



Presenter: Keva White, LCADC, LSW

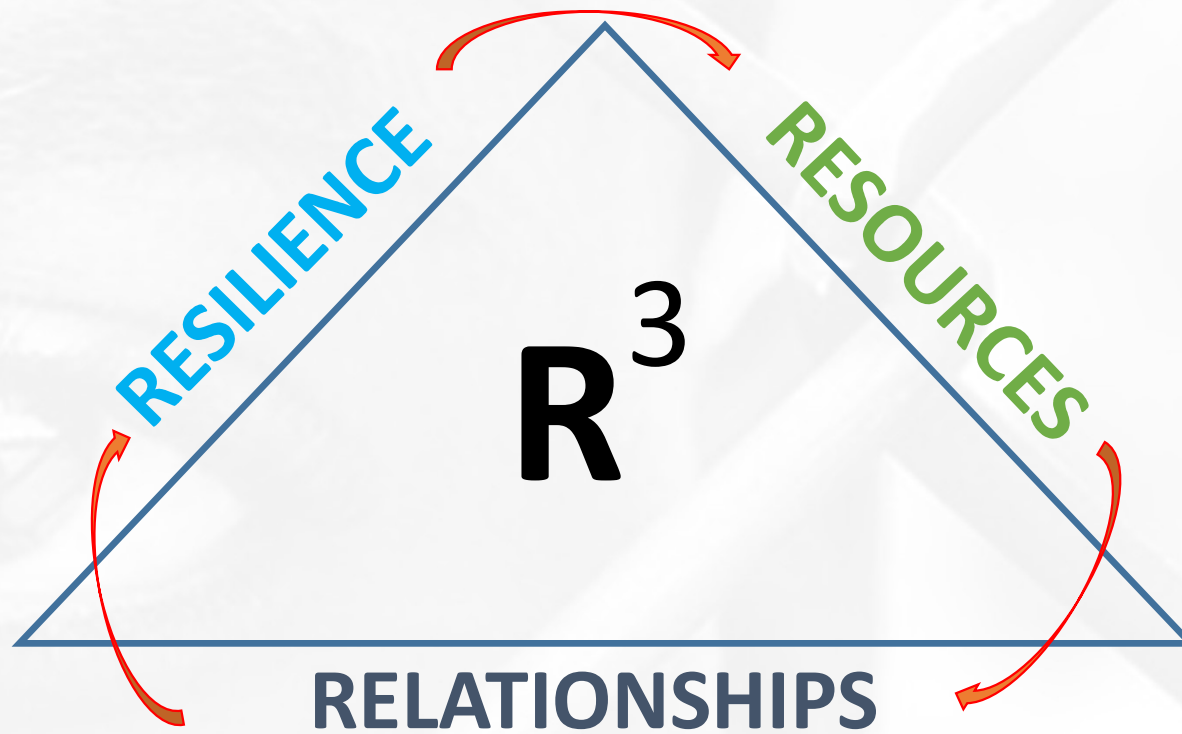
Understanding the Culture of **Poverty!**


Friday, August 28, 2020

Objectives:

- ❑ Examine several contextual frameworks for identifying causations of poverty.
- ❑ Enhance our understanding of cultural elements associated with impoverished communities & families.

The Framework:





Why Bother!

Code of Ethics: 1.05(c)

Cultural Competence and Social Diversity:

*“Social workers should obtain education about and seek to **UNDERSTAND** the nature of social diversity and oppression...”*

A black and white photograph of a person's face, specifically their eyes, looking through metal bars. The bars are in the foreground, creating a grid pattern over the face. The person's eyes are looking directly at the camera. The word "DEFINITIONS" is overlaid in large, bold, white, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

DEFINITIONS

Working Definitions: Culture

A set of behaviors, beliefs and values characteristic of a particular social, ethnic or age group **TRANSMITTED** from one generation to another.

Working Definitions: Poverty

*“A condition in which a person, family or community does without **RESOURCES!**”*



“unequal access and **inequitable distribution** of **resources** leads to Poverty”



VIEWPOINTS!

Trainers Philosophy:

- **NOBODY!** wants to be poor?
- Poverty is relative in nature
- Access to **resources** and information
- Situational and Structural Causations



Relativity of Poverty: The Pila Analogy!



