

Not sure

Literature, Russian Literature



Order 521500 Topic: not sure One cannot segregate the spider from the web; the separated spider will create another web of more or less similar structure for its existence. The relationship between race and poverty in the U. S. is similar. Both go hand in hand. Just like two arms of the scale are important to find the equilibrium or the correct measure, the aspects, social structure and culture, needs to be discussed and understood in tandem. Black poverty is the cumulative effect of heterogeneous social forces like segregation and the middle-class black residents fleeing from urban centers, not as a matter of choice but due to compelling circumstances. The reasons for black poverty are historical, a product of individual and cultural inadequacy. The author stands for symbiosis of social and cultural forces. They are the alternative beats of the same heart. At the same time, these forces move in a vicious circle—like the cause and effect theory; one leads to the other. William Julius Wilson, (2009, p. 2) puts his perspective on the issues thus: “ But as a sociologist, from years of research and study I am also aware of and understand the structural reasons—including the limited availability of economic and social opportunity—for the extremely high crime rates of young black men from ghetto neighborhood.” Most of the social problems have the political angle/s as well. Wilson expresses concern with three such important ones, the plight of low-skilled black males, the persistence of inner-city ghetto and the fragmentation of the African American family(may be termed as the breaking up of the joint family into nuclear families) Racial inequality is an all-embracing issue and both institutional and cultural factors are responsible for it. One cannot deal with the issues by separating them ‘ surgically.’ A comprehensive approach is

needed to find the solution. Public policy has changed the racial status quo in the past, and its imaginative implementation is the hope for the future of the black race in U. S. The need of the hour is not great laws but great individuals with a vision to implement the provisions of the law honestly to establish genuine change in the society. Wilson puts it succinctly: “.... two important factors are associated with racial inequality—social structure and culture.”(p. 3) He sees both institutional and systemic hurdles and cultural deficiencies responsible for poverty of the blacks and they find no escape from the life of ghetto. Dramatic economic changes have done little to improve the lot of the poor blacks. In the early part of the 20th century, local governments officially created segregated neighborhoods by enforcing legal provisions and the economically strong whites continued the same practice by private agreements and intimidation to bar the blacks out from the white neighborhood. Federal government also remained the moot spectator to these unhealthy societal developments. The offshoots of the materialistic civilization—technological and internet revolutions and the resultant economic and demographic changes did not help the race aggravated problems of the ghetto. Middle class residents and industry left the inner city to relocate to suburbs with the availability of better infrastructure and cheap real estate. Job opportunities to the urban blacks further dwindled. Automation and cheap overseas labor intervened to deteriorate the situation. Ghetto residents lost contact with mainstream American society. Social norms were badly affected. Youngsters took to crime; men abandoned their families having no means to support. Women took to single motherhood; children suffered from broken homes and ignoble examples set

forth by the elders, youngsters took to evil tendencies, unable to find decent jobs. Wilson argues about this process with conviction: " Parents in segregated communities who have had experiences [with discrimination and disrespect] may transmit to children, through the process of socialization, a set of beliefs about what to expect from life and how one should respond to circumstances. ... In the process children may acquire a disposition to interpret the way the world works that reflects a strong sense that other members of society disrespect them because they are black."(p. 56)Thus, he advocates that the focus needs to be on promoting work opportunities and addressing poverty concentration instead of simply fighting racism on paper or pursuing punitive policies. Such measure will lead to social disharmony on an intensive scale. Conclusion: The author is eminently suited to comment on the subject of race and the plight of the black people. He is the Professor at Harvard University, President Emeritus of the American Sociological Association and has authored many books, the important among them is: *The Declining Significance of Race and When Work Disappears*. —though legally equal, the ground realities in the American society are too tough for the blacks to handle. At personal levels, a black individual is viewed with suspicion, and this is the beginning of the problem of the black race. He cites his own example: " I am also feared. For example, several times over the years I have stepped into the elevator of my condominium dressed in casual clothes and could immediately tell from the body language of the other residents in the elevator that I made them feel uncomfortable."(p. 1)The problem of black people cannot be solved by dividing it into watertight compartments and by passing more laws. It needs to be tackled through an

amalgam of institutional and cultural factors. Above all, the thought processes of the whites and blacks need to change, at the individual level.

Works Cited Wilson, William Julius, *More Than Just Race*, W. W. Norton & Company; 1 edition, March 9, 2009)