRLS\*

Katheryn Ann Thomas  
Texas A&M University



Abstract

It is hypothesized that the process of development of orientations towards marriage and family of procreation will differ for Negro and white girls in terms of goal definitions, the import accorded the goals, and the dynamics of these orientations. In regard to the latter, it is expected that the orientations of both Negro and white girls will become more realistic over time, expectations moreso than aspirations.

Reported is data from a longitudinal study of 165 Negro and white girls residing in economically depressed areas of rural East Texas. The youth were originally questioned in 1966 when they were high school sophomores and were recontacted two years later regardless of their school status at that time.

The results partially substantiate the hypothesized relationship between race and marital-family orientations. In both 1966 and 1968, Negro girls expressed a greater desire to work outside the home after marriage -- particularly after children -- and accorded desire to marry and raise a family less importance relative to other goals than white girls. On the other hand, the fertility goals of the Negro and white girls were similar; both desired small families. In 1966, Negro girls expressed desires to marry at a later age than whites; no significant racial differences were found in these aspirations in 1968. In both years, the marital-family expectations of the girls were distributed similarly to their aspirations, suggesting the girls perceived few barriers to their goal attainment. Contradicting the hypotheses regarding dynamics of the orientations, the aggregate distributions of the orientations, even expectations, did not change appreciably over the 2-year period for Negro or white girls. However, evidence of marked individual instability of orientations suggests a need for further research.

\*Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Texas Academy of Science, Nacogdoches, March 12, 1971. The research reported here was supported by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station as a contribution to TAES research project H-2611 and USDA (CSRS) project S-61, "Human Resource Development and Mobility in the Rural South."

RC00710

\*The data collected in the initial contact of the sample utilized in this study were previously reported by Kuvlesky and Obordo (1969). This paper augments Kuvlesky's and Obordo's study by including analysis of rank of importance of marital-family goals and analysis of data collected in a second follow-up study.

## INTRODUCTION

Although there has been much speculation regarding future change in fertility rates, in womens' statuses and roles in the home and in the community and its consequences on the structure of the American family, there has been little research and, thus, little substantive knowledge on which to base these predictions. This paper is concerned with a variable vital to such change: youth's goals or aspirations. While goals may be only one factor involved in the complex process of status attainment, it is an essential one. Without goals directed toward change, it is unlikely that the change will occur.

The purpose of this paper is to delineate that process by which girl's aspirations and expectations towards marriage and familial statuses and roles are developed. The primary problem is: Are the aspirations being formed by these girls defined such that attainment of them would result in change or stability of marital-family behavior and social structures?

Special attention will be placed on racial differences in status-projection development. The reason is that different processes of development may be operative for Negro and white girls, especially in regard to marital-family projections. The rationale for this position is that the Negro is faced with the problem of negative, minority status in American society. The family has been a burden to the Negro female -- a contributor to the problem of negative status and a hindrance to its resolution. Therefore, maintenance of the status-quo in regard to familial structures and behavior represents more of a disadvantage to the Negro than to the white female.

The specific orientations to be investigated in this study are: desired age of marriage; number of children desired and expected; desire and expectation to work outside the home after marriage; and importance of desire to marry and raise a family relative to other goals. Longitudinal data will be utilized to permit analysis of the developmental process. Information about the developmental process per se has particular significance for ameliorative programs, because it will indicate at what age youths' orientations are most susceptible to influence and the nature of needed change, if any, at the various stages of development.

## RELATED THEORY AND PAST RESEARCH

A theoretical account of the process of development of fertility behavior can perhaps be extended to subsume other marital-family goals. This theory posits a continuity from size of family of orientation to size of family of procreation, mediated by fertility ideals or values and their expression in fertility goals (Westoff and Potvin, 1967: 122-123; Duncan, et al., 1965). In other words, "family size (and perhaps other marital-family values) is considered a norm to which the individual is socialized in much the same way that the child learns other values and styles of interaction" (Westoff and Potvin, 1967: 123). There are, of course, factors which can cause discontinuity between family of orientation and values and, thus, modification of goals. Examples of such factors are change in reference groups (Westoff and Potvin, 1967: 123), when the child has had an "unsatisfying experience in his family of orientation," and/or when "the solutions learned in the family of orientation are . . . inappropriate for current problems" (Duncan, et al., 1965: 515). The result of the discontinuity, if it occurs in large enough numbers and is manifested in behavior, is social change.

