

A Life Course Framework for Improving the Lives of Boys and Men of Color

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Overview:

Why a focus on boys and men of color (BMOC)?:
A Vicious Cycle of Male Disadvantage
A Life Course Framework for Improving the Lives of BMOC

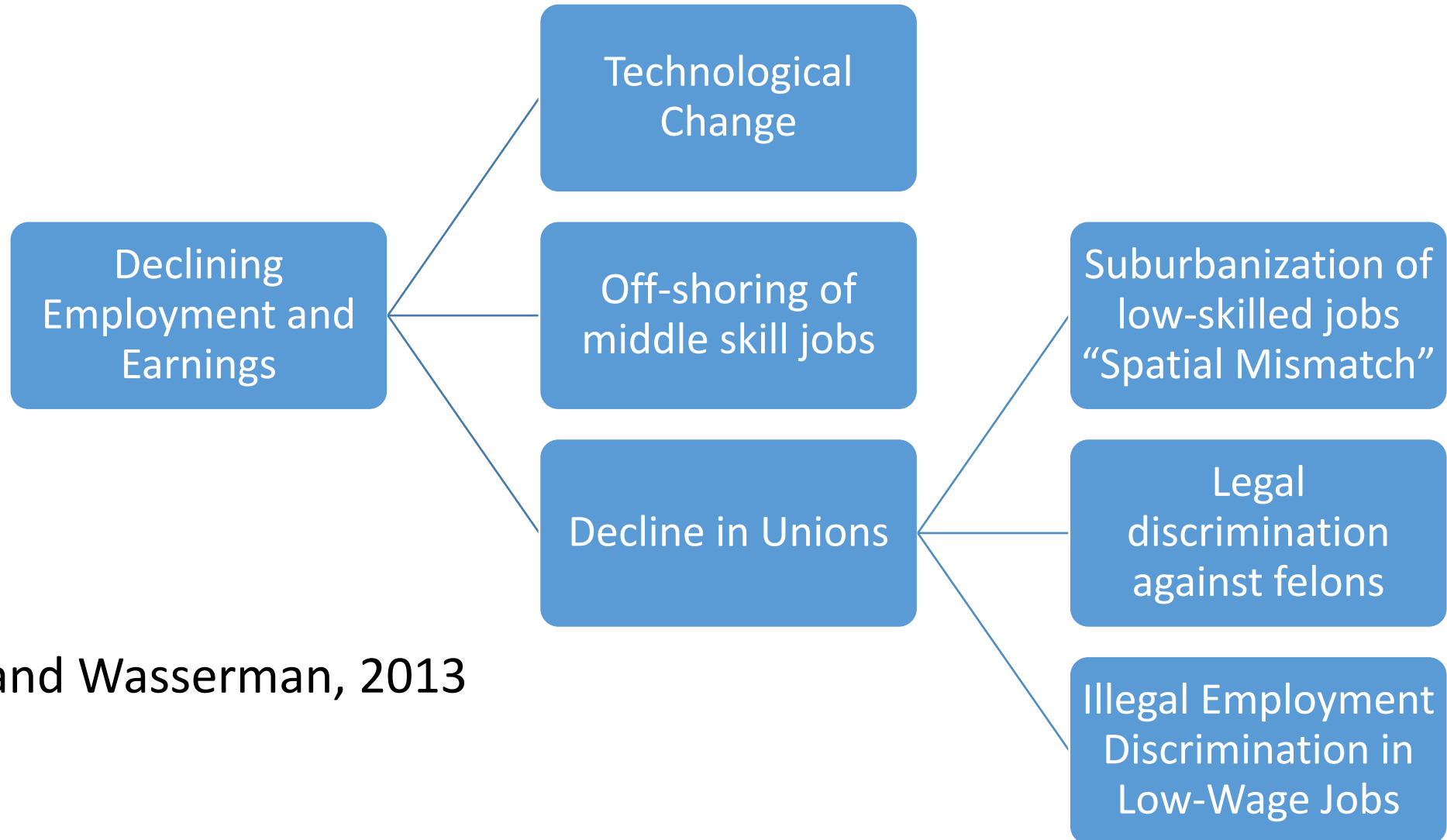
Why Focus on Boys and
Men of Color?

Why Focus on BMOC?