CAUSATIONS!

Theories: Causations of Poverty

❑ **Behaviorist** – INDIVIDUAL is responsible for their current condition; behaviors, beliefs, values, transmission

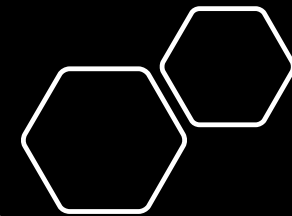
Republican

❑ **Structuralism** – inequalities of social and economic SYSTEMS promote/maintain poverty (*Jordan, 2004*)

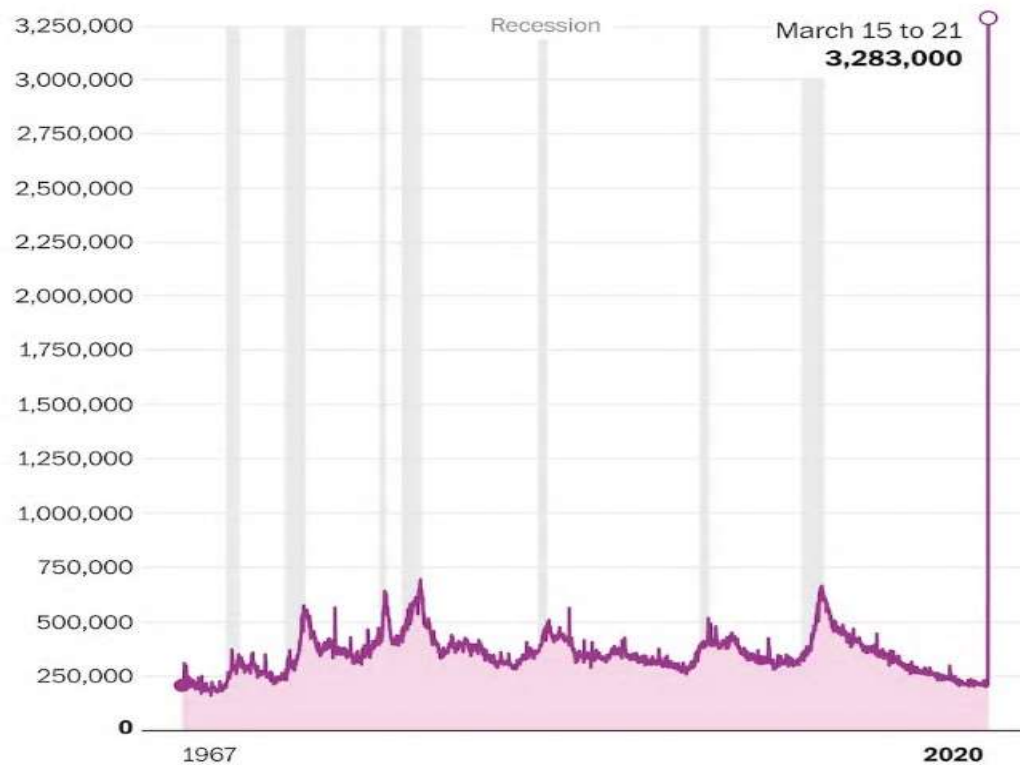
Democrat

Behavioralist vs. Structuralist?

- Unemployment
- Underemployment
- Unexpected Death
- Lack of Education
- National Health Crisis
- Media Influence
- Gentrification
- Social Welfare Policy



Weekly initial claims for unemployment insurance



Note: Seasonally adjusted
Sources: Labor Department via FRED

THE WASHINGTON POST

THE COST OF COVID-19!

Aid for Dependent Children: Social & Emotional Impact!

- ❑ Devaluation of marriage
- ❑ Human deprivation
- ❑ Moral disengagement of children
- ❑ Marginalized children from fathers





“...(Active) Father involvement is essential to a child's **economic**, social, psychological and physical **well-being**”

Source: The Effects of Father Involvement: An Updated Research Summary of the Evidence Inventory; Centre for Families, Work & Well-Being, University of Guelph 2007

Multi-dimensional: Causations of Poverty

*“the culture and/or behavioral variables are only relevant to the degree that historical structural **FACTORS** condition the **environment** in which groups of varying economic and socially disadvantage operate in and **REACT** to.”*



RESILIENCE!