A number of sociologists propose that change is occurring in Negro values -- that a substantially large proportion of Negro youth, despite their economically and culturally deprived origins, espouse the same values as their white, middle-class counterparts and, thus, are culturally assimilated in American society (Broom and Glenn, 1965; Gordon, 1961; Merton, 1957). Antonovsky explains this change in values by the theory that Negro youth are in the process of dissociating themselves from their negative, minority status (Antonovsky, 1967) and thereby reject certain common

attributes of their race which contribute to Negro oppression (perhaps as a result of all of the factors named above). Based on this argument, it is hypothesized that the marital-family goals formed by the Negro girls will be incongruous with the situation in their home and community environment in so far as the goals relate to oppressive elements or characteristics of their environment, such as large families. On the other hand, continuity between the characteristics of their home and community environment and goals may be maintained if such characteristics would aid amelioration of the girls' oppressive status.

Past research, including the initial survey of the longitudinal sample utilized in this investigation, supports Antonovsky's idea. Observed racial differences have been opposite to what one would expect to find if there is continuity between girls' aspirations and their exposure in their homes and in the Negro community. Negro women have been found to marry earlier than whites (Bell, 1967) and to have more children (U.S. Department of Labor, 1969; Myrdal, 1962). Yet Negro girls have expressed desires to marry not earlier but later than their white counterparts (Kuvlesky and Obordo, 1969; Drabick, 1965; Hernandez, 1969), and they appear to desire not more but less children than white girls (Gustavus and Mommsen, 1969; Hernandez and Picou, 1969; Jaffee, 1964; Knapp, 1970).

The first interrogation of our sample suggests, on the other hand, continuity between the situation in many of the Negro girls' families and community and a goal which, if attained, might aid amelioration of the Negro's economic deprivation: desire for employment outside the home. A substantial proportion of Negro girls, compared to only a few whites, desired to work outside the home after having children.

To the author's knowledge, relative importance of family goals has yet to be a subject of sociological research. Because familial commitments have been more of a burden to Negro than white women, one may argue that desire to marry and raise a family will have less importance relative to other goals for Negro than for white girls -- again a result of the Negroes' efforts to dissociate themselves from their oppressive environment.

A limitation to extant research on this problem is that in most cases, the data was collected at only one point in time. There is virtually no information regarding the process of development of marital-family orientations -- i.e., at what age they are crystallized, their tendency to remain stable or change over time, the nature of any change, etc.

As has been theorized regarding occupational projections (Ginzberg, 1951), marital-family projections may become more realistic over time. If this is the case, marital-family orientations of Negro and white girls may develop in opposite directions as the youth approach adulthood and the time of decision-making. The Negro girl may become more cognizant of the factors which will help mitigate her situation may consciously orient herself in this direction. On the other hand, as she approaches adulthood, the white girl must begin to cope with the conflicting values and goals which she has internalized during childhood and adolescence -- i.e., "feminine" values and goals which are consistent with the girls' prescribed future role in marriage and their family of procreation, and "egoistic" values and goals which are consistent with the achievement orientation characteristic of American society (Douvan and Adelson, 1966). White society prescribes that when they are adults, females allocate primacy to "feminine" goals. Therefore, these are the most realistic in terms of the girls' probable future



behavior. Consequently, one would expect the white girls' familial orientation to increase as the girls approach adulthood.

Conversely, one may also argue that the marital-family orientations of the Negro and white girls will develop in similar, rather than opposite, direction as a result of the Negro girls also becoming more familially oriented. This would be a natural consequence of their anticipation of their approaching role as wife and mother. Moreover, realism for the Negro girls also entails increasing awareness of barriers to goal attainment -- perhaps the barriers that have accounted for continuity of the Negro familial structure and behavior across generations.

If youth distinguish between aspirations and expectations, as some sociologists claim (Stephenson, 1957; Kuvlesky and Bealer, 1966), one may expect change in expectations to reflect this growing awareness of barriers to goal attainment more than change in aspirations. The same may be hypothesized in regard to the development of aspirations and expectations by white girls. That is, change in white girls' expectations is more likely to be in the direction of greater familial commitment than change in aspirations.