- **Gross disparities in particular negative outcomes:** *Violence victimization, and offending crime and incarceration.*
- **Males of color are showing negative or stagnant trends in key opportunity outcomes relative to females:** *Employment and earnings, high school graduation, college enrollment and completion.*
- **A vicious cycle of intergenerational male disadvantage:** *Single parent families are significantly more damaging to male educational outcomes than females.*

Declining Employment and Earnings

Demand-Side Shifts in Employment



- Author and Wasserman, 2013

Mass Incarceration and Declining Employment and Earnings

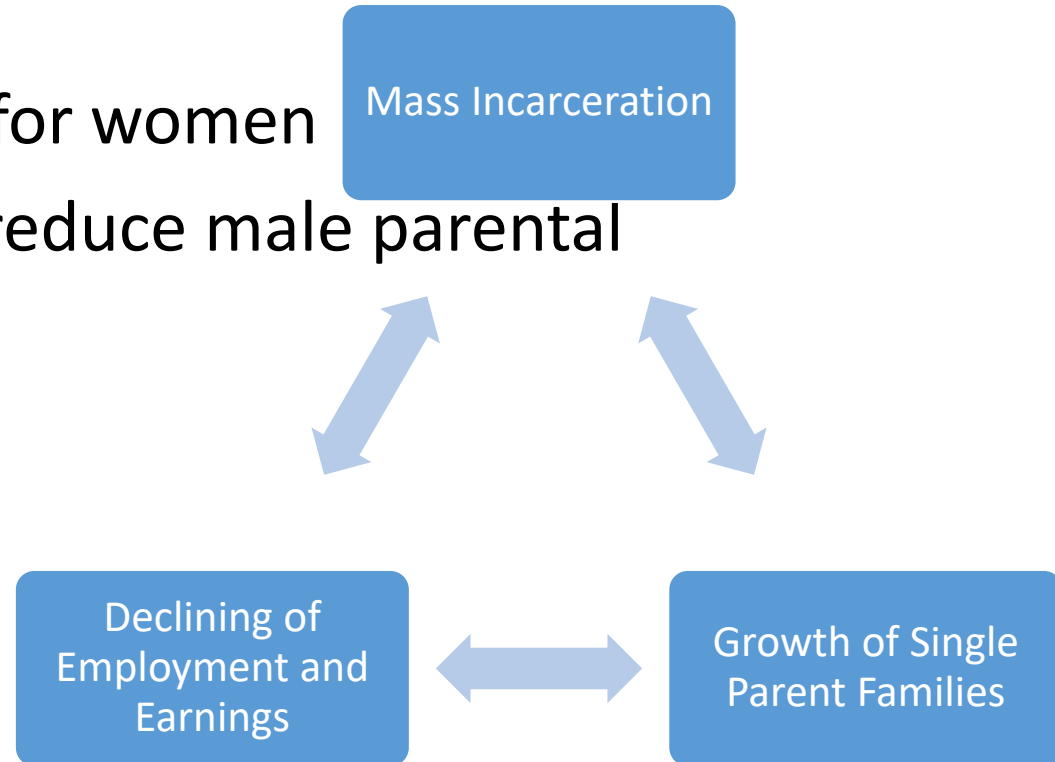
Rise of Mass Criminalization

- **Imprisonment increased by 430 percent between 1973 and 2010, largely because of changes in policy that** increased prison admissions and sentence lengths, particularly for drugs. (Travis and Western, 2014.)
- **Felony conviction and/or imprisonment** reduces lifetime earnings and employment by 10-30 percent. (Travis and Western, 2014)
- **The explosions in the market for crack cocaine in the 1980's** increased withdrawal from high school and the labor force, particularly among black males. **Together cocaine, marijuana, heroin and meth comprised a \$109 billion industry in 2010.** (Rand, 2014)

Rise of Single Parent Families

Rise of Single Parent Families

- Decline of “marriageable males”
- Declining economic returns to marriage for women
- Incarceration reduced and continues to reduce male parental involvement



Children Living in Single Parent Families

- **In 2012, the percentage of children living in single parent families:**
 - **20.7 percent of white children**
 - **31.3 percent of Latino children**
 - **55.2 percent of black children**

Gender Specific Effects of Family Disadvantage on Educational Outcomes

Gender Specific Effects of **Family Disadvantage** on Educational Outcomes

- Growing up in a single parent family:
 - **Reduces college attendance for boys, but not for girls**
 - **(Father absence) increases juvenile delinquency among boys, but not girls**
 - **Increases behavior problems more significantly among boys than girls**
- Growing up in a low-income family:
 - **Reduces boys expectations of college graduation more significantly than girls**