["At Promise" vs. "At Risk"]

Working Definition

Resilience

*“achieving desirable outcomes in spite of significant **CHALLENGES** to adaptation or development”*

Source: Masten and Coatsworth (1995)

Three Types:

Overcoming the odds = attainment of positive outcomes despite high-risk status;

Recovery from trauma = children who function well after an intensely stressful or traumatic event(s);

Sustained competence under stress = ability to cope with chronic environmental stress factors;

*For children and youth to develop into healthy, confident, and secure individuals actively engaged in their personal and social growth they must be viewed **“AT PROMISE”** as opposed to **“AT RISK”***

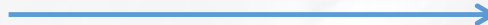
Adapted from APA, Task Force on Resilience & Strength in Black Children/Adolescents

RESILIENCE: Paradigm Shift – “At Risk, At Promise”

Three Doctors!



1. Overcoming the Odds!
2. Recovery from Trauma
3. Sustained Competence



It is Important to Understand that...

*Resilience should be viewed as a resource that needs to be **nurtured** and **cultivated** in a child life in order to break the cycle of poverty.*



GENERATIONAL POVERTY!

[Inherited Economic Vulnerability]

Characteristics:

- ❑ Being in poverty for TWO GENERATIONS
- ❑ Systemic discrepancies
- ❑ Children are socialized into BEHAVIORS and ATTITUDES leading to an inability to escape poverty

Generational Poverty: Impact on Children

Grandmother (Age 67) – H.S. dropout, welfare, recovering addict, living in subsidized senior housing; gave birth at age **19**

G1 = 19 years

Daughter (Age 50) – H.S. dropout, welfare recipient, recovering addict, working part-time, living with friend; gave birth at **age 21**

G2 = 21 years

Granddaughter (Age 25) – H.S. dropout, unemployed, living with mother, who is living w/friend; gave birth to her son at **age 24**

G3 = 24 years

Great Grandson (Age 1yrs) – without any interventions, it could take about **64 years** to dig himself out poverty!

School Impact:

- Failure to complete assignments
- Physically aggressive
- Likes to entertain
- Very disorganized, frequently lose papers, no signatures

It is Important to Understand that...

*An **EDUCATION** is the key to getting out of, and staying out of, generational poverty*

Breaking The Cycle:

1. Equitable distribution of resources.
2. Improve skills of disadvantaged children & youth
3. Develop authentic relationships
4. Empathetic engagement



POVERTY MAINTENANCE!

[Media Influence & Financial Institutions]

Poverty Maintenance Factors:

- Predatory lending**
- Social welfare policy
- Media portrayal of poor people**
- Generational Poverty

