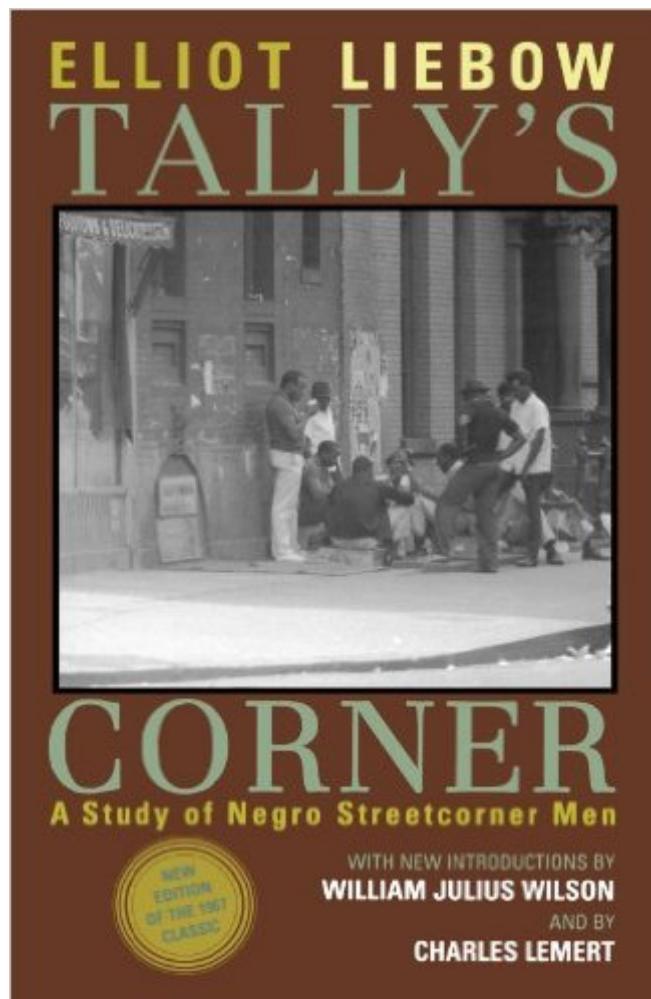


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# Tally's Corner: A Study Of Negro Streetcorner Men (Legacies Of Social Thought Series)



## Synopsis

The first edition of Tally's Corner, a sociological classic selling more than one million copies, was the first compelling response to the culture of poverty thesisâ "that the poor are different and, according to conservatives, morally inferiorâ "and alternative explanations that many African Americans are caught in a tangle of pathology owing to the absence of black men in families. The debate has raged up to the present day. Yet Liebow's shadow theory of valuesâ "especially the values of poor, urban, black menâ "remains the single most parsimonious account of the reasons why the behavior of the poor appears to be at odds with the values of the American mainstream. While Elliot Liebow's vivid narrative of "street-corner" black men remains unchanged, the new introductions to this long-awaited revised edition bring the book up to date. Wilson and Lemert describe the debates since 1965 and situate Liebow's classic text in respect to current theories of urban poverty and race. They account for what Liebow might have seen had he studied the street corner today after welfare has been virtually ended and the drug economy had taken its toll. They also take stock of how the new global economy is a source of added strain on the urban poor. Discussion of field methods since the 1960s rounds out the book's new coverage.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is Elliot Liebow's first book. I was extremely fortunate in having it as assigned reading in an introductory sociology course when I was an undergraduate. The book is exceptional in many

ways. When Liebow reached the dissertation stage in his doctoral program at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., he was uncertain as to how to proceed. His advisor's advice was simple: "Go out and make like an anthropologist." Which is exactly what Liebow did. Liebow "made like an anthropologist," moreover, not in an exotic society in the South Pacific or the , but in Washington, D.C. itself. He spent over a year observing and participating in the life of inner-city Black men who frequented an area referred to as Tally's corner. His choice of this area and these men required a good deal of tact, self-confidence, and anthropological skill: a thirty-seven year old White man entering and interacting in a group of young to middle-aged Black men who had no particular reason to accept him as anything other than a meddling outsider representing the dominant race. Liebow, nevertheless, gained acceptance and provided insights into life among low-income inner-city Blacks that were unsuspected and invaluable. For example, the area was not nearly as socially disorganized as was commonly assumed. Instead, helping relationships based on friendship and kinship were commonplace. The area was, in fact, a neighborhood. Black men were not the recklessly sexual itinerant impregnators that they were and often are assumed to be. Instead, their failure to stay with the women who bore their children was commonly rooted in their feelings of inadequacy at being unable to find a job that would enable them to support a family.

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