Report of the Task Force on Urban Psychology

Toward an Urban Psychology: Research, Action, and Policy

Photos by William H. Joseph

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Foreword

The American Psychological Association's (APA) Task Force on Urban Psychology (TFUP) is an outgrowth of the APA Committee on Urban Initiatives (CUI), whose goals were to (1) contribute to a greater understanding and amelioration of those problems associated with urban life; (2) promote and sustain those aspects of urban life that enhance individual and societal growth, development, and well-being; and (3) encourage research, training, and practice related to urban initiatives. The CUI sought to influence public policy, legislative action, scientific research, and professional practice with the intent of enhancing the quality of life for urban residents. The TFUP has prepared the following report as a culmination of the work of the committee. The report provides an examination of critical urban issues for psychology, summarizes the state of scientific research related to urban issues, and offers an agenda for action in urban psychology. While urban dynamics and related mental health and well-being issues are clearly global concerns, this report limits much of its discussion and recommendations to issues affecting populations in the United States.

This report seeks to raise professional consciousness of an "urban psychology" as a viable and appropriate framework for helping psychologists effectively and collaboratively work on issues that have relevance to the residents of urban areas, as well as those local and national policymakers who make decisions that affect urban environments. As a framework, urban psychology proposes that the mix of people and places that make up the urban setting affects psychological functioning and development in these settings. By adopting an ecological orientation to understanding person-environment transactions, urban psychology draws together the progress psychologists have made and raises further questions for research and practice. Such a perspective must engage other disciplines in addition to psychology in order to gain a deeper understanding of how existing urban ecologies affect the psychological well-being of urban residents and communities, and how urban problems can be effectively addressed.

In preparing this report, task force members were committed to promoting a strengths-based ecological perspective that examines not only the frequently cited negative consequences of urban life, but

also the rich assets found in urban life. As the contents of this report illustrate, both urban problems and assets undoubtedly have serious consequences for the psychological well-being of cities and their inhabitants. Consistent with the APA Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest's (BAPPI) charge to the task force, this report makes specific suggestions for enhancing psychological research, practice and interventions, education and training, and public policy to improve the quality of life for urban residents.

Task force members included Veronica G. Thomas, PhD (Chair); Susan Saegert, PhD (Principal Editor); Dorothy W. Cantor, PsyD; Deborah Gorman-Smith, PhD; Kenneth I. Maton, PhD; Fernando I. Soriano, PhD; Dozier W. Thornton, PhD.

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Report of the Task Force on Urban Psychology Toward an Urban Psychology:

Research, Action, and Policy

Executive Summary

A growing number of psychologists are working to define an emerging field of psychology called urban psychology. Urban psychology is not viewed as an isolated area of study within the field, but rather as a framework for helping psychologists to effectively and collaboratively work on issues relevant to people living in urban areas and to local and national decision makers as well. As such, it is an inherently interdisciplinary undertaking that will involve collaboration with fields such as urban planning, public health, sociology, anthropology, social work, geography, and political science.

Psychological research and practice have made and continue to make substantial contributions in areas and disciplines that deal with urban issues and concerns. Psychologists who work in these areas provide critical information and interventions that markedly improve efforts to mobilize the strengths of urban communities and address their problems. However, the field of psychology and even individual psychologists working in these areas do not usually view their work as "urban" per se. As a result, public and private initiatives that address urban concerns draw on the expertise of many disciplines but often exclude psychology. The current report addresses this gap by highlighting selected contributions of psychology for several critical urban issues and by providing recommendations to increase awareness of psychology's contributions and encourage greater involvement of psychologists in these areas.

In 2000, about 80% of the U.S. population lived in urban areas (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001a). By 2007 half the world's population will live in cities, rising to 75% by 2020 (United Nations, 2001b). Urban dwelling influences all aspects of life, including health, parenting practices, choice of sexual partners, and employment. As such, it must be of concern to psychologists.

The Final Report of the Task Force on Urban Psychology balances the all too frequent identification of urban life with deficits and pathology by giving attention to the strengths found in urban settings and among urban residents. The Report also promotes an approach drawing on Bronfenbrenner's

social-ecological model of development, a central tenet being that individual development and well-being is influenced by the ongoing qualities of the social settings in which the person lives or participates and by the extent and nature of the interactions among these settings.

Urban Populations and Intergroup Relations

Ethnic and cultural minorities are especially concentrated in cities. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2000), 49% of those living in central metropolitan areas are members of ethnic and cultural minority groups, with African Americans and Hispanics making up the largest proportion. These population figures suggest that the emerging field of urban psychology will need to consider cultural diversity and be mindful of the cultural and historical context of urban populations.

Concentrated multicultural populations in urban areas often result in intercultural group conflict and tensions, but also offer heightened interaction among intercultural and interracial groups that leads to the development of intercultural harmony and sensitivity. The purpose, interdependence, and social power differentials of these contacts determine the realization of benefits from interracial or intercultural contact (Soriano, 1993). Urban psychology has an opportunity to contribute to our understanding of not only intergroup conflict, but intergroup cooperation as well.

Despite the opportunity for multicultural interaction, segregation is a common characteristic of urban environments. For example, indices of Black-White segregation and Black isolation, while generally high, are even more extreme in cities (Massey & Denton, 1993). Trends also indicate some segregation among Asians, and high segregation and rising isolation among Hispanics. Extreme segregation is problematic because it isolates a minority group from resources and opportunities that affect socioeconomic well-being. Psychology's long-standing attention to to the consequences of racial and ethnic segregation and to methods for improving intergroup relations bring important insights to interdisciplinary investigations of current conditions and to policies aimed at increasing equality of opportunity and ameliorating inequities in urban life.

Urban Social Issues

Of the many social issues associated with urban areas, one of the most pressing is concentrated poverty. Poverty in the United States has become more urban over the last several decades, with the number of people living in high-poverty or underclass urban neighborhoods doubling, concentrating large numbers of poor families together in certain neighborhoods. The actual number of poor families has not substantially increased; however, the spatial organization of poverty has changed. As more poor people live near other poor people in neighborhoods with high poverty rates, they become more physically isolated from the social and economic mainstream of society.

Of particular concern is the high rate of poverty among the nation's children. In 2000, nearly 40% of all children under age 3 years lived in poor or nearly poor families (National Center for Children in Poverty, 2002). The poverty rate for young Black and Hispanic children under age 3 years is still 3 times higher than that for White children under age 3 years. Children living in impoverished and particularly underclass urban neighborhoods are at increased risk for most behavioral, social, and psychological problems (Children's Defense Fund, 1991; Brooks-Gunn, Duncan & Aber, 2000).

Recognizing the impact of living in areas of concentrated poverty on children and families, several housing studies have been conducted to evaluate the effects of helping low-income families with children to move from public and assisted housing in high-poverty, inner-city neighborhoods to middle-class neighborhoods throughout a metropolitan area. One such study, Moving to Opportunity, was a randomized trial supported by the U.S. Department of Urban Development to rigorously evaluate the impact of such programs (Shroder, 2001). A 5-year follow-up found positive impacts on personal safety, housing quality, mental health, and obesity among adults and mental health, delinquency, and risky behavior among teenage girls. However, there were some negative effects on boys' behavior, for example, increased involvement in risky behaviors such as substance use and delinquency and increased risk for physical health problems. Understanding these differences in patterns of response is an important issue urban psychology can address.

Violence disproportionately affects urban residents (U.S. Department of Justice, 2000). The

impact of victimization and exposure to community violence has become an issue of national concern. It is not just direct victimization that affects health and development, but also witnessing violence or having a close friend or family member who is a victim. Much of the research conducted has focused on the impact of exposure to violence among children living in poor, urban neighborhoods plagued by high rates of violence. Studies report that between 50% and 96% of urban children have witnessed community violence in their lifetimes (Fitzpatrick & Boldizar, 1993; Gorman-Smith & Tolan, 1998; Miller, Wasserman, Gorman-Smith, & Kamboukos, 1999).

Yet while many low-income neighborhoods in large cities experience concentrations of crime and violence, research findings show that even in these environments, the majority of children exposed to such potent risk factors become healthy and competent adults (Henderson, 1998). Despite social and economic disconnection, many families protect, nurture, support and guide their children toward conventional success and integration into the larger society.

Another issue of serious concern in urban communities is homelessness. Psychologists have initiated and contributed to interventions in the United States that have been effective in helping people escape from homelessness. However, continued mobilization toward the prevention and reduction in levels of homelessness is needed, including continued research on the social, economic, and psychological factors that contribute to the continued growth of the urban homeless population and effective public policy addressing the issues.

Urban Health

Where individuals live affects their health. There is growing concern about health problems in urban environments among researchers and practitioners across many disciplines. Urban health includes physical, mental, and social well-being of urban residents and communities. While urban health has been a topic of vigorous discussion in the fields of public health and sociology, inadequate attention has been paid to the topic in the field of psychology. Major sociological theories of health within an urban ecological framework have provided insight into how the distinct spatial qualities of neighborhoods affect the health risk beliefs and behaviors of their residents (e.g., Fitzpatrick & LaGory, 2003). Numerous reports indicate that infectious diseases (e.g., tuberculosis, AIDS, HIV infection, and other sexually transmitted diseases), asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, lead poisoning, mental illness, cancer, infant mortality, substance abuse, trauma caused by violence, and other health and social problems are exacerbated in urban communities (e.g., National Public Health and Hospital Institute, 1995: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001).

Many of the physical diseases and other health-related conditions prevalent in urban areas are related to poverty and are affected by poor nutrition, inadequate and unsafe housing, exposure to violence, environmental pollution, and lack of social service infrastructure (Prewitt, 1997). Likewise, recent research has demonstrated a powerful role for socioeconomic status (SES) in mental health status, with low SES predicting elevated rates of a broad range of psychiatric conditions. Poverty increases the level of stress and sense of hopelessness among individuals. However, although numerous environmental and social pathogenic processes have been posited and investigated, there is little consensus on the causal relationship between urbanization and mental health and social deviancy (Marsella, 1998). Studies of the structural characteristics of neighborhoods have been helpful, but structural characteristics only partially answer the question of the relationship between neighborhoods and mental health because they do not include tests of mediating and moderating variables. Psychological research on the stresses and social processes in these environments are beginning to fill in the gaps left by the studies of structural characteristics alone. For example, Garbarino and Kostelny (1993) found that even in neighborhoods with similar structural characteristics, those socially impoverished neighborhoods characterized by weak neighborhood ties, few internal resources, and stressful day-to-day interactions exhibited higher child maltreatment rates than poor neighborhoods with strong ties (Wandersman & Nation, 1998). Psychologists are also developing models of the cumulative burden that multiple urban stressors place on adults, children, and the functioning of families and communities (Evans, 2004; Saegert & Evans, 2003) that can make a unique contribution to the work of other disciplines.

Urban Physical Environments

The size, density, and configuration of the urban physical environment affect the psychological and social experiences and behaviors of urban dwellers. Research on the psychological and social consequences of the physical form of urban areas most often focuses on threats to well-being associated with stress, urban decay, and disorder, and more recently, urban sprawl. Research on restorative environments and studies of design and policy approaches to alleviating stresses and providing more supportive urban environments emphasize how physical environments can promote more optimal human behavior, health, and experiences.

The stress paradigm in particular has been applied to studies of crowding and noise, qualities associated with urban environments. Higher levels of crowding, especially in the home, and higher noise levels, especially during the performance of demanding activities, have been linked to greater cardiovascular activation and neuroendocrine functioning (Evans, 2001), destructive coping strategies such as smoking (Cherek, 1982), and learned helplessness (Evans, Hygge, & Bullinger, 1995).

Urban revitalization in many cities has resulted in spruced-up downtowns, as well as the return of White, higher income households to the city. However, although cities with mixed income and race populations are no doubt stronger socially and financially, the way in which reinvestment has occurred in many places has exacerbated rather than reduced segregation by class and race. The psychological and social implications of heightened microsegregation and increased competition for urban housing will be important topics for urban psychology in coming years.

Less attention has been devoted to ways in which urban physical environments enhance the quality of life and to ways urbanites themselves improve their environments. Toward this end, research on restorative environments has increased in recent years. Restorative environments are places that support the renewal of attention and emotional and physiological recovery from stress. For example, views of nature have been shown to speed postoperative healing, reduce physiological and attentional indicators of stress, improve mood and decrease aggressive feelings, and promote effective problem solving among public housing residents. Many of the studies demonstrate important psychological effects of views for inner-city, as well as for other, residents. Urban parks, greenery on streets and building facades, small front and back yards, greened balconies, community gardens, urban farms, and small pockets of natural elements can be included in urban environments and may make a significant difference to psychological well-being. Green spaces and activities such as gardening and tree care encourage socializing and contribute to stronger social networks. The importance of strong social networks cannot be overemphasized in terms of creating greater place attachment, which supports efforts to significantly improve the physical conditions and safety of individuals' homes.

Much of the research on community and neighborhood influences on human development has focused on the impact of neighborhood characteristics, particularly within poor urban neighborhoods, on children and families. Most of this work has been guided by a developmental-ecological perspective, which presumes that the impact of major developmental influences, such as family functioning, depends on the sociological characteristics of the communities in which youth and families reside (Szapocznik & Coatsworth, 1999; Tolan & Gorman-Smith, 1997). How families function, or how parents parent, differs depending on the neighborhood in which they live, and the same factor may have a different impact depending on the age of the individual. For example, Furstenberg (1993) found that young mothers residing in the most dangerous, poor urban neighborhoods adapted by isolating their families from neighborhood socializing. Although that increased the mother's sense of safety, it also cut her off from potential social support. In some urban neighborhoods, both too little and too much parental monitoring were associated with increased behavior problems among youth, in contrast to the linear relation found in studies of families drawn from less impoverished and less violent communities (Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992). Gorman-Smith, Tolan, and Henry (2000) found that in more weakly organized neighborhoods, some parenting practices were associated with risk of delinquency, whereas strongly organized neighborhoods mitigated the risk of serious and chronic delinquency resulting from these practices. This study clearly shows that what is good and effective parenting in one context may not be the same elsewhere. Inadequate attention to community

influences on parenting and family functioning may lead to erroneous conclusions about what parenting characteristics should be encouraged, as well as the extent to which parenting is the locus of risk. Also, as in any other type of community, family functioning varies in urban and inner-city communities. Even in the poorest urban neighborhoods, the majority of families function adequately, in terms of basic parenting skills and family relationship characteristics (Florsheim, Tolan, & Gorman-Smith, 1998). Psychologists are currently involved, and need to be more involved, with other disciplines in prevention and intervention programs with youth and their parents. Effective interventions need to reflect and incorporate the complex relationship between neighborhood context and family functioning.

Urban Education

Urban public schools enroll a large proportion of our nation's school-aged children and a substantial proportion of the country's minority, economically disadvantaged, and immigrant children. Urban public schools are intimately linked to and affected by the complex interactions of forces of urbanization. Urban schools are typically located in regions with a declining tax base and scarce resources. In comparison with schools in other locations, urban schools have a greater shortage of teachers and more teachers with emergency credentials. Understanding urban learners and engaging in productive urban school reform call for a simultaneous and multidirectional analysis of urban students and their families, schools, and environments. Further, urban students bring fewer traditional resources (e.g., they have less-educated parents, more poverty, and poorer health) to the school setting, and this can ultimately hinder their educational future.

Much of the discussion about urban learners focuses on their challenges and weaknesses. Consequently, schools have adopted a deficit orientation, from which educators and psychologists learn little about what urban children can do and what they receive and bring from their home environment. By contrast, researchers have found that urban students enter school equipped with skills in major life areas, including caretaking and homemaking. Urban children also enter school with deep-seated cultural values, resources, and belief systems appropriated from their life experiences that potentially could be capitalized on in academic settings (Boykin, 2000; Jagers & Carroll, 2002).

Psychologists have been involved in urban school reform efforts. One of the most notable recent contributions was the development of the Leaner-Centered Psychological Principles: A Framework for School Redesign and Reform, which was jointly formulated by the American Psychological Association (APA) and the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (APA Board of Educational Affairs, 1995). A second notable contribution was the conference on Bringing to Scale Educational Innovation and School Reform: Partnerships in Urban Education, convened by the APA Committee on Urban Initiatives and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, June 1997.

Employment for Urban Residents

Unemployment rates in cities are about one-third higher than in suburban areas (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2000), and one in eight cities is "doubly burdened," that is, facing high unemployment and significant population loss or high poverty rates. Psychologists have been instrumental in developing, conducting, and evaluating some of the most successful job intervention programs. One of the most successful and well-researched interventions is the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) training program (not to be confused with the now defunct federal JOBS program) developed by the University of Michigan Prevention Research Center (Caplan, Vinokur, & Price, 1997). JOBS developers recognized the negative consequences of unemployment, including poorer health and depression. JOBS was created as a preventive intervention to take place before job seekers become emotionally disabled. Research has shown JOBS interventions to be effective.

Several factors contribute to the high level of unemployment in inner cities, including the loss of a large number of manufacturing jobs, movement of many entry level jobs to the suburbs and poor transportation systems to those jobs, and the creation of high-tech jobs in cities that few inner-city urban residents have the skills to perform. Williams and Collins (2001) proposed that institu-

tional discrimination based on residential segregation for African Americans in urban areas severely restricts employment opportunities in several ways, including isolating them from both role models of stable employment and social networks that could provide leads about potential jobs. The social isolation can then induce cultural responses that weaken the commitment to norms and values that may be critical for economic mobility.

An important contribution of psychology to addressing this range of urban problems is a focus not just on the problems but also on identifying and mobilizing the assets of communities. A deficit approach to urban life assumes that urban communities lack the organizational capacity or necessary assets to improve their conditions, whereas the strengths-based approach urged in this report recognizes the many tangible and intangible assets characteristic of many urban social institutions and community organizations (e.g., neighborhoods, churches, voluntary associations). When effectively mobilized, formal and informal institutions in urban areas can bring tremendous resources to bear on problems and yield effective community development. Long considered to be major centers of economic, political, educational, and recreational importance, cities are rediscovering their competitive assets as the cultural and entertainment magnets of their regions (Katz, 2000).

Methodological Approaches

A major challenge in urban research is incorporating multiple ecological levels in research design and analysis to more accurately reflect the complexity of urban life, encompassing psychological, interpersonal, family, group, neighborhood, and community-wide influences. Conceptual models have evolved that attempt to capture these multilevel influences, multiple methods have been employed to assess data at the varied levels, and new statistical methods have been developed to assess nested, multilevel phenomenon (e.g., hierarchic linear modeling). Many of these efforts include interdisciplinary teams of researchers contributing methods from their respective disciplines.

Also, community-based urban researchers increasingly favor strengths-based approaches, which see citizens and community groups as partners in research design, implementation, data collection, interpretation, and dissemination. Participatory community and action research methods emphasize collaboration and power sharing between community members and academic researchers, with a major focus on findings of practical benefit to community groups. Similarly, empowerment evaluation works to build the capacity of local groups and organizations during the program evaluation process.

Areas for Urban Research

Although there are many important, substantive research areas in urban psychology, below are some specific recommendations stemming from the work reviewed in this task force monograph. The examples below are intended to be illustrative and not exhaustive.

Studying Strengths and Assets in Urban Communities

Much research focuses on the deficits or problems of urban environments. Equally important is an examination of urban resources, strategies for maximizing these assets, and understanding how they can translate into increased well-being for persons living in cities. Urban psychologists, as well as researchers from other disciplines, are beginning to focus attention on human and social capital, as well as paying increased attention to the role of economic resources in coping, human development, identity, health, and well-being.

Studying Psychological Processes in the Context of Both Physical and Social Environments

Psychologists are already contributing to our understanding of how social characteristics, such as race and ethnicity, are related to psychological and social processes. Others focus on the role of the physical environment. Looking at both dimensions together will provide a more comprehensive and useful foundation of knowledge about urban life.

Physical and Mental Health in Urban Environments

Recognition of social disparities in health, well-being, and access to health care have turned attention to the role the urban environment plays in exacerbating or reducing these differences.

Sociological and epidemiological research has identified the importance of structural characteristics and their link to health and mental health problems. However, psychological research is needed to elucidate the mediating and moderating variables needed to allow better understanding and appropriate interventions.

Research in Urban Education and Child Development

Research in urban education and child development in urban settings should be contextually relevant, addressing children holistically and focusing on both the micro and macro issues that influence learning and development. For example, more research needs to examine the achievement gap in urban schools not simply in terms of the characteristics of urban students, families, and schools but more broadly using a macroecological approach, including a focus on the decentralization of cities, changes in the social ecology of neighborhoods, and the structure of the urban labor market.

Intergroup Relations, Acculturation, and Identity Formation in Urban Multiethnic Contexts

The composition of cities has been changing rapidly at the same time that media, travel, and immigration bring more and more people into steady contact with each other. How are social relationships, family dynamics, and personal development being affected by this milieu? While these changes are occurring everywhere, cities provide an especially good laboratory because of their density, size, variety of populations, and speed of change.

Evaluating the Effects of Policies on Urban Residents

The solutions to many of the problems urban residents face goes beyond responses of individuals, families, or even particular communities or programs. They require policy interventions. Psychologists are sometimes involved in the study of urban school reforms and mental health policies. However, psychologists should expand their policy evaluations to areas such as housing, community development, employment, transportation, and other urban policy domains.

Comparative Urban, Suburban and Rural Research

Research should examine, through systematic evaluations, whether interventions to enhance the quality of urban life are as effective as comparable ones in suburban and rural areas, and to what extent effectiveness depends upon similar, and different, processes, strategic approaches, skills, and tactics.

Dissemination and Translational Research

Research on how to disseminate findings of research so that they are utilized effectively in real world urban contexts should be developed. Better ways to effectively translate and communicate to policymakers key research findings related to pressing urban problems should be developed. This entails, in large part, ensuring that research advances are communicated in such a manner that is understandable, contextually relevant, and meaningful to the "lived" experiences of urban residents.

Concentrated Poverty: A Critical Urban Domain

As detailed throughout the report, the entire spectrum of social needs and urban institutions can benefit from the contributions of psychology. Unfortunately, some of the most critical urban domains, including housing, urban planning, community development, job training, comprehensive neighborhood revitalization, and urban social policy, currently involve too few psychologists and other professionals. Psychology's expertise and perspective are sorely needed in these and related domains. Common to many of these critical domains is the central contributing role of concentrated poverty.

Advocate for Services for the Urban Poor

Researchers and others need to more aggressively examine the ways in which poverty has denied individuals and families access to needed services and to advocate for services for the urban poor within the communities they serve.

Develop New Programs and Services in Critical Areas

Social intervention work is tremendously important in the arenas of education, prevention, and promotion of well-being among the urban poor and in high-poverty neighborhoods. Examples of new programs and services that need to be developed include:

- Comprehensive mental health and job training programs: Programs need to be developed for TANF recipients, many of whom have serious and multiple barriers to employment (e.g., mental health and substance abuse problems, domestic violence) that make it difficult for them to maintain jobs. The special issues of poor, single mothers need to be addressed in such programs.
- School reform in high poverty areas: To address school reform in high poverty areas, psychology, with other disciplines, should effectively translate its theory and basic research into applied knowledge that can be of practical benefit to urban public schools and build on the strengths of low-income students and families.
- Homelessness prevention: Interventions and policies that prevent homelessness need to be generated; possibilities include expanding various housing supports, promoting assistance to at-risk groups, and promoting the creation of a large number of low-income housing units.

Poverty is a primary contributor to nearly every major social problem, and there is no greater contribution that psychologists and those in other disciplines can make to the quality of urban life than working to enhance the capacity and empowerment of individuals, schools, and neighborhoods affected by concentrated poverty.

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Introduction

Given the sheer number of individuals living in urban areas, psychologists' efforts to promote human development and well-being must give serious attention to the urban context. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2001a), in 1900 the majority of the U.S. population, or 60%, was considered rural. As Table 1 shows, by 1920 the urban population grew to half, or 51% of the U.S. population. Current estimates suggest that only about 2 out of 10 persons, or 21% of residents in the United States, live in rural environments (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001a).

Worldwide, it is expected that by 2007, half the population of the globe will live in cities, rising to 75% by 2020 (United Nations, 2001b). Urban dwelling influences all aspects of life, from health to choice of sexual partners to parenting practices to employment. As such, it must be of concern to psychologists.

Toward an Urban Psychology

A growing number of psychologists are working to define the emerging field of urban psychology. From the perspective of the TFUP, urban psychology is not merely an isolated area of study within the field, but rather a viable and appropriate framework for helping psychologists to effectively and collaboratively work on urban issues that have relevance to the worlds outside the academy—particularly to people in urban areas and to local and national decision makers. As such, it is an inherently interdisciplinary undertaking, but one that represents special challenges for psychologists.

The U.S. Census Bureau (2001b) defines ***urban*** as all territory, population, and housing units located within an urbanized area or an urban cluster to encompass densely settled territory that consists of core census block groups or blocks that have a population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile and surrounding census blocks that have an overall density of at least 500 people per square mile.

Urban life conjures up conflicting images of gleaming international centers of commerce, entertainment, and culture; of faceless crowds and anomie; and of unrelieved poverty, environmental degradation, and crime. These and other properties of urban life are related to the defining qualities of greater size, density, and heterogeneity of populations in urban areas; all have important consequences for mental and social life (Lefebvre, 2003; Simmel, 1971; Wirth, 1938). Urban scholars also emphasize the physical organization of commercial, public, and residential space around a cultural and economic core. Sometimes the word ***urban*** is used simply to distinguish nonagricultural and built-up areas from rural agricultural and uncultivated land. Finally, the word ***urban*** is sometimes used to designate areas that are part of a global system of economic production and distribution. All of these definitions have significance for psychology, though not all have been explored in research and theory.

Urban psychology deals not only with cities, but urban environments more broadly, which include inner cities (i.e., the central or inner-most parts of the city, particularly when associated with social problems such as inadequate housing and high levels of crime and unemployment), central cities (i.e., the densely populated city at the heart of a metropolitan area), metropolitan areas (i.e., large urban areas, usually including a city and its suburbs and outlying areas), etc. This broad use of terminology is also relevant when referring to urban populations and communities. Terms used to designate population characteristics also vary among disciplines and data sources. Definitions of socioeconomic status (e.g., underclass, affluent, low income, higher income), and ethnic, racial, and cultural identity (e.g., Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Native American) differ by source as well. Throughout this report, the task force utilizes various terms depending on context, data source, and research being discussed when referring to the diverse aspects of urban areas and populations.

The central question for urban psychology concerns how the distinctive characteristics of the people and places that make up urban environments give rise to particular types of experiences and behaviors, and have particular consequences for mental health, well-being, and human development. Urban psychology is an extension of the idea, which has a long history in psychology, that the environment has specifically psychological implications (reviewed in Bonnes & Secchiaroli, 1995; Ittelson, Proshansky, Rivlin, & Winkel, 1974).

Numerous studies in social and environmental psychology, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, attempted to define the psychologically potent characteristics of urban life. Stanley Milgram's (1970) well-known paper, "The experience of living cities," identifies psychological overload as a unifying explanation for various urban psychological phenomena. His theory, as well as popular concern about deteriorating quality of life in cities, led to numerous studies of crowding (cf. Saegert, 1977), helping in urban settings (Darley & Latane, 1968; Latane & Darley, 1968; Moser, 1988; Solomon, Solomon, & Maiorca, 1982), and responses to urban stimuli (Geller, 1980; Ostfeld & D'Atri, 1975). However, consideration of the large-scale social and physical environment as critical to psychological experience dates back at least to Kurt Lewin's (1946) famous formulation that behavior is a function of the person and the environment. Lewin's work also reminds us that we must not only look at how the urban environment affects people in general, but at the personal, situational, and cultural differences among people.

A second key theoretical issue involves going beyond questions of how urban environments affect psychological processes to also understanding how people produce and inhabit urban settings. Urban populations vary along dimensions related to psychological outcomes. For example, cities are home to more ethnic minorities and immigrants than other settings and include greater economic and lifestyle diversity. Urban environments are an amalgam of physical spaces and differently behaving inhabitants. The characteristics of urban places develop over time out of the interaction of the people who live there, the physical environment, and social organization. Personal, small-group, cultural, social, economic, and political processes are all at work in creating the physical forms and living experience of cities (Low & Altman, 1992). Together the populations and spaces of cities present both opportunities and challenges to well-being and healthy development.

A third important theoretical and practical question for urban psychology concerns the consequences of urban life for mental health, well-being, and development. Psychologists debate the results of

living in cities (Marsella, 1998). While many negative consequences of living in urban environments, such as poverty and mental illness (Harpham, 1994; Lyon, 1989; Marsella, 1991), have been highlighted over the years, a growing number of social scientists point out the positive factors that draw people to densely populated cities (Marsella, 1998; Dankelman & Davidson, 1988). Examples of urban attractions include jobs, career and educational opportunities, increased entertainment venues, and broader choices for services, including medical and mental health treatment. Indeed, psychologists themselves are much more prevalent in urban settings, although their accessibility and the roles they play in people's lives differ depending on the affluence and ethnicity of urban dwellers.

For individual urban residents, the level of choices and benefits associated with urban life are tied to resources. Hence, for the large number of low-income people in cities, urban life can be filled with stress, poor living conditions, discrimination, and a heightened awareness of social inequality (Garbarino, Kostelny, & Dubrow, 1991). The social, political, and economic institutions that give urban life its specific character and that shape the nature of urban inequality are intrinsically linked to those of surrounding areas. For example, the poverty and neglect of many urban public school systems developed as a consequence of the movement of the more affluent, especially White, populations away from cities into suburbs. The social, political, and economic institutions that direct more resources into suburban schools further reinforce the educational gap between suburban and urban children. In the wake of such historical trends, urban often becomes a codeword for poor, Black, and Brown people, and a signifier of danger, disrepair, and neglect. At the same time, it stands for opportunity, cultural riches, excitement, diversity, and possibility.

The contradictions between vast opportunity and exclusion of many urban dwellers from access to these resources provide a space for psychology to both understand the frequently negative consequences of urban life that have been studied and to promote alongside of them a strengths-based approach that mobilizes the assets of the city and its inhabitants to enhance the quality of urban life. This perspective engages many disciplines, in addition to psychology, in understanding how existing urban ecologies affect psychological well-being, how problems can be addressed, and how creative and fulfilling forms of urban life can be developed. Marsella, Wandersman, and Cantor (1998) argue that the challenges and opportunities of urban life open new doors and new possibilities for psychology as a science and profession in the 21st century. This report seeks to elaborate these possibilities and offer a perspective for responding to the call for action.

Related Conceptual Frameworks

Each section of this report has its roots in a variety of psychological theories utilized in approaching different topic areas. Throughout the report, two unifying concepts tie the psychological theories together: (a) urban life is examined within a set of ecologically nested, developmentally significant relationships; and (b) the report seeks to balance the all-too-frequent identification of urban life with deficits and pathology by calling attention to the positive attributes of urban settings and the strengths found among urban residents.

This approach to urban psychology draws on Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1988) social-ecological model of development. A central tenet of developmental-ecological theory is that individual development is influenced by the ongoing qualities of the social settings in which the person lives or participates and the extent and nature of the interaction between these settings. Family functioning, peer relationships, schools, communities, and the larger society (e.g., media) influence development. This conceptual model also suggests that social systems are nested within one another—individuals are nested within families, and families in turn are nested within neighborhoods. These characteristics, as well as interactions among them, influence risk and development.

Experience of the physical environment is also nested. Direct experience and face-to-face interactions occur in particular behavior settings such as classrooms, living rooms, parks, and offices. These settings articulate with each other in the larger urban environment of neighborhoods, business districts, transportation networks, etc. Thus, urban dwellers' particular lives occupy different spaces, but they are linked within a larger urban fabric that to some extent binds their fates. And, at the scale of institutions, the media, and the culture itself, urban life has a pervasive influence.

The complexity and interrelatedness of urban life require frameworks of analyses that go beyond the examination of one variable at a time. The effects of the threats associated with urban life (e.g., violence, concentrated poverty, crowding, noise, etc.) must be considered together. While children and adults can often cope effectively with one or two threats to health and well-being, the negative effects of exposure to multiple risks are more frequent and serious (Evans, 2004; Garbarino, Kostelny, & Dubrow, 1991; Rutter, 1981). Thus, models based on cumulative risk are particularly appropriate for psychologists studying the harmful consequences of urban life. Theorists propose various concepts to understand the effects of cumulative risk, ranging from the psychophysiological weight of allostatic loads (McEwen, 1998) to the individual and collective burden of living in a low-resource, high-stress community, as described by Geronimus' (1992) concept of "weathering." The concept of allostatic load presents a physiological model of cycles of activation in the face of challenge and restoration in periods of lesser demand and rest. Situations that prevent restoration and augment challenge can, over time, lead to incapacity to respond to new challenges and to chronic stress. "Weathering" places such processes in a broader social and cultural context by exploring the choices faced by individuals and groups who are chronically subjected to situations in which challenges exceed the physical and material resources people have to meet them.

The growing movement to promote a strengths-based approach to research and social intervention seeks to counter the problems of traditional deficits-based orientations (Maton et al., 2004) and is especially relevant in urban settings. Strengths, not weaknesses, of individuals, families, communities, and cultural groups command primary attention in this view. These strengths are defined broadly, are consistent with the ecological framework, and exist at multiple levels of analysis.

Understanding the assets found in social networks is one example of a strengths-based approach. Social networks provide important resources to help people cope with threats and achieve other goals and satisfactions. The size, density, and heterogeneity of urban populations provide the raw material for many and varied networks. The aggregate resources and types of connections among members of a social network determine the value of membership. Social capital theories explain why some network memberships are more useful than others and promote better individual and collective outcomes (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993, 2000; Saegert, Thompson, & Warren, 2001). Social capital is provided by networks characterized by trust, mutual obligation, the ability to enforce sanctions, and a good flow of information. Social ties among network members overlap so that, for example, the parents in a particular network know not only each other, but also their children's peers and teachers. These networks are often reinforced and monitored by membership in institutions or religious organizations. These social networks support effective collective action, as well as individual goal achievement. Other asset approaches are also highlighted throughout the report. Based on a strengths perspective, urban psychology should seek to: (a) recognize and build upon existing strengths, and build new strengths in urban individuals, families, communities, and cultural groups; (b) strengthen the social environments in which individuals, families, communities, and cultural groups are embedded; and (c) engage individuals, families, communities, and cultural groups in a strengths-based process of designing, implementing, and evaluating urban research and social interventions that should be collaborative, participatory, and empowering. This approach does not ignore the very real threats of poverty, racism, and environmental degradation to well-being. Rather, it balances this focus with attention to the resources at hand that might be used to overcome such negative conditions for human well-being and development.

Critical Issues for Urban Psychology

Urban psychology includes and addresses a wide range of social, economic, and psychological issues associated with living in cities. Urban psychology is extremely broad in its focus.

Social issues that characterize cities tend to reflect their diversity and vibrancy and their problems. Cities are melting pots of various cultures, races, and ethnicities and thriving centers for the arts and entertainment. However, racism and societal biases create challenges and problems, and crime and violence are much higher in cities. The size, density, and diversity of the urban physical environment affect the health and psychological well-being of the city's inhabitants. Crowding, urban decay, and urban sprawl can negatively influence the behavior and lives of urban residents. However, effective urban planning and design methods have been shown to decrease some of the negative effects of urban life and to improve the physical environment. Formal and informal institutions (e.g., families, community and religious organizations, school systems, and work/workplace) can positively shape the lives of urban dwellers. The level of resilience in urban families plays an important role in nurturing the strengths of their children. However, urban public schools often suffer from lack of resources, and urban unemployment is an issue of critical concern.

Psychologists have already made substantial contributions to better understanding the many aspects of cities and city life; however, psychology as a discipline and profession has a great deal more to contribute on these fronts. While clearly not intended to be exhaustive, this section summarizes the critical areas of focus for an emerging field of urban psychology.

Urban Populations and Intergroup Relations

Ethnic Cultural Diversity

From the beginning, the United States has been a country of ethnic diversity and ethnic tensions. The latest U.S. census figures show that this diversity continues to increase. The largest minority populations in the United States are Hispanic and African American. African Americans represent about 12.35% of the U.S. population, while Hispanics represent 12.5% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001d). Asian and Pacific Islanders represent about 5% of the U.S. population. American Indians represent 1.5% of the population. Cultural minorities are especially concentrated in cities. For example, the latest U.S. census indicates that 36% of urban dwellers are racial or ethnic minorities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Among those in central metropolitan areas, the proportion increases to 49% of the population. The largest proportion of racial or ethnic groups in central metropolitan areas is African American, at 22%, followed by Hispanic, at 19% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). These population figures suggest that the emerging field of urban psychology will need to consider cultural diversity and be mindful of the cultural context of urban populations.

Acculturation and Ethnic Identity

Acculturation and ethnic identity are two factors that will need to be considered in an emerging field of urban psychology. Psychologists have studied acculturation and ethnic identity and have empirically linked the influence of ethnicity to such social issues as intercultural group relations, and to psychological factors, such as self-esteem (Dinh, Roosa, Tein, & Lopez, 2002; Phinney, 1990; Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003).

Early work on acculturation applied the concept to immigrants, but more recent work acknowledges the relevance of acculturation to other populations as well. Acculturation is defined as the process of adopting cultural values, norms, beliefs, practices, and social affiliations that are associated with either the dominant culture or with a culture of origin (Keefe & Padilla, 1987). Higher acculturation levels mean closer affiliations with American mainstream culture, while low levels mean closer affinity to the culture of origin. The concept of acculturation is being increasingly applied to the experiences of nonimmigrant populations, such as African Americans (e.g., Landrine & Klonoff, 1996). Soriano et al. (2004) are extending the relevance of the concept even further by suggesting that acculturation is a relevant experience even for nonminority populations. As such, acculturation is considered a process whereby cultural adaptation and change take place when two or more cultures are in contact with one another. Contact can also include exposure to cultures observed through the media, such as the adoption of the values and behaviors of Black youth culture, including forms of speech, music, and dress, by White non-Hispanic populations having little contact with Black populations. Some experts believe this type of media exposure will lead to what is considered a "global" or "national" culture (Cowen, 2002).

The concept of ethnic identity differs from acculturation (Hutnik, 1991; Phinney, 1990). Ethnic identity has been empirically treated as a component of social identity, as a feeling of belonging and commitment to shared values and attitudes tied to a person's cultural group of origin (Liebkind, 1996). Studies show that ethnic identity is important for intergroup relations (c.f., Triandis & Trafimow, 2001; Liebkind, 2001), which also require a consideration of psychosocial factors, such as an individual's security within the culture of origin (Jackson & Smith, 1999). Whether the mixture of different ethnic groups is regarded as a melting pot or a mosaic, the components of the mixture are undeniably more diverse and in closer proximity to each other in many cities. An important focus of urban psychology will be the study of individual and social psychological change within urban settings, including the study of cultural change, identity, and adaptation.

Aging in Cities

The habitability of urban environments for older adults has been the focus of four decades of research. Historically, there were concerns that urban centers were particularly inhospitable places for the aged, who could become socially isolated, had tenuous ties to their communities, and were vulnerable to crime (Lawton & Kleban, 1971). Research has documented that most urban-residing older adults have reasonably well-developed social ties and are, in fact, less likely to

be subjected to crime than younger individuals. With the economic improvement of many of America's urban centers, urban residence offers many advantages to older people relative to its suburban and rural counterparts.

Thirty percent of older Americans live in cities compared with 43% in suburbs and 27% in rural areas (U.S. Census Bureau, 1993). Studies of the economic well-being of metropolitan- versus non-metropolitan-residing older persons indicate that on the whole, the former are financially better off (Miller & Montalto, 1998). Compared with rural residents, urban older residents often have better access to age peers because of the greater availability of public transportation. Transportation is a critical issue for older adults who may have increased difficulty driving. Frail rural and suburban residents face more difficulty accessing social and recreational opportunities, as well as medical care, compared with older urban residents. Patterns and meaning of social ties differ in urban and nonurban older adults, reflecting the differing social ecologies of these environments (Felton, Hinrichsen, & Tsemberis, 1981). Some studies suggest that urban-residing older adults evidence better emotional well-being and health compared to their rural counterparts.

Nonetheless, some urban older residents face especially difficult challenges. Low-income, older city dwellers must deal with the high financial cost of urban life. Poorer urban elderly adults often live in neighborhoods with higher rates of crime. Black and Hispanic elderly adults are disproportionately poor. Although the rate of poverty among all older Americans is 11%, among older divorced Black women, it is 47% (Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics, 2000). Older persons living in poorer neighborhoods usually have less convenient transportation alternatives than their wealthier counterparts, and access to medical, social, and related services may be more difficult. Historically, urban minorities have been discriminated against in access to high-quality health care and may be reluctant to use existing health care systems based on earlier life experiences (Harper, 1990).

Despite calls for the development of culturally sensitive health and mental health care delivery systems for older persons, programs have been slow to develop. A notable exception is a geropsychology training program funded through the federal Graduate Psychology Education (GPE) grant mechanism. The Ferkauff Graduate School of Yeshiva University in New York City is the site of the GPE-funded project, "Doctoral Geropsychology Training in a Primary Care Setting." The program places graduate students in various service delivery settings in New York City's Bronx borough, where there is a high proportion of minority older persons. Of particular note is a placement in one hospital where trainees work in collaboration with medical care providers. Psychology trainees assess and treat chiefly poor minority older adults with mental health problems, who otherwise would not have sought mental health care. The program provides an opportunity for psychology trainees to learn how to provide age- and culturally sensitive services and serves as a model for the provision of mental health care services to urban older residents.

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Individuals

For decades, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) individuals have made their homes in large metropolitan centers, including New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Urban areas in the South, including Atlanta, Miami, and Houston, have also become increasingly popular choices for LGBT individuals during the last 20 years. Such environments offer LGBT people a greater sense of tolerance and acceptance than that experienced by those living in nonurban areas. More opportunities for association with peers and support systems in the form of community-based organizations and advocacy for the LGBT population by local political leaders are two reasons for this difference.

Historically, urban centers have provided LGBT individuals with opportunities to express themselves and to form communities (Berube, 1990; D'Augelli & Garnets, 1995; D'Emilio, 1983; Kennedy & Davis, 1993). Across the 19th and 20th centuries, urban environments in this country and abroad (e.g., London, Paris) have been the sites of large lesbian and gay communities (Faderman, 1991). D'Emilio (1983) credits the immigration of lesbians and gay men to urban centers following WWII as crucial in the evolution of the creation of the modern gay and lesbian identity and culture. The anonymous nature of cities; the separation from family and traditional social ties;

and the increased presence of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered individuals in one location provided opportunities for self-discovery, self-expression, relationship formation, and community identity (Berube, 1990; D'Emilio, 1983; Kennedy & Davis, 1993). This was true across ethnic groups (D'Augelli & Garnets, 1995), as well as in smaller urban centers (Kennedy & Davis, 1993). It was in the large urban centers that the first political and social organizations for lesbian and gay men were started (D'Emilio, 1983).

D'Emilio, Berube, and others (D'Augelli & Garnets, 1995) credit the urbanization of lesbian and gay culture with the birth of the LGBT rights movement. The presence of LGBT communities in urban centers has also strengthened these centers by providing economic and cultural vitality. In certain sectors of the country, the LGBT community has brought about the economic renaissance of depressed or stagnant communities (e.g., Asbury Park, NJ; Rosendale, NY; Fort Lauderdale, FL; sections of Chicago, IL).

Regardless of these advantages, LGBT individuals in urban centers face a unique set of problems that affect both their physical and mental health. Issues of marginalization, the interaction between city demands and homophobic attitudes evident in cities, the intimate connection between mental health issues and risk behaviors, the rise in new HIV infections, and the high rates of substance abuse in these environments create a situation that places many urban LGBT individuals at risk.

Issues of marginalization are evident even in urban centers. Homophobic attitudes extant in these environments have been exacerbated recently as the issue of same-sex marriage has gained worldwide attention.

Like all individuals living in urban centers, LGBT people also experience the stressors brought forth by living in a highly populated area and the quick-pace lifestyle that such environments demand. For LGBT individuals living in urban areas, however, these stressors are compounded by the perpetuation of homophobic views. As a result, LGBT individuals living in urban centers often experience struggles with mental health. Stall et al. (2003) show the intimate link that exists between mental health issues and the drug-using and sexual-risk-taking behaviors certain segments of the LGBT communities in urban centers undertake that further place the physical and mental health of LGBT individuals at risk. These findings corroborate previous work that has demonstrated the association between the stressors that LGBT individuals experience and depressive symptoms (Lewis, Derlega, Griffin, & Krowinski, 2003).

The HIV/AIDS epidemic of the last 20 years has also devastated LGBT communities in large urban centers. However, these urban environments have also given birth to community organizations (such as Gay Men's Health Crisis) that have brought together many elements in the community to support those who are affected by HIV/AIDS, and have given rise to political organizations (ACT-UP and Queer Nation). Nonetheless, recent increases in HIV infections among gay and bisexual men in particular (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003) suggest a resurgence or a second wave in the HIV epidemic (Wolitski, Valdisserri, Denning, & Levine, 2001), which creates further stress for individuals living in these HIV epicenters. The fact that many of these new infections occur among younger gay and bisexual men who are also men of color indicates the complex interplay between race/ethnicity and culture, sexuality, access to care, and generational factors evident in these urban centers in which LGBT individuals reside. In addition, events like those of 9/11 have served to further exacerbate the stressors related to HIV (Halkitis, Kutnick, Rosof, Slater, & Parsons, 2003).

Finally, for close to a century, research has documented the abuse of substances (including alcohol and tobacco) by LGBT individuals associated with the stressors that LGBT people face (Finlon, 2002). More recently, substance abuse has been noted in older LGBT individuals who age in large LGBT urban centers and who continue to experience problems with substance abuse compounded by ageism and loneliness (Jones, 2001). The recent emergence of a powerful set of substances known as club drugs has created yet another burden for urban LGBT communities. Methamphetamine, in particular because of its enormously powerful intoxicating and disinhibiting effects and its association with sexual risk taking, has created an enormously dangerous situation for the LGBT communities of the United States (Halkitis, Parsons, & Stirratt, 2001; Halkitis, Parsons, & Wilton, 2003).

The aforementioned issues create the potential for a physical and mental health crisis among

LGBT individuals living in urban centers. While considerable research has focused on the problems of LGBT people, studies are limited that address the protective factors necessary to address the psychological and physical health needs of LGBT individuals living in these urban centers and the successes of many LGBT people who thrive in metropolitan areas. While future endeavors should clearly attempt to consider stressors that urban LGBT people face, a positive psychological approach is also needed to understand the role of resiliency and the ways in which cities benefit from the talents and resources that LGBT individuals provide.

Gender and Urban Context

In recent years, scholars have pointed out that urban spaces often overlook the needs of women in context. This may be attributed to their physical differences from men and their socially ascribed roles as workers, mothers, caretakers, and decision makers (Beall, 1997; Spain, 2001). The limited work that has been done on gender and urban space has remained largely isolated in feminist scholarship in sociology (Spain, 2001), with almost a total absence of such work in the field of psychology. Within the past few decades, sociologists have begun to integrate gender relations into postmodern urban theory. Applying a gender perspective to urban theory in her conceptualization of the "thereness" of women, Lofland (1975) points out that women perform much of the invisible work of maintaining urban neighborhoods through daily routines. Subsequent work identifies women's voluntary community work as an essential link between the home and the workplace (Milroy & Wismer, 1994).

Appleton (1995) discusses the notion of "gender regime" as the way gender is shaped by and shapes a particular social institution or a coinfluence of social institutions, in the case of an urban area or city. She further describes urban gender regimes in terms of the prevailing ideologies of how men and women should act, think, and feel; the availability of cultural and behavioral alternatives to those ideologies; men's and women's access to social positions and control of resources; and the relationships between men and women. In Appleton's analysis, cities are described as varying in their gender regimes, with consequences for the degree and legitimacy of gender stratification. For example, the variation in cities' zoning regulations and support for public transportation with such policies has a significant effect on women's access to paid work. Cities, in comparison to other areas, have a significantly larger proportion of heterosexual, lesbian, and bisexual adults, which, in turn, may influence residents' perceptions of what constitutes an "acceptable" adult lifestyle.

Women and men contribute to and experience the urban context in different ways. Cities offer both increased assess to education, employment opportunities, mass transportation, diverse potential partners, and various cultural outlets. On the other hand, and oftentimes related to the structural environment of urban areas, women face particular insecurities and dangers that place them at greater risk for victimization. For example, it has been noted that women in cities depend more on public transportation than men, and they tend to walk, rather than rely on private vehicles or other forms of transportation (Beall, 1997). This can place them at increased risk for certain kinds of assault. In fact, statistics released from the U.S. Department of Justice (2000) indicate that women living in urban areas are raped or sexually assaulted at rates 53% higher than suburban or rural women. Further, these statistics indicate that female-headed households in urban areas are more likely to be burglarized than urban male-headed households.

There also appears to be some disparity in the social well-being of male and female heads of households within urban populations. Mapalad-Ruane and Rodriguez (2003) note that although empirical research linking gender to urban quality of life has been largely absent, if there is a link, it could be made by pointing to the fact that there is a higher incidence of poverty among female-headed households in general, and households in urban areas in particular. Calculating well-being indexes for 745 U.S. urban counties and presenting detailed results for the 50 largest counties, Mapalad-Ruane and Rodriguez found a well-being gap between male- and female-headed households, with female-headed households at the lower end. These results clearly point to the need for psychologists to concentrate on gender relations within the urban context, focusing specifically on the interactive effects of various aspects of the urban context (e.g., population size and density, diversity) and gender on the well-being of residents.

Intergroup Relations

Multicultural populations concentrated in urban areas often result in intercultural group conflict and tensions, evidenced in areas such as Watts in Los Angeles, where various immigrant populations are moving into traditionally African American communities. However, even in such neighborhoods, not all social indicators reveal negative interactions. Urban environments also offer opportunities for heightened interaction among intercultural and interracial groups that lead to harmony and sensitivity. This contact is considered vital for increasing intercultural understanding and decreasing prejudice and stereotyping. Indeed, decades of psychological research have held that contact between groups under optimal conditions is critical for reducing prejudice (Williams, 1947; Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1971; Pettigrew, 1986; Brewer & Miller, 1988). Allport (see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000 for a recent review) held that prejudice would be reduced only under specific conditions: (a) equal status between the groups, (b) common goals, (c) no competition between the groups, and (d) authority sanction for the contact. Sherif, Harvey, Hood, & Sherif (1961) stressed the nature of the contact in terms of purpose, interdependence, and social power differentials for the realization of benefits from interracial or intercultural contact (Soriano, 1998). Pettigrew & Tropp (2000) reported recent meta-analytic findings supporting the importance of optimal intergroup contact to efforts to reduce prejudice. More specifically, their findings suggest: (a) programs to reduce prejudice should incorporate Allport's four key situational conditions and foster cross-group friendship; (b) the perspectives of both groups, especially those of the lower status groups, must be carefully considered; (c) because optimal intergroup contact has the potential to improve a variety of the components of prejudice (i.e., affect, beliefs, social distance, and stereotypes), structured contact should not focus on just one or two of the components; (d) contact in work and organizational settings has far stronger effects than in travel and tourism settings; (e) creating situations that counter prevailing negative stereotypes is important; and (f) social-structural changes in institutions are necessary to provide opportunities for optimal intergroup contact on a scale sweeping enough to make a societal difference (pp. 110-111). Urban psychology has an opportunity to contribute further to our understanding of not only intergroup conflict, but of intergroup cooperation and harmony as well.

Segregation is a common characteristic of urban environments and a condition that can be understood within the context of intercultural group relations and conflict. That is, segregation can be thought of as an indicator of poor intercultural group relations in urban sectors because in extreme cases cultural isolation is the result. For example, Massey and Denton (1993) document that indices of Black-White segregation and Black isolation, while generally high, are even more extreme in cities (Massey & Denton, 1993). Despite broader, though not fully effective, enforcement of discriminatory housing segregation, racial groups continue to live in highly segregated areas. As addressed later in this report, studies suggest that this segregation has negative implications for job attainment and career mobility (Cotter, Hermsen, & Vanneman, 2003; Jackman, 1994). Massey and Denton (1993) coined the term "hypersegregation" to identify those metropolitan areas that had an index of higher than 60% on at least four of the five dimensions of segregation: (a) evenness or dissimilarity (spatial separation between Blacks and Whites), (b) isolation (living in neighborhoods more than 80% Black), (c) clustering (extent to which minority areas adjoin one another; spatially maximized when Black neighborhoods form one large, contiguous ghetto), (d) centralization (the degree to which Blacks are distributed in and around the center of an urban area), and (e) concentration (relative amount of physical space occupied by Blacks). Blacks are increasingly confined to smaller, more compact areas as segregation increases.

Over the last three decades, high levels of immigration have had important implications for segregation and isolation for Asian and Hispanic populations. The greater and more rapid the immigration, the more pronounced the increase in segregation. Asian segregation indices have seen fluctuations from lows in 1970 to increases between 1980 and 1990 to restoring the indices to their 1970s levels. The rapid Asian immigration into moderately segregated communities produced sharp increases in the extent of isolation, with the most pronounced in areas where large numbers of South-East refugees settled. Trends are also moving in the direction of high segregation and rising isolation among Hispanics. However, despite these large increases, the index of Asian and/or Hispanic segregation in any metropolitan area did

not approach the high levels characteristic of Blacks in the largest metropolitan areas of the United States. The largest and most segregated Asian communities in the United States are much less isolated than the most integrated Black communities as well (Massey, 2003).

Massey and Denton (1993) note that a high level of segregation on any single dimension is problematic because it isolates a minority group from amenities, resources, and opportunities that affect socioeconomic well-being. Blacks are more segregated than other groups on any single dimension, as well as across all dimensions simultaneously (Massey, 2003). Based on his review, Massey (2003) concludes that several actions are necessary to eliminate residential segregation. Three of the proposed actions are of particular importance to this discussion: (a) the need to incorporate the effects of racial segregation more fully into theories about the perpetuation of poverty, (b) the need to incorporate desegregation efforts more directly into public policy developed to ameliorate urban poverty, and (c) the need to increase the severity of penalties for hate crimes directed against Blacks moving into White neighborhoods beyond ordinary acts of vandalism or assault and prosecute them at the federal level as violations of the victim's civil rights. Yet again, research suggests that living in segregated environments can also have positive outcomes on subjective well-being, such as self-esteem and increased cultural pride among adolescent youth (Postmes & Branscombe, 2002).

SES and Family Structure

Though the national poverty rate fell steadily between 1993 and 2000, recent data indicate that more than 11% of the U.S. population lived in poverty in the year 2001. In metropolitan areas, 11.1% lived below the poverty level, whereas within more concentrated central cities, the comparable number was 16.5% (U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March 2002). However, these numbers mask important differences in race, ethnicity, and family structure. More than 20% of individuals who self-identified their race as Black (which may or may not include Hispanic ethnicity) or who identified their ethnicity as Hispanic (irrespective of race) lived below the poverty level in both metropolitan areas (21.4% of Blacks; 21.2% of Hispanics) and central cities (26.1% of Blacks; 23.9% of Hispanics) in 2001. The numbers were higher still for female-headed households. In metropolitan areas, 27.3% of these families lived in poverty, whereas almost 34% of female-headed households lived below the poverty level in central cities in 2001 (U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March 2002). About 36% of Black female-headed households and almost 38% of Hispanics lived in poverty in metropolitan areas and 40.3% and 41.9% of Black and Hispanic female-headed households, respectively, lived in poverty in central cities. For female-headed households with children under the age of 6, the picture is even bleaker. Almost half or more lived below the poverty level in 2001, whether in metropolitan areas (47.4%, irrespective of race or ethnicity) or central cities (53%), or Black or Hispanic female-headed households within those areas (53.3% of Blacks and 54.6% of Hispanics in metropolitan areas; 58.5% of Blacks and 58% of Hispanics in central cities).

Urban Social Issues

Concentrated Poverty and Economic Segregation

For many, the image of an urban neighborhood is one of concentrated poverty—neighborhoods composed of the poorest poor—and typically, minority poor. This image largely reflects the fact that during the last several decades, poverty in the United States became more urbanized. In 1959, 27% of poor people lived in cities; by 1985, 41% of poor people lived in cities. During this same period, the number of people living in high-poverty or underclass neighborhoods (i.e., those in which 40% or more of the residents are poor according to the federal poverty standard) doubled, concentrating large numbers of poor families together within neighborhoods (Jargowsky & Bane, 1990). Importantly, the actual number of poor families did not increase during this period. The change was not in poverty per se, but in the spatial organization of poverty. More poor people lived near other poor people in neighborhoods with high poverty rates—these individuals becoming more physically isolated from the social and economic mainstream of society (Jargowsky, 1997, 2003; Massey & Denton, 1993; Wilson, 1987, 1996).

As discussed in other sections of this report, not only is poverty an issue of obvious concern, but the spatial concentration of children and families living in poverty is of particular concern and deserving of

attention. Poor children and families living in these neighborhoods not only lack basic necessities in their own homes, but live in a context that exacerbates the impact of individual poverty. Concentration of poverty is associated with the concentration of other social problems and risks, including joblessness, teen childbearing, drug use, and single parenthood. Children living in these neighborhoods are exposed to high rates of crime and violence, live in substandard housing, and are likely to attend low-performing schools (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Sealand, 1993; Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Leventhal, & Aber, 1997; Coulton & Pandey, 1992; Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997). Families and individuals living in poor neighborhoods often bring a variety of skills and resilience to the job of living, but the deficits of isolation and inadequate-to-nonexistent resources frequently overwhelm these strengths (Gorman-Smith, Tolan, & Henry, 2000).

The residents of neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, who experience these multiple forms of social and economic disadvantage, are disproportionately members of minority groups (Jargowsky & Bane, 1990). Between 1980 and 1990, concentrated poverty among Blacks grew, both in terms of the absolute number of Blacks and the percentage of the Black population living in poverty, with 23.7% of Blacks living in underclass neighborhoods by 1990 (Jargowsky, 1994, 1997). The percentage of metropolitan, Black poor people living in such areas increased from 37.2% to 45.4%. The chance that a poor Black child resided in a high-poverty neighborhood increased from roughly one in four to one in three (Jargowsky, 2003). These data highlight the fact that the effects of urban poverty are largely tied to the effects of race (Wilson, 1987, 1996).

A variety of theories exist regarding the increased concentration of poor minority families in urban neighborhoods. Massey and Denton (1993) argue that racial segregation is responsible for the creation of this urban underclass. They argue that institutional racism is pervasive in American society, denying Blacks equal access to benefits such as education and employment; racism supports the geographic isolation of African Americans. Wilson (1987) argues that the deindustrialization of the U.S. economy, the shift of jobs from cities to suburbs, and the flight of the minority middle class from the inner cities led to more concentrated poverty in some urban areas. He argues further that people living in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty have become isolated from job networks, mainstream institutions, and role models and that their increasing isolation is related to such problems as school dropouts, joblessness, out-of-wedlock births, the proliferation of single-parent families, and violence. Both arguments can be supported by data, and it is likely that this complicated combination of social and structural factors has contributed over time.

Although dramatic shifts occured in the spatial organization of concentrated poverty from the 1970s to the 1990s, data from the 2000 census identifies more positive changes during the 1990s (Jargowsky, 2003). The number of people living in underclass neighborhoods declined by 24% or 2.5 million people. The steepest declines occurred in metropolitan areas in the Midwest and South. For example, in Detroit, the number of people living in underclass neighborhoods dropped by almost 75%. In Chicago, the number dropped by 43%. In addition, concentrated poverty declined among all racial and ethnic groups, especially African Americans. The number of African Americans living in underclass neighborhoods declined from 30% in 1990 to 19% in 2000. As discussed later in this section, these trends are likely due, at least in part, to focused efforts within some major cities to change the nature and concentration of poor housing within some neighborhoods (Goering & Feins, 2003; Goetz 2003).

Although these trends are positive, the impact of the recent economic downturn is unknown. Also, although there has been a substantial decrease in the number of poor persons living in high-poverty areas, there are still 3.5 million people living in areas of concentrated poverty. Importantly, the poverty rate for U.S. children under age 3 years remains high despite the recent decline. In 2000, nearly 40% of all children under age 3 years lived in poor or nearly poor families (National Center for Children in Poverty, 2002). Young minority children continue to have significantly higher poverty rates than White children. The poverty rate for young Black and Hispanic children under age 3 years is still 3 times higher than that for White children under age 3 years. The impact of the economic and social isolation of these children and families continues to be one of great concern.

Children living in impoverished, particularly underclass, urban neighborhoods are at increased risk for most behavioral, social, and psychological problems (Children's Defense Fund, 1991). For example, Tolan and colleagues (1995), using the criteria for inner-city of 40% or more households below poverty level, found that rates for all types of psychopathology among children living in inner-city neighborhoods were elevated above national rates, with rates of aggression and delinquency 2.5 and 2.8 times greater than the national rate in the inner-city communities respectively. Similarly, Crane (1991) reports a sharp increase in risk of school dropout and teen pregnancy for adolescents living in inner-city or underclass neighborhoods over that found in other urban communities. These findings suggest a particularly risky developmental ecology associated with inner-city residence.

While many low-income neighborhoods in large cities present concentrations in crime and violence, research findings show that even in these environments, the majority of children exposed to such potent risk factors become healthy and competent adults (Henderson, 1998). Despite social and economic disconnection, many families protect, nurture, and support their children toward conventional success and integration into the larger society. What accounts for these differences in response to risk among families and what factors promote positive child development in these settings? As Goldstein and Soriano (1995) suggest, in relationship to the proportion of youth in gangs, the question is not why an estimated 10% of youth living in high-crime areas become involved in gangs, but rather why only 10% do so? These are the questions that beg empirical inquiry, which research psychologists in the emerging field of urban psychology will want to address.

Recognizing the impact of living in areas of concentrated poverty on children and families, several housing studies have been conducted to evaluate the effects of helping low-income families with children to move from public and assisted housing in high-poverty, inner-city neighborhoods to middle-class neighborhoods throughout a metropolitan area. The Gautreaux Initiative in Chicago suggests a number of positive effects on employment and educational outcomes, but is not a randomized trial, thus generalization of results is limited. As a result of these positive effects, however, the Moving to Opportunity (MTO) demonstration project was designed, through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as a randomized trial to more rigorously evaluate the impacts of such a program (Shroder, 2001).

In Moving to Opportunity, families were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: (a) an experimental or treatment group that received Section 8 housing vouchers and special assistance to move with the requirement that the move be to a low-poverty neighborhood, (b) a control group that received Section 8 housing vouchers but no special assistance and no stipulation as to where to move, or (c) a second control group that did not receive vouchers or special assistance and remained in public housing. Five years after the move, researchers found positive impacts on personal safety, housing quality, mental health, and obesity among adults and mental health, delinquency, and risky behavior among teenage girls. Also found, however, were negative effects on boys' behavior. Although boys initially showed short-term improvements in delinquent behaviors following a move to lower-poverty areas, long-term follow-up (5 years after the move) found increased involvement in risky behaviors, including substance use and delinquency and increased risk for physical health problems (Feins & McInnis, 2001; Kling & Liebman, 2004). Families with both male and female children moved to similar neighborhoods, suggesting differences in outcomes are not the result of exposure to different kinds of neighborhoods, but because male and female youth respond to their environments (or the change) in different ways (Kling, Ludwig, & Katz, 2005). A clear understanding of these differences in patterns of response should be sought by urban psychology.

The economic segregation that typifies many urban areas means that, whereas some parts of cities are characterized by concentrated poverty, other areas within cities and the surrounding metropolitan regions are characterized by extreme affluence. While there is an ever growing empirical literature on the impact of poverty and living in areas of concentrated disadvantage, there has been almost no research on those living at the other end of the socioeconomic spectrum—those living in areas of concentrated affluence. This likely reflects two interrelated assumptions. The first is that there is no difference between the affluent and the middle-class majority, who have been studied, and the second is that, given their

privileged circumstances, it is unlikely they have problems worthy of study (Luthar, 2003). Neither of these assumptions has been evaluated, however, and the limited data available suggest they are not likely true. In addition, the impact on low-income families of proximity to affluent families needs to be better understood.

Crime and Violence

Violence disproportionately affects urban residents. The U.S. Department of Justice (2000) reports that during 1998, 29% of the population lived in urban communities, although urban residents sustained 38% of all violent and property crime victimizations. Residents of urban communities experienced more violent crime, rape and sexual assault, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, and personal theft than did suburban or rural residents. The overall average violent-crime rate in urban areas was about 74% higher than the average rural rate, and 37% higher than the average suburban rate. Also, urban victims of violent crime were more likely than suburban or rural crime victims to be victimized by a stranger (respectively 53%, 47%, and 34% victims of violent crime). Urban homes also sustained more property crime, burglary, and motor vehicle theft than suburban or rural households.

The rates of personal victimization are also high, with 63 per 1,000 urban residents having been the victim of a violent crime between 1993 and 1998, compared with 45 per 1,000 suburban and 35 per 1,000 rural residents. Victimization rates are much higher among males, African Americans, youth, and low-income individuals. Urban males experienced 87% more violent victimizations than rural males and 47% more than urban females. African American residents of urban neighborhoods experienced 68 violent victimizations per 1,000, while urban White residents were victimized at a rate of 59 per 1,000. Youth (those between 12 and 20) in all areas experienced violent crime more than all other age groups, and urban youth experienced the highest rates.

Crime and violence, however, are not evenly distributed across all neighborhoods. Much of this violence is concentrated in the poorest urban neighborhoods. Research has consistently found that increasing concentration of poverty is associated with increases in violence (Land, McCall, & Cohen, 1990; Taylor & Covington, 1988). Although the concentration of violence and connection to poor urban neighborhoods is well established, the explanation for this relation is less clear. In a now-classic paper on neighborhood effects, Jencks and Mayer (1990) identified five theoretical frameworks for linking neighborhood to individual behavior. The theoretical models include: (a) collective socialization models that suggest neighborhoods influence child development through community social organization, including the presence of adult role models and supervision and monitoring by adults and others in the community; (b) relative deprivation models that suggest individuals evaluate their own situations relative to neighbors' or peers' and react to perceived differences and that deviant behavior is a consequence of these individuals' judgments; (c) contagion models that suggest negative or disruptive behavior of neighbors and peers strongly influences the behavior of others; (d) models of competition that suggest neighbors or peers compete for scarce community resources; and (e) neighborhood institutional resource models that suggest that the neighborhood affects children through access to resources that promote healthy development and provide stimulating learning and social environments, such as parks, libraries, community centers, and community services.

More recent research has focused on neighborhood social organization and social control as important in understanding neighborhood variations in crime and violence. The social organization of a neighborhood is reflected in processes such as social support and cohesion among neighbors, a sense of belonging to the community, the supervision and control of children and adolescents by other adults in the community, and participation in formal and voluntary organizations. The data suggest that within poor urban neighborhoods, the structural barriers of the neighborhood can impede the development of neighborhood social organization, and, in turn, lack of neighborhood social organization increases the risk for crime and violence (Sampson, Morenoff, & Earls, 1999; Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997). Perhaps the most influential study among the current literature is the report of Sampson et al. (1997) that applies an elegant multilevel sampling procedure to evaluate these relations. They find that the relation of community structural characteristics to crime is mediated by neighborhood social processes. Sampson et al. (1997) label these

processes "collective efficacy." Collective efficacy refers to the extent of social connection within the neighborhood combined with the degree of informal social control (extent to which residents monitor the behavior of others with the goal of supervising and monitoring children and maintaining public order). Thus, this community-level comparison suggests that characteristics of neighborhood social processes are important in understanding how communities relate to delinquent behavior and should be included in risk studies.

The good news is that rates of violent crime have been decreasing since the early 1990s (U.S. Department of Justice, 2000). This is especially true of violent crime committed by youth (Butts & Travis, 2002). Violent crime in the United States decreased for 6 straight years, from 1994 to 2000, and the rate of juvenile crime in 2000 was lower than at any time in the previous two decades (Butts & Travis, 2002). However, despite the trend in a positive direction, crime and violence are still major problems in the United States, particularly in urban neighborhoods.

Given the high rates of crime and violence, the impact of victimization and exposure to community violence has become an issue of national concern. Research is clear that it is not just direct victimization that affects health and development, but also witnessing violence or having a close friend or family member who is a victim. Not surprisingly, much of the research conducted has focused on the impact of exposure to violence among children living in poor, urban neighborhoods plagued by high rates of violence. Studies show that between 50% and 96% of urban children have witnessed community violence in their lifetimes (Fitzpatrick & Boldizar, 1993; Gorman-Smith & Tolan, 1998; Miller, Wasserman, Neugebauer, Gorman-Smith, & Kamboukos, 1999; Richters & Martinez, 1993a; Schwab-Stone et al., 1995); much of the violence is serious. In a study of 6- to 10-year-old boys in New York City, 35% reported witnessing a stabbing, 33% had seen someone get shot, 23% had seen a dead body in their neighborhood, and 25% had seen someone get killed (Miller et al., 1999). Further, children living in poor, urban communities are often exposed to multiple violent events and a variety of types of violence. In studies of youth in Chicago, 45% reported having witnessed more than one violent event (Bell & Jenkins, 1993), and 30% had seen three or more such events (Gorman-Smith & Tolan, 1998). In both the Richters and Martinez (1993) sample of fifth and sixth graders and the Jenkins and Bell (1994) high school sample, 70% of the youth witnessing a shooting had seen two or more. Also, children are often close to the individuals whose victimization they witnessed (Jenkins & Bell, 1994). In the Chicago sample, 70% of those witnessing a shooting or stabbing reported that the closest victim was a friend or family member.

This exposure threatens healthy development and is related to a host of short- and long-term developmental problems. Children and adolescents exposed to violence have more academic and internalizing problems, including symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety disorder, and depression, as well as externalizing disorders, such as aggression and violence (Cooley-Quille, Boyd, Frantz, & Walsh, 2001; Gorman-Smith, Henry, & Tolan, 2004; Gorman-Smith & Tolan, 1998; Kliewer, Lepore, Oskin, & Johnson, 1998; Richters & Martinez, 1993a; Schwab-Stone et al., 1995).

Exposure to violence and living in high-crime neighborhoods affects adults as well. Not surprisingly, residents in poor urban neighborhoods report a greater fear of crime or victimization (Perkins & Taylor, 1996; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981). Fear of crime has been related to stress, anxiety, and other types of mental health problems (Taylor, Perkins, Shumaker, & Meeks, 1990; White, Kasl, Zahner, & Will, 1987). High-crime and violent neighborhoods pose challenges, often leading parents to exert more control over their children in order to protect them. For example, Earls, McGuire, and Shay (1994) found that parents who reported living in more dangerous neighborhoods also reported using more harsh control and verbal aggression with their children than did parents who resided in less dangerous neighborhoods. When parents move out of violent neighborhoods into safer environments, their parenting strategies become less restrictive (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2001).

In addition to conducting research to better understand the causes of violence, the impact of exposure to violence, and mediators and moderators of risk, psychologists have focused on intervention and prevention strategies. Potential strategies for intervention fall into three broad categories: (1) community-level interventions to reduce the occurrence of violence, including community policing; (2) interventions with families to

help support parenting and other aspects of family functioning, decrease risk for involvement in violence, and promote positive development among children and youth exposed to violence; and (3) individual-level interventions, most often focused on children and adolescents, to change beliefs about and support for violence. Space limitations preclude a full review of these interventions, but several thorough reviews have been published (see Prothrow-Stith, 2002; Tolan & Guerra, 1994; Wasserman & Miller, 1997). Because psychologists tend to focus on individual- and family level interventions, two examples of community-level interventions are described here.

Communities that Care (CTC) is one example of a program that addresses risk at the community level (Hawkins & Catalano, 1992). The CTC model is based on research that has identified risk factors for substance abuse or other problem behaviors in four areas of a child's life: community, home, school, and peer group. CTC focuses on reducing the risk factors that are most problematic in a specific community. CTC is not a "one size fits all" prevention approach; it allows individuals to assess their community's risks and resources, and to select programs and strategies specifically tailored to their community's needs. Thus, the targeted risk factors and prevention plan may be quite different from community to community. The program can also foster the protective factors or characteristics, skills, and abilities that build resilient children and buffer them against risk.

Other broad-based community efforts have included community-policing programs, such as Operation Ceasefire in Boston, which grew out of the Gun Project Working Group and sought to lower youth homicide by directly attacking the illegal gun trade and creating a strong deterrent to gang violence (Braga, Kennedy, Waring, & Piehl, 2001; Kennedy, Piehl, & Braga, 1996; Piehl, Kennedy, & Braga, 2000). Targeted and strong enforcement by police and the legal system, as well as coalitions providing services and other kinds of help to gang members (e.g., street workers, probation and parole officers, churches, community groups), significantly reduced youth violence over the course of the intervention, with the number of monthly youth homicides reduced by 63% in the first year (Braga et al., 2001).

The APA ACT (Adults and Children Together Against Violence) initiative is another example of the numerous efforts of psychologists to prevent violence. ACT, focused largely in urban areas, is a national initiative emphasizing the importance of early prevention by raising awareness and educating adults and communities about their important role in creating an environment that protects children from violence. (See the ACT Web site at www.actagainstviolence.org for more information.)

The multiple levels of a system in which crime and violence are embedded make the issues of intervention and prevention quite complex. Urban psychologists must continue to evaluate the harmful psychological effects of crime and violence in many urban inner-city communities and develop intervention and prevention programs modeled after these and other successful community efforts.

Prisoner Reentry Into Communities

Rising incarceration rates have made the process of prisoners returning to society an issue of pressing concern. Nationwide, about 630,000 inmates were released from state and federal prisons in 2001. This number represents a fourfold increase over the past 25 years (Lynch & Sobol, 2001). Reentry concerns are most prominent in major metropolitan areas across the country, as about two thirds of the prisoners released will return to central cities, most often concentrated within a few neighborhoods within those cities. For example, in Illinois in 2001, just over half of released prisoners returned to the city of Chicago. Of that group, 34% returned to just 6 of Chicago's 77 communities (LaVigne, Mamalian, Travis, & Visher, 2003).[2] These six neighborhoods are among the most socially and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in the city, characterized by high concentrations of families living below the poverty level, high rates of female-headed households, and low rates of owner-occupied homes with implications for these men and women and for the communities to which they return.[3]

For men and women returning from prison, the availability of jobs, adequate housing, and the accessibility of social services (i.e., heath, mental health, substance abuse treatment) are very likely to affect the transition from prison to the community

2 To put these numbers in perspective, in 2001, 30,068 men and women were released from Illinois prisons; 15,488 returned to the city of Chicago, and 4,398 (34%) returned to six Chicago communities--Austin, Humboldt Park, North Lawndale, Englewood, West Englewood, and East Garfield Park.

3 90% of released prisoners are male.

and subsequent recidivism (Vigilante, Flynn, Affleck et al., 1999). Unfortunately, a large number of prisoners are returning to neighborhoods with relatively scarce social and economic resources, undermining chances for successful reentry. Even when there are resources available, it is not clear whether returning prisoners are aware of these resources or if agencies within these neighborhoods could ever meet the demand with such high numbers of returning prisoners (LaVigne, Mamalian, Travis, & Visher, 2003). As community members vie for scarce resources, a history of criminal involvement can create additional barriers to employment, housing, and eligibility for other forms of social and economic support. For example, in Chicago, the Chicago Housing Authority bans individuals convicted of drug-related or violent crimes from public housing for up to 3 years postincarceration (Chicago Housing Authority, 2003). Thus, a large number of prisoners are returning to communities that have limited resources and characteristics that almost ensure unsuccessful reentry to the community.

Compared with the general population, prisoners experience higher rates of mental illness, with approximately 10% of state prisoners reported to have a mental illness, compared with 2% of the general population (Maruschak & Beck, 2001). An additional 14% reported having a learning or speech disability, 14% a hearing or vision problem, and 12% a physical condition. With regard to physical health needs, in 2000, 2.2% of state prisoners were HIV positive. In a study of prisoners returning home in Baltimore, almost 40% reported at least one serious physical ailment, with asthma and high blood pressure being the most commonly reported. The physical and mental health needs of returning prisoners can easily overwhelm a community.

Such high concentrations of people cycling in and out of prison also have important implications for communities. This constant cycle is likely to destabilize social networks and social relationships within the neighborhood. Some research suggests that weakened social organization and social networks are related to increased crime (Lynch & Sobol, 2001; Rose & Clear, 1998). In addition to the potential for increases in crime and concerns regarding public safety, higher concentrations of prisoners reentering a community can generate costs to the community, including potential increases in rates of unemployment and homelessness (Hammett, Roberts, & Kennedy, 2001).

Imprisonment and reentry not only affect the individuals who have been in prison, but also the lives of children and other family members. More than half of the 1.4 million adults incarcerated in state and federal prisons are parents of minor children (Harrison & Beck, 2002). Minority children living in urban communities are disproportionately affected, increasing the risk for behavioral and emotional problems for children already at increased risk for problem behaviors. Research suggests that parental separation due to imprisonment can have a significant impact on children, including increased involvement in delinquent behavior, poor school performance, depression, and increased risk of abuse and neglect (Johnson & Waldfogel, 2002).

The imprisonment of parents disrupts parent-child relationships, affects the network of familial support, and places additional burden on governmental services such as schools, foster-care and adoption agencies, departments of child services, and youth-service organizations (Travis, Cincotta, & Solomon, 2003). This occurs most often in communities that are already overburdened and under resourced.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) reports that within 3 years of release, 68% of released prisoners nationally were arrested for a new crime, and 52% returned to prison (Visher, Kachnowski, La Vigne, & Travis, 2004). The BJS study found that those who returned to prison were more likely to have used drugs preprison and postrelease, were younger, and were more likely to think their neighborhood was not a good place to find a job as compared to those who were not arrested.

Prisoner reentry has important implications for the communities to which prisoners return, and the communities to which they return have important influence on successful reentry of prisoners into the community. There are many opportunities for psychologists to aid in this process, from providing mental health and substance abuse services to working with children and families to aid in the transition out of prison, as well as other actions to prevent recidivism.

Family interventions, based on strengthening the family support network for a returning prisoner, can help improve the likelihood of successful reentry of prisoners. For example, an evaluation of La Bodega de la Familia, which provides support to the families of drug users in the criminal justice system,

shows that the rate of illicit drug use among program participants decreased from 80% to 4%—a significantly greater reduction than among those who did not participate in the program. In addition, family members obtained medical and social services at substantially higher rates than those in the comparison group (Sullivan, Milton, Nelson, & Pope, 2002).