WISC. AUTO TITLE LOANS

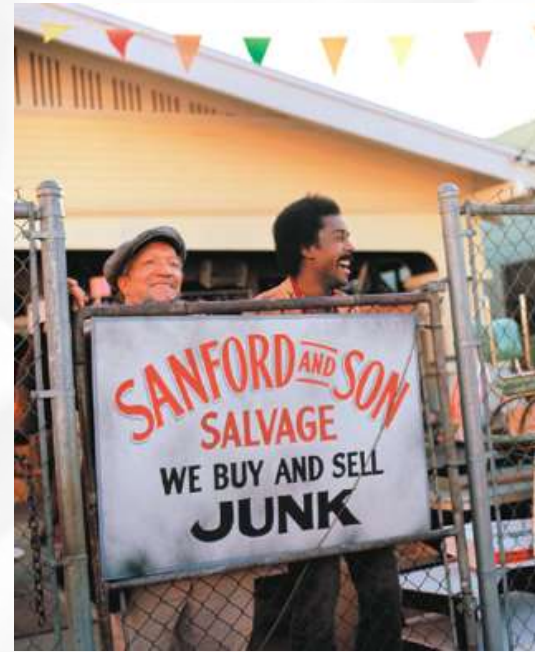
**AUTO TITLE
LOANS**

&

**PAYDAY
LOANS**



Media Portrayal: Family & Lifestyle



Media Portrayal: Single Parenthood

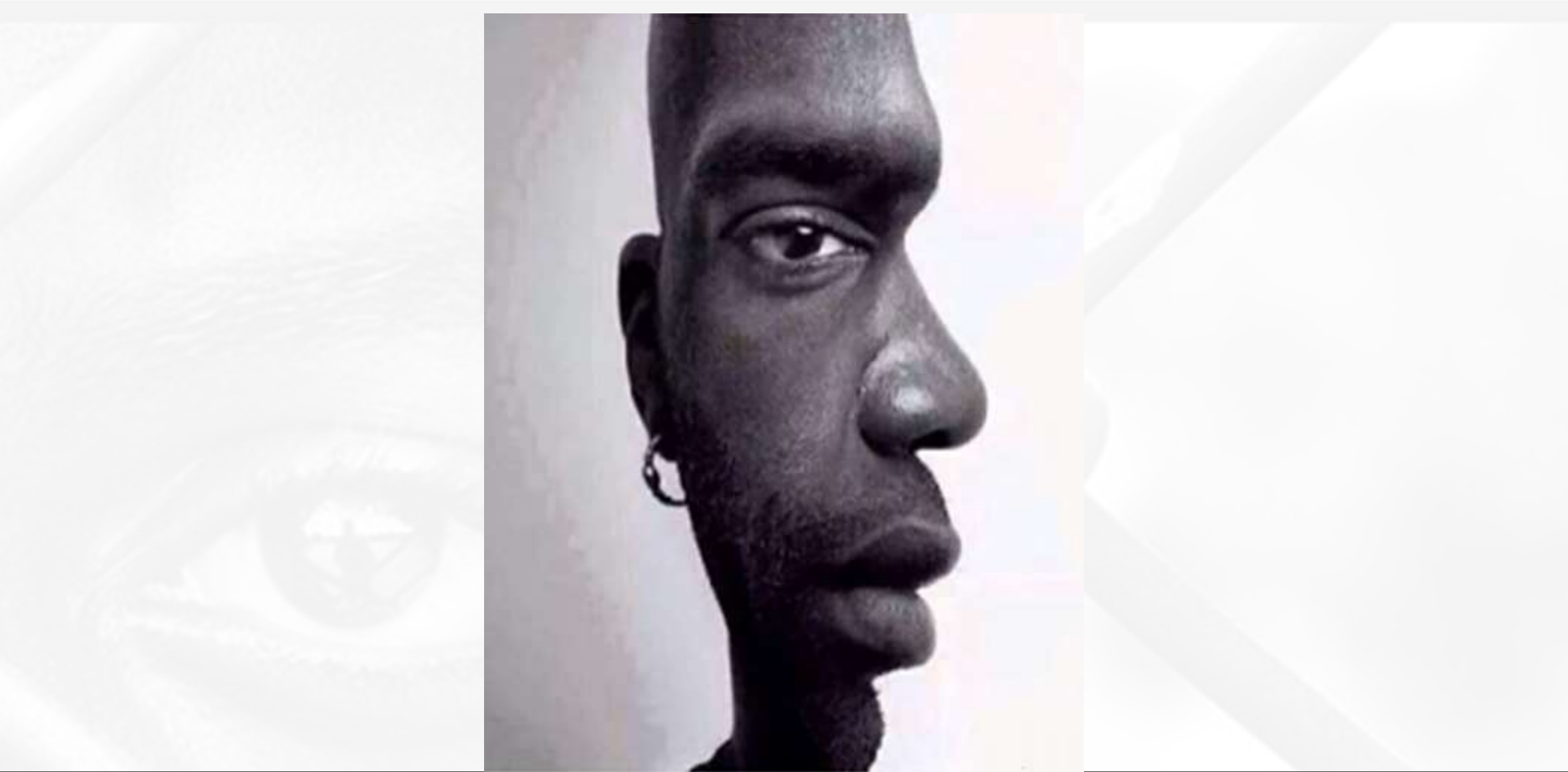


Media Portrayal: Future & Destiny



PERCEPTIONS & STEREOTYPES!