In summary, theory and past research suggest that:

1. Negro and white girls will develop different marital-family orientations over time: they will define their goals differently and accord the goals differential importance relative to others.
2. The dynamics of these orientations will differ for Negro and white girls -- their orientations may even change in opposite directions as they approach adulthood.
3. Change in expectations will reflect a growing awareness of opportunity barriers more than change in aspirations.

## METHODS

### The Sample

The girls comprising the sample for this study were questioned in 1966, when they were high school sophomores, and again in 1968, regardless of their school status at that time. Eighty-nine percent of the original sample was recontacted in 1968. Only the girls who were interviewed both in 1966 and 1968 are included in this study. Because ethnicity and marital status are likely to be factors influencing marital-family orientations, Mexican-American and married boys and girls have been excluded from the sample.

Evidence of a general similarity in the 1966 marital-family projections of the girls who were and who were not recontacted in 1968 (as indicated by the low association between marital-family orientations and recontact status, Appendix ) suggests the failure to recontact a small portion of the girls did not significantly alter the quality of the sample. Although many of the youth not recontacted had dropped out of school, a factor which may significantly have affected their 1968 orientations, it is likely that these girls subsequently married and, thus, would not have been eligible for inclusion in this study anyway.

All of the youth resided in rural,<sup>1</sup> East Texas at the time of the first interview, and the large majority maintained similar residence in 1968. The sample area was also characterized by low median family incomes<sup>2</sup> and

---

<sup>1</sup>The counties in the sample area were classified 100 percent rural in the 1960 U.S. Census. None were adjacent to metropolitan areas.

<sup>2</sup>Median family incomes in the sample counties ranged from \$1,737 to \$2,451 per year.

a large Negro population. The nature of the sample area does not permit one to generalize beyond areas with similar characteristics. Preferred, as well as actual, age of marriage and size of family have been found to vary inversely and positively, respectively, by socio-economic status (Westhof, et al., 1961; Drabick, 1965; Gustavus, et al., 1969; Franklin and Remmers, 1961). In addition, persons of rural residence tend to marry earlier and to have larger families than persons residing in urban areas (Moss, 1965; Larsen and Rogers, 1964), and evidence suggests that rural residents in the South have larger family ideals (Freedman and Sharp, 1954).

The family backgrounds of the Negro and white girls were markedly different in certain respects, reflecting differences found between Negro and white communities generally. The Negro girls came from lower socio-economic backgrounds than the whites, their families were much larger and more often characterized by parental absence and marital instability (Table 1).

Table 1. Selected Background Characteristics of Negro and White Girls

| Characteristics of<br>Family of Orientation         | Negro               | White |
|---|---------------------|-------|
|   | ----- Percent ----- |       |
| Parental Absence                                    | 29                  | 6     |
| Divorce or Separation                               | 17                  | 2     |
| Main Breadwinner's Job Unskilled<br>or Semi-skilled | 68                  | 24    |
| Mother Employed Outside Home or<br>Looking for Work | 67                  | 42    |
| Five or more children                               | 81                  | 33    |
| Mean No. of Children                                | 6.8                 | 3.9   |

### Instruments

In 1966 all of the youth were administered questionnaires in school in a group setting. Most of the youth were questioned in similar manner in 1968. The majority of youth who had to be contacted individually were given personal interviews; a few had to be mailed questionnaires.

Desired age of marriage was obtained from an open-ended question which asked the respondent to state the age at which she "would like to get married." The responses have been grouped into three categories: (1) 19 or less -- representing the girls who desired to marry almost immediately after finishing high school; (2) 20-22 -- representing those who desired to wait a few years, perhaps allowing themselves time to pursue egoistic goals such as vocational education or junior college or a clerical or similar level career; (3) 23 or over -- representing those who may have been allowing themselves time to finish college or become well established in a career.

To elicit fertility projections, the respondents were asked how many children they wanted and how many they expected to have. Structured alternative responses ranged from "none" to "8 or more."

In answer to questions regarding their desires and expectations to work outside the home after marriage, the girls were requested to choose one of the following alternatives:

1. Not work outside the home at all.
2. Work part-time until I have a child.
3. Work full-time until I have a child.
4. Work part-time even after I have children.
5. Work full-time even after I have children.

