



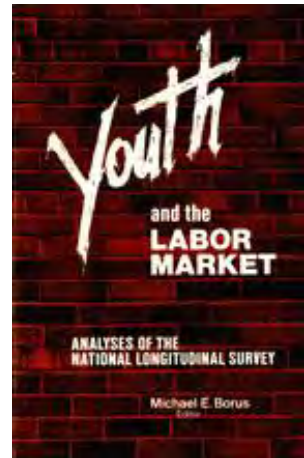
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# Changes Over the 1970s in the Employment Patterns of Black and White Young Men

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# **Chapter 3**

## **Changes Over the 1970s in the Employment Patterns of Black and White Young Men**

**by Tom K. Pollard**

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Over the decade of the 1970s, the labor market clearly slackened more for young black men than for young white men. This deterioration is most often illustrated by the relative fall in the black employment-to-population ratio and the relative increase in the black unemployment rate.<sup>1</sup>

The divergence in the black and white employment-to-population ratios has been associated with radical change in the distribution of unemployment among the black youth population. In the early 1970s, employment was distributed fairly evenly over both the black and white youth populations, with the vast majority of youths only briefly unemployed during the year. By the end of the decade, however, blacks had become overrepresented among those experiencing high total unemployment during any given year, and whites tended toward less annual unemployment.<sup>2</sup>

The gravity of this situation is debatable, however. The private and social costs of the increase in the black-white differential in aggregate employment are dependent on the specific underlying individual patterns of employment. Two broad opposing views of the individual patterns emerge from

a study of the literature. Some analysts see unemployment as the result of labor market dynamics; the flow of individual workers between jobs causes unemployment as they engage in job search.<sup>3</sup> These analysts hold that lower annual employment among black youth comes from their higher turnover out of employment and their consequent more numerous periods of job search. The opposing view is that unemployment is caused, in general, not by the turbulence of the labor market, but by stagnation.<sup>4</sup> This latter explanation is based on the idea that black youth in certain submarkets or with certain characteristics experience chronic, long term unemployment. They may, therefore, have long periods of unemployment at times when persons in other submarkets or with other characteristics are experiencing little unemployment. For these black youth, unemployment results from low movement into employment rather than high turnover out of employment.

Viewed from an efficiency standpoint, high turnover unemployment is often a necessary, if not beneficial, characteristic of the early labor market experiences among youth reflecting their instability and the imperfection of job/worker matching processes. If this theory is correct, policies to lower unemployment should be directed not toward the problems of specific workers, but toward improving the workings of the market in general. Stagnation with chronic, long term unemployment, on the other hand, is far more serious and suggests that some groups are being systematically excluded from employment. For youth, such exclusion is particularly serious because very limited employment early in one's career may likely limit future success. If unemployment is associated with stagnation for certain groups of workers, policies to decrease unemployment must address the problems specific to those workers experiencing it. Here we examine whether the turnover or the chronic unemployment model accurately portrays black and white

youth unemployment and, therefore, with what urgency and with which policies the worsening position of blacks relative to whites should be addressed.

Due to restrictions imposed by the data set, employment (time employed) will be used instead of unemployment (time not employed while in the labor force) as the labor market indicator for purposes of this study.<sup>5</sup> In general, unemployment may be the theoretically superior measure because it takes into account labor force participation decisions, but the significance of the labor force/not-in-the-labor force distinction may be limited by the sample selection rules used which limit the comparisons to out of school youth who are not in the military—the vast majority of whom are in the labor force. This limitation enhances the credibility of the employment measure and aids interpretation of our results by reducing the effects of two demographic trends that have certainly contributed to the divergence in black/white employment-to-population ratios and unemployment rates over the decade—increased military enlistment and school enrollment among black relative to white youth.<sup>6</sup> The NLS Survey of Young Men provides the data on men age 18-21 for the early part of the decade (1970-71); the NLS Youth Survey provides data on males of the same age at the end of the decade (1979-80).