["Getting Off Automatic"]

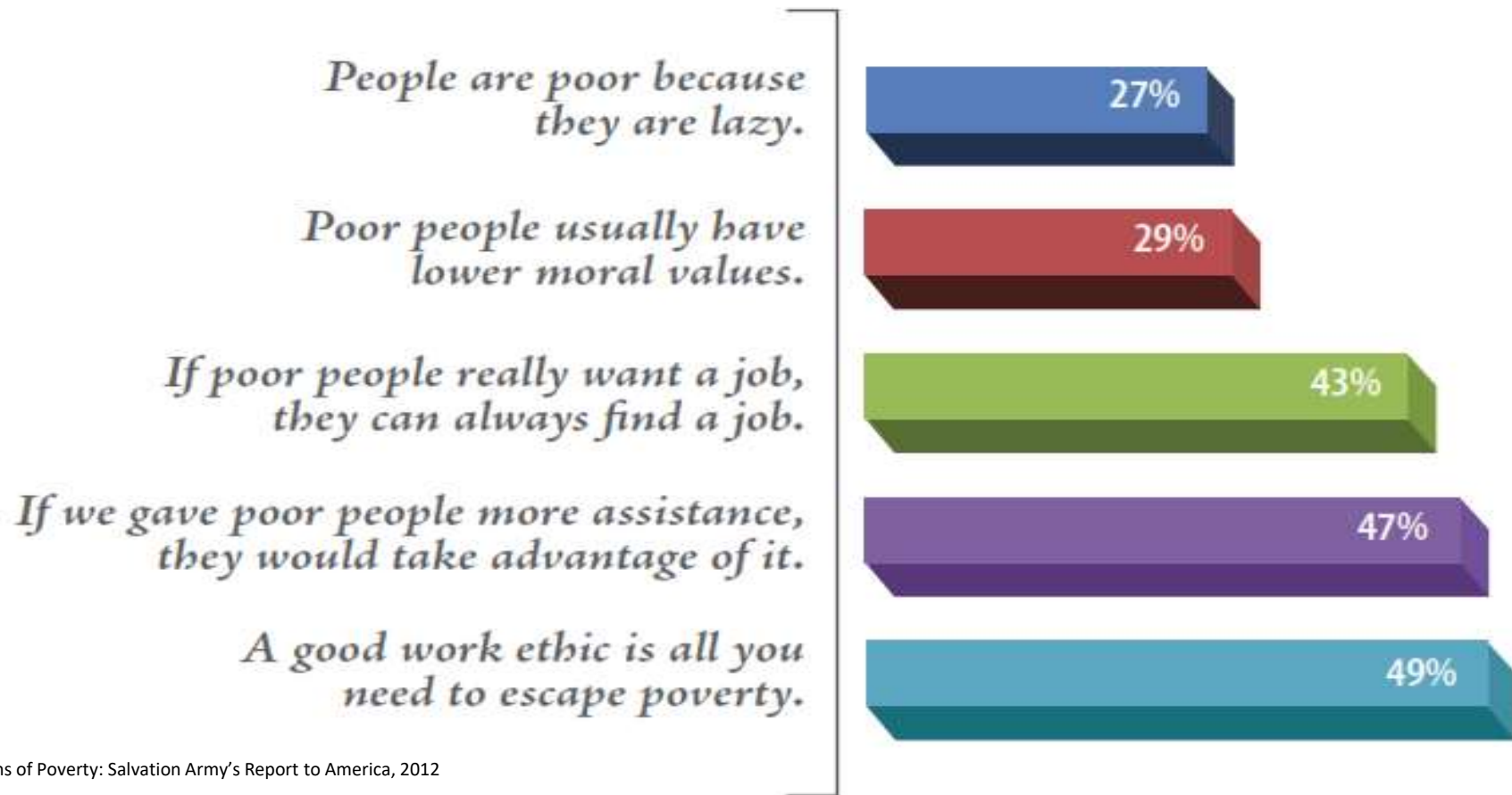


Perceptions/Stereotypes: *Getting off Automatic!*

Perceptions: The process by which we try and INTERPRET information about the environment/people around us.

Stereotypes: An EXAGGERATED BELIEFS associated with a general group or groups to which a person belongs.

Skeptical Beliefs of Poverty



Source - Perceptions of Poverty: Salvation Army's Report to America, 2012

Perception of Poor People