The African American Family: Then and Now

Urban Migrations and Life in the City
The “Great Exodus”

- Conditions in the South lead to what has been known as the “Great Exodus” of Blacks from that region of the country to others.
- Following the Civil War, 11 of every 12 Blacks lived in the South.
- During the decade between 1870-1880s, the net migration of Blacks from the South was 60,000 persons.
- During the decade of the 1920s, it was 454,000.
- During the 1940s, at its peak of 1,599,000.
- Decline after 1950s, and to reverse in 1980s.
Challenges of Urban Living

- Found discrimination & racism to be same
- Frictions between white workers and black
- Race Riots
- Disruptions in social and cultural continuity as buffer against discrimination & racism
- From small community social control to urban social exploitation
- Struggle to gain entrance into Industrial employ
Racialized Urban Ghetto

- Low income urban neighborhoods populated predominantly by Blacks
- High poverty & unemployment rates & low education achievement
- Few employment opportunities, health, and other public services
- Low levels of social organization & higher levels of crime, dilapidated housing, & general environmental decline than other parts of the city
- So named because of role of race in creation
The Creation of the Racialized Urban Ghetto

- Blacks voluntarily moving into areas where other blacks lived
- Urban policies and practices that promoted racial residential segregation
- Federal and local housing policies that contributed to urban segregation & the creation of all white suburbs.
- Federal transportation policies that further segregated suburbs & cities, and areas of cities
- Anti-black/Pro-white mortgage lending practices
Adaptive Strategies

- The transportation of black institutions, particularly the black church to the city
- Continued use kinship and family support systems in the South
- The use of kinship and fictive kinship as strategies of survival in urban settings
- Legal & illegal hustling as survival strategy
- Emphasis on education and economic development
- Broadening of organizational & political activity