The years chosen for observation also definitely bear on the interpretation of our results. The unemployment rates among white prime-age males were similar in 1970-71 and in 1979-80.<sup>7</sup> Although the earlier observation was made at a trough in the business cycle and the later at a peak, the similarity of the white male labor market in the two periods indicates that our choice of these years for observation controls to some extent for labor market conditions.

Over the 1970s, black and white youth have experienced reduced aggregate employment rates and a skewing of the

employment distributions toward lower total annual employment. Further, individual employment patterns have indeed changed for both black and white youth, the change having been much more drastic for blacks. Not working in the early part of the decade was associated with high turnover for both blacks and whites, but a similar reduction in employment rates for blacks and whites over the decade was accompanied by blacks moving, much more than whites, toward reduced employment characterized by stagnation.

### **I. Change Over the 1970s in Employment Means and Distributions**

The percentage of the population employed during the survey week decreased by 18 percent for black and 9 percent for white males over the decade (see table 3.1).<sup>8</sup> The percentage of blacks employed was 86 percent of that for whites in 1971 and only 78 percent in 1980.

Associated with this decrease in the survey week employment ratio was an increase in the proportion of the black and white young men employed all year (with no periods out of work). In both years, however, a larger portion of the whites than the blacks was employed all of the preceding year (in 1971, 48 percent for whites versus 34 percent for blacks and in 1980, 54 percent for whites and 38 percent for blacks).

Even though for both blacks and whites the proportion employed all year increased, the average weeks worked by employed young men decreased. The decrease in average weeks worked was modest for whites, decreasing from 45 weeks in 1970-71 to 44 weeks in 1979-80, but more substantial for blacks, falling from 41 weeks to 38 weeks. (Table 3.2)

The decrease in average annual weeks of employment over the decade was distributed fairly evenly over the white sample, but for blacks it became more concentrated among those persons who were out of work for a large portion of the year.

**Table 3.1**  
**Employment Status During Survey Week by Year of Survey and Race**

	1971						1980					
	Black		White		Total		Black		White		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working	221	77.6	1,395	89.9	1,616	88.0	217	63.6	1,676	81.2	1,893	78.7
Unemployed	39	13.8	117	7.6	157	8.6	88	25.8	293	14.2	381	15.8
OLF	24	8.6	39	2.5	63	3.4	36	10.6	94	4.6	131	5.5
Population (weighted) 000s	285	100	1,551	100	1,836	100	341	100	2,064	100	2,405	100

UNIVERSE: Civilian males, ages 18-21 who were not enrolled in school as of the 1970 survey for the 1971 observation and the 1979 survey for the 1980 observation.

**Table 3.2**  
**Employment Experience During the Preceding Year by Year of Survey and Race**

	Population characteristics			
	1971		1980	
	Black	White	Black	White
Persons employed during the year	267	1,502	296	1,955
Average weeks employed per person employed during the year	41.3	44.8	37.9	43.7
Persons with periods not working during the survey year	188	807	212	946
Average weeks not employed per person with periods not employed during the survey year	17.6	14.4	24.5	15.4
Total population - weighted - 000s	285	1,551	341	2,064
Total population - unweighted	209	397	197	450

UNIVERSE: Males, ages 18-21 as of the beginning of the survey year, who were not enrolled in school and not in the military during the survey year.

In 1970-71, the distribution of weeks worked was similar among blacks and whites. Eighty percent of the black and 89 percent of the white youth were employed more than 26 weeks (table 3.3); but by 1979-80, the distribution of employment among blacks had undergone a fundamental change while the distribution for whites changes relatively little. Twenty percent of the blacks worked less than 13 weeks during 1979-80 compared to 11 percent of the blacks in 1970-71. For whites, only 4 percent worked less than 13 weeks in 1979-1980, a decline in this category from the 1970-71 level of 6 percent (table 3.3). These trends in the white distribution indicate a relatively small decrease in employment among a large portion of the white sample, while the decreasing equality of the black distribution indicates a significant relative decrease in employment among a relatively small subsample of blacks.