Homelessness

Over the past two decades, the view of homelessness has changed from that of a new social problem of great national concern to a normal feature of urban America. However, there is nothing normal about extensive urban homelessness in the wealthiest nation in the world. Homelessness is often more pronounced in urban areas because in those settings, homeless people are more numerous, more geographically concentrated, and more visible. Link, Susser, Stueve, Phelan, Moore, and Stuening (1994) suggest that the magnitude of 5-year and lifetime homelessness is probably greater than the findings of previous prevalence studies. Specifically, Link et al. found that nationally, lifetime and 5-year prevalence of all types of homelessness combined was 14% (26 million people) and 4.6% (8.5 million people) respectively. Lifetime "literal homelessness" (sleeping in shelters, abandoned buildings, bus and train stations, etc.) was 7.4% (13.5 million people).

Family homelessness was very rare 30 years ago. Increasing income inequality and federal housing assistance expenditures that have not kept up with need contribute to this current problem. In 2002, housing tax benefits for individuals in the top fifth of income level amounted to $89 billion, whereas housing outlays to households in the bottom fifth amounted to only $26 billion (Dolbeare & Crowley, 2002).

One of the more distinctive features of the resurgence of American homelessness, particularly in the 1980s, was the overrepresentation of African Americans. Hopper and Milburn (1996) report that Blacks are disproportionately represented among younger homeless persons and homeless families (usually mothers and their children), both nationally and within specific urban locales (e.g., 54 % of homeless families in New York and 57% in Los Angeles). Similarly, Culhane and Lee (1997) report that 16% of poor African American children under the age of 5 stayed in public shelters in Philadelphia and New York within a 1-year period. Data reported by the Interagency Council on the Homeless (1992) indicates that individuals with psychiatric disabilities constitute an estimated 30% of the homeless population. A significant number of these individuals are also dually diagnosed, that is, having both a major mental illness and alcohol or substance abuse problems (Drake, Osher, & Wallach, 1991). Further, many of these individuals, a large proportion of whom live in urban cities, remain chronically homeless, cycling among the streets, shelters, and institutions (Hopper, Jost, Hay, Welber, & Haugland, 1997).

Lee, Price-Spratlen, and Kanan (2003) found that the local housing market, economic conditions, demographic composition, climate, community transience, and the "safety net" are possible determinants for the rates of homelessness that differ across metropolitan contexts. Although a definitive reason for the persistence of homelessness cannot be given, there are some plausible explanations: (a) the growing lack of low-income housing (e.g., through the loss of public housing and gentrification) has made it increasingly difficult for the urban poor to find permanent housing; (b) decreasing welfare, health, and other social benefits have eroded the "safety net" that prevents people from falling into homelessness; and (c) the homeless and the poor—from which the homeless generally are drawn—have little political clout and, therefore, social changes that might truly support them have not been enacted.

Finally, certain interventions in the United States have been shown to be effective in helping people escape from homelessness. Prior to welfare reform, when poor families were also entitled to income support, subsidized housing seemed sufficient to end homelessness (Shinn, Baumohl, & Hopper, 1998). A nine-city study of homeless families (chosen for long-term patterns of recurrent homelessness and need for services) offered both subsidized housing (Section 8 certificates) and case management services. Among 601 families, for whom 18 months of follow-up data was available, 88% remained in permanent housing. This study supports the value of services-enriched housing and does not speak to the benefits of housing without services, although no differences in housing stability were found across sites with rather different configurations of services (Rog, Holupka, & McCombs-Thornton, 1995).

While housing "fixes" homelessness, other supportive services, such as assistance in finding jobs with living wages and child care, are likely to be necessary for such families to prosper. Housing First is a program that houses, in apartments with independent landlords, individuals with serious mental illness and often with co-occurring substance abuse problems who have been living on the streets. A panoply of psychological, psychiatric, substance abuse, health, vocational, and recreational services is available to tenants, however only participating in money management services and attending a meeting with a member of an Assertive Community Treatment team twice a month are required. In a random assignment study, the program was substantially more effective in getting and keeping individuals housed than conventional continuum of care programs requiring participation in treatment and sobriety. The program was also less expensive as it reduced inpatient days in psychiatric hospitals. Interestingly, there were no differences between the groups in psychological symptoms or substance use (Gulcur, Stefancic, Shinn, Tsemberis, & Fischer, 2003).

Psychologists have initiated and contributed to interventions in the United States that have been shown to be effective in assisting people out of homelessness. However, there needs to be a continued mobilization toward the prevention and elimination of homelessness, including effective public policy addressing the issues and continued research on the social, economic, and psychological factors that contribute to the continuing growth of the urban homeless population.

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse is a major concern in most cities. According to the 2001 Household Survey published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (2002), an estimated 22 million Americans suffer from substance dependence or abuse of drugs, alcohol, or both. About 19.5 million Americans, 8.3% of the population ages 12 or older, currently use illicit drugs, 54 million have participated in binge drinking in the previous 30 days, and 15.9 million are heavy drinkers. Workplace alcohol, tobacco, and other drug-related problems cost U.S. companies more than $102 billion each year in lost productivity, accidents, employee turnover, increased health care costs, absenteeism, and workers' compensation claims (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996).

Although there has been much recent discussion about the growing problem of substance abuse in rural areas, this issue remains a major problem in urban communities. Further, substance abuse disproportionately affects certain racial groups. For example, recent reports show higher rates of substance use among American Indians/Alaska Natives compared with persons from other racial/ethnic groups. Specifically, among American Indian/Alaska Native youths aged 12 to 17 years, the rates of past-month cigarette use, binge drinking, and illicit drug use were higher than those from other ethnic/racial groups (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2003).

Statistics illustrate that, on average, across all age groups, residents of large metropolitan counties have the highest rate of illicit drug use (7.6%), followed by nonmetropolitan (5.8%) and completely rural counties (4.8%) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2002). However, the prevalence of illicit drug use among youths reveals the emergent pattern of 14.4% in rural areas, 10.4% in counties with small metropolitan areas, and 10.4% in large metropolitan areas.

Both urban and rural areas experience drug problems. However, the consequences differ. Urbanization, including the increase in the size, density, heterogeneity of populations, and other multiple unique dimensions of urban life, influence health behaviors, such as substance use (Leviton, Snell, & McGinnis, 2000), via the availability of drugs, preference for certain types of drugs, and the availability of substance-abuse treatment facilities. In urban communities, substance use is not only a social issue, but also a health problem that dramatically affects the mental and physical health of the individual, as well as family and neighborhood stability. Substance abuse and addiction have been linked to many of the nation's urban ills, including crime and violence, health care costs and crowded emergency rooms, child abuse and neglect, spousal abuse, homelessness, HIV/AIDS, welfare and foster care, and high taxes and business costs. In many cities, substance abuse, homelessness, and their interconnected problems constitute a major epidemic. Investigators argue that the social forces that major metropolitan inner cities face have a cumulative impact on drug use and subsequent crime rates (Dunlap, 1992). Some of

these deleterious social forces in urban areas include high unemployment, concentrated poverty, rising rent costs, destruction or reduction of low-income housing, increased homelessness, expanding neighborhoods of homogeneous populations of low-income minorities, and the intensifying factor of generational drug and alcohol abuse.

Numerous intervention and prevention efforts have been implemented to address the urban substance abuse problem. Many of these approaches are grounded in psychological theory centering on cognitive behavioral change. For a review of identified best and promising practices and strategies for reducing alcohol and substance abuse, see the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Program Web site at: http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/substanceabuse/field_tested_programs.htm. Similarly, the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention has also identified best- practices and promising-practices programs that address substance abuse. Clearly, psychologists have the capacity to not only collaborate in the development of theoretically based intervention and prevention programs, but to play a significant role in demonstrating which programs are working in urban communities.

HIV/AIDS

Although the number of HIV/AIDS cases has changed over time, the percentage distribution of AIDS cases by population of area of residence has not changed much. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), in 1994, 85% of the nearly 76,000 AIDS cases were in persons from large metropolitan areas, while only 6% were in persons from nonmetropolitan areas. Despite steady decreases in the number of AIDS cases since 1994, in 2001, 81% of persons with HIV/AIDS resided in large metropolitan areas, and 7% in nonmetropolitan areas.

A December 2003 press release from the National Youth Advocacy Coalition (NYAC) indicates that AIDS is devastating many urban centers, with more than half of all the AIDS cases reported in the United States between 1986 and 2001 occurring in only 15 cities: Los Angeles, San Francisco, Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, Atlanta, Chicago, Baltimore, Boston, Newark, New York City, Philadelphia, Houston, Dallas, San Juan, and Washington, DC. Many of the country's most marginalized populations (e.g., lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered individuals, immigrant population, poor individuals) live in urban centers. Thus, for many urbanites, managing HIV and AIDS is more difficult because of poverty, unemployment, homelessness, lack of access to health care services and information, lack of access to mental health services and substance abuse treatment, significant obstacles because of immigration status, and stigma attributed to the perceived cause of infection.

HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects African Americans. While African Americans comprise only about 12% of the U.S. population, they accounted for half of the new HIV infections reported in the United States in 2001 (CDC, 2000). Numerous studies suggest that many new infections occur among young African Americans (CDC, 2001, 2002; Valleroy, MacKellar, Karon, Janssen, & Hayman, 1998; Valleroy et al., 2000). In 2000, African American men comprised up to 41% of the reported HIV cases among men, while African American women constituted nearly 64% of the HIV cases reported among women—4 times the rate among Latina/Hispanic women the same age, and 16 times the rate for White women (Lee & Fleming, 2001).

Numerous HIV/AIDS prevention efforts that focus on populations most at risk have been launched in urban areas (CDC, 2001). For example, an HIV prevention initiative for low-income African American women in urban Detroit focuses on the psychological issues that prevent women from insisting that their male partners adopt safer sexual practices. Project participants attend four 2-hour classes aimed at giving them the confidence to say "no sex without a condom"; since 1996, more than 400 women have attended the program. A prevention program in Chicago works to reduce the risk of HIV among African Americans living in shelters and other transitional living facilities throughout the greater Chicago area by training shelter staffers and volunteers to be HIV and STD prevention peer educators and by providing personalized HIV counseling, testing, and referral services for those at risk for HIV. The program also conducts group education classes that discuss risk reduction strategies, substance abuse education, and behavior modification techniques.

These and other programs are examples of the contribution psychology has made toward promoting effective interventions and health promotion

efforts in urban areas. However, there is much more to be done.

Urban Health and Mental Health

Health is linked not only to characteristics of individuals and households, but also to the social, contextual, and ecological features of the places in which individuals reside. As such, there is something about places in addition to people that has relevance for understanding health outcomes. Cities have unique forms, densities, diversities, and patterns of social interactions that have significant and complex influences on physical and mental health. Therefore, any useful discussion of health must recognize its multidetermined, multidimensional, and dynamic aspects. Urban areas are characterized by population density with disproportionately high concentrations of special populations of the socially disadvantaged (e.g., poor individuals, residents of public housing, homeless persons, racial and ethnic minorities, and recent immigrants) who have unique health needs.

Urban health relates to the physical, mental, and social well-being of urban residents and communities. While the notion of an urban health has been discussed considerably in the fields of public health and sociology, inadequate attention has been paid to the topic in the field of psychology. Major sociological theories of health within an urban ecological framework have been put forth to provide better insight into how the distinct spatial qualities of neighborhoods affect the health risks, beliefs, and behaviors of their residents (e.g., Fitzpatrick & LaGory, 2003).

In terms of health outcomes, Krieger, Chen, Waterman, Rehkopf, and Subramanian (2003) argue that place matters in two important ways, both of which have particular relevance for urban areas: (a) context—that people in poor areas have poor health because a concentration of poverty creates or exacerbates harmful interactions, and (b) the location of public goods or environmental conditions—that poor areas are less likely to have good supermarkets and are more likely to be situated next to industrial plants, thereby harming the health of their residents. In urban areas, the high density of people, traffic, and businesses can make air, noise, and water pollution a concern. Also, the large numbers of individuals congregated in small areas can worsen threats to public health because of the more rapid transmission of infectious disease or the greater number of people affected by natural or other disasters (e.g., the events of September 11, 2001).

Numerous reports indicate that infectious diseases (e.g., tuberculosis, AIDS, HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases), asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, lead poisoning, mental illness, cancer, infant mortality, substance abuse, trauma caused by violence, and other health and social problems are exacerbated in urban communities (e.g., National Public Health and Hospital Institute, 1995; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). The American College of Physicians (Andrulis, 1997) argues that there is an "urban health penalty" for persons residing in urban areas. This refers to the notion that inner-city residents suffer the same chronic conditions as individuals elsewhere, but that their condition is made worse by poverty, poor housing conditions, unemployment, and other socioeconomic problems.

Many of the physical diseases and other health-related conditions prevalent in urban areas are related to poverty and are affected by poor nutrition, inadequate and unsafe housing, exposure to violence, environmental pollution, and lack of a social service infrastructure (Prewitt, 1997). The gradual impact of environmental pollutants and visible indicators of community blight (e.g., dilapidated vacant houses, abandoned vehicles, offensive graffiti, brownfields) have also been documented to be significantly related to the incidences of certain disease factors such as lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, influenza, and pneumonia (e.g., Litt, Tran, & Burke, 2002). Older housing in cities can pose a risk to people's health, with living in housing built before 1978 being a risk factor for lead paint poisoning, which is a major hazard for young children.

Poor health is often a symptom of living in poverty (Adler, Boyce, Chesney, Folkman, & Syme, 1993). In fact, pervasive poverty is among one of the greatest social challenges urban areas face, and it is one of the single largest determinants of health. A comprehensive review of the health literature indicates that socioeconomic status (SES) remains a persistent and major predictor of variations in health outcomes, with inverse associations between SES and health status dating back to some of the earliest recorded records and

existing in all countries where it has been examined (Williams & Collins, 2002). In their review of the literature, Williams and Collins conclude that although research interest in the association between SES and mental health status has been declining over time, recent findings continue to demonstrate a powerful role for SES, with low SES predicting elevated rates of a broad range of psychiatric conditions. Poverty increases the level of stress and sense of hopelessness among individuals. Using an ecological model, Saegert and Evans (2003) provide insights into how poverty, housing markets, and housing policies channel poor people into ecologies of risk that affect health directly through exposure to toxins and hazards, and indirectly through the stress such environments generate and the lower levels of environmental resources available for coping. These and other related studies indicate that many health-related issues (e.g., infant mortality, violence) in urban areas are as much issues of social and racial inequality as they are public health issues.

Poor, minority households are more often exposed to environmental decay, disorder, and incivilities. Several research reviews have examined the serious cumulative effects of such exposures. Evans and Kantrowitz (2002) marshal evidence to argue that the health status of the poor can be substantially explained by their cumulative exposure to suboptimal physical environments. Geronimus (1992) introduces the "weathering" hypotheses to explain why teenage pregnancies made sense for African American women, whose health often deteriorates early because of the cumulative experience of economic deprivation and physically and socially burdensome environments. Ellen, Mijanovich, and Dillman (2001) conclude, on the basis of their extensive literature review, that poor-quality neighborhoods undermine health (a) through relatively short-term influences on behaviors, attitudes, and health care utilization; and, more seriously, (b) through "weathering" attributable to years of exposure to accumulated stress, lower environmental quality, and the limited resources of poor communities.

Some researchers stress the importance of multilevel frameworks, including ecosocial theory that takes into account individual characteristics in addition to the characteristics of the areas in which people reside, in public health research and practice (e.g., Krieger, Chen, Waterman, Rehkopf, & Subramanian, 2003). A position paper of the American College of Physicians (Prewitt, 1997) recognizes that physicians were unlikely to succeed in improving inner-city health care if they failed to look beyond the medical model. Increasingly, psychosocial factors are being considered as playing an important role in understanding how morbidity is expressed, with some of these factors being more particular to urban areas. In confronting these and other related issues, psychologists can play a crucial role in collaborating with physicians and other health professionals in efforts to improve the physical and mental well-being of urban residents.

Much psychological research has documented the relationship between stress and health outcomes. Because of the nature of the urban environment (i.e., high density, diversity, environmental pollutants), many types of stress-related episodes occur more frequently among its residents in comparison to rural or suburban residents. For example, residential crowding has been associated with increased levels of cardiovascular activation and neuroendocrine functioning and is often accompanied by psychological distress (Evans, 2001). This negative health effect is further exacerbated when coupled with other stressors typically experienced in low-income households (Saegert & Evans, 1999). Data also indicate that frequent exposure to violence affects children's physiology, with such children more likely to become hypervigilant or distraught or at increased risk of experiencing intense stress in anticipation of the next violent episode (Earls, 2000).

Urban Mental Health

The trend toward urbanization suggests that a higher proportion of the U.S. population with mental health problems will likely reside in urban areas. However, beyond these projections, as noted by Marsella (1998) in his review of the literature, "the range of disorders and deviancies associated with urbanization is enormous and includes psychoses, depression, sociopathy, substance abuse, alcoholism, crime, delinquency, vandalism, family disintegration, and alienation" (p. 624). For example, a number of epidemiological studies have documented that unemployment, which is approximately one-third higher in urban as compared to suburban areas (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2000), pro-

duces significant deterioration in mental health (Kessler, Turner, & House, 1988). Even anxiety related to job insecurity has been shown to increase anxiety and depression (Wilkenson & Marmot, 2003). Research has also demonstrated a positive relationship between fear of crime with higher levels of anxiety found in poor urban neighborhoods, and elevated levels of depression (Taylor, Perkins, Shumaker, & Meeks, 1991).

Mental Health: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity Supplement to the Surgeon General's Mental Health Report refers to the association between mental health, racism and discrimination, and poverty. The report notes the higher percentage of ethnic minority group members living in urban areas, and the positive relationship between racial ethnic discrimination and psychological (2001).

Distress and depression and anxiety (2001). While reiterating that poverty in the United States has become more urban, the report notes that studies have consistently shown that people in the lowest strata of income, education, and occupation are about two to three times more likely than those in the highest strata to have a mental disorder. As discussed earlier in this report, the Surgeon General's report notes that poorer neighborhoods have few resources and suffer from considerable distress and disadvantage in terms of high unemployment rates, substance abuse, crime, and homelessness.

In their review of children in low-income urban settings, Black and Krishnakumar (1998) note that constant population density and associated problems, including inadequate or unaffordable housing, crowding, limited access to resources, and high crime rates, produce environments that interfere with children's development and increase their risk for adverse mental health problems. Moreover, children exposed to chronic violence in their neighborhood are more anxious and fearful of being left alone, play more aggressively, have more difficulty concentrating, and experience memory impairment (Osofsky, Weivers, Hann, & Flick, 1993).

Psychologists are often called upon to provide services for children and families with these and other problems. Although they often incorporate family interactions into their conceptualizations of children's behavior and development, context is often overlooked (Garbarino, 1995). This oversight is a critical one that needs to change. As Black and Krishnakumar (1998) suggest, interventions are needed to promote strategies of resilience to overcome the challenges of urban life for children, their families, and communities.

As noted by Marsella (1998), there is little consensus on the causal relationship between urbanization, mental health, and social deviancy, although numerous environmental and social pathogenic processes have been posited and investigated. Wandersman and Nation (1998) help clarify this issue; they note that research shows a relationship between neighborhood structural characteristics and the amount of violence against children, with impoverishment, instability, and the child-care burden (ratio of children to adults) predicting child maltreatment rates (Coulton, Korbin, Su, & Chow, 1995). However, from a psychological perspective, studies of structural characteristics only partially answer the question of neighborhood effects because they do not include tests of mediating and moderating variables. Psychological research on the stresses and social processes in these environments is beginning to fill in the gaps left by studies of structural characteristics alone. Garbarino and Kostelny (1992) state that even in neighborhoods with similar structural characteristics, those socially impoverished neighborhoods characterized by weak neighborhood ties, few internal resources, and stressful day-to-day interactions exhibit higher child maltreatment rates than poor neighborhoods with strong ties (Wandersman & Nation, 1998).

Psychologists have important roles to play in bringing clarity and understanding to the urbanization and health relationship. To this end, a number of researchers have made recommendations (Black & Krishnakumar, 1998; Marsella, 1998; Wandersman & Nation, 1998).

Healthy Cities

When psychologists discuss the notion of mental and physical health, it is often at the level of the individual or family unit. Rarely do psychologists seriously debate the notion of a healthy city. The World Health Organization (WHO) examines most aspects of public health, many of which are particularly relevant to urban settings. WHO (2001) defines a healthy city as one that is "continuously creating and improving those physical and social environments and expanding those community resources that enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life

and in developing to their maximum potential." Further, the WHO has identified 11 qualities of a healthy city, including:

1. a clean, safe physical environment of high quality (including housing quality);
2. an ecosystem that is stable and sustainable in the long term;
3. a strong, mutually supportive and nonexploitative community;
4. a high degree of participation and control by the public over the decisions affecting their lives, health, and well-being;
5. the meeting of basic needs (food, water, shelter, income, safety, and work) for all the city's people;
6. access to a wide variety of experiences and resources, with the chance for a wide variety of contact, interaction, and communication;
7. a diverse, vital, and innovative city economy;
8. the encouragement of connectedness with the past, the cultural and biological heritage of city dwellers, and other groups and communities;
9. a form that is compatible with and enhances the preceding characteristics;
10. an optimum level of appropriate public health and sick care services accessible to all; and
11. high health status (high levels of positive health and low levels of disease).

Globalization

The term globalization is widely used in a variety of contexts among scholars and practitioners from many disciplines. Globalization is generally defined as a cumulative and dynamic process of moving goods, services, ideas/technology, cultural practices and behavior across transnational borders. Globalization emphasizes improved communication and transportation technologies, deregulation of trade barriers, rapid growth and increase in the size of the developing country's economy, and global production capacity (Harris, 1993). These facilitate transnational connectedness or transcendence of borders, resulting in economic, sociological, political, and environmental transformations, particularly in the landscape and social fabric of many cities throughout the world (Boschken, 2003; Scholte, 1997).

Key salient effects of globalization at the macro level have been observed in the changing geography of jobs, such as increased incidence of well-organized crime and terrorism, spread of deadly diseases (e.g., SARS), increasing concerns over environmental degradation (e.g., global warming and ozone depletion), and rapid urbanization in less-developed countries. Despite these negative consequences, many still believe that globalization was and is inevitable as a result of time-space compression arising from rapidly changing communication and transportation technologies. However, scholars like Norberg-Hodge (1999) argue that globalization is produced by specific economic and political decisions and actions.

Globalization is strongly linked to urbanization. Throughout the world, rural populations are in decline, and cities are growing on a massive scale. A down side to the development of megacities is that people come to rely on transported food, water, and building materials, and they compete for the same standardized, monoculture products (e.g., jeans, hamburgers, cars, televisions, etc.). It is assumed that subsidies and financial incentives lead globalization and that these vast cities are not sustainable.

Globalization has had profound but uneven effects on American cities. "Offshoring" and the emergence of the "global factory" have resulted in a drastic change of the geography of jobs, which has had subsequent impacts upon income and wage distribution in the United States. The "hollowing out" of the middle class, the increasing income disparity between the "haves and have-nots," and the proliferation of the urban underclass have been tied to the forces and impact of globalization (Harris, 1993; Scholte, 2003; Smart & Smart, 2003). Despite increased population diversity, segregation by income, class, and race has continued in American cities over the years (Fischer, 2003; Madden, 2003).

The growing body of literature indicates how important it has become for psychologists, urbanists, policymakers, and local communities to understand the roots of globalization and its pro-

found impact on the local and global communities, in addition to forming interdisciplinary coalitions to address this issue.

Urban Physical Environments: Challenges, Assets, and Initiatives

The physical environment of urban areas reflects and accommodates the essential characteristics of urban populations: large numbers, density, and diversity. The physical space of the earth occupied by cities was 2% in 2002; however, cities used up 76% of industrial wood, 60% of water, and contribute 78% of the carbon emissions attributable to human activities (Worldwatch Institute, 2002). Sprawl in the United States has increased the amount of land covered by cities by 305% between 1950 and 1990, while urban populations grew by only 38%. Even urban areas with declining populations saw their land coverage double (Sheehan, 2003). Sprawl makes significant contributions to global warming, the loss of prime agricultural land, and exponential increases in automobile deaths (Sheehan, 2003).

The size, density, and particular urban configuration and physical environment affect the psychological and social experiences and behaviors of urban dwellers. In addition, the physical environment and psychological and social experiences of different populations vary. For example, living conditions in cities are often difficult for the poor. An estimated 600 million to 1 billion people worldwide live in urban slums (Worldwatch Institute, 2002). In the United States, urban dwellers experienced higher cost burdens and more housing condition problems than the rest of the country (Joint Center for Housing Studies, 2003).

While scholars often see the effects of living in a particular environment versus the characteristics of inhabitants as a dichotomy, this view masks the ways in which environment and inhabitants shape each other. Both affect and are affected by the experience and actions of particular individuals (Macintyre, Ellaway, & Cummins, 2002; Saegert & Evans, 2003; Shinn & Toohey, 2003). Physical environments also contain the accumulated residue of the historical and cultural record of inhabiting the particular site (Karp, Stone, & Yoels, 1991). However, empirical studies rarely achieve this level of complexity of conceptualization (Burton, 1990). Theoretical concepts describing the relationship between people and places, such as place attachment, sense of community, and place-based social capital, provide more dynamic accounts of the mutual shaping of place, social groups, and individuals (Brown & Perkins, 2001; Perkins, Hughey, & Speer, 2002; Saegert, Thompson, & Warren, 2001; Saegert & Winkel, 1998; Saegert, Winkel, & Swartz, 2002).

Challenges of Urban Physical Environments

Research on the psychological and social consequences of the physical form of urban areas most often focuses on threats to well-being associated with stress (Burton, 1990; Wandersman & Nation, 1998), urban decay and disorder (Ewart & Suchday, 2002; Wandersman & Nation, 1998), and, more recently, urban sprawl (Bothwell, Gindroz, & Lang, 1998; Frank & Engelke, 2001). Research on restorative environments (Kaplan, 1995; Kuo & Sullivan, 2001a) and studies of design and policy approaches to alleviating stressors and providing more supportive urban environments emphasize the use of physical environment to promote optimal human behavior, health, and experience (Bothwell, Gindroz, & Lang, 1998; Sundstrom, Bell, Busby, & Asmus, 1996).