To elicit relative importance of marital-family goals, the girls were asked to rank their desire "to get married and raise a family" and six other goals -- occupational, educational, leisure-time, money, place of residence, and material possessions -- by their order of importance to the youth. To simplify analysis, the responses have been grouped into three categories: High (rank of 1 and 2); Moderate (rank of 3-5); Low (rank of 6 and 7).

## RESULTS

A striking result of this investigation is that the marital-family orientations of the Negro and white girls, when viewed in the aggregate, did not change appreciably over the two-year period. That is, the youth were distributed the same according to these projections in 1966 and 1968. Indeed, statistical analysis reveals no significant differences (at the .05 level or below) between the projections of the girls in 1966 and 1968 (see Table 2 of Appendix).

Yet, as shown in Table 2, most of the girls did change their marital-family orientations. Fertility desires were the only projections which the majority of the girls did not change between 1966 and 1968, and even a substantial proportion of the girls changed these desires. For the most part, however, the individual upward shifts were counter-balanced by downward shifts and vice versa, thereby producing similarity in aggregate distribution.

Patterns of racial variation and similarity, therefore, remained similar in 1966 and 1968. The only exception was in regard to desired age of marriage. In 1966 the Negro girls desired to marry later than white girls, perhaps allowing themselves more time than the white girls to finish college or become well-established in a career (Table 3). In 1968, racial differences in these aspirations were not statistically significant. Both white and Negro girls expressed a desire and expectation to work outside the home after marriage (Tables 4 and 5). However, few whites, compared to a substantial proportion of Negroes, desired and expected to work outside the home after having children. This greater orientation of Negro and white girls towards career than family goals was also demonstrated by

Table 2. Percentage of Girls Who Changed Their Marital-Family Projections between 1966 and 1968.

| Projection                               | Negro | White |
|--|-------|-------|
| Desired Age of Marriage                  | 69    | 79    |
| No. of Children Desired                  | 48    | 39    |
| No. of Children Expected                 | 54    | 53    |
| Desire to Work After Marriage            | 60    | 73    |
| Expectation to Work after marriage       | 64    | 64    |
| *Rank Importance of Marital-Family Goals | 52    | 55    |

\*Figures indicate change in level of rank importance rather than actual rank.

Table 3. Desired Age of Marriage of Negro and White Girls in 1966 and 1968.

| Desired Age    | 1966                |              | 1968         |              |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                | Negro (N=77)        | White (N=87) | Negro (N=76) | White (N=88) |
|                | ----- percent ----- |              |              |              |
| 19 or less     | 12                  | 18           | 9            | 20           |
| 20-22          | 35                  | 59           | 51           | 54           |
| 23 or more     | <u>53</u>           | <u>23</u>    | <u>40</u>    | <u>26</u>    |
| Total          | 100                 | 100          | 100          | 100          |
| No information | 0                   | 1            | 1            | 0            |
| Mean           | 22.6                | 21.6         | 22.2         | 21.2         |
| Median         | 22                  | 21           | 22           | 21           |



Table 4. Girls' Desire to Work Outside Home After Marriage in 1966 and 1968.

| Conditions for Working | 1966                |              | 1968         |              |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                        | Negro (N=71)        | White (N=81) | Negro (N=72) | White (N=83) |
|                        | ----- percent ----- |              |              |              |
| Not at all             | 10                  | 15           | 11           | 17           |
| Parttime until child   | 17                  | 21           | 20           | 14           |
| Fulltime until child   | 21                  | 47           | 26           | 59           |
| Parttime after child   | 28                  | 7            | 28           | 4            |
| Fulltime after child   | <u>24</u>           | <u>10</u>    | <u>15</u>    | <u>6</u>     |
| Total                  | 100                 | 100          | 100          | 100          |
| No information         | 6                   | 7            | 5            | 5            |
| Mean                   | 3.39                | 2.77         | 3.17         | 2.67         |
| Median                 | 3                   | 3            | 3            | 3            |

Table 5. Girls' Expectation to Work Outside the Home after Marriage.

| Conditions for Working | 1966                |              | 1968         |              |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                        | Negro (N=73)        | White (N=83) | Negro (N=69) | White (N=83) |
|                        | ----- percent ----- |              |              |              |
| Not at all             | 17                  | 14           | 22           | 11           |
| Parttime until child   | 15                  | 29           | 24           | 19           |
| Fulltime until child   | 15                  | 29           | 16           | 42           |
| Parttime after child   | 37                  | 23           | 25           | 19           |
| Fulltime after child   | <u>16</u>           | <u>5</u>     | <u>13</u>    | <u>9</u>     |
| Total                  | 100                 | 100          | 100          | 100          |
| No information         | 4                   | 5            | 8            | 5            |
| Mean                   | 3.22                | 2.75         | 2.83         | 2.95         |
| Median                 | 3                   | 3            | 3            | 3            |

their differential ranking of marital-family goals. Negro girls accorded less relative importance to these goals than whites (Table 6). Indeed, about half of the Negro girls ranked such goals as low as 6 or 7; white girls tended to rank these goals moderately.