**Table 3.3**  
**Distribution of Total Weeks Employed**  
**During the Survey Year**  
**for Total Sample by Year of Survey and Race**

Weeks employed	1971		1980	
	Black	White	Black	White
52	29.3	44.8	35.0	52.8
48-51	20.7	21.3	13.6	13.3
38-47	16.1	13.9	12.3	14.4
26-37	13.7	8.7	10.5	10.1
13-25	9.0	5.1	9.2	5.2
0-12	11.2	6.2	19.5	4.2
Population (000s)	285	1,551	341	2,064



Finally, despite the rough nature of the breakdowns, the distribution of employed persons across number of employers and total weeks employed categories indicates that the relative decline in average annual employment and growing concentration of periods of not working among blacks have been accompanied by a relative decrease in turnover among blacks (table 3.4). Here we use the number of employers as a proxy for job turnover: the larger the number of employers the greater the presumed level of job turnover during the year.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 3.4**  
**Percentage Distribution of Weeks Worked**  
**and Number of Jobs Held for Those Employed**  
**During the Year by Survey Year and Race**

Total number of Weeks/Jobs	1971		1980		
	Black	White	Black	White	
No. of weeks					
1-38	31.2	18.1	40.8	22.6	
39+	68.8	81.9	59.2	77.4	
No. of Jobs					
1	47.4	61.4	60.5	52.8	
2 +	52.6	38.6	39.5	47.2	
No. of weeks/jobs					
1-38	1	3.8	5.8	20.9	8.9
	2+	27.4	12.2	20.0	13.7
39+	1	43.6	55.6	39.6	43.9
	2+	25.2	26.4	19.5	33.5
Total employed (000s)		267	1,503	296	1955

UNIVERSE: Males, ages 18-21 as of the beginning of the survey year, who were not enrolled in school, not in the military, and who were employed at least one week during the survey year.

During 1970-71, more blacks held multiple jobs while the majority of whites held a single job. When we consider the number of weeks employed along with the number of employers, we find that more than half of blacks who held multiple jobs had less than 39 weeks of total employment while less than one-third of multiple jobholding whites worked less than 39 weeks. We can therefore characterize the 1970-71 patterns of blacks as showing relatively high turnover out of employment with substantial periods of not working. Whites, on the other hand, were more likely than blacks to hold a single job, and when an employer change did occur it was associated with more weeks of annual employment than was the case for blacks.

The 1979-80 figures show whites more likely than they were in 1970-71 to hold multiple jobs. Blacks show a major reversal of their earlier pattern, being more likely in 1979-80 to have one employer rather than multiple employers during the year. Most of the increase in single jobholding among blacks is in jobs lasting for fewer than 39 weeks (21 percent of blacks held one job for fewer than 39 weeks in 1979-80 compared to 4 percent in 1970-71). Whites show a more modest increase over the decade in the likelihood of having a single job lasting less than 39 weeks (9 percent of whites held one job for fewer than 39 weeks in 1979-80 compared to 6 percent in 1970-71). The increase over the decade in multiple jobholding among whites appears almost totally in the 39+ weeks-of-employment category, indicating that the increased turnover among whites was accompanied by relatively short spells of not working. In summary, although employment did decline somewhat among whites over the decade, higher job turnover seems to be the major force operating. On the other hand the decline in black employment over the decade appears to be associated more with increased instances of lengthy periods of joblessness among a growing subsample of the black population.

Over the decade, the annual number of weeks without work has thus become concentrated among a smaller proportion of black and white male youth. Blacks moved toward lower annual employment, both absolutely and relative to whites. Further, black employment changed from a phenomenon characterized by high turnover out of employment to one characterized by low movement into employment.

## II. Individual Regressions

Using multiple regression techniques, we can examine further the relationship between turnover and employment, identify some causes for the decrease in employment over the decade, and look at the persistence of employment from one year to the next among blacks and whites. In order to portray changes in employment over the decade more accurately, we estimated regression equations for black and white youths separately in each year. The dependent variable for each of these four equations is the proportion of a given year that a person was employed (the 1970-71 survey year for the earlier sample and calendar year 1979 for the later sample). The explanatory variables used were marital status, educational attainment, age, South/non-South residence, SMSA/non-SMSA residence, number of employers during the year, and weeks employed in the previous year (see table 3.5 for definitions of the variables used). Three well-documented trends, decreasing marriage and residence in the South and increased residence in SMSAs among blacks relative to whites, were expected to contribute to the divergence in black and white employment.<sup>10</sup> Although age and educational attainment were expected to affect employment positively, relative trends in these variables and their effects are not as well understood.