Crowding and Noise

The stress paradigm has been particularly applied to studies of crowding and noise, qualities associated with urban environments (Burton, 1990; Evans, 2001). There is some evidence that U.S. residents of denser residential areas experience greater depression and other negative emotional states, lower feelings of safety, and less neighborhood satisfaction (Oliver, 2003). Higher levels of crowding, especially in the home, and higher noise levels, especially during the performance of demanding activities, have been linked to greater cardiovascular activation and neuroendocrine functioning (Evans, 2001). Although both are associated with physiological arousal, the psychological processes related to the two stressors differ somewhat. Residential crowding is frequently accompanied by psychological distress, which may be more a function of the social withdrawal crowded households employ as a coping device rather than the direct consequence of arousal (Evans, 2001). The negative effects of residential

crowding are more potent when they are combined with the other stressors typically experienced in low-income households (Evans & Saegert, 1999). Like crowding, exposure to high levels of noise has been associated with destructive coping strategies, such as more smoking (Cherek, 1982) and learned helplessness (Evans, Hygge, & Bullinger, 1995).

Surprisingly little psychological research considers the variation of crowding and noise within cities. While anyone walking through the heart of London or New York City might not question the correlation of urban life with noise and crowding, a stroll through the streets around the super-block high-rise complexes in downtown Houston can seem almost surreally deserted of pedestrians and rather quiet, except for the occasional screech of alarms. It is even common within London and New York City to come upon quiet retreats from noise and crowding. The heterogeneity of environments between and within cities, suggests that more attention should be paid to urban variation when trying to understand the quality of urban life.

Urban Decay and Disorder

Deterioration of the physical infrastructure of cities, including abandoned housing, graffiti on subway trains, and the like, dominates many images of inner-city environments. Suburban and exurban expansion erode the tax base of cities. At the same time, it leaves them to provide for urban residents with fewer economic resources. Poorer, minority populations most often live in inner cities and also reside in areas characterized by more deterioration and incivilities (Evans & Kantrowitz, 2002; Saegert & Evans, 2003). Physical decay affects the quality of life and is especially associated with fear of crime and victimization (Brown, Perkins, & Brown, in press; Taylor, 1999). Another strand of research relates environmental decay to poorer mental and physical health (reviewed in Saegert & Evans, 2003). Through an extensive literature review and longitudinal studies linking change in housing quality to change in mental health, Evans and colleagues (2000) make a strong case that poor housing quality predicts poorer mental health (Evans, Wells, Chan, & Saltzman, 2000). Concepts such as "weathering" and "the broken windows theory," as discussed in other sections, describe the negative effects of urban decay on the health and well-being of urban residents and how they contribute to increased levels of crime and violence in poor, inner-city neighborhoods.

Urban Sprawl

Recently, the field of public health has turned a spotlight on the positive consequences of density by examining the health benefits of a "walking city," as compared to the automobile-driven lifestyle associated with urban and suburban sprawl (Frank & Engelke, 2001). Churchman's (1999) review points to the difficulty of distinguishing the aspects of density that might be harmful to health and well-being from those that might be beneficial or neutral. Denser cities with more on-street land uses and parks are thought to promote walking and bicycling and less reliance on motorized forms of travel. Urban forms that reduce reliance on motorized transportation also reduce the health hazards associated with automobile emissions, in addition to promoting exercise. Less exposure to air pollution, and especially more physical exercise, are likely to promote greater psychological well-being and improved physical health (Evans, Colome, & Shearer, 1988; Salovey, Rothman, Detweiler, & Steward, 2000). An Irish study found that residents of "walkable communities" reported higher levels of social capital (Leyden, 2003). Diversity of use and walkability has been related to academic achievement and behavior problems among youth (Szapocznik, Mason, Lombard, Martinez, & Gorman-Smith, 2003). However, psychological and sociocultural processes (Sallis & Owen, 1999; Stokols, 1992), as well as physical design (Rappaport, 1987), intervene to determine whether people use the environment for physical exercise and social contact.

Public transportation provides another way to improve air quality and is almost always necessary in dense, walkable cities. Research has shown that longer and more unpredictable public transit journeys attract fewer riders away from car travel (Sallis & Owen, 1999) and create more stress for riders (Evans, Wener, & Phillips, 2002). A longitudinal study of train riders documented that when a new route substantially reduced trip time, commuters' physiological, psychological, and cognitive indicators of stress also declined (Wener, Evans, Phillips, & Nadler, 2003).

Gentrification

In the United States, public policies have mandated reinvestment in the urban core that has been cut off as a result of financial practices known as redlining. Urban revitalization in many cities has occurred and includes spruced-up downtowns, as well as the return of White, higher-income households to the city. Cities with mixed income and race populations are no doubt stronger socially and financially. However, the way in which this reinvestment has occurred in many places has exacerbated rather than reduced segregation by class and race (Wyly & Hammel 1999, 2003). An influx of White households, often high-income, single men, into previously neglected inner-city neighborhoods, as well as into urban-fringe neighborhoods, has resulted in increased housing prices and greater exclusionary lending as a function of income and race (Wyly & Hammel, 2003).

Gentrification threatens to displace existing residents and further extend segregationist trends in housing that are also evident in suburban housing markets. Loans made in suburban areas continue to dwarf those made in cities. For example, suburban loans made between 1993 and 2000 in 23 U.S. cities exceeded $1.5 trillion, whereas loans to gentrified areas of those cities totaled about $35.3 billion (Wyly & Hammel, in press). Thus, gentrification does not appear to be reducing the threat of sprawl, but rather adds a new twist to forms of class and race exclusivity in residential environments. The psychological and social implications of heightened microsegregation and increased competition for urban housing will be important topics for urban psychology in the coming years.

Vulnerability to Terrorism

The size and density of cities, as well as their physical form, makes cities especially likely targets for terrorism. The interdependence of urban dwellers also maximizes the damage of terrorism and heightens it psychological impact. The events of 9/11 proved how urban landscapes can be dramatically reshaped by human actions, with vast consequences on many different scales. E. B. White's (1949) musings foreshadowed the potential for calamity when the massive interdependence of millions of residents within the urban landscape meets the power of modern technology:

> The subtlest change in New York is something people don't speak much about but that is in everyone's mind. The city, for the first time in its long history, is destructible. A single flight of planes no bigger than a wedge of geese can quickly end this island fantasy, burn the towers, crumble the bridges, turn the underground passages into lethal chambers, cremate the millions. The intimation of mortality is part of New York now: In the sound of jets overhead, in the black headlines of the latest edition.

The events of 9/11 galvanized psychologists as practitioners responding to a public health crisis (Klitzman & Freudenberg, 2003) and as researchers seeking to understand the mental health consequences of these events (Ahern, Galea, Resnick, Kilpatrick, Bucuvalas, Gold, & Vlahov, 2002), as well as the psychological dimensions of the conflicts that motivated those who flew into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon (Orbach, 2002). September 11th raised still unanswered questions concerning the estimation of service planning and delivery, the need for data on specific population groups (e.g., effects on children), the impact on rescue workers, and the nature of the course of disorders resulting from terrorism.

Urban Environmental Assets and Initiatives

Less attention has been devoted to the ways in which urban physical environments enhance the quality of life and to the ways that urbanites themselves improve their environments. The following sections describe some of the urban assets found or created in urban environments.

Restorative Environments

Restorative environments are defined as places that support the renewal of attention (Kaplan, 1995) and emotional and physiological recovery from stress (Ulrich, 1983). Most psychological theory and urban planning research concerning restorative environments focuses on natural environments. For example, views of nature have been shown to speed postoperative healing (Ulrich, 1984; Ulrich, Simmons, Losito, Fiorito, Miles, & Zelson, 1991), reduce physiological and attentional indicators of

stress, improve mood and decrease aggressive feelings (Hartig, Evans, Jamner, Davis, & Garling, 2003; Kuo & Sullivan, 2001b), buffer job stress (Leather, Pyrgas, Deale, & Lawrence, 1998), and promote real-life problem solving among public housing residents (Kuo, 2001). Kaplan, Bardwell, and Slakter (1993) discuss a study that suggests museums can provide restorative experiences, especially for more frequent museum goers; however, little research has examined the restorative properties of non-natural environments.

While urban environments are often juxtaposed as the polar opposites of natural environments (cf. Hartig et al., 2003), the difference is one of degree. Many of the studies cited demonstrate important psychological effects of views for inner-city- and other residents (cf. Kuo, 2001). Urban parks, greenery on streets and building facades, small front and back yards, greened balconies, community gardens, urban farms, and small pockets of natural elements can be included in urban environments and may make a significant difference to psychological well-being (Kaplan, 1973). Green spaces and activities (e.g., gardening and tree care) encourage socializing and contribute to stronger social networks (Kuo, Sullivan, Coley, & Brunson, 1998; Taylor, Wiley, Kuo, & Sullivan, 1988), while the activities themselves contribute to a greener environment, with its attendant benefits to onlookers. Healing gardens in hospitals have been found to promote well-being for patients and provide relief and restoration for the often stressed staff (Cooper-Marcus & Barnes, 1999).

However, larger economic, social, and cultural trends may be decreasing access to restorative public spaces for many segments of urban populations. Increased privatization of public space, intrusive surveillance, cutbacks of public funds, and urban fears engendered by increased ethnic diversity and heightened ethnic tensions in the wake of 9/11 color the quality of urban dwellers' experiences of parks and other public spaces (Low, Taplin, & Scheld, 2004).

Community Development

Psychologists have also been active as researchers, and to some extent practitioners, in understanding and contributing to the physical improvement of urban communities. Research on community development initiatives indicates that psychological and social processes among residents can contribute to the improvement of the physical quality of homes, blocks, and neighborhoods. Perkins, Brown, Larsen, and Brown "in press" report that psychological, but not geographic, proximity to areas of public investment in upgrading housing stock is related to efforts by homeowners to improve their own housing. Greater place attachment, as well as a combination of perceptions of community problems and collective efficacy, also predicted objective and subjective indicators of incumbent upgrading.

Social capital has made particularly important contributions to successful efforts to improve urban environments. Saegert and Winkel (1998) found that primarily minority residents of dilapidated housing in distressed inner-city neighborhoods are able to significantly improve the physical conditions and safety of their homes. Resident participation in building activities, resident leadership, and the strengthening of norms of trust and reciprocity together constitute an increase in social capital that is effectively deployed to improve living conditions. Police department records confirm that, even in very high-crime neighborhoods, buildings that developed more resident participation are also able to discourage crime in their buildings (Saegert, Winkel, & Swartz, 2002). In a study of a gentrifying neighborhood, these same social capital factors are important in helping resident owners of limited-equity cooperatives assure high-quality housing and low housing costs, without being subject to the displacement rampant in landlord-owned buildings (Saegert, Benitez, Eizenberg, Extein, Hsieh, & Chang, 2003). Without a lower-cost housing stock, few minority and immigrant residents could remain in the area. In all of these cases, the context in which social capital is developed and could be used to improve the lives of low-income minority residents is important. Tenant organizations gain support from advocacy and technical assistance groups who together engage politically to demand and protect programs that give residents the right to stay in their homes and to exert control over them.

A study of civic action to improve heavily polluted industrial neighborhoods in a Canadian city found that the decision to engage in civic action is facilitated by membership in social networks that made collective action easier (Wakefield, Elliott, Cole, & Eyles, 2001). By using psychological theory and methods to examine the experiential,

behavioral, and relational aspects of social capital, psychologists have contributed to our understanding of the psychological and social processes involved in developing effective social networks (Perkins, Hughey, & Speer, 2002; Warren, Thompson, & Saegert, 2001) and contributed to better understanding of successful community development (Nation, Wandersman, & Perkins, 2002; Speer & Hughey, 1995).

Participatory Planning and Design

Psychologists in the United States and throughout the world frequently contribute to participatory planning, design, and environmental management projects intended to produce physical environments that better support human development and well-being. For example, public-housing residents in Chicago work with environmental psychologists, architects, and social work faculty and students to physically redesign their housing development to include economic development. These professionals also assist with organizational development and conflict resolution, resulting in the transfer of housing ownership to residents (Feldman, 1999).

Participatory planning and design differ from traditional methods in that they involve promoting communication among residents and users of existing or planned environments and designers and technical experts. The level of participation in projects varies, ranging from residents and users being simply informed of goings on to residents and users controlling the project. Despite the impressive array of participatory planning and design tools that have been developed, issues of power and democratic processes continue to raise challenges (Horelli, 2002). However, the very fact that power differentials and democratic process can become matters for debate and problem solving is an advantage compared to traditional professional approaches. Participatory projects highlight the need to integrate knowledge from community, social, and environmental psychology and to use this knowledge in interdisciplinary contexts that require integration of technical knowledge from the physical sciences, economics, and the design professions (Wiesenfeld & Sanchez, 2002).

New Urbanism

New urbanism (Katz, 1993; Sander, 2002) is based upon the ideals of community design of the early 1900s, when residences were typically located closer to each other, providing greater opportunities for support and involvement. New urbanist communities are not automobile centric or gated. A major tenet of the theory guiding new urbanism is that clearly defined walkable neighborhoods promote a greater connection to others and increased opportunity to interact with other community members. Neighborhoods with populations diverse in age and socioeconomic status, and diverse building usage (e.g., residential, commercial, civic, recreation) are hypothesized to enhance neighborhood social processes. Following from this hypothesis, it is suggested that civic, business, residential, and recreational buildings and space should be built in close proximity with each other, rather than segregated, as is the current custom. With this approach, increased shared monitoring and support are likely because residents know one another. Having businesses and residences close to one another creates less dependence on cars, allowing residents to walk and become familiar with their neighbors, resulting in increased interest in monitoring neighborhood activities. In addition, the construction of town squares and other public gathering places creates additional space for residents to socialize and provides informal opportunities for social support. These qualities of the built environment are intended to increase social connectedness and thereby increase social capital among neighbors. In addition to the positive social effects of new urbanism, advocates claim that the lower reliance on automobile transportation and the ethos expressed in the designs will increase environmental sustainability.

New urbanist environments completed or under way are burgeoning, up 37% in 39 U.S. states in 2001, bringing existing projects to 200 (Sander, 2002). Canada has also been the site of large-scale new urbanist development (Gordon & Tamminga, 2002). A review of design guidelines in England notes substantial overlap with new urbanist design criteria (Tisdale, 2002). The volume of new urban designs has elicited more careful analysis and research into the claims that the designs increase environmental sustainability and social capital (cf. Gordon & Tamminga, 2002; Sander, 2002). Critics of new urbanism argue that these environments, many built on the edge of urban centers, actually promote more motorized transportation and accentuate urban inequality because living in these communities is costly and therefore excludes many

(reviewed in Berke, 2002). A careful review of research (Sander, 2002) documents a wide variety of locations, including renovations of existing urban neighborhoods and public housing developments. Sander concludes that research does not clearly support claims that new urbanist designs lead to more social capital, especially not to improved relations among groups that differ by class and ethnicity, although there are promising findings in some places and many research questions still to be explored. A study of ecosystem effects identifies some benefits of the new urbanism, but also a number of obstacles to achieving real environmental sustainability (Gordon & Tamminga, 2002).

Environmental Sustainability

Physical scientists, demographers, and environmental activists have long warned of the fact that human use of the world's natural resources is outstripping the potential for the natural renewal of these resources. This imbalance between use and supply of resources leads to concern about the sustainability of the earth as a human habitat. Social scientists have added the concept of social sustainability to call attention to the dialectic of day-to-day interactions and experiences with larger cultural, social, and ecological systems (Low, 2003). Members of the international city-identity-sustainability network of psychologists study the conditions in which rapid economic and social change fragment social relationships and separate people from the ecological consequences of their behavior, and propose a model for reversing these processes (Pol, 2002). This model postulates that social cohesion among residents of a city or neighborhood promotes identification with the place, as well as with other people, which in turn contributes to efforts to make the environment physically sustainable through the reinforcement of socially sustainable practices and policies. Urbanization both reflects and contributes to the pressures that global change puts on social cohesion, identity, attachment to place, and ecological sustainability (Berke, 2002; Pol, 2002; Wackernagel & Rees, 1996).

Psychologists also work in interdisciplinary teams to develop ways to encourage the intergenerational legacy of a viable environment through participatory action research with a focus on children and youth (Bartlett, de la Barra, Hart, Missair, & Satterthwaite, 1999). The pace and extent of globalization suggest that more such work is needed and should include interdisciplinary collaborations studying issues such as urban anomie; coping strategies of disenfranchised population groups (e.g., immigrants, ethnic minorities, women, youth); perception of safety in urban neighborhoods (e.g., perception of risk to different forms of terrorism and violence); promoting civic engagement in a diverse community; provision and delivery of services (e.g. education) and policy designs for diverse population groups; ways to democratize the acquisition, dissemination, and utilization of knowledge and information; and the impacts of the changing geography of jobs on urban form and the social fabric of urban neighborhoods.

Psychology and Urban Institutions

Cities are not simply aggregates of populations and built forms. They are institutionally organized to provide the basic functions of society, including the production of goods and services and the reproduction of populations. The urban social issues previously discussed are deeply entwined with how these institutions function and the psychological, social, and economic implications of their functioning for city residents. The following sections examine how several key institutional functions are working in urban environments and how psychologists are involved.

Families and Neighborhoods

Much of the research on community and neighborhood influences on human development has focused on the impact of neighborhoods, particularly poor urban neighborhoods, on children and families. Most of this work is guided by a developmental-ecological perspective (Szapocznik & Coatsworth, 1999; Tolan & Guerra, 1994; Wandersman & Nation, 1998). Developmental-ecological theory presumes that the impact of major developmental influences, such as family functioning, depends on the sociological characteristics of the communities in which youth and families reside (Szapocznik & Coatsworth, 1999; Tolan & Gorman-Smith, 1997). How families function, or how they parent, may differ depending on the neighborhood in which they live, and the same level of family functioning may have different effects on risk depending on neighborhood residence (Furstenberg, 1993; Gorman-Smith, Tolan, & Henry, 2000; Sampson, 1997). In addi-

tion to context, a developmental-ecological model incorporates the capacity for change over time. That is, the same factor may have a different impact, depending on the age of the individual.

Neighborhood Influences on Youth Development

Research has shown that neighborhood conditions are associated with most aspects of child and adolescent behavioral and emotional development, including academic achievement (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Sealand, 1993; Dornbush et al., 1991; Duncan, 1994; Entwisle et al., 1994; Halpern-Felsher et al., 1997), social competence (Kupersmidt et al., 1995), aggression (Chase-Landsdale, Gordon, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanov, 1997; Loeber & Wikstrom, 1993; Lynam et al., 2000; Peeples & Loeber, 1994), and family functioning (Furstenberg, 1993; Gorman-Smith et al., 2000; Jarrett, 1995; Sampson & Laub, 1994; Sullivan, 1989). The most critical aspect of neighborhood structure is economic condition, with concentrated disadvantage consistently linked to negative outcomes. Other aspects of neighborhood condition (e.g., housing quality, ethnic heterogeneity, mobility) are highly correlated with economic characteristics (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Leventhal, & Aber, 1997; Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997).

Research suggests that it is not just neighborhood structural characteristics that are important to understanding risk, but also the social processes or organization within the neighborhood (Gorman-Smith et al., 2000; Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997; Tolan, Gorman-Smith, & Henry, 2003; Wilson, 1987). The social organization of a neighborhood is reflected in processes, such as social support and cohesion among neighbors, sense of belonging to the community, supervision and control of children and adolescents by other adults in the community, and participation in formal and voluntary organizations. In this model, the influence of neighborhood structural factors is partially mediated by neighborhood social processes, which are partly, but not completely, shaped by neighborhood structural and socioeconomic constraints, suggesting that within some neighborhoods, the structural barriers of the neighborhood can impede the development of neighborhood social organization. In turn, lack of neighborhood social organization increases the risk for a variety of types of problems and behaviors (Elliott et al., 1996; Sampson et al., 1997; Tolan, Gorman-Smith, & Henry, 2003).

Different aspects of neighborhood characteristics, both structural (e.g., poverty, residential instability) and social organization (e.g., informal social control, support, belonging), relate differently to different outcomes. Space limitations preclude an exhaustive review of research on neighborhood influence on development. Readers are referred to Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn (2000) and Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, and Aber (2000).

Another strain of research has focused more specifically on environmental effects on development. For example, Saegert and Evans (2003) provide an ecological model for understanding how poverty, housing markets, and housing policies channel poor people into ecologies of risk that affect health directly, through exposure to toxins and hazards, and indirectly, through the stress such environments generate and lower levels of environmental resources available for coping. Further, the effects of health burdens, stress, and low levels of resources affect all household members, contributing to family conflicts and parenting problems. Living in ecologies of risk can thus contribute to the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage.

Parenting Practices and Urban Context

In addition to direct effects on development, neighborhood context also appears to influence family functioning and its relation to risk (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, & Aber, 1997; Gorman-Smith, Tolan, & Henry, 1999; Sampson, 1997). In different types of communities parents manage childrearing differently (Furstenberg, 1993; Garbarino & Sherman, 1980; Jarrett, 1995; Sampson & Laub, 1994; Sullivan, 1989). For example, Furstenberg (1993) found that young mothers residing in the most dangerous poor urban neighborhood adapt by isolating their families from the neighborhood socializing. Although this increases the mother's sense of safety, it also cuts her off from potential social support. Other research has pointed to the importance of balancing developmental and ecological constraints through "precision parenting," in poor, urban neighborhoods (Gonzalez, Cauce, Friedman, & Mason, 1996; Mason, Cauce, Gonzalez, & Hiraga, 1996). That is, in some urban neighborhoods, the relation between parental monitoring and involve-

ment is such that both too little and too much are associated with increased behavior problems among youth. This finding is in contrast to the linear relation found in studies of families drawn from less impoverished and less violent communities (Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992).

Other studies have also found that the impact of parenting practices on youth outcome varies, depending on community residence. For example, Gorman-Smith, Tolan, and Henry (1999) report that parenting practices do not mediate stress effects on delinquency in inner-city communities, but do so in poor but less impoverished urban communities, even though there are no differences in average-level scores on parenting practices scales between the two community types. More recently, Gorman-Smith, Tolan, and Henry (2000) compared the impact of different parenting practices and family relationship patterns in inner-city communities with high- and low-neighborhood social organization, and each of these to poor, but not inner-city urban communities. In more weakly organized neighborhoods, parenting practices are associated with risk of delinquency, whereas strongly organized neighborhoods offset the risk of serious and chronic delinquency. It may be that when emotional needs, such as a sense of belonging and support, are met by the neighborhood, the risk carried by the family is minimized. What is good and effective parenting in this context may not be the same as elsewhere. Inadequate attention to community influences on parenting and family functioning may lead to erroneous conclusions about which parenting characteristics should be encouraged, as well as the extent to which parenting is the locus of risk. Effective interventions need to reflect and incorporate the complex relationships between neighborhood context and family functioning.

Resilience of Urban Families

The social conditions of poor urban neighborhoods present a bleak portrait and suggest a life fraught with ever-present potential harm and limited resources for successful development. Although it is true that children and families living in these neighborhoods are at increased risk for most behavioral and psychological problems, in fact, many of these children and families function at typical or normal levels for our society. Although it is unrealistic to assume that children and families will be unaffected by exposure to chronic and pervasive stressors, such as economic strain, overtaxed schools, and community violence, many families protect, nurture, and support their children toward conventional success and integration into the larger society (Bell, Flay, & Paikoff, 2002; Tolan, Gorman-Smith, & Henry, 2003).

As in any other type of community, there is a range of family functioning in urban and inner-city communities. Even in the poorest urban neighborhoods, the majority of families function adequately, in terms of basic parenting skills and family relationship characteristics (Florsheim, Tolan, & Gorman-Smith, 1998; Garbarino, Dubrow, Kostelny, & Pardo, 1992). For example, in a study that evaluated family functioning over time (i.e., 4 years over the course of early to late adolescence), only 20% of the families were identified as consistently struggling around parenting practices and family functioning. About 25% of the families were consistently functioning exceptionally well along multiple dimensions of family functioning (Gorman-Smith et al., 2000). These and other data suggest that differences in risk associated with neighborhood characteristics are not simply a function of the worst families living in the worst neighborhoods (Furstenberg, 1993; Jarrett, 1995).

Interventions To Support Families

Several reviews of youth health-promotion programs suggest a need for comprehensive prevention and intervention programs that include families and caregivers (see, e.g., Catalano, Arthur, Hawkins, Berglund, & Olson, 1998; Tolan & Guerra, 1994). Programs that involve youth only are less effective than those that involve parents and caregivers as well (Farrington & Welsh, 2001; Reese et al., 2000; Tolan & Guerra, 1994). Interventions developed for families living in urban neighborhoods should incorporate the idea that neighborhood characteristics affect family functioning. The implication for prevention and intervention programs is that the impact of the intervention most likely depends on the social ecology in which development occurs and the intervention is provided. Consideration of context is important, both in developing interventions and in evaluating prevention effects (Muehrer & Koretz, 1992; Tolan, 1999).

Preventive efforts, such as Schools and Families Educating Children (SAFE Children) (Gorman-Smith et al., in press) or the Chicago

HIV Prevention and Adolescent Mental Health Program (CHAMPS), in which multiple family groups develop informal networks of support and address issues of parenting, family relationship characteristics, parental involvement, and investment in their child's schooling, peer relations, and neighborhood support, have demonstrated efficacy (Tolan, Gorman-Smith, & Henry, 2003). These interventions tend to focus on the internal functioning of the family (e.g., rules and consequences, support, communication), specific developmental challenges for the age group, the developmental challenge of managing peer relations (e.g., communication around selecting and maintaining friends, integrating peers into family life, helping children manage peer relations), demands of managing urban life, and the developmental challenge of moving toward and setting up goals for the future.

Although individuals have an amazing ability to cope, the capacity to overcome exposure to multiple negative events or multiple types of stress is not unlimited. As Werner (1990) states,

> As long as the balance between stressful life events and protective factors is favorable, successful adaptation is possible. However, when stressful life events outweigh the protective factors, even the most resilient child can develop problems. Intervention may thus be conceived as an attempt to shift the balance from vulnerability to resilience, either by decreasing exposure to risk factors and stressful live events or by increasing the number of available protective factors (e.g., competencies and sources of support) in the lives of children. (p. 111)

For individuals living in inner-city neighborhoods, it is difficult to eliminate or reduce stressful life events, and the challenge is to increase protective factors. Schools, as well as families, can play an important role in nurturing the strengths of children, as well as serving as a place of support for parents.