The only orientations which did not appear significantly influenced by race in either 1966 or 1968 were fertility desires and expectations. Almost all of the girls desired and expected from 2 to 4 children; the central tendency was 3 (Tables 7 and 8).

Given the initial (1966) racial differences in aspirations, one would expect the racial disparity to increase with time, if Negro and white girls' aspirations do develop in opposite directions as the youth approach adulthood. However, the aggregate distributions of both Negro and white youth were so similar in 1966 and 1968, the association between race and marital-family orientations increased, and then just slightly, only in regard to desire to work after marriage and rank importance of family goals (Table 9). The association decreased in regard to desired age of marriage.

Table 6. Rank of Importance Girls Accorded Marital-Family Goals.

| Rank           | 1966                |                 | 1968            |                 |
|----------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                | Negro<br>(N=77)     | White<br>(N=86) | Negro<br>(N=73) | White<br>(N=83) |
|                | ----- percent ----- |                 |                 |                 |
| High (1-2)     | 8                   | 31              | 14              | 41              |
| Moderate (3-5) | 34                  | 47              | 38              | 30              |
| Low (6-7)      | <u>58</u>           | <u>22</u>       | <u>48</u>       | <u>29</u>       |
| Total          | 100                 | 100             | 100             | 100             |
| No information | 0                   | 2               | 4               | 5               |
| Mean           | 5.14                | 3.70            | 4.89            | 3.57            |
| Median         | 5                   | 3               | 5               | 3               |

Table 7. Number of children Desired by Negro and White Girls in 1966 and 1968.

| Number of Children | 1966                |                 | 1968            |                 |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                    | Negro<br>(N=77)     | White<br>(N=88) | Negro<br>(N=77) | White<br>(N=88) |
|                    | ----- percent ----- |                 |                 |                 |
| 0-1                | 5                   | 3               | 5               | 3               |
| 2                  | 42                  | 31              | 43              | 27              |
| 3                  | 14                  | 34              | 17              | 31              |
| 4                  | 33                  | 27              | 30              | 30              |
| 5 or more          | <u>6</u>            | <u>5</u>        | <u>5</u>        | <u>9</u>        |
| Total              | 100                 | 100             | 100             | 100             |
| No information     | 0                   | 0               | 0               | 0               |
| Mean               | 3.0                 | 3.05            | 2.90            | 3.15            |
| Median             | 3                   | 3               | 3               | 3               |

Table 8. Number of Children Expected in 1966 and 1968 by Negro and White Girls.

| Number of Children | 1966                |                 | 1968            |                 |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                    | Negro<br>(N=77)     | White<br>(N=86) | Negro<br>(N=76) | White<br>(N=87) |
|                    | ----- percent ----- |                 |                 |                 |
| 0-1                | 7                   | 1               | 8               | 2               |
| 2                  | 32                  | 32              | 38              | 30              |
| 3                  | 22                  | 37              | 17              | 35              |
| 4                  | 29                  | 22              | 22              | 23              |
| 5 or more          | <u>10</u>           | <u>8</u>        | <u>15</u>       | <u>10</u>       |
| Total              | 100                 | 100             | 100             | 100             |
| No information     | 0                   | 1               | 0               | 1               |
| Mean               | 3.12                | 3.08            | 3.04            | 3.14            |
| Median             | 3                   | 3               | 3               | 3               |

Table 9. Statistical Analysis of Negro-White Differences in Marital-Family Orientations in 1966 and 1968.