**Table 3.5**  
**Variable List for Employment Regressions**

WKEMPR <sub>t</sub>	Proportion of year t employed (for earlier observation t = survey year 1970-71; for later observation t = calendar year 1979).
MARRIED	Equals 1, if respondent was married on both surveys considered (1970 and 1971, for the earlier observation; 1979 and 1980, for the later observation); 0 otherwise.
AGE	Equals 1 if respondent was 20 or 21; 0 otherwise.
SOUTH	Equals 1 if respondent was living in the South on both survey dates considered (1970 and 1971 for earlier observation and 1979 and 1980 for the later observation); 0 otherwise.
EM1	Equals 1, if the respondent had 1 employer during year t; 0 otherwise.
EM2	Equals 1, if the respondent had 2 employers during year t; 0 otherwise.
EM3	Equals 1, if the respondent had 3+ employers during year t; 0 otherwise.
ATTAIN	Equals 1, if the respondent had completed 12+ years of schooling; 0 otherwise.
SMSA	Equals 1, if the respondent resided in an SMSA on both survey dates considered (1970 and 1971, for the earlier observation; 1979 and 1980, for the later observation); 0 otherwise.

We focus mainly on the relationship between number of employers and total employment, which serves as our test of the turnover hypothesis: a negative relationship indicates that reduced employment results from employer changes and the higher the number of employers, the lower employment is likely to be. The alternative to the turnover hypothesis is that the lack of employment among blacks stems more from severe stagnation among a subsample of blacks. In this case, employment will not be related to turnover. Further levels of

employment may be highly correlated from one year to the next, so we add lagged employment to test for a difference between blacks and whites in the persistence of employment from one year to the next.

The sample means in table 3.6 show that the members of the white sample were employed an average of 86 percent of the 1970-71 survey year, and the members of the black sample were employed an average of 77 percent.<sup>11</sup> Sample means in table 3.7 reveal that for calendar 1979 the white sample was on average employed 88 percent of the time, i.e., more than in 1970-71, while the figure for the black sample had fallen to an average of 70 percent of the year. Changes in the sample means of the predictor variables and their effects may partially explain this divergence in black and white male employment.<sup>12</sup>

The large relative decline over the decade in the proportion of the black sample who were married contributed to the divergence in employment. The married portion of the white sample fell from 41 percent in 1970-71 to 21 percent in 1979; for blacks the figure declined from 29 percent in 1970-71 to 6 percent in 1979. The effect of marital status on employment is positive and substantial for both blacks and whites in 1970-71, and this effect increased by about the same percentage for both groups over the decade.

The movement of blacks from the South also contributed to a divergence in black and white employment over the decade. The proportion of blacks living in the South declined over the decade relative to whites. The positive effect on employment for blacks of living in the South increased also relative to that for whites over the decade. Thus, although blacks in the South had higher employment in both 1970-71 and 1979, the increased effect of living in the South and the decline in the proportion of blacks living there contributed to the divergence in employment over the decade.

Although in 1979 blacks were still substantially less likely than whites to finish high school, the proportion of those who did rose over the decade. The estimated effect of high school graduation on employment is generally positive (although it is statistically insignificant for blacks) and converges for blacks and whites over the decade. Thus, changes in the distribution and effects of education, if anything, contributed to a convergence in black and white employment.

The black sample, younger on average than the white sample in 1970-71, had the same average age in 1979. In 1970-71, the effect of age on employment was positive for whites and insignificant for blacks. In 1979, it was more strongly positive for blacks than for whites. These findings indicate that over the decade, the trends in both the age distribution and age effects acted to decrease the employment difference between blacks and whites.

The growing representation of blacks relative to whites in SMSAs contributed marginally to the divergence in employment over the decade. The proportion of both samples living in SMSAs fell over the decade, but the fall was greater for whites, yielding a slight decrease in the relative representation of blacks. In both 1970-71 and 1979 residence in an SMSA had a positive effect on employment for whites and a negative effect on employment for blacks; further, the effects increased slightly over the decade.

Turnover, as measured by the number of employers during the year, decreased markedly over the decade among blacks but remained relatively unchanged among whites. The percentage of blacks not working at all during the year rose from 4 percent in 1970-71 to 11 percent in 1979. Only 1 percent of whites did not work at all in 1970-71, and that low figure also prevailed in 1979. Multiple job holding increased slightly over the decade among whites (from 38 percent of the white sample in 1970-71 to 43 percent in 1979) and

**Table 3.6**  
**Employment Regressions for White and Black Males, 1970-71**

	Blacks			Whites		
	Sample means	Estimated coefficients (t-stats. in parentheses)		Sample means	Estimated coefficients (t-stats. in parentheses)	
		Regression I	Regression II		Regression I	Regression II
Dependent variable: WKEMPR <sub>t</sub>	.77	—	—	.86	—	—
Explanatory variables:						
AGE	.59	-.008 (-.24)	-.002 (-.06)	.66	.062 (2.56)	.031 (1.36)
ATTAINMENT	.37	.001 (.03)	-.015 (-.48)	.70	.045 (1.80)	.023 (.98)
EM1	.45	.893 (10.25)	.684 (7.89)	.61	.872 (9.6)	.622 (7.02)
EM2	.28	.624 (6.99)	.490 (5.77)	.25	.782 (8.48)	.564 (6.36)
EM3	.23	.702 (7.75)	.512 (5.77)	.13	.680 (7.22)	.459 (5.08)
MARRIED	.29	.110 (3.02)	.077 (2.26)	.41	.061 (2.59)	.031 (1.4)

SMSA	.69	-.027 (-.67)	-.058 (-1.57)	.64	.005 (.22)	.004 (.19)
SOUTH	.61	.074 (1.95)	.037 (1.04)	.32	.060 (2.36)	.051 (2.21)
WKEMPR <sub>t-1</sub>	.77	—	-.340 (-6.06)	.87	—	-.404 (-8.11)
Constant term	—	-1.02	-.713	—	-1.07	-.730
	n = 195	R <sup>2</sup> = .45	R <sup>2</sup> = .54	n = 341	R <sup>2</sup> = .33	R <sup>2</sup> = .44
		F = 19.8	F = 24.4		F = 20.8	F = 29.4

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UNIVERSE: Males, 18-21 as of the survey in 1969, who were neither enrolled in school nor in the military between the survey in 1969 and the survey in 1971.



**Table 3.7**  
**Employment Regressions for White and Black Males, Calendar 1979**

	Blacks			Whites		
	Sample means	Estimated coefficients (t-stats. in parentheses)		Sample means	Estimated coefficients (t-stats. in parentheses)	
		Regression I	Regression II		Regression I	Regression II
Dependent variable: WKEMPR <sub>t</sub>	.70	—	—	.88	—	—
Explanatory variables:						
AGE	.69	.093 (1.82)	.037 (.82)	.69	.027 (1.27)	.018 (.94)
ATTAINMENT	.51	.075 (1.59)	.0002 (.006)	.72	.086 (3.73)	.031 (1.40)
EM1	.57	.681 (8.62)	.629 (9.08)	.56	.843 (11.49)	.626 (8.69)
EM2	.24	.661 (7.77)	.614 (8.23)	.31	.818 (11.08)	.610 (8.46)
EM3	.08	.728 (6.83)	.635 (6.75)	.12	.792 (10.28)	.592 (7.95)
MARRIED	.06	.166 (1.70)	.088 (1.02)	.21	.068 (2.78)	.046 (2.06)