Urban Education

Improving urban education, in particular, has become one of the most prominent public policy issues in this country. Urban schools and students have a number of qualities that distinguish them from their rural and suburban counterparts (Education Commission of the States, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 1996, 2003a, 2003b; Weiner, 1999). Unfortunately, much of the discussion around urban education focuses on the weaknesses of urban schools and what urban students cannot do, what they do not have, and what they fail to bring to the school setting.

Urban education encompasses public as well as private schools. Urban school reform has focused mostly on public education; therefore, this section primarily focuses on addressing the strengths and challenges of urban public schools, in addition to highlighting the need for urban psychology to continue to contribute to the discussion of urban school reform. Urban public schools--the social institutions entrusted with educating urban youth--are intimately linked to and affected by the complex interactions of the forces of urbanization. Consistent with Kurt Lewin's notion that the setting is as important as the actor, understanding urban learners and engaging in productive urban school reform call for a simultaneous and multidirectional analysis of urban students and their families, schools, and environments. Life for many urban children is difficult. The environmental stresses of urban living produce serious emotional difficulties and psychiatric symptoms that interfere with children's abilities to attend to information and to develop good social regulation skills (Garbarino, Dubrow, Kostelny, & Pardo, 1992; Pianta, 1999). Clearly, the more urban schools draw their students from neighborhoods riddled with deeply embedded and complex social and economic ills, the worse their students are likely to perform, both inside and outside the classroom.

Characteristics of Urban Students

Recent data indicate that urban students are more likely to be living in poverty than those in suburban or rural locations (U.S. Department of Education, 2003a). Urban students are more likely to be attending schools with significantly higher concentrations of low-income students, with 40% of urban students attending high-poverty schools, while only 10% of suburban students and 25% of rural students attend such schools. High-poverty schools are defined as those with more than 40% of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch. The students being served in urban schools are more likely to be English language learners, less likely to live in a

two-parent family, almost twice as likely to be assigned to special education, far more likely to drop out of school and to have greater rates of mobility (Education Commission of States, 2003). Urban students, in comparison to their rural or suburban counterparts, are more likely to be exposed to multiple safety and health risks that present greater challenges to them, their families, and school personnel (NCES, 2003b). Further, urban students are more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors and less likely to have access to regular medical care. Student behavior problems, such as absenteeism, classroom discipline, weapons possession, and student pregnancy, are more common in urban environments than in other locations (NCES, 2003b; Wang & Kovach, 1996).

Urban public schools enroll a large proportion of our nation's school-aged children. Of 16,850 public school districts in the United States, 100 serve about 23% of the nation's students (Council of Great City Schools, 2002). These districts, many of which are located in urban areas, serve 40% of the country's minority students and 30% of the economically disadvantaged students. Urban schools enroll a substantial proportion of immigrant children; more than 150 languages are currently being spoken in U.S. public schools.

Characteristics of Urban Schools

Urban schools are different from rural and suburban schools in other systemic ways. These schools operate in political and financial environments that are more complex, contentious, and competitive than those of smaller school systems (Council of Great City Schools, 2003). Further, urban schools are typically located in regions with a declining tax base and scarce resources. Urban schools, in comparison to those in other locations, have a greater shortage of teachers and more teachers with emergency credentials. Urban teachers have fewer resources available to them and less control over their curriculum than teachers in other locations. Further, urban students bring fewer traditional resources (e.g., less-educated parents, more poverty, poorer health) to the school setting, and this can ultimately hinder their educational future. Thus, the context for urban students often provides the fewest resources, while the student population requires the most support, a combination that leads to statistics that consistently demonstrate the lower academic achievement levels of urban students (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2000; Gardner & Miranda, 2002; Williams, 1996).

Many school buildings in these areas are dilapidated and in desperate need of repair. Both qualitative research and quantitative research document the harm done to students by decaying school buildings that are mostly located in inner cities. Fine and colleagues' (in press) interviews with Los Angeles public school students reveal the lessons they learn from reading their neglected environment: that society regards them as not worth the investment it would take to create a good educational environment. Durán (submitted for publication) uses public data on the physical condition of New York City elementary schools to show that when schools need more repairs, students miss more days of school, which in turn results in lower standardized test scores, even after controlling for indicators of teacher quality and student income.

Schools in urban settings are frequently part of a decentralized bureaucracy that is less than responsive to the diverse needs of individual schools and children. Urban schools are oftentimes run by bureaucracies that function quite poorly and are cut off from the communities they are supposed to serve (Weiner, 1999). School size is typically related to the population density of the local area and its age distribution of children. As a result, urban schools are larger than average schools, which brings additional challenges to the learning environment (Council of Great City Schools, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 1997).

External Contexts of Urban Schools

The external contexts of many urban schools are also significantly different from those of schools in other locations. In urban schools, external context frequently includes gang activity, high rates of underemployment, widespread availability and use of drugs, and a breakdown of the local community structure (Peterson, 1994). Many urban schools are located in crime-infested communities, often surrounded by high chain-linked fences to shield students from random violence; metal detectors and other security measures are visible inside the school walls. In the third edition of its report, Beating the Odds III: A City-by-City Analysis of Student Performance and Achievement Gaps on State Assessments, the Council of Great City Schools (2003) stressed that the contextual differences of

urban schools are significant and cannot be ignored, particularly as the nation strives to meet the goals established by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and raise student achievement nationally. Given the complexities of issues in urban communities, schools in these areas are often called upon to perform roles far beyond traditional schooling, including serving as medical clinics, counseling centers, police and security outposts, drug rehabilitation clinics, and city shelters (Barber, 1997), in addition to food distribution locations.

Urban schools are ecologically embedded institutions that routinely incorporate and reflect both the challenges and strengths of their surrounding communities. Urban youth bear the burden of a variety of modern morbidities (i.e., enormous demographic and economic transformations, poverty, unemployment, residential and educational segregation, a disjointed pattern of service delivery, and ineffective schools) that plague urban life (Wang & Kovach, 1996). Further, the schools that serve these children frequently manifest the racism, poverty, classism, physical decay, and the multitude of "savage inequalities" that is endemic in the larger communities (Kozol, 1991; Shujaa, 1995; Williams, 1994). Residential segregation, in particular, has a profoundly negative impact on both the composition of the school population and the quality of education. The increase in residential segregation and the byproduct of educational segregation in urban schools is as much an economic, as a social, response to the decentralization of cities and the changing urban economic order (Wang & Kovach, 1996). In fact, researchers at the Harvard Civil Rights Project found that the vast majority of intensely segregated minority schools face conditions of concentrated poverty powerfully related to unequal educational opportunity (Orfield & Lee, 2004).

Over the last decade, there has been increased recognition that the achievement gap in our nation's urban schools may be better understood in terms of the decentralization of cities, changes in the social ecology of neighborhoods, and the structure of the urban labor market. Utilizing a macroecological approach, some scholars argue that the socioeconomic makeup of cities accounts for much of the failure of urban schools, with the socioeconomic contexts of schooling (i.e., differences in ethnicity, socioeconomic class, family and community resources, patterns of residential and educational segregation), in particular, playing important roles in differences in educational attainment (Bartelt, 1994; Kantor & Brenzel, 1993; Massey & Denton, 1993). At the school level, these factors play out in terms of uncertified and less experienced teachers who lack knowledge and skill in basic classroom management and research-based instructional strategies for students placed at risk by these inequalities.

Urban Educational Assets

What has received less attention in public discourse is that these schools and their students also have strengths that positively contribute to the urban environment. Stone, Doherty, Jones, and Ross (1999) view urban schools as a natural focus for community development efforts. Urban schools possess a large store of useful physical and material assets, employing able and concerned individuals, and have achieved some dramatic success, even in the face of environmental adversities, as centers of academic achievement and community activity. Urban schools are increasingly becoming the most reliable source of stability and social support for many poor inner-city children (Fischer, Hout, Jankowski, Lucasm, Swidler, & Voss, 1996; Noguera et al., 1996). They have the potential to contribute to protective mechanisms in children by promoting self-esteem, self-efficacy, and other social skills, as well as providing them with opportunities to experience success and develop important problem-solving skills (Waxman, Gray, & Padron, 2002; Zimmerman & Arunkumar, 1994).

Urban learners too have strengths that they bring with them to the learning context. Unfortunately, much of the discussion about urban learners focuses on their challenges and weaknesses. Consequently, schools have adopted a deficit orientation from which educators and psychologists learn little about what children can do, what they do know, and what they get from the home environment. Poor urban students have a number of adaptive assets that often go unrecognized because they are often competencies not typically associated with, expected of, or evident in middle-class children. In working with inner-city schools, researchers have found that many of these students enter school equipped with skills in major life areas (Boykin, 2000). Urban children often have substantial caretaking and homemaking responsibilities, as they are responsible for preparing meals and

caring for their younger siblings and the children of older siblings. Various scholars (e.g., Boykin, 2000; Delpit, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997) argue that urban children enter school with deep-seated cultural values, resources, and belief systems, appropriated from their proximal life experiences that potentially could be capitalized on in academic settings. In other words, students' assets and cultures should be incorporated into the academic and social content of schooling (Zeichner, 1996). The Urban Learner Framework, developed by staff at Research for Better Schools, a Philadelphia-based research and development laboratory, presents a vision of the urban learner as culturally diverse, capable, effortful, and resilient. This framework advocates institutionalizing practices and conditions that increase the number of resilient children by helping them develop coping strategies and protective mechanisms.

Urban School Reform

Since the release of 1983 report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, A Nation at Risk, educators and policymakers have been engaged in various efforts to reform public education. Reforming education is one of the nation's most pressing concerns, given the critical need to prepare a more diverse, and inclusive, group of future citizens and workers to manage complexity, find and use new resources and technologies, and work cooperatively to frame and solve novel problems (Darling-Hammond, 1997). In recent years, the movement to reform public education has particularly focused upon improving education in urban settings, where a large proportion of these children are at risk for low achievement. Historically, psychology has played an instrumental role in the study of educational issues, dating back to William James, John Dewey, and others who were present at the discipline's founding. Over the years, psychology has gained invaluable information about social and motivational processes, personality and cognitive development, and human learning, all of which are key to effective teaching and learning, and to the entire schooling enterprise. The transfer of the accumulated psychological knowledge to education and school reform has been limited at best (Spielberger, 1998), and individuals with little, or no, psychological training have made most of the decisions concerning education in this country (Sternberg, 2003).

Traditionally, urban reform efforts treated schools as isolated entities, disconnected from the communities in which they were embedded and insulated from the political and economic realities that surround them. Psychology, historically, did not consider seriously enough the macro issues that permeate schools and communities in urban environments. Such work was generally the domain of sociology, anthropology, ethnic studies, and urban planning. Clearly, strategies for urban school reform must be grounded in a real understanding of the complexities of urban life and the dynamics that have led to poor academic achievement by urban students (Williams, 1996). As such, recent efforts involve more systemic approaches to urban school reform and evaluations of such reform initiatives, taking into consideration not only the characteristics of individual learners, but also aspects of the family, school, and community (e.g., Boykin, 2000; Comer, 1988; Comer, Haynes, Joyner, & Ben-Avie, 1996; Slavin, Madden, Dolan, & Wasik, 1996; Thomas, 2004; Williams, 1996b).

Much of the reform initiatives over the past several decades have focused on early childhood education. In particular, Head Start, initiated in 1965, was designed to help break the cycle of poverty by providing preschool children of low-income families with a comprehensive program to meet their emotional, social, health, nutritional, and psychological needs. This program has been a significant, although not exclusively, urban reform effort that is currently under review with possible major changes. Psychologists have implemented much of the research on Head Start early childhood development, with an emphasis on the role of the urban environment.

Even considering concerns raised, with the recent enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, psychologists have a great opportunity to affect education through involvement in evidence-based research on how children, especially urban school-age children, who are often placed at risk for underachievement, learn and how best to translate the findings from scientific research into school-based practices. Psychologists must collaborate effectively with educators, parents, communities, and other relevant stakeholders to improve the learning outcomes of all children, but especially those children residing in urban areas who are most often placed at risk for underachievement.

Psychology's recent contributions to urban school reform. One of the most notable recent contributions of psychology to education is the development of the Learner-Centered Psychological Principles: A Framework for School Redesign and Reform, which was jointly formulated by APA and the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (APA Board of Educational Affairs, 1995; APA Presidential Task Force on Psychology in Education, 1993; Lambert & McCombs, 1998). The 14 learner-centered principles, divided into four groups (i.e., cognitive and metacognitive factors, motivational and affective factors, developmental and social factors, and individual differences), see learners holistically, in the context of real-world learning situations (Lambert & McCombs, 1998). One of the most important educational principles in this learner-centered psychological perspective--one that is particularly relevant for urban school reform--is the notion that learning does not occur in a vacuum (APA Board of Educational Affairs, 1995). Principle 6, which deals with context of learning, states that "learning is influenced by environmental factors, including culture, technology, and instructional practices." For urban learners in particular, reform efforts must recognize that cultural or group influences on students can affect many educationally relevant variables, including motivation, orientation toward learning, and ways of thinking. Frisby (1998) elaborated on Principle 6, noting that in school reform, a commitment to a learner-centered perspective is a worthy goal that cannot exist independently of a consideration of context effects. To effect real change, urban school reform needs to address the issue of diversity and acknowledge the role that location and context play in schools. Integrating research-based instructional and motivational principles with these context issues is a challenge for psychologists and educators to address collaboratively.

How to bring sound principles to urban education is a serious issue. Another recent contribution of psychology to the field of education culminated on June 26-28, 1997, when a selected group of psychologists and educators convened at a conference, Bringing to Scale Educational Innovation and School Reform: Partnerships in Urban Education. Participants identified the best ways to evaluate educational practices and to bring evidenced-based effective practices to scale. This conference, sponsored by the APA Committee on Urban Initiatives and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, with additional funding provided by The College Board, represented a major call for psychologists to accept the challenge of participating in the school reform movement. The participants noted that although the problems of urban education cannot be solved by any single discipline, psychology has unique contributions to offer the educational reform effort: (a) Psychologists' training gives them an in-depth understanding of the teaching/learning process, individual differences, and motivation; (b) psychologists have the methodological know-how to evaluate educational practices and replicate proven programs; (c) psychologists are intimately familiar with the process of change and the individual and interpersonal factors associated with change, thus making them well-suited to helping individual educators and entire educational systems to deal successfully with change; and (d) psychologists' assessment and research skills are critical for the collection, interpretation, and use of data, which schools can use to make data-based decisions about their practices (American Psychological Association, 1997).

Conference participants also pointed out that the diversity of the student body in urban schools poses special challenges to teachers and educators. Teachers need assistance in meeting these challenges in positive ways. Psychologists can support effective learning by concentrating on the positive features, or strengths, of urban children's experiences, while simultaneously increasing our understanding of the difficulties these students face and suggesting practical ways for dealing with these challenges. Building on children's strengths is essential to raising students' academic achievement. Students learn better when they are taught in ways that capitalize on their own analytical, creative, practical, and cultural strengths (Boykin, 2000; Jagers & Carroll, 2002; Padrón, Waxman, & Rivera, 2002; Sternberg, Grigorenko, Ferrari, & Clinkenbeard, 1999). Bringing this knowledge and these skills from the laboratory and schools involved in research projects to scale represents a significant challenge that the conference addressed.

A rich and extensive psychological knowledge base has explored children's socioemotional development (e.g., Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2002; Elias et al., 1997; Jagers & Carroll, 2002; Utne O'Brien, Weissberg, & Shriver, 2003). Numerous studies (e.g., Zins, Elias, Greenberg, & Weissberg, 2000) have clearly estab-

lished a link between students' social and emotional competence and their academic performance, as well as other behavioral outcomes. For example, Elliot, Gresham, Freeman, and McCloskey (1988) found that prosocial interaction with peers is linked to increased academic time on task. Wentzel (1993) found that prosocial interactions are linked with higher grades and achievement test scores among students. The development of emotional competence has also been thought to aid in the development of children's ability to cope with stressful situations, which is believed to lead to improved brain development, ultimately playing an integral role in learning through its role in focusing students' attention.

With this body of research in mind, the APA Committee on Urban Initiatives sponsored a "School Superintendents Forum" in conjunction with the 2001 APA Annual Convention in San Francisco. This forum focused on how psychologists could help schools incorporate socioemotional learning (SEL) into models of educational achievement on the psychological research that informs this work and on how psychology can contribute to the implementation of practical, effective SEL programs. This by-invitation-only forum, which brought together San Francisco area school officials and staff with psychologists, also explored strategies for scaling up effective SEL programs within urban schools.

Another avenue through which psychologists can make a contribution to urban education is through a recent initiative, the "Other 3Rs: Reasoning, Resiliences, and Responsibility." This project is a collaborative of well-respected researchers and education practitioners charged with designing and implementing a model for elementary school teachers to promote reasoning, resilience, and responsibility in their classrooms. Possible benefits and anticipated outcomes in learning the Other 3Rs include improved study skills, improved attendance, improved relationships, increased collaboration, and increased achievement. These are all outcomes that many educational researchers and practitioners are seeking to increase in all students, but particularly urban students who oftentimes operate in very diverse and challenging environments.

Challenges for the Future of Urban Schools

Urban school reform efforts could substantially benefit from psychological theory, research, and practice that address students more holistically, focusing on both the micro and macro issues that influence the learning process. Psychology's challenge is to better translate its theory and basic research into applied knowledge that can be of practical benefit to urban schools. The work of psychologists, like other professionals serving urban communities, must become more culturally competent and contextually relevant to the realities of urban schools (e.g., high student mobility, high turnover in school personnel, inadequate financial resources), urban life (e.g., decentralization of cities and rapidly changing demographics), and urban learners. Failure to do so risks continued discriminatory identification, misassessment, and diagnosis; improper evaluation and placement; and inappropriate services to children of color and children of limited English proficiency. Psychologists need to become attuned to providing services that build on assets rather than documenting failure in students. A presentation by a group of psychologists representing the APA Coalition for Psychology in the Schools and Education at the 2004 American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting documented the range of ways that psychologists can provide support in urban schools. The success of school reform has economic implications for cities, in terms of the quality of the work force, and for individuals who need the skills to perform in a dynamic and increasingly technological economy.

Unemployment for Urban Residents

Unemployment is an issue of critical concern for urban areas. Unemployment rates in cities are approximately one-third higher than in suburban areas (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2000), and one in eight cities is doubly burdened, that is, facing high unemployment and significant population loss or high poverty rates (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2000).

Research from the Great Depression to the present has documented the psychological and social costs of job loss to the individual, his or her family (Price, Friedland, & Vinokur, 1998), and to the community in cases of widespread job loss. Marie Jahoda and colleagues, who did some of the earliest theoretical focus on job loss in the early 1930s, note that work serves a number of psychological and social functions critical to the individ-

ual, and these functions are lost when an individual loses his/her job (Jahoda, Lazarsfeld, & Zeisel, 1971). The psychological impact of job loss is largely due to loss of these critical functions, that is, the capacity to earn money, a required and regular set of activities, time structures, the status and identity conferred by employment, the opportunity to carry on social activities with coworkers, and the sense of participation in a collective effort and purpose (Price, Friedland, & Vinokur, 1998).

Bakke (1933, 1940a, 1940b), the other major early contributor to the theoretical knowledge on job loss, focused on the profound impact loss of income and the fear of poverty have on the lives of unskilled workers and their families, which may be similar to many poor inner-city workers. He illuminated how "the experience of unemployment is shaped not only by the experience of job loss, but by the lingering effects that previous employment has on people's lives" (Price, Friedland, & Vinokur, 1998). That is, the content of unskilled work provides the workers little opportunity to make decisions, plan, or control their work, thus fostering the belief that their world is largely controlled by others and they are relatively powerless to shape their own world. This makes dealing with unemployment even more difficult.

More recent research has built on that of Jahoda and Bakke, describing job loss as a stressful life event that negatively affects health and mental health (Pearlin, 1989; Price, Choi & Vinokur, 2002) and proposing explanatory factors, such as economic hardship and the cascade of secondary stressors it produces, the relationship between identity and job loss, and perceptions of mastery and control (See Price, Friedland, & Vinokur, 1998 for a review.). Other research (Bowman, 1984) examines the impact of unemployment on discouraged workers, especially Black youth, and notes the possible deleterious psychosocial effects.

Traditional approaches to unemployment, such as transportation solutions (getting inner-city residents to jobs in the suburbs and/or making housing available to inner-city residents in suburban neighborhoods closer to jobs) and job training (generic job training such as typing skills, training for specific jobs available in the geographic area, and job-seeking skills training [i.e., how to get a job and appropriate work behavior and skills]), have made little progress in fighting urban unemployment (Dickens, 1999).

With their focus on psychological issues, psychologists have been instrumental in developing, conducting, and evaluating some of the most successful job intervention programs. One of the most successful and well-researched interventions is the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) training program (not to be confused with the now defunct federal JOBS program), developed by the University of Michigan Prevention Research Center (MPRC) (Caplan, Vinokur, & Price, 1997). JOBS developers recognized the negative consequences of unemployment including poorer health, especially depression; henceforth, JOBS was created as a preventive intervention to take place before job seekers become emotionally disabled.

Short-term goals of the JOBS intervention are to enhance productive job-seeking skills and increase the self-confidence needed to use those skills, to fortify the job-seekers' ability to resist demoralization, and to persist in the face of barriers and common setbacks inherent in a job search. Long-term goals are to provide job seekers with the confidence and skills to achieve reemployment in "stable settings that maximize economic, social, and psychological rewards from reemployment" (Caplan, Vinokur, & Price, 1997).

Research has shown JOBS interventions are effective. Short-term evaluations conducted 1 and 4 months after the interventions show that program participants found jobs more quickly than those in the control group, with better pay and more stability. JOBS participants who remained unemployed had reduced depressive symptomatology, higher job-seeking confidence, and higher motivation to engage in job-seeking activities. Long-term follow-up conducted more than 2-1/2 years after the intervention found beneficial results for 81% of the participants. Specifically, they had jobs with significantly higher per-hour pay and earned more over the preceding 28 months than the control group (Vinokur, van Ryn, Gramlich, & Price, 1991). JOBS has been found to be cost-effective and easily implemented in different sites, including Baltimore, parts of Michigan and California, China, Finland, and Israel. The program has been expanded to include research and program development aimed at enhancing family coping with economic stress (Price, Friedland, Choi, & Caplan, 1998).

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 has been credited with drastically reducing welfare

rolls, however, the decline has been slowest in the urban areas, resulting in the nation's welfare cases becoming more concentrated in the cities. In 2001, 10 urban counties accounted for roughly one third of all U.S. welfare cases, putting urban areas at the "epicenter of welfare reform" (Katz & Allen, 2001). Welfare reform is relevant to the current discussion, not only because of the high urban concentration, but also because of the law's "work first" approach. Failure to comply or lack of participation in workfare programs can result in sanctions and/or termination of cash assistance. Women and children, particularly of color, have been most affected.

As so cogently documented by the APA briefing paper, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Problems Among Women on Welfare, many women on welfare, especially those who are unable to find work or those who cannot maintain employment, face serious and multiple barriers to employment, such as mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence. The briefing paper notes that there is a critical need for comprehensive services for these women, services that include screening, assessment, and treatment (American Psychological Association, 1998). Furthermore, the data suggests that a majority of women who leave do not retain their jobs for at least 1 year, and many do not regain employment easily (Lennon, Blome, & English, 2001). PRWORA permits certain forms of education and training that meet the definition of work, including up to 1 year of vocational education and training, and job-skills training and education that is directly related to employment. However, few women get education or training for jobs, including those providing marketable skills higher paid, male-dominated occupations. Many of the jobs provide insufficient wages to move the women out of poverty (American Psychological Association, 1998). Likewise, there is a shortage of high-quality, affordable child care, especially for infants and on evenings and weekends (Herman & Schmidt, 1999). Nearly one fifth of workers worked nonstandard hours in 1991, and women comprised a third of those working nonstandard shifts. According to the U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau (1998), service sector jobs requiring nonstandard hours are among the fastest growing in the United States.

The growth in high-tech jobs has been a substantial contributor to economic gains in cities (although high-tech job growth in the suburbs is 30% faster than in central cities). Often inner-city residents, the poor, and ethnic minorities are without the technical skills necessary for many of the high-tech jobs (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2000), and conflict may arise between them and the more affluent individuals in those higher paying less restrictive positions. This growth has often led to a cultural as well as a digital divide. Psychologists have much to offer in bridging this gap.

Psychologists and other social scientists have conducted research on welfare-to-work programs, documented the barriers to employment, and developed program and policy recommendations to address these issues (APA, 1998). For example, Lennon, Blome, and English (2000) discuss a new "Welfare to Jobs and Independence" program modeled on the Michigan JOBS program. No information on the effectiveness of this program is available at this point.

As important as the contributions of psychologists have been to programs to combat unemployment, many primarily focus on the individual and lack an ecological perspective, although the work of some psychologists suggests that an ecological perspective can improve the success of JOBS programs. In looking at employment and training programs targeting the hardest to serve (i.e., people with substance abuse problems, exhausted TANF, parolees, etc.), Campbell and Glunt (2003) found that organizational- and community-level factors are equally important to individual job-seeker attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. At an organizational level, unintentional stigma toward clients and technical competence of staff within helping programs are critical to client success. Equally, the degree to which an employment and training program is networked with actual employers and other community employment resources affects the quality of jobs program participants actually obtain (i.e., full-, part-time base and hourly wage). Job retention is affected by community support resources (Campbell & Glunt, 2003).

One approach to improving job opportunities and interest is school-to-work programs. A report of the Urban Institute (Herman & Schmidt, 1999) includes examples of companies that have begun working with high schools to develop a new workforce. Three of their examples are described below.

1. Charles Schwab is making an effort to shift from recruiting only workers with a bache-

lor's degree to developing its own workforce through a combination of work-based learning, work experience, and school based learning;

2. CISCO Systems is working with high schools to help students qualify for jobs as computer network administrators; and

3. The auto industry is upgrading the quality of training for future auto mechanics.

Programs such as these could be one component in a coordinated approach to increasing employment in urban areas with high unemployment rates.

One of the factors determining future prospects of unskilled workers is the education system preparing young adults to enter the labor market. The K-12 education system needs reform if more high school graduates are to obtain the basic math, reading, and communication skills employers require (Lerman & Schmidt, 1999). Lerman and Schmidt note the impact of the discrimination by teachers faced by Black and other minority students in terms of placement into academic courses. Black and other ethnic minority students who do well on standardized tests are much less likely to be placed in academic high school courses than White students with comparable test scores. Students on the nonacademic track have less access to college prep science, math, and English courses that teach the skills demanded by most colleges and employers (Lerman & Schmidt, 1999).