| Orientations                            | 1966                                 |           | 1968                                 |           |
|---|--------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|-----------|
|   | Level of Significance<br>of $\chi^2$ | $\bar{C}$ | Level of Significance<br>of $\chi^2$ | $\bar{C}$ |
| Desired Age of Marriage                 | .001                                 | .437      | NS                                   |           |
| No. of Children Desired                 | NS                                   |           | NS                                   |           |
| No. of Children Expected                | NS                                   |           | NS                                   |           |
| Desire to work after Marriage           | .001                                 | .477      | .001                                 | .529      |
| Expectation to work after Marriage      | .001                                 | .387      | .001                                 | .376      |
| Rank importance of marital-family goals | .001                                 | .332      | .001                                 | .429      |

## DISCUSSION

The results of this analysis suggest that Negro and white girls are developing somewhat different orientations towards their future statuses and roles in marriage and in their family of procreation. Their goals differ in definition (in regard to employment outside the home) and import such that the Negro girls appear less eager to commit themselves to marriage and family to the extent that the white girls do. Even though the Negro girls do not differ from whites in regard to fertility desires and, later in adolescence, desired age of marriage, their aspirations contrast significantly with the situation in their community and family of orientation. All of the aspirations expressed by the Negro girls suggest, as does past research, that Negro girls are attempting to dissociate themselves from their negative status and/or oppressive environment. In regard to age of marriage and fertility values, they appear culturally assimilated into white, middle-class American society. If the Negro girls are able to realize their desires, as they evidently perceive they will be able to do, the implications are favorable for helping to resolve the current plight of the Negro female.

The finding of little aggregate change in orientations over time suggests that, at least during the period from sophomore to senior year in high school, marital-family projections do not become more realistic for Negro or white youth generally. Neither the aspirations nor expectations of the white girls became more consistent with their expected future commitment to marriage and family. Nor did development of the Negro girls' aspirations and expectations reflect an increase in desire for dissociation from their environment. An obvious explanation for the latter is

that Negro girls are quite cognizant of the oppressive aspects of their environment and have formed dissociative values in relation to these aspects at an early age -- at least by early adolescence. On the other hand, the aspirations and expectations of the Negro girls did not appear to decrease as a result of a growing awareness, if any, of barriers to their goal attainment. Perhaps the factors that contributed to their parents' marital-family behavior and that of other adults in their community are no longer present. A more feasible explanation is that the girls did change their aspirations and expectations, but in opposite directions to each other: some as a result of increased desire to dissociate themselves from their environment and some with growing awareness of the likelihood of their not attaining these goals. The former changes would have been compensated for by the latter changes and vice versa in formation of aggregate distributions. Further research is needed to probe these dynamics.

The projections of the white girls were realistic in terms of meeting societal prescriptions regarding their future behavior: they evidenced a desire and expectation to devote themselves primarily to the statuses and roles of wife and mother. However, these projections were incongruent with the merely moderate rank of importance they accorded marital-family goals relative to others. This suggests ambivalence and confusion on the part of the white girls as a result of their internalization of "egoistic" as well as "feminine" values. Even by their sophomore year of high school, most of the girls did not appear to have resolved this conflict. Rank of importance of goals is significant, because it suggests the priority that will be granted the goals; white girls appear to be granting priority to goals that will probably be irrelevant to their future status attainment.

Failure to achieve such goals may have unfavorable implications: frustration, possibly anomie and aberrant behavior.

The fact that, on an individual basis, the girls' marital-family orientations were rather unstable may also be indicative of this ambivalency and confusion in values and goals. Additional follow-up studies are needed to determine the stability of the projections the girls expressed as high school seniors or at that age level. Further analysis whereby various control variables are employed is also needed to explain the individual change.

With improved contraceptive techniques, higher education of women, and lessening demands for women to remain solely in the home, motivation and normative orientations will play an increasingly significant role in determining marital-family status attainment and behavior. The study of marital-family orientations, thus, relates to some of the most critical of national and world problems: the crisis of over-population, participation of women in the labor market and its implications for the future of the American family, and the interminable, plaguing problem of poverty. Therefore, it is an area of study that should receive high priority in future sociological research.