SMSA	.68 (-.25)	-.014 (-.56)	-.026	.59 (1.47)	.030 (2.01)	.038
SOUTH	.53	.056 (1.05)	-.009 (-.20)	.29	.067 (2.99)	.057 (2.81)
WKEMPR <sub>t-1</sub>	.64	—	-.395 (-6.94)	.86	—	-.351 (-8.54)
Constant term	—	-1.04	-.721	—	-1.07	-.763
	n = 161	R <sup>2</sup> = .45 F = 15.4	R <sup>2</sup> = .58 F = 23.3	n = 386	R <sup>2</sup> = .34 F = 23.9	R <sup>2</sup> = .44 F = 33.4

UNIVERSE: Males, 18-21 as of January 1, 1978, who were neither enrolled in school nor in the military between January 1, 1978 and December 31, 1979.

decreased substantially among blacks (from 51 percent of the black sample in 1970-71 to 32 percent in 1979).

The regression results for 1970-71 reveal for whites a statistically significant negative relationship between the number of employers and employment (based on pairwise t-tests of the difference between the estimated coefficients on EM1, EM2, and EM3). White workers who had two employers during the year were employed five weeks less on average than those with a single employer during the year, and those with three or more employers were working 13 weeks less on average than those with two employers. Although the relationship among blacks is not as striking, it is definitely negative. Annual employment among blacks with one employer and those with three or more employers was almost identical to that of whites. Blacks with two employers had much less employment than whites in the same category. Blacks with two employers experienced 13 less weeks of employment and those with three or more employers 10 weeks less employment than those with a single employer. These results indicate that in 1970-71 the lower number of weeks of employment among blacks resulted from: (1) their somewhat greater representation among those with no employment during the year and, (2) higher average turnover among the employed together with a stronger negative relationship between turnover and employment.

In the 1979 estimates, the positions of blacks and whites with regard to turnover are reversed. Blacks move to a position of less turnover than whites, and the proportion of blacks not working during the year increases greatly relative to whites. In addition, the relationship between number of employers and total employment is only weakly negative among whites and totally absent for blacks, black workers with three or more employers experiencing slightly more time employed than those with fewer employers. In 1979, therefore, the reduced employment among blacks results

from a much larger proportion of the black than the white sample having had no job during the year, blacks having fewer employers on average and less employment among those with just one or two employers during the year.

As a crude test of whether employment levels are more persistent among blacks or whites, we added employment in the previous year,  $WKEMPR_{t-1}$ , to the regression equation, and the results are shown as Regression II in tables 3.6 and 3.7. The size of the estimated coefficient on this variable indicates the extent of the relationship between levels of employment in subsequent years. In 1970-71 the coefficient is smaller for whites than for blacks, but in 1979 the opposite is true. Although the differences are not statistically significant in either case, they indicate a change in the relative size of the measures. Thus, as the employment distribution during the year for blacks has become more bimodal, the persistence in these levels from year to year has increased for blacks relative to whites.

### III. Conclusion

This paper addressed the question of whether the relative decline in employment and the relative concentration of joblessness among black youth during the 1970s was associated with a relative increase in movement out of employment or, alternatively, with a relative decrease in turnover out of unemployment, which would indicate increasing stagnation. We found support for the latter.

Average annual employment among blacks is increasingly being determined by a subgroup with little or no employment experience. Observing a sample of civilian males age 18-21 who were not enrolled in school in 1971, and a similar sample in 1979, we found that as annual employment decreased over the decade for blacks, job mobility also decreased drastically. And while lower employment experienced in 1970-71 was positively related to the number of employers

the individual had during the year (an indication of turnover), this relationship was much weaker for whites and totally absent for blacks in 1979. Further, there was a relative increase over the decade for blacks in the extent to which high or low employment in one year predicts high or low employment in the next year.

It was beyond the scope of this study to consider specific policies to address the deterioration in black employment patterns over the 1970s. We have shown, however, that the growth in joblessness among young black males, both absolutely and relative to that for young white males, must not be treated as an aggregate, or market, phenomenon for purposes of policy formulation. Rather, the problems are specific to that growing subgroup of blacks being chronically excluded from employment. If the plight of these young black males is to be improved, the problems must be identified and addressed directly.