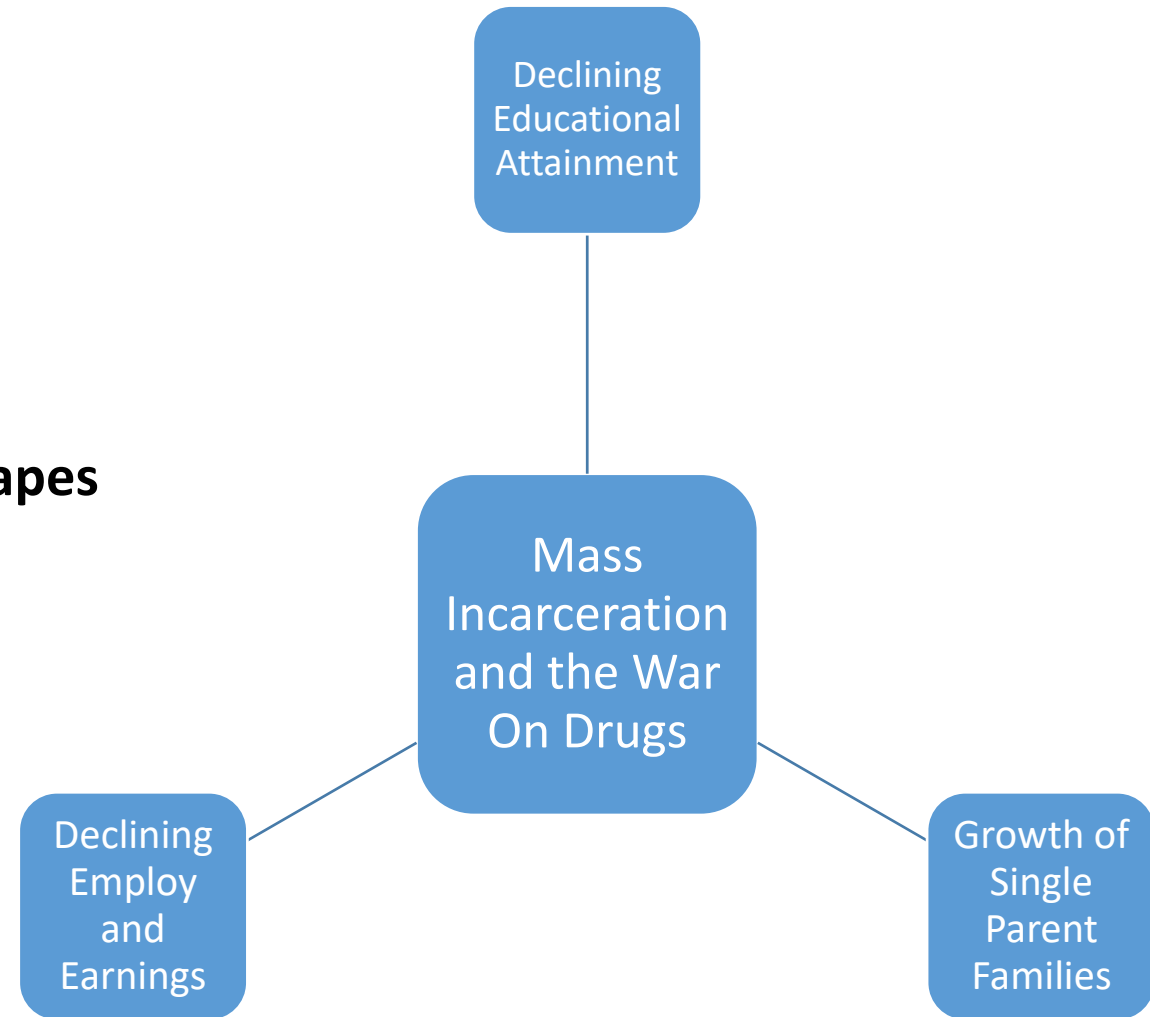
Gender Specific Effects of Family Disadvantage on Educational Outcomes

- **Father's Education Matters a Lot for Boys:**
 - A father who graduates from high school reduces juvenile delinquency for boys, but not for girls
 - Boys are less likely to complete college than their sisters if their father is absent or less educated than their mother
- **Father's Incarceration Impacts Boys More Negatively Than Girls**
 - Boys are twice as likely as girls to show an increase in aggressive behavior when their fathers are incarcerated

A Vicious Cycle of Intergenerational Male Disadvantage

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- **This cycle is now an intergenerational phenomenon as educational attainment shapes the employment prospects of the next generation**



Key Takeaways From the Life Course Framework

- **The vicious intergenerational cycle described is not the inevitable:** At every step, policy and resource decisions were and are being made that can either amplify or dampen the impact of big, impersonal forces like structural shifts in the economy.
- It's unlikely that we can interrupt this intergenerational cycle without directly addressing **employment and earnings** and **mass criminalization** among men of color—in both generations
 - In father's generation we need to **remove the barriers to contributing financially and emotionally to their children and their partners lives.**
 - In son's generation, if pervasive employment discrimination is not addressed it can blunt their incentive to invest in the education and credentials required by today's labor market. **A black male needs at least some postsecondary education in order to have equal chance of employment as a white male high school dropout.**
- We will need to think critically, creatively and expansively **about how to support moms raising sons on their own**—including how to augment their financial, emotional, and social resources. This should be supplemented with a focus on how **to increase the resiliency of young males being raised in single parent and poor families.**

Key Takeaways From the Life Course Framework

- **Education outcomes are crucial**—the protective effect of college degree on incarceration and earnings outcomes is marked. We should remain focused on reversing the criminalization of students while at the same time working to build public school systems that fully and equitably prepare young men of color to compete in the job market. However, it's unlikely that a sole focus on education will reverse the cycle.
- **Place matters, and the impact of living in neighborhoods of concentrated disadvantage must be addressed in gender specific ways.**