Williams and Collins (2001) provide a somewhat different perspective on urban unemployment. As discussed previously, they looked at institutional discrimination based on residential segregation for African Americans largely in urban areas, and they note that residential segregation severely restricts employment opportunities in several ways, including by isolating African Americans from role models of stable employment and social networks that could provide leads about potential jobs. Social isolation can then induce cultural responses that weaken the commitment to norms and values that may be critical for economic mobility. Williams and Collins were building on the argument first made by Wilson (1987) that the prevalence of concentrated poverty among Blacks decisively undermines the life chances of the Black poor. Wilson argued that through a variety of mechanisms, class isolation reduces employment, lowers income, depresses marriage, and increases unwed childbearing over and above any effects of individual or family deprivation.

Massey (2003) noted that one of the most important disadvantages transmitted through prolonged exposure to "the ghetto" is educational failure. The dropout probability for Black teenage males dramatically increases as the percentage of low-status workers in the neighborhood increases (Crane, 1991). Additionally, a longitudinal study following young Black men and women from ages 15 to 30 years found that young men who live in neighborhoods of concentrated male joblessness are more likely to be jobless themselves, controlling for individual and family characteristics (Massey & Shibuya, 1995). Similarly, Shihadeh and Flynn (1996) note that long-term exposure to conditions of concentrated poverty can undermine a strong work ethic, devalue academic success, and remove the social stigma of educational and economic failure and of imprisonment (Williams & Collins, 2001).

As noted previously, most of the research on concentrated poverty and employment focused on men, with the exception of research on welfare-to-work programs or the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Variables examined most frequently for women tend to be marriage, teenage pregnancy, number of children, and unwed pregnancy. Massey & Shibuya's (1995) longitudinal study of concentrated joblessness includes women's labor force attachment and finds greater attachment increases women's odds of marriage, which is the variable of interest. Little additional research on the impact of employment for poor women is available.

The information provided in this section clearly shows the interconnectedness of barriers to economic mobility in urban areas and the critical need for interventions if the cycle of poverty, unemployment, and underemployment is to be broken.

Social Strengths and Community Development in Urban Communities

A deficit approach to urban life assumes that poor urban communities, in particular, lack the organizational capacity or necessary assets to improve their conditions, whereas a strengths-based approach recognizes the varied tangible and intangible assets characteristic of many urban

social institutions and community organizations (e.g., neighborhoods, churches, voluntary associations). The framework urged in this monograph supports the notion of a strengths-based approach to improving urban communities and their residents. When effectively mobilized (formal and informal) institutions in urban areas can bring tremendous resources to bear on problems and yield effective community development.

More recently, community development has been defined as "asset building that improves the quality of life among residents of low-to-moderate income communities" (Ferguson & Dickens, 1999, p. 5). Some researchers in this area characterize community assets into five basic forms: (a) physical capital in the form of buildings, tools, etc.; (b) intellectual and human capital in the form of skills, knowledge, and confidence; (c) social capital or norms, shared understandings, trust, and other factors that make relationships feasible and productive; (d) financial capital, in standard form; and (e) political capital that provides the capacity to exert political influence (Ferguson & Dickens, 1999). Community development in urban areas includes major institutional sectors (government, nonprofit, and for-profit organizations) and product sectors (education and youth development, housing and commercial property, security and others), both encompassing a system with four levels: grassroots, frontline, local support, and nonlocal support (Ferguson & Stoutland, 1999). Grassroots activities include those organized and implemented by volunteer residents who work individually and collectively to improve quality of life for residents within the community. This may be done in collaboration with frontline organizations (e.g., churches, schools, community health centers, political organizers, commercial businesses). The (local and nonlocal) support organizations include funders, policymakers, trainers, and technical assistance providers that provide funds, authorization, goods, and services to frontline organizations (Ferguson & Stoutland, 1999).

In terms of resources, urban areas have long been considered major centers of economic, political, cultural, educational, and recreational importance. Cities are rediscovering their competitive assets as the cultural and entertainment magnets of their region (Katz, 2000) as mentioned earlier in this report. In contrast to life in smaller rural or suburban areas, urban life provides its residents a broader and more varied mix of intellectual and cultural stimulation, economic opportunity, convenience, access (e.g., transportation facilities, accessibility to health care services), multiculturalism, and personal choice in pursuing various social roles and relations (Katz, 2000; Marsella, 1998). Urban areas offer opportunities for children and families to obtain services or to assemble and share similar interests (Black & Krishnakumar, 1998).

Powerful strengths of cities that allow them to best capitalize on their assets include their density, infrastructure, and central location, which position many of them to compete effectively in the new metropolitan economy (Raines, 2000). Cities are home to many of the nation's leading universities and medical research centers. They offer "empty nesters" an attractive lifestyle, with easy access to cultural amenities, health services, and other necessities of daily life (Katz, 2000). The density of cities increases the efficiency of both production and consumption, primarily because it lowers transportation costs (Glaeser, 2000).

The urban labor market provides its workers with greater flexibility and opportunities in several ways (Glaeser, 2000). In contrast to workers in smaller communities, young semiprofessional and professional workers in a big city can move from job to job as they decide upon their vocational trajectory. The competitive demand for skills in dense cities enables workers to invest in their own educational and professional development with the confidence of reaping large returns on this investment.

Contrary to prevailing stereotypes, many urban residents (even those of less economic means) are not victims, but instead survivors and thrivers who cope with and transcend the stressors of their environment. Life in urban settings generates resilience and other positive outcomes (Saegert, 1996).

Also, contrary to some stereotypes, urbanization does not automatically result in disorganized, isolated neighborhoods, even among lower-income residents. In fact, an important source of informal and formal personal and social relationships in urban communities is the neighborhood, and urban residents often have a strong sense of identification with their neighborhood. Further, many of these neighborhoods are organized in terms of community groups, social clubs, political organizations, and civic associations, which offer various outlets for urban dwellers. Work-based social relationships

also provide a means of social support for many urban residents, with such relationships frequently forming the basis for establishing friendships outside the workplace. Recognizing the strengths of urban living, there is clearly a need for psychologists and others to increase their focus on recognizing and mobilizing the assets of urbanization.

Voluntary Associations

Citizen participation in voluntary associations and groups (or frontline organizations, as discussed above) is a critical element in community-development efforts in urban areas. Van Til (1988) describes a voluntary association as a structured group whose members have united for the purpose of advancing an interest or achieving some purpose toward social betterment. In urban areas, voluntary associations represent avenues for the expression of a diverse array of mutual support, creative talent, energy, and collective social and political power. These organizations mobilize the capacities of urban residents to address a myriad of issues. Also, participation in voluntary organizations provides a mechanism for urban dwellers to cultivate informal, personal ties. Historically, marginalized groups in urban areas created their own fraternal, social, and cultural institutions to meet their socioemotional, recreational, and economic needs.

Wandersman, Jakubs, and Giamartino (1981) view the relationship between participation in voluntary associations and the development of a community as a reciprocal one. They also point out the many positive community outcomes that have been associated with organizational participation, including improving the quality of the physical environment, enhancing services, and preventing crime. Voluntary associations may be either informal (e.g., a fairly loose network of citizens coming together to address a community need) or formal (e.g., the YMCA/YWCA or PTA with a formal board of directors). While it cannot be denied that some urban communities lack a strong institutional infrastructure, it must also be recognized that many have high levels of social capital in the form of churches, businesses, neighborhood associations, schools, and community development corporations.

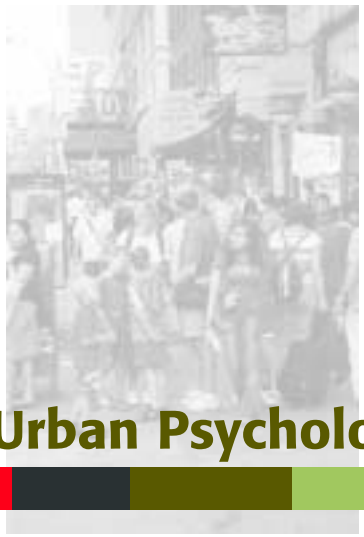
Faith-Based Institutions

The diversity of urban areas with their varying economic realities, ethnic and racial compositions, histories, and political influence has translated into a diverse urban faith-based landscape. In spite of the decline of many urban institutions, faith-based institutions still represent among the most stable and viable institutions located in many inner-city neighborhoods. These frontline institutions have unique resources to bring together urbanites and enhance community development.

Faith-based institutions contribute significantly to urban social services, including providing support for poor families; designing and implementing programs around issues, such as substance abuse treatment, educational and cultural enrichment, and job and entrepreneurial training; and promoting effective and just law enforcement (e.g., Cisneros, 1996; Kriplin, 1995; Mares, 1994; Rans & Altman, 2002; Wineburg, 1992). For example, churches have long been considered the lifeblood of urban African American neighborhoods, providing not only spiritual edification, but also acting as an agency of social control, a center for the arts, coordinating body for economic cooperation and business enterprise, an educational institution, and a political forum (Calhoun-Brown, 1997).

In many urban areas, faith-based institutions have formed coalitions with law enforcement to advance youth development by working to reduce child abuse and neglect, street violence, drug abuse, school failure, teen pregnancy, incarceration, and chronic joblessness. Faith-based entrepreneurial efforts have been implemented in many of the nation's major cities. For example, entrepreneurial efforts in the cities of Boston, Detroit, New York, Oakland, and Chicago have included cooperative restaurants, operations of restaurant franchises (e.g., McDonalds's and Kentucky Fried Chicken), construction cooperatives, rehabilitation of former crack houses, recycling operations, auto shops, credit unions, print shops, job information centers, and day-care centers (e.g., Gordon & Frame, 1995; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; Thomas & Blake, 1996). As a major resource in urban areas, faith-based institutions are viewed as having strong leadership potential because of their respect in the community, their clergy's leadership skills, ties to national organizations and interests, and their ability to generate rapid consensus on strategies (Buss & Redburn, 1983). However, on a cautionary note, some argue that faith-based institutions can also promote bias and undermine effective coping with certain social/health problems such as the spread of HIV/AIDS (Cohen, 1999).

The rate of development of community programs, partnerships, and government- sponsored initiatives involving religious institutions has clearly increased in recent years; through applied research, community practice, and policy development, psychologists have important roles to play in helping to maximize positive and minimize negative outcomes in the faith-based arena (Maton, Dodgen, St. Domingo, & Larsen, in press).



Methodological Approaches to Urban Psychology

This review demonstrates the many contributions psychologists are already making to our understanding of urban life. One of the special strengths of psychology is a way of thinking and problem solving, with a commitment to data-based decision making and research. The research and interventions described also reveal ways in which psychologists can further develop their work to better understand and contribute to urban life.

Context-responsive research methods, which are useful in many settings, are particularly important in complex urban environments characterized by interpenetration among multiple systems, heterogeneity of cultural contexts, and rapid changes. A number of promising context-responsive approaches are highlighted below as well as special challenges that researchers working with urban populations face.

Qualitative Methods Combined With Quantitative Methods

Multiple research methods are needed to understand and address the issues presented in this report. Qualitative methods are a method par excellence for rich, detailed descriptions of the complex, dynamic nature of social environments and the meaning and belief systems of populations under study (Brodsky, 1996; Burton & Jarrett, 2000; Harre & Moghaddam, 2003; Marecek, Fine, & Kidder, 1997; Miller & Banyard, 1998). Qualitative methods also offer unique contributions to the emergence of new and unexpected understandings of phenomena, to cultural sensitivity in research, and to strengths-based approaches that reverse negative stereotypes about marginalized populations. On the other hand, quantitative methods appear uniquely suited for examination of large samples, for hypothesis testing, and for replication. For some research questions, either qualitative or quantitative methods will suffice. However, in many cases, combining qualitative methods and quantitative methods can build on the unique strengths of each methodology and offset the weaknesses of each.

Use of Multiple Data Sources

Urban research often combines data from multiple sources to study the intersection of how individuals perceive situations, how a trained observer might characterize the setting, and official records from institutions like schools, hospitals, or police departments. Shinn and Toohey (2003) delineate five distinct measurement approaches to assessment of ecological contexts, each with distinct advantages and disadvantages: compositional measures based on archival data (e.g., aggregated census tract data), compositional measures of perceptions (e.g., aggregated resident perceptions of neighborhood life), observational inventories (e.g., quality of neighborhood housing), setting regularities (e.g., formal and informal norms), and qualitative/descriptive methods. Studies involving multiple data sources are more likely to avoid the biases inherent in any one source and also offer useful information on the relationship between individual psychological processes and the environment. For example, methodological advances in the study of urban decay, disorder, and incivilities include the development of standardized self-reported measures of disorder and decay along the dimensions thought to most significantly affect residents' well-being (Ewart & Suchday, 2002; Ross & Mirowsky, 1999) and observational measures of housing and neighborhood quality (Evans, Wells, Chan, & Saltzman, 2000; Saegert, Montagnet, Rafter, & Krenichyn, 2001). Both observational measures and survey measures of urban physical and social environments have been related to police crime records (Brown et al., in press; Saegert, Winkel, & Swartz, 2002). Self-report methods are essential to the study of psychological phenomena, but their interpretation is often clarified by combining them with other data sources. Multimethod research offers an extremely effective means of better understanding urban phenomena in their distinctly urban, complex, ecological context.

Research Methods From Other Disciplines

Other disciplines have developed and refined methods useful for capturing various facets of urban life and the urban environment. Geographic scientists have developed geographic information systems (GIS). GIS produce a computer-based method for tracking, analyzing, and managing geographical data. Outputs include diagrams, data-coded maps, tables, and photographs (Bernhardsen, 1999; Matei, Ball-Rokeach, & Qui, 2001). Anthropologists use the technique of urban ethnography, involving extensive fieldwork in urban areas with the goal of discerning the meaning of particular phenomena to the individuals and groups studied (Anderson, 1990; Foster & Kemper, 1996; Fullilove, Green, & Fullilove, 1999; Goode, 2002; Simon & Burns, 1997). Urban ethnography involves "long-term, close-up, personal observation and listening to people in the context of their everyday lives" (Goode, 2002, p. 280). Sociologist William H. Whyte (1980, 1988) pioneered the use of combined photographic-observational methodology to examine urban life in public spaces. Time-lapse photography, direct observation, and related methods provide detailed descriptions of how different subgroups of individuals use and behave in open public spaces. Community case study is a community sociology method that involves the extensive study of a single community with the goal of developing a holistic description of life in that community (Bell & Newby, 1974; Caccamo de Luca, 2000). Lynd and Lynd's (1929, 1937) two studies of Middletown are the classics in this area, presenting a multidimensional view of a midwestern city's evolving social and cultural life in the mid-20th century using a combination of archival, survey, interview, and observational data. An example of urban research that creatively adopts approaches from other disciplines is Campbell, Sefl, Wasco, and Ahrens's (2004) study of urban rape survivors. An innovative sampling method was developed, building on the work both of feminist urban sociologists (focused on "communities of women in motion"; Miranne & Young, 2000) and biologists who study migratory animals such as shrimp (using "adaptive sampling"; Thompson & Seber, 1996). The authors recruited a cross-section of urban rape survivors based on the resulting daily rounds conceptualization; the sample was recruited in a wide variety of urban settings (breadth), with more frequent recruitment used in high-concentration settings (depth).

Multilevel Research

A major challenge in urban research is the simultaneous inclusion of multiple ecological levels in research design and analysis. Urban life encompasses psychological, interpersonal, family, group, neighborhood, and community-wide influences.

Research that focuses only on a given level will be unable to capture important, multilevel influences, which are central in the ecological approach (e.g., Perkins & Long, 2002). In the past 10 years, for example, substantial multilevel research has examined the influence of neighborhood characteristics on families and children. This kind of research requires that data are collected simultaneously at the neighborhood, family, and child levels (Booth & Crouter, 2001; Burton & Jarrett, 2000; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Roosa, Jones, Tein, & Cree, 2003; Sampson, Morenoff, & Gannon-Rowley, 2002; Shinn & Toohey, 2003). Conceptual models have evolved that attempt to capture these multilevel influences, multiple methods have been employed to assess data at the varied levels, and new statistical methods have been developed to assess nested, multilevel phenomena (e.g. hierarchic linear modeling). Importantly, many of these efforts include interdisciplinary teams of researchers bringing together methods from their respective disciplines (Duncan & Raudenbush, 2001; Schneiderman, Speers, Silva, Tomes, & Gentry, 2001; Winston et al., 1999). For example, multilevel hierarchical models have contributed to a clearer distinction between individual traits and contextual factors such as the socioeconomic status, gender, and other characteristics of block and neighborhood residents as predictors of crime victimization (Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997) and how residents interpret signs of decay and disorder (Perkins & Taylor, 1996).

Strengths-Based Research Approaches

Community-based urban researchers increasingly favor strengths-based approaches. Such approaches view citizens and community groups as partners in research design, implementation, data collection, interpretation, and dissemination. This research collaboration enhances the quality of research and the utility of findings. For example, participatory community and action research methods emphasize collaboration and power sharing between community members and academic researchers, with a major focus on findings of practical benefit to community groups (Jason et al., 2004; Tandon, Azelton, Kelly, & Strickland, 1998). Similarly, empowerment evaluation (Fetterman, Kaftarian, & Wandersman, 1996; Michigan State University Evaluation Team, 2003) works to build the capacity of local groups or organizations during the program evaluation process. Empowerment evaluation aims to ensure that the site being evaluated has substantial input into the purpose and methods of evaluation and aims to build the capability of participants to conduct future evaluations and use evaluation data to continually improve programs after researchers have left. One additional feature of a strengths-based approach is to carefully examine the deficits-based versus strengths-based assumptions underlying the selection of research questions and methods and the interpretation of research findings. Researchers are advised to start with a critical analysis of the assumptions underlying previous research in the area—which may have been deficit-based leading to poorly conducted studies emphasizing all that is wrong with urban populations and cities—to help ensure that such assumptions do not undermine the quality and usefulness of their studies in the urban arena.

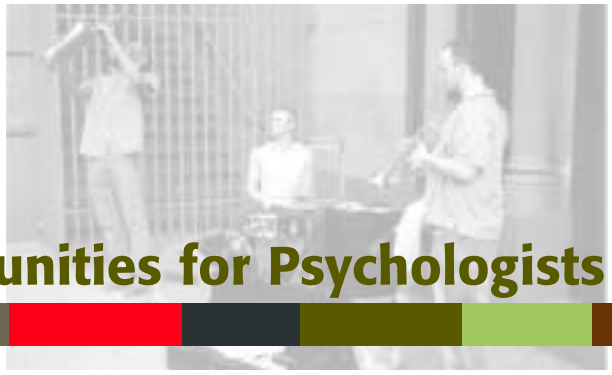
Special Considerations and Challenges in Research for Urban Settings

Research in urban settings brings special considerations and challenges, including issues of access, language, exploitation, safety, and isolating causal relationships. For example, researchers encounter many obstacles to engaging populations such as intravenous drug users, recent immigrants, and urban gangs. Researchers may need to spend especially long periods of time establishing credibility and trust with these groups and to employ in place of more traditional techniques sampling techniques such as snowball sampling (in which participants are asked to refer others they believe may be interested in participating). Translating measures into various languages and finding research assistants who speak the same language as those studied represent additional challenges. Inadvertent exploitation is also a concern. Payment for participation in research may be coercive for poor individuals. Other issues relate to the meaning of "community consent," to bias that reinforces stigma and marginalization (e.g., Paradis, 2000; Russell, Porter, & Touchard, 2001), and to deciding whether to send graduate or undergraduate research assistants into urban neighborhoods and housing projects characterized by high rates of violence that may raise safety and ethical issues (e.g., Demi & Warren, 1995). Isolating causal factors represents a major methodological challenge in urban research, especially when researchers attempt to evaluate com-

munity-wide interventions or city-wide policies. Establishing appropriate comparison groups is difficult in such research, and isolating the influence of interventions or policies from the multiple other ecological influences on observed outcomes can prove difficult.

Interdisciplinary Research Teams

It is increasingly clear that our best understanding and most effective contributions to individual and community well-being call for theoretical perspectives, knowledge, and methodologies from multiple disciplines. Already increasingly common, interdisciplinary research teams may become the norm, especially in the urban context. Psychology has an important and distinctive role to play in urban research, across the entire range of research areas. Psychology's systematic and rigorous empirical training and wide-reaching theoretical bases represent invaluable assets, but psychologists cannot do it alone. Knowledge, theory, and research methods from the entire spectrum of social science and related disciplines are needed to enhance understanding and effective problem solving related to our most difficult pressing problems in low- and moderate-income urban areas (e.g., Ferguson & Dickens, 1999; Saegert, Thompson, & Warren, 2001; Schneiderman, Speers, Silva, Tomes, & Gentry, 2001).



Opportunities for Psychologists

As this report illustrates, the distinctive cultural, social, and economic milieus of cities and their physical and institutional characteristics strongly affect human development, mental and physical health, and well-being. The importance of urban physical environments and their links to health and development have been recognized by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and important private foundations, such as Robert Wood Johnson. Funding for basic and applied research, for translational studies to improve practice, and for clinical, educational, and public health interventions, increasingly requires the collaboration of interdisciplinary teams. As the first director of the NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR), psychologist and later APA CEO, Norman Anderson, PhD, encouraged funding agencies to operate with a model of the determinants of health and development that spans levels of analysis from the biological through the psychological and social, to the large-scale physical environment and socioeconomic and cultural context. To continue to contribute to knowledge and practice concerning human behavior, development, health, and well-being, psychologists' conceptual and methodological models must articulate with those of other disciplines as they address the problems and opportunities of an increasingly urban world. The following sections identify the opportunities and approaches to help psychologists move forward with this task.

New Directions for Urban Research

Urban psychological research promises to advance understanding of how urban settings and populations interact to influence human development and well-being through the further development of ecological and interdisciplinary paradigms and methods.

The following recommendations of the Task Force on Urban Psychology in the area of research cover two major aspects: (a) recommendations for improved research procedures, designs, and methodologies for use in urban settings and (b) recommendations for more and better urban psychology

research in specific content areas of particular relevance to urban environments and their residents.

Improved Research Paradigms

Psychologists bring particular methodological strengths to urban research because of a tradition of rigorous research design. The challenge is to assure that research done in this tradition is context-sensitive and addresses multiple levels of analysis by paying particular attention to the following approaches.

Build on and Expand Theoretical Research Base

The challenge of interdisciplinary and contextually sensitive research is theoretical as well as methodological. The beginning of this report emphasizes the utility for urban psychologists of Bronfenbrenner's developmental social ecological framework, theories of cumulative risk, social capital theory, and a strengths-based approach. As psychologists work with other disciplines, it will be important to develop new theories that illuminate the interrelationships of different levels of analysis and articulate with the physical sciences and urban professions.

Situating Research in the Urban Ecology

Studies will need to consider the extent to which characteristics of urban environments (e.g., density, complexity, rapid change, juxtaposition of differences, the existence of enclaves, the built environment, and extremes of poverty and wealth) organize the urban ecology in ways that multiply or diminish their impact on individuals and urban communities. Many of the physical environment interventions reviewed try to lay out processes and prototypes for design and decision making that optimize access to urban assets and that might cumulatively reduce the disadvantages marginalized populations experience. For example, new urbanist environments purport to accommodate relatively high-density development in a nonstressful socially supportive way (Katz, 1993; Sander, 2002). Transportation, housing provision, and design schemes that integrate people of different races and classes and put them in easy reach of job and cultural opportunities may improve the urban living experience for those currently disadvantaged by environmental configurations (Churchman, 1999; Frank & Engelke, 2001; Sander, 2002). Participatory design and planning can include a wider variety of urban residents in decision making about their environments, improving both environments and the inclusive democratic nature of local governance (Horelli, 2002; Wiesenfeld & Sanchez, 2002).

Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

Verbal and visual qualitative methods allow the researcher to form a descriptive picture of the urban ecology being studied, the kinds of relationships among particular urban residents, the nature of individual experiences, and the form of transactions between people and the physical environment. These understandings can serve as the basis for selection of appropriate quantitative methods by suggesting the factors most important in organizing the ecology of the situation and particular processes that are most important for study. Focus groups and interviews with key actors can also provide insight into interpretation of quantitative findings.

Use of Multimethod, Multilevel Data

Urban psychology directs attention to many levels of analysis. Methodologies and measures that capture and integrate these levels are crucial. For example, observational and archival data can contextualize self-reports and experimental methodologies. Physiological measurements can link these to health and the physiological dimensions of psychological processes. Psychologists can join other disciplines in the use of multilevel statistical models, geographic information systems and spatial analysis, and other emerging analytic techniques that are being developed in other disciplines and by interdisciplinary teams.

Interdisciplinary Research

Given the complexity of urban areas, urban psychological research should include the use of interdisciplinary and intersectional research teams (i.e., social demographers, medical anthropologists, urban sociologists, psychologists, epidemiologists, biostatisticians, economics, planners, and policymakers). Such psychological research should integrate perspectives from different disciplines to address how to charac-

terize the built, human, and urban environments and to develop models for the processes and interactions that shapes the urban environment.

Use of Community-Based Action Research

The study of the urban environment is often fragmented by the disciplinary training, theoretical interests, and methodological requirements of researchers. But for people living in and using the urban environment, it is always multidimensional. Working with urban residents and users of particular environments to determine research priorities and action goals situates research more firmly in an actual ecology and provides a compelling problem focus that helps researchers from different disciplines work together. As important is that community-based action research involves those who are studied in understanding their situation and empowers them to use the research to improve their lives.

Specialized Training

Additional research training likely will prove important to enhance expertise and proficiency in the specialized research modalities noted above. Funding sources for such training should be identified and disseminated widely.

Areas for Urban Research

Although there are many important, substantive research areas in urban psychology, below are some specific recommendations stemming from the work reviewed in this monograph. The examples below are intended to be illustrative and not exhaustive.

Studying Strengths and Assets in Urban Communities

Much research focuses on the deficits or problems of urban environments. Equally important is an examination of urban resources, strategies for maximizing these assets, and understanding how they can translate into increased well-being for persons living in cities. Urban psychologists are beginning to focus research on human and social capital, as well as paying increased attention to the role of economic resources in coping, human development, identity, health, and well-being.