## REFERENCES

- Antonovsky, A.  
1967 "Aspirations, class and racial-ethnic membership." *The Journal of Negro Education* 36 (Fall): 385-393.
- Bell, Robert  
1967 *Marriage and Family Interaction*. Chicago: Dorsey Press.
- Broom, Leonard, and Norval D. Glenn  
1965 *Transformation of the Negro American*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Douvan, Elizabeth, and Joseph Adelson  
1966 *The Adolescent Experience*. New York: John Wiley.
- Drabick, Lawrence W.  
1965 *Marriage Plan and Migration Intent: Factors Associated with Expectations*. Raleigh: North Carolina State University, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, Educational Series No. 5.
- Duncan, Otis Dudley, Ronald Freedman, J. Michael Coble and Doris P. Slesinger  
1965 "Marital fertility and size of family of orientation." *Demography* 2:508-515.
- Franklin, R. D., and H. H. Remmers  
1961 "Youth's attitudes toward courtship and marriage." *The Purdue Opinion Panel*. Lafayette: Purdue University, Division of Education Reference, Report of Poll No. 62.
- Freedman, Ronald, and Harry Sharp  
1954 "Correlates of values about family size in the Detroit metropolitan area." *Population Studies* 8 (July): 35-45.
- Gordon, Milton  
1961 "Assimilation in America: theory and reality." *Daedalus* 90 (Spring): 263-285.
- Ginzberg, Eli, S. W. Ginsberg, S. Axelrod, and J. L. Herma  
1951 *Occupational Choice*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Gustavus, Susan O., and Kent G. Mommson  
1969 "Negro-white differentials in the formation of ideal family size among young people." Revision of a paper read at the annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Society, New Orleans.
- Hernandez, Pedro F., and J. Steven Picou  
1969 *Rural Youth Plan Ahead: A Study of the Occupational, Educational, Residential, and Marital Expectations of Rural Youth in Louisiana*. New Orleans: Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, Louisiana State University, Bulletin No. 640.



- Jaffee, Frederick S.  
 1964 "Family planning and poverty." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 26: 467-470.
- Knapp, Melvin, and V. A. Boyd  
 1970 "Family size preferences among black-white adolescents in the South." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Council on Family Relations.
- Kuvlesky, William P., and Robert C. Bealer  
 1966 "Clarification of the Concept 'Occupational Choice.'" *Rural Sociology* 31 (September): 265-276.
- Kuvlesky, William P., and Angelita S. Obordo  
 1969 "A racial comparison of teenage girls' projections for marriage and procreation." Revision of a paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Society, New Orleans.
- Larsen, Olaf F., and Everett M. Rogers  
 1964 "Rural society in transition: the American setting," in James H. Copp (ed.), *Our Changing Rural Society*. Ames: Iowa State University Press.
- Merton, Robert K.  
 1957 *Social Theory and Social Structure*. New York: Free Press.
- Moss, J. Joel  
 1965 "Teenage marriages: cross-national trends and sociological factors in the decision of when to marry." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 27 (May): 230-242.
- Myrdal, Gunnar  
 1962 *The American Dilemma*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Stephenson, Ralph M.  
 1957 "Mobility orientations and stratification of 1,000 ninth graders." *American Sociological Review* 22 (April): 204-212.
- U. S. Department of Labor  
 1969 *The Social and Economic Status of Negroes in the United States*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Labor Statistics Report No. 375.
- Westoff, Charles F., and Raymond H. Potvin  
 1967 *College Women and Fertility Values*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

APPENDIX

Table 1. Lambda Coefficients Measuring Association between 1968 Recontact Status and 1966 Marital-Family Orientations.

| Orientation                             | $\lambda$ |
|---|-----------|
| Desired age of marriage                 | .010      |
| No. of children desired                 | .000      |
| No. of children expected                | .000      |
| Desire to work after marriage           | .009      |
| Expectation to work after marriage      | .034      |
| Rank importance of Marital-Family goals | .000      |

Table 2. Chi Square Analysis of Differences between 1966 and 1968 Marital-Family Orientations, by Race.

| Orientations                            | Negro    |    | White    |    |
|---|----------|----|----------|----|
|   | $\chi^2$ | df | $\chi^2$ | df |
| Desired age of marriage                 | 4.13     | 2  | .50      | 2  |
| No. of children desired                 | .34      | 4  | 1.76     | 4  |
| No. of children expected                | 2.02     | 4  | .69      | 4  |
| Desire to work after marriage           | 1.97     | 4  | 4.07     | 4  |
| Expectation to work after Marriage      | 4.20     | 4  | 5.16     | 4  |
| Rank importance of Marital-Family goals | .65      | 2  | 4.79     | 2  |