RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY AND ATTAINMENT OF INTERRACIAL COUPLES

For presentation at the meeting of the
Population Association of America
April 2013

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Partial support for this research came from a *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development research infrastructure grant, R24 HD042828, to the Center for Studies in Demography & Ecology at the University of Washington.

Introduction

Marriage and cohabitation between members of different racial and ethnic groups has increased dramatically over recent decades. By 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau recorded more than five million married couples with members of different races or Hispanic origins, representing almost 10% of all married-couple households. Just forty years earlier, mixed couples represented less than 1% of the husband-wife households, numbering just 310,000. Moreover, more than 18% of a growing number of opposite-sex cohabiting couples included partners of different races or Hispanic origins as of 2010 [U.S. Census Bureau 2012; see also Qian and Lichter (2011)].

The rapid increase in the number of mixed-race couples has been viewed as an indication of a softening of racial boundaries once considered largely impermeable and has coincided with a loosening of social proscriptions of mixed-race coupling (Gullickson 2006; Wright et al. 2003). Growing racial heterogamy has also helped usher in a period of dramatic diversification of the population, with the population of mixed-race children growing 37% from 2000 to 2009, an increase from 1.8 million to 2.5 million (U.S. Census Bureau 2010).

Yet despite these dramatic demographic and corresponding social shifts, we still know relatively little about how the growing numbers of mixed-race couples are faring in existing systems of racial stratification. This is especially true in the study of residential stratification. To be sure, some strong research has offered a picture of the spatial distribution of mixed-race couples (e.g., Holloway et al. 2005; Wright et al. 2011), providing solid indications that mixed-race couples tend to be located in more diverse neighborhoods than do racially homogamous couples and suggesting that the increasing prevalence of mixed-race couples may play an important role in declining levels of residential segregation by race and ethnicity (Ellis et al. 2007, 2012; Glaeser and Vigdor 2012; Iceland 2009). However, work on the residential location of mixed-race couples has relied on cross-sectional, often aggregate-level data, making it impossible to assess the causal order in the association between mixed-race coupling and neighborhood location, or to examine micro-level residential processes implicated in prevailing theoretical arguments. Especially important is the inability to test the relative roles of the racial characteristics and socioeconomic standing of these couples, or the impact of metropolitan opportunity structures, in shaping their residential mobility patterns, and the processes of residential mobility that shape these patterns of residential location.

Our purpose is to offer an assessment of these theoretical arguments using multilevel data drawn from almost a quarter-century of data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics linked to neighborhood and metropolitan data from multiple population censuses. We utilize multilevel models to compare several groupings of mixed-race couples to racially homogamous couples and, as a first analysis of the topic, examine these couples' access to, and movement between, neighborhoods characterized by their levels of racial and ethnic compositional diversity – mobility patterns that continually reshape broader patterns of residential segregation by race.

Background and Theory

The small amount of available evidence on the topic suggests that mixed-race couples experience residential outcomes that are quite distinct from those of mono-racial couples. For example, in their recent study, Wright, Ellis, and Holloway (2011) found that in 2000 black-white couples were overrepresented in the most diverse neighborhoods of the 12 largest metropolitan areas included in their analysis. Holloway and his colleagues (2005) found a similar dynamic in their study of residential patterns reflected in 1990 census data. These general findings point to the potential transformative effects of growing mixed-race populations on existing patterns of residential segregation, and suggest that the experiences of mixed-race couples may represent important challenges to existing patterns of residential attainment.

However, this past research leaves open a number of important questions. For instance, what is the temporal order in the association between mixed-race coupling and exposure to neighborhood diversity? Holloway and his colleagues argue that the residential patterns of mixed-race couples "reflect a combination of choices and constraints" (2011: 6) that lead mixed-race couples into diverse neighborhoods, thereby implying that mixed-race couples exhibit distinct patterns of inter-neighborhood migration that results in their heightened exposure to neighborhood diversity. Yet given the association between residential diversity and the likelihood of *forming* a mixed-race relationship (Briggs 2007; Britton 2011; Houston et al. 2005; Kalmijn 1998; Peach 1980), it is likely that at least part of the association between mixed-race coupling and neighborhood diversity reflects the fact that mixed-race couples are more likely to be *formed* in diverse neighborhoods than in more homogeneous areas. Thus, investigating common claims in the literature requires a prospective analysis of the residential mobility patterns focusing on the extent to which mixed-race couples are more likely to move into, and/or remain in, heterogeneous neighborhoods than are mono-racial couples.

Even if one accepts the assumption that the greater level of neighborhood diversity experienced by mixed-race couples represents a unique set of residential selection processes rather than contextual influences on union formation, the factors driving these residential processes remain unknown, defining a second set of unresolved questions. A common explanation for the unique residential patterns revealed in cross-sectional analyses is that mixed-race couples simply have stronger preferences for integrated living than do single-race couples (cf., Dalmage 2000; Datzman and Gardner 2000; Halloway et al. 2005; Wright et al. 2011). Certainly, the tendency to view residential outcomes as a reflection of differences in residential preferences is fairly common in the literature on residential stratification (c.f., Clark 1988, 2009; Fossett 2006) and is consistent with strong evidence that residential preferences vary sharply across racial groups (Charles 2006; Krysan et al. 2009). Moreover, several authors have pointed to social dynamics that may create a strong incentive for mixed-race couples to choose racially diverse neighborhoods. For example, Moran (2001: 156) argues that black-white couples choose diverse areas so that their "children develop an appreciation of their complex heritage." Similarly, Dalmage's (2000) in-depth interviews indicate that black-white couples may simply feel more comfortable in diverse neighborhoods where their unique status is least conspicuous.