Studying Psychological Processes in the Context of Both Physical and Social Environments

Psychologists are already contributing to our understanding of how race and ethnicity are related to psychological and social processes. Others focus on the role of the physical environment. Looking at both dimensions together will provide a more realistic foundation of knowledge about urban life.

Physical and Mental Health in Urban Environments

Recognition of social disparities in health, well-being, and access to health care have turned attention to the role the urban environment plays in exacerbating or reducing these differences. Concern about an epidemic of obesity and the prevalence of life-style related diseases has led to interdisciplinary conferences and national initiatives to understand and promote housing, transportation, and urban forms that contribute to greater physical activity and reduce exposure to toxins and health hazards emanating from the urban environment (e.g., the Harvard School of Public Health Symposium on Housing, Neighborhoods, and Health, June 26, 2003, and the Robert Wood Johnson Grant Program for Active Living, 2003-2004). Sociological and epidemiological research has identified strong structural characteristics and health and mental health problems. However, psychological research is needed to elucidate the mediating and moderating variables needed to allow better understanding and appropriate interventions.

Research in Urban Education and Child Development

Psychological research in urban education and child development in urban settings should be contextually relevant, addressing children holistically and focusing on both the micro and macro issues that influence learning and development. For example, more research needs to examine the achievement gap in urban schools, not simply in terms of what urban students do not have, but instead using a macroecological approach that includes a focus on the decentralization of cities, changes in the social ecology of neighborhoods, and the structure of the urban labor market.

Intergroup Relations, Acculturation, and Identity Formation in Urban Multiethnic Contexts

The composition of cities has been changing rapidly at the same time that media, travel, and immigration bring more and more people into steady contact with each other. How are social relationships, family dynamics, and personal development being affected by this milieu? While these changes are occurring everywhere, cities provide an especially good laboratory because of their density, size, variety of populations, and speed of change.

Evaluating the Effects of Policies on Urban Residents

The solutions to many of the problems urban residents face go beyond responses of individuals, families, or even particular communities or programs. They require policy interventions. Psychologists are sometimes involved in the study of urban school reforms and mental health policies. However, psychologists should expand their policy evaluations to areas such as housing, community development, employment, transportation, and other urban policy domains.

Comparative Urban, Suburban, and Rural Research

Research should examine, through systematic evaluations, whether interventions to enhance quality of urban life are equally effective as comparable ones in suburban and rural areas, and to what extent effectiveness depends upon similar, and different, strategic approaches, skills, and tactics, etc.

Dissemination and Translational Research

Research on how to disseminate findings of research so that they are utilized effectively in real-world urban contexts should be developed.

New Practice and Social Intervention Opportunities

As has been evident throughout this report, a wide range of new and important practice and social intervention opportunities exists in the urban arena for psychologists.

The Forefront of Innovation

Although psychologists have long been present in urban schools, community mental health centers, and hospitals, they have not often been involved in planning and development or administration and therefore are not in the forefront of innovation. Practicing psychologists need first to see themselves as having a great deal to offer to the urban settings in which they are employed, and then to be more aggressive in getting themselves into positions in which their expertise and knowledge can be brought to bear on the individuals within the systems and the systems themselves. To contribute effectively in the urban arena, psychologists need to refine current competencies and develop new ones. Three key competencies emphasized throughout the report appear especially important.

Cultural Competence

Cultural competence is one of the critical capacities for effective work in the urban arena, with its diversity of cultural groups. Both individual practice and social intervention must build upon a foundation of knowledge of different cultural groups, an appreciation of cultural differences and distinctive cultural strengths, and competence in working with individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds. (See ***Guidelines for Providers of Psychological Services to Ethnic, Linguistic, and Culturally Diverse Populations,*** developed by the APA Board of Ethnic Minority Affairs Task Force on the Delivary of Services to Ethnic Minorty Populations, August 1990)

Appreciation and Understanding of the Role of the Urban Context

A second critical competency is an appreciation and understanding of the role of the urban context, including attachment to place, in influencing mental health, individual behavior, and social functioning. Adoption of an ecological, multilevel, strengths-based perspective appears essential for maximizing positive impact in psychologists' work in the urban arena and minimizing unintended negative ones.

Capacity To Work Collaboratively

A third, essential competency is the capacity to work collaboratively with practitioners from var-

ied fields, community groups, and social institutions. Psychologists have a critical role to play in contributing to urban well-being through application of applied research, community intervention, intergroup relationship building, policy analysis, and advocacy skills. However, psychologists cannot do it alone. Whether the focus is on the mental health of a client, the education of a child, the cohesion of a family, or the quality of life in a neighborhood, collaborative work and partnerships, spanning the entire range of practitioner groups and applied disciplines are essential if a substantial difference is to be made (cf. Maton, 2000). Psychologists need to develop competency in developing interdisciplinary, multilevel approaches to the individual and the system.

Enhancing the Quality of Urban Life

Psychologists are involved, to varying extents, in a wide range of efforts to enhance the quality of urban community life. Pathways of influence include program development and implementation, coalition building, community development, consultation, technical support, program evaluation, action research, community organizing, policy analysis, and policymaking. To make a greater difference in urban life, psychologists' involvement in these varied arenas needs to be expanded and refined, as highlighted below.

Prevention and Health Promotion Program Development

A greater number of psychologists are needed to contribute to the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs to prevent psychological, social, and physical health problems and to promote well-being. The development of intervention programs that encompass multiple domains (e.g., school, family, neighborhood) and multiple levels of analysis (individual, group, organization, community, cultural) are of special importance; such theory-based, comprehensive, multilevel programs are especially likely to have a sustained influence on the quality of urban life (Nation et al., 2003).

Policy Analysis and Policy Advocacy

There is a great need for psychologists to become more involved in urban policy analysis and policy advocacy. Psychologists' efforts may be devoted to urban policy per se or to national policy issues with critical implications for urban areas. One example of the latter is the work by psychologists at the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP), located in the School of Public Health, Columbia University. NCCP identifies and promotes strategies that prevent child poverty and improve the lives of low-income children and their families. Staff prepare and disseminate policy-relevant reports based on extant research and advocate for effective policy through presentations to Congress and related activities. Four primary substantive areas for NCCP are economic security (e.g., Cauthen, 2002), early care and learning (e.g., Knitzer & Adely, 2002), family stability (e.g., Raver & Knitzer, 2002), and demographics (e.g., Elmelech, McCaskie, Lennon, & Lu, 2002). NCCP is a well-known and important player in the realm of policy analysis and advocacy. A critical role for all psychologists involved in the policy arena is to effectively translate and communicate to policymakers key research findings related to pressing urban problems.

Action Research

Action research involves a collaboration between university-based researchers and community groups to generate and apply research findings to enhance community functioning. In recent years, applied urban psychologists have begun to adopt action research methods to enhance urban community life. One classic example is the Block Booster Process Intervention, carried out in New York City in the early 1990s by community psychologists Abe Wandersman, Paul Florin, and colleagues (Florin, Chavis, Wandersman, & Rich, 1992). Block organizations randomly assigned to the intervention condition had a 50% higher survival rate than block organizations that did not participate in the intervention. Action research shows promise as a distinctive and important pathway of influence through which psychologists can contribute to the quality of urban life.

Consultation and Technical Support

Many urban psychologists have the knowledge necessary to provide valuable consultation and technical support to urban community agencies and groups in their areas of expertise. Consultants can be university based or privately situated in consultation and evaluation firms. An example of the latter

is the Association for the Study and Development of Community (ASDC), a research and development organization that specializes in community capacity building and social problem solving (ASDC, 2002). Urban citizens, agencies, and policymakers can all benefit from the enhanced involvement by psychologists in consultation and technical assistance.

Elected Policymakers

A small number of psychologists contribute to urban policy as elected policymakers, holding policy positions ranging from local school board member to the U.S. House of Representatives. Debi Starnes, PhD, for example, is an urban psychologist who directly influences policy through her role as an Atlanta City Council member. Starnes draws in part upon her psychological training in problem analysis, empirical grounding, interpersonal relationship building, collaboration, and problem solving (Starnes, 2003). The involvement of psychologists as elected officials provides a distinctive and influential means through which the special skills of psychology can be brought to the urban arena.

Concentrated Poverty: A Critical Urban Domain

As detailed throughout this report, the entire spectrum of social needs and urban institutions can benefit from the contributions of psychology. Unfortunately, some of the most critical urban domains, including housing, urban planning, community development, job training, comprehensive neighborhood revitalization, and urban social policy currently involve few psychologists. Their expertise and perspective are sorely needed in these and related domains. Common to many of these critical domains is the central contributing role of concentrated poverty.

In psychologists' work in the urban arena, concentrated poverty will consistently influence our perspective and focus.

Advocate for Services for the Urban Poor

Psychologists need to look at the ways in which poverty has denied individuals and families access to needed services and to advocate for services for the urban poor within the communities they serve.

Develop New Programs and Services in Critical Areas

Social intervention work is tremendously important in the arenas of education, prevention, and promotion of well-being among the urban poor and in high-poverty neighborhoods. Examples of new programs and services that need to be developed include:

1. Comprehensive mental health and job training programs. Programs need to be developed for TANF recipients, many of whom have serious and multiple barriers to employment (e.g., mental health and substance abuse problems and domestic violence) that make it difficult for them to maintain jobs. The special issues of poor, single mothers need to be addressed in such programs.
2. School reform in high-poverty areas. To address school reform in high-poverty areas, psychology should effectively translate its theory and basic research into applied knowledge that can be of practical benefit to urban public schools in high-poverty areas and build on the strengths of low-income students and families.
3. Homelessness prevention. Interventions and policies that prevent homelessness need to be generated; possibilities include expanding various housing supports, promoting assistance to at-risk groups, and promoting the creation of a large number of low-income housing units.

Poverty is a primary contributor to nearly every major social problem, and there is no greater contribution that psychologists can make to the quality of urban life than working to enhance the capacity and empowerment of individuals, schools, and neighborhoods affected by concentrated poverty.

New Directions in Education and Training

A basic understanding of urban psychology should be a part of graduate and undergraduate training in psychology, whether as part of existing courses or as standalone courses. Such training should encompass the study of culture in urban settings and populations and promote an understanding of

urban factors as both positive and negative. That is, urban environments should be understood as providing both risk and protective factors. A field of urban psychology implies changes in education and training at all levels. These changes should encompass a contextually relevant and multicultural perspective consistent with the recently revised APA Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists (2003).

Graduate Education in Urban Psychology

Graduate education for urban psychologists should emphasize understanding what factors within the urban setting affect human development, physical and mental health, and well-being. Graduate training for urban psychology should include the traditional domains of psychology, as well as new competencies.

New Competencies

Urban psychologists will need knowledge of urban systems and ecological analysis, program development and evaluation, cultural competence, and the use of qualitative, multilevel, mixed methods, and action research approaches in psychological studies. Graduate programs in psychology that have an urban psychology thrust should provide students with multiple opportunities to develop this multifaceted body of knowledge and skills through involvement in interdisciplinary urban research projects and varied field and practicum experiences in urban settings.

Interdisciplinary Training

Urban issues demand that an urban psychology be multidisciplinary in nature. Therefore, education and training related to urban psychology should incorporate strong connections with related disciplines. Graduate training should provide avenues for students to work with psychologists, as well as others (e.g., urban planners, urban sociologists, urban health researchers), in varied capacities (e.g., supervised internships, field and practical experiences) that promote students' understanding of the influence of the urban setting on the development and well-being of urban residents.

Policy Studies

Graduate training is necessary in the policy arena for students in urban psychology. This will provide an opportunity for psychologists to understand urban policy and to develop the skills, through internships and field experiences, to work with urban policymakers, advocacy groups, and citizen groups in efforts to contribute to the development of strengths-based, socially just, and contextually relevant urban policies.

Undergraduate Education in Urban Psychology

Undergraduate education in psychology is aimed toward developing students who have skills and values that reflect psychology as both a science and an applied field and who think as scientists about individual behavior and experience.

Prepare Students To Work in Urban Settings

The undergraduate psychology curriculum prepares students for entrance into the workforce upon completion of the baccalaureate degree, as well as acceptance into graduate or professional schools in psychology or some related discipline. Given that a vast proportion of the U.S. population lives in urban areas, many of the graduates from undergraduate programs in psychology will eventually work in urban settings. Therefore, an urban psychology focus should be introduced at some level in the undergraduate psychology curriculum for the psychology major. Also, there could be much value in exposing urban psychology to nonpsychology undergraduate majors (e.g., individuals preparing to be teachers, social workers, law enforcement professionals) who intend to work directly within urban settings and with diverse urban populations. This would necessitate the collaboration of undergraduate psychology faculty with faculty in these other disciplines to better address the needs of these students.

Introduce Urban Concepts

It is essential that the undergraduate psychology curriculum give some attention to issues related to urban ecologies and urban populations. For example, emphasis on the influence of urbanicity, or the distinctive urban environment on human development and well-being, should be an integral part of the contents of introductory texts in psychology. This could be particularly instructive in efforts to help undergraduate students understand how social and physical context might influence the application of psychological principles, and how these principles can be useful in explaining social issues and informing public policy.

Continuing Education

Few practitioners or researchers had a focus on urban issues as part of their graduate training. The APA Office of Continuing Education in Psychology should work with task force members and/or staff liaisons to ensure that appropriate continuing education workshops take place at APA annual conventions and assist task force members and staff in facilitating trainings at regional, state, and divisional meetings. Additionally, CE trainings should utilize newer communication technology where possible and appropriate.

Participation in Interdisciplinary Research and Practice

The practice of interdisciplinary research and programs requires actual participation with experienced researchers and practitioners from different disciplines working in particular urban settings. Many institutes and centers, within universities and outside of them, have ongoing programs of urban research and programs that can provide hands-on learning experiences for undergraduate, graduate, postdoctorate, and even more advanced professionals. Internships, summer institutes, and semester or yearlong placements can help psychologists go beyond theoretical understanding of urban psychology to the actual mastery of the skills and ways of thinking that emerge from truly interdisciplinary collaboration on an actual urban issue. In such settings, research often transcends the interdisciplinary and becomes transdisciplinary, that is, concepts and approaches go beyond putting together pieces from different fields to offer new routes to knowledge and practice.

Interdisciplinary Linkages

Urban psychology has much to contribute to other disciplines and much to gain by closer collaboration. Urban planners, architects, civil engineers, and public health specialists all struggle with ways to make the urban environment more supportive of healthy human development and fuller lives. Other social sciences, such as sociology, anthropology, political science, social work, geography, and economics are also important in putting together the pieces that make a good urban environment and support healthy human beings and greater social justice. Medicine, ergonomics, physiology, and biology contribute important knowledge of the physical interface of people with their environments. These collaborations are being sponsored by the National Institutes of Health and other funding agencies in areas such as physical and mental health in urban environments. In addition to forms of interdisciplinary cooperation mentioned above, psychologists can increase their interdisciplinary linkages in many ways.

Participating in conferences and associations that promote interdisciplinary study. Many associations have sprung up to facilitate interdisciplinary exchange of ideas. These include some founded by psychologists such as the Society for Community Research and Practice (SCRP), which has organized a special committee on interdisciplinary linkages and is cosponsoring a conference on this topic with Vanderbilt University's Interdisciplinary Program in Community Research and Action. Psychologists and members of other disciplines cofounded other organizations, such as the Environmental Design Research Association; another recent example is the International Society for Urban Health. Still other examples include the growing participation of psychologists in conferences held by other disciplines, such as the Applied Anthropology Conference.

Forming interdisciplinary faculty (or faculty-student) seminars on urban topics.Seminars at various universities bring faculty, and often graduate students, together to present papers, hold panel discussions, and provide a format for more open discussion. Some topics include Youth and Community Development at the University of Washington's Center for Educational and Environmental Development and Urban Health at the City University of New York.

Contributing to interdisciplinary publications. A number of urban focused journals exist but they rarely contain work by psychologists. The Journal of Urban Affairs, published by the Association of Urban Affairs, is one example. Psychologists could also expand the inclusion of members of different disciplines when they write about urban issues.

Formal American Psychological Association (APA) linkages. In its official capacity, the American Psychological Association could promote interdisciplinary research by cosponsoring interdisciplinary conferences, conference sessions, and publications related to urban psychology. APA could also recognize interdisciplinary research and practice by recognizing such achievements with

special awards categories, either focused particularly on urban issues or defined more generally.

New Directions in Public Policy and Advocacy

To change the discourse on urban life, urban psychologists must reach out to collaborate with nontraditional partners and increase their advocacy efforts with policymakers.

Outreach to Nontraditional Partners

There are a number of national and local organizations, such as the League of United Latin American Citizens, the National Urban League, and the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, which work on a broad range of urban issues. APA should partner with these organizations around issues such as education, violence, and health promotion. State psychological associations with urban committees should partner with such organizations' chapters or local organizations such as churches, commissions, and boards. These collaborations would strengthen the voice of psychology outside of the field and demonstrate the relevance of psychological research and its relevance to urban issues to nontraditional partners. Such collaborations would also strengthen support for initiatives to eliminate health disparities, the achievement gap, and homelessness, for example.

Increased Advocacy

Urban psychologists should organize, either through the national office, their state psychological associations, divisions, or other affiliations (academia, hospital, clinic, coalitions, etc.), to become more active in the public policy process. Policymakers make decisions that have a profound effect on urban life, from housing to employment to access to services. Urban psychologists have an obligation, as citizens and as psychologists, to inform policymakers of psychological research and its relevance to these issues. Elected officials routinely make decisions about the conduct, funding, and nature of policies and programs that affect urban life. They are, with few exceptions, not scientists. Therefore, they must rely on the expressed views of their constituents, the information of experts, and their own opinions to make important decisions. In our effort to promote human development and well-being, it is psychologists' right and responsibility to inform those decisions.

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Appendix:

Journals With Emphasis on Urban Context

Journal of Urban Affairs is a multidisciplinary journal devoted to articles that address contemporary urban issues. It is directed toward an audience that includes practitioners, policymakers, scholars, and students. The Journal aspires to contribute to the body of substantive and methodological knowledge concerning public policies, programs, and administration.

Journal of Urban Design is a scholarly international journal that seeks to advance theory, research, and practice in urban design. The ***Journal of Urban Design*** provides a new forum to bring together those contributing to this re-emerging discipline and enables researchers, scholars, practitioners, and students to explore its many dimensions. The journal publishes original articles in specialized areas such as urban aesthetics and townscape; urban structure and form; sustainable development; urban history, preservation, and conservation; urban regeneration; local and regional identity; design control and guidance; property development; and practice and implementation.

Journal of Urban Health addresses urban health issues from both clinical and policy perspectives, filling a neglected niche in medical and health literature. The journal is published four issues per year. It publishes urban health data, book reviews, selected reports, and proceedings from Academy symposia and classic papers that are important to the knowledge base of the field.

Journal of Urban History provides scholars and professionals with the latest research, analyses, and discussion on the history of cities and urban societies throughout the world for almost 30 years. The ***Journal of Urban History*** publishes original research by distinguished authors from the variety of fields concerned with urban history. It covers the latest scholarship on such topics as public housing, migration, urban growth, school reform, city planning, history, racial segregation, urban culture, and urban politics. In addition to incisive articles, the Journal of Urban History regularly publishes review essays, providing a tremendous resource for research, study, and application of new interpretations and developments in urban history.

Journal of Urban Planning and Development is a quarterly journal that addresses the application of civil engineering to such aspects of urban planning as area-wide transportation, the coordination of planning and programming of public works and utilities, and the development and redevelopment of urban areas. Examples of topical areas covered include environmental assessment, esthetic considerations, land-use planning, underground utilities, infrastructure management, renewal legislation, transportation planning, and evaluation of the economic value of state parks.

Journal of Urban Technology publishes articles that review and analyze developments in urban technologies as well as articles that study the history and the political, economic, environmental, social, esthetic, and ethical effects of those technologies. The goal of the journal is, through education and discussion, to maximize the positive and minimize the adverse effects of technology on cities. The journal's mission is to open a conversation between specialists and nonspecialists (or among practitioners of different specialties) and is designed for both scholars and a general audience whose businesses, occupations, professions, or studies require that they become aware of the effects of new technologies on urban environments.

Education and Urban Society (EUS) is a multidisciplinary journal that examines the role of education as a social institution in an increasingly urban and multicultural society. To this end, ***EUS*** publishes articles exploring the functions of educational institutions, policies, and processes in light of national concerns for improving the environment of urban schools that seek to provide equal educational opportunities for all students. EUS welcomes articles based on practice and research with an explicit urban context or component that examines the role of education from a variety of perspectives including, but not limited to, those based on empirical analyses, action research, and ethnographic perspectives, as well as those that view education from philosophical, historical, policy, and/or legal points of view.

Canadian Journal of Urban Research (CJUR) is a multidisciplinary, scholarly journal dedicated to publishing articles that address a wide range of

issues relevant to the field of urban studies. ***CJUR*** welcomes papers focusing on urban theory and methodology, empirical research, problem and policy-oriented analyses, and cross-national comparative studies. Manuscripts either in English or French are considered for publication.

Urban Forum is concerned with both the broad developmental issues of urbanization in the Third World, and no less provides a distinctive African focus to the subject. Urban societies are examined from a variety of perspectives: issues of local governance, the role of city planning, our free market system, and the impact of multiethnic and multicultural formations in urban affairs. The journal makes a special effort to examine specific cities in developing nations as legal and cultural entities in their own right. Urban Forum can be a source journal in sociology, political science, economics, as well as urban studies.

Urban Ecosystems is an international journal devoted to scientific investigations of the ecology of urban environments and their policy implications. The scope of the journal is broad, including interactions between urban ecosystems and associated suburban and rural environments. Special emphasis is placed on the ecology of urban forests. Contributions may span a range of specific subject areas as they may apply to urban environments: biodiversity, biogeochemistry, conservation, ecosystem ecology, environmental chemistry, hydrology, landscape architecture, meteorology and climate, policy population biology, social and human ecology, soil science, urban planning, and wildlife and fisheries management.

Urban Policy and Research is an international journal dedicated to the publication of refereed articles in English in the field of urban studies and urban policy in Australia, New Zealand, and the Asia Pacific region. The scope of the journal is international. It presents to a worldwide readership a view of the urban policies of particular countries, and it encourages dialogue among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners in the region. Urban Policy and Research seeks to develop better links between theoretical and empirical research, and practice. It seeks to stimulate informed debate about urban issues by publishing material from a wide range of theoretical and research approaches. While specializing in Australian and New Zealand urban policy, Urban Policy and Research also seeks to provide a global audience and Asian Pacific region audiences with an English-language publication and to encourage an outward looking perspective among scholars and practitioners.

Urban Studies is a journal that provides an international forum for the discussion of issues in the fields of urban and regional analysis and planning. A hallmark of the journal is that is publishes leading articles from urban scholars working from within a variety of disciplines, including geography, economics, sociology, political science, and planning and public administration. The journal aims to provide theoretically and empirically informed analyses of the myriad changes affecting the urban and regional condition in the economically advanced nations and less-developed economies. While contribution to academic scholarship is the mainstay of the journal, its intent is to also inform practitioners of the changing urban scene.

Gender, Place, and Culture provides a forum for debate in human geography and related disciplines on theoretically informed research concerned with gender issues. It also seeks to highlight the significance of such research for feminism and women's studies. The journal fosters debate and dialogue in its "Viewpoint" section, which includes commentaries, discussions, and other shorter pieces. Key concerns include: geographical variations in gender division, gender relations, and structures of oppression; the sociocultural construction and the cultural politics of gender; the intersections between gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, class, age, and other social divisions in relation to space, place, and nature.

Urban Affairs Reviews is concerned with the timely dissemination of scholarly research on urban policy, urban economic development, metropolitan governance and service delivery, residential and community development, social and cultural dynamics, and comparative or international urban research.

Urban Education contains focused analyses of critical concerns that inner-city schools face in urban education. For almost 40 years, Urban Education has provided thought-provoking commentary on key issues from gender-balanced and racially diverse perspectives. Areas discussed in the journal include, for example, mental health needs of urban students, student motivation and teacher practice, school-to-work programs and

community economic development, restructuring in large urban schools, and health and social services. Annual special issues provide in-depth examinations of today's most timely topics in urban education.

Urban Review provides a forum for the presentation of original investigations, reviews, and essays that examine the issues basic to the improvement of urban schooling and education. The broad scope of topics presented reflects awareness of the multidisciplinary nature of contemporary educational problems.

Journal of Urban Affairs is among the most widely cited journals in the field. Published for the Urban Affairs Association, the journal explores issues of relevance to both scholars and practitioners, including: theoretical, conceptual, or methodological approaches to metropolitan and community problems; empirical research that advances the understanding of society; Strategies for social change in the urban milieu; innovative urban policies and programs; issues of current interest to those who work in the field and those who study the urban and regional environment.

International Journal of Urban and Regional Research (IJURR) is the leading international journal for urban studies. Since its inception in 1977 as a groundbreaking forum for intellectual debate, it has remained at the forefront of its field. With a commitment to global and local issues, a cutting-edge approach to linking theoretical development and empirical research, and a consistent demand for quality, ***IJURR*** encompasses key material from an unparalleled range of critical, comparative, and geographic perspectives. Embracing a worldwide readership of more than 50 countries and a multidisciplinary approach to the field, ***IJURR*** is essential reading for social scientists with a concern for the complex, changing roles of cities and regions.

Journal of Urban Economics provides a focal point for the publication of research papers in the rapidly expanding field of urban economics. It publishes papers of great scholarly merit on a wide range of topics and employing a wide range of approaches to urban economics. The journal welcomes papers that are theoretical or empirical, positive or normative. Although the journal is not intended to be multidisciplinary, papers by noneconomists are welcome if they are of interest to economists. Brief notes are also published if they lie within the purview of the journal and if they contain new information, comment on published work, or new theoretical suggestions.

Urban History occupies a central place in historical scholarship, with an outstanding record of interdisciplinary contributions and a broad-based and distinguished panel of referees and international advisors. Each issue features wide-ranging research articles covering social, economic, political, and cultural aspects of the history of towns and cities. The journal also includes book reviews, summaries of PhD theses, and surveys of recent articles in academic journals. In addition, ***Urban History*** acts as a forum for stimulating debate on historiographical and methodological issues. An indispensable tool for urban historians worldwide, the journal's annual bibliography features on average of more than 1,000 publications culled from monographs, edited collections, and periodicals.


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