## NOTES

1. For a review of the literature on the divergence in black and white unemployment rates over the last three decades see Mare and Winship (1980). Other examples of empirical work on the divergence in unemployment rates over the 1970s are: Iden (1980), pp. 10-15; Bowers (1979), pp. 4-19; Newman (1979), pp. 19-27.
2. For excellent studies of the differing and changing distributions of unemployment for blacks and whites, see Clark and Summers (1979); Lerman, Barnow, and Moss (1979); and Levy (1980).
3. For an example of this view, see the comments by Robert Hall following Clark and Summers (1979); Hall (1970); and Hall (1972).
4. See: Clark and Summers (1979) and Levy (1980) for examples of this view.

5. There are a large number of missing values in the NLS youth data on those variables used to designate periods in an individual's work history as either unemployed or out-of-labor force time. Further, the missing values are concentrated among those persons with relatively long periods out of work. The situation is serious enough to bias downward an unemployment measure based on the work history. For this reason the labor force determination is ignored and time of employment is used.

6. It is possible that the relative increase in military enlistment and school enrollment among blacks has to a growing extent over the decade removed the most able persons from the black labor force and from our sample of blacks. This would lead to a decrease in the employability of our sample over the decade relative to the entire black population and relative to the white sample and, thereby, bias our results. The comparison of sample and population characteristics indicates that this effect on our results is minor.

7. The CPS unemployment rates for white males 25-54 in the modal month for the NLS surveys were 3.7 percent in 1971 and 4.3 percent in 1980. The average monthly CPS unemployment rates for the months covered by the work history data were 3.5 percent in 1970-71 and 3.6 percent in 1979-80.

8. Among the *entire* youth population there has been a definite divergence in the employment of blacks and whites. It is due in large part to a relative increase in black school enrollment and military enlistment. However, any trends we find are net of the effects of increasing enrollment and enlistment since we have sampled only nonenrolled, civilian males.

9. We recognize the number of employers is certainly not a perfect measure of turnover; it considers only movements in and out of employment and measures these movements with substantial variance since persons with one employer during the year could have had from zero (if they held the job for the entire year) to two transitions (if they found and lost the job during the course of the year). These problems notwithstanding, the number of employers does indicate the number of periods of job search during the year.

10. There are certainly other factors which might well have contributed to the divergence in employment over the decade; among the most important is the availability of unearned income and central city residence. Preliminary regressions using these variables did not yield significant results. The employment patterns of blacks in central cities were not significantly different from those of noncentral city residents of SMSAs,

although the concentration of blacks in central cities increased over the decade. Although positive trends in unearned income have been put forth as important explanations of declining black employment, we found no evidence of this in preliminary regressions. However, the large number of missing values on this variable reduced the sample sizes greatly and prevented generalization from our results.

11. The assessment of the impact of the predictors on the black/white employment differential will center on Regression I of tables 3.6 and 3.7. Table 3.6 includes the regression results for 1970-71 for the white and black samples, respectively, and table 3.7 presents the results for whites and blacks in 1979. Regression II on these tables includes  $WKEMPR_{t-1}$  as an explanatory variable. This variable is certainly correlated with some if not all of the other regressors since to some extent factors predicting high (low) employment in one year will predict high (low) employment the next year; thus its inclusion would complicate our discussion of the trends in the effects of the other regressors.

12. To determine the contribution of a given variable to the divergence in black and white employment over the decade we use a variant of the procedure used to decompose the difference in sample means into the portion due to (1) the difference in intercept terms, (2) the difference in sample distributions across values for the explanatory variables, (3) differences in the effects of the explanatory variables, and (4) the interaction of differences in effects and differences in distributions. For an explanation of this procedure see: Althausser and Wigler (1972), and, a companion piece, Iams and Thornton (1975). However, instead of summing across all variables to get the total contribution of (1) - (4) to the difference in sample means, we sum across the effects above to get the total contribution of each variable to the difference in sample means of the dependent variable.

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