However, we actually know very little about the racial-residential preferences of black-white couples, and even less about the preferences of other types of mixed-race couples. One possibility is that residential preferences of mixed-race couples simply reflect the combination of preferences held by the two members of the couple. Available research indicates that whites'

tolerance for living near minority groups has increased over time but remains limited, and whites tend to rank integrated neighborhoods as substantially less desirable than mostly-white neighborhoods (Charles 2006; Krysan and Bader 2007). The residential preferences of other groups are more complex. In comparison to whites, African Americans express stronger preferences for more balanced mixtures of neighbors from multiple groups (Charles 2006; Krysan and Bader 2007; Krysan and Farley 2002). Available research also suggests that Latinos and, to a lesser extent, Asians, are more tolerant of neighborhood diversity than are whites, but somewhat less tolerant than are blacks (Charles 2006). Thus, to the extent that the residential preferences of mixed-race couples reflect the combined preference of their members, and these preferences affect residential decision-making, we might expect exposure to neighborhood diversity to be greatest among couples with a black member and lowest among those with a white member.

Neighborhood outcomes, however, are unlikely to reflect unrestrained residential preferences. In fact, existing theoretical arguments of residential attainment point to several other factors, besides preferences, that may help to determine mixed-race couples' greater exposure to neighborhood diversity and the residential mobility processes that drive this exposure. First, the spatial assimilation perspective highlights the potential importance of socioeconomic resources. This perspective suggests that as members of racial and ethnic minority groups increase their education and income they can convert this capital into upward residential mobility, often moving into neighborhoods containing higher shares of whites (Charles 2003, Moran 2001). Accordingly, group differences in neighborhood attainment can be thought of as attributable to group differences in socioeconomic status. Combined with evidence that mixed-race marriage is somewhat selective of the highest-status members of at least some groups (Gullickson 2006; Kalmijn 1998), this theoretical argument suggests that controlling for education and income will explain at least part of the heightened exposure to diversity among mixed-race than among single-race minority couples, as well as group differences in underlying mobility behaviors.

Some support for the assimilation argument is found in recent cross-sectional studies of the topic. In their analysis of data from the 1990 U.S. Census, Holloway et al. (2005) found that, in the aggregate, high-income mixed-race couples are more likely to live in neighborhoods with whites than non-whites (2005). Yet, again, these cross-sectional data do not provide the opportunity to disentangle the effects of socioeconomic resources on residential attainment from the effects of other confounders, or to separate out the effects of socioeconomic characteristics on the likelihood of mixed-race marriage. A more complete test of these theoretical arguments requires longitudinal data that allow for an examination of residential sorting processes while accounting for a multitude of individual and contextual factors that might affect residential attainment and intermarriage.

A second theoretical perspective, the place stratification model, also suggests that the residential experiences of mixed-race couples reflect more than just unique residential preferences. According to this perspective, the obstinate state of discrimination in the U.S. continues to constrain the residential options of some minority groups so that racial groups are arranged into neighborhoods hierarchically, with whites on top, followed by Asians and Latinos, and African Americans at the bottom (Alba and Logan 1993; Logan and Molotch 1987; Massey

and Denton 1993). The central implication of the stratification argument is that group disparities in residential location and mobility will persist even after controls for socioeconomic predictors of these outcomes, presumably reflecting discriminatory treatment by real estate agents, landlords, lenders, and other residential gatekeepers (Roscigno, Karafin, and Tester 2009; Ross and Taylor 2005). These same discriminatory barriers are also assumed to produce group differences in the effects of socioeconomic characteristics on residential outcomes by limiting the ability of minority householders to translate their socioeconomic characteristics into access to high-status areas (Alba and Logan 1993).

How these discriminatory forces might affect residential outcomes for mixed-race couples specifically is unclear. On one hand, discrimination may be less intense for some mixed-race couples than for single-race minority couples. Specifically, the social advantages enjoyed by whites might provide for minority-group members some level of protection against the discrimination normally affecting the residential outcomes of members of their race. Under such a dynamic we would expect residential outcomes, and the effects of socioeconomic characteristics on these outcomes, of mixed couples that include a white member to be more similar to those of mono-racial white couples than are those of mono-racial minority couples.

On the other hand, persistent resistance to racial intermarriage (Bobo et al. 2012; Dalmage 2000) raises the possibility that mixed-race couples may face discrimination that is as strong, or stronger, than that faced by mono-racial minority couples. In in-depth interviews of black-white couples, Dalmage finds that these couples perceive a unique form of racism she calls *borderism*. Dalmage (2000: 40) defines borderism as "discrimination faced by those who cross the color line…or attempt to claim membership (or are placed by others) in more than one racial group." Based on these observations, we might expect that mixed-race couples face opportunities to gain access to high-status neighborhoods, and to translate their economic resources into desirable locations, that are at least as restricted as those faced by mono-racial minority couples.

Finally, the general housing availability model (South and Crowder 1997) suggests that processes of residential mobility and attainment are shaped by the structure of opportunities afforded by the local housing market. In the context of studying access to diverse neighborhoods, the racial and ethnic composition of the metropolitan population is potentially most important; diverse metropolitan areas are likely to contain a larger relative number of diverse neighborhoods, increasing the likelihood of individual households selecting this type of neighborhood. Given that mixed-race marriage is also significantly more common in diverse metropolitan areas (South and Messner 1993; Crowder and Tolnay 1999), it is possible that the higher level of neighborhood diversity experienced by mixed-race couples, as well as underlying mobility process, are explained by the racial and ethnic composition of the metropolitan areas in which they are located, not by a heightened preference for diverse neighborhoods as has been argued in past research.

Together, these theoretical arguments raise a number of important questions about the residential outcomes of mixed-race couples. How does the level of neighborhood diversity experienced by individual couples vary by the specific racial pairing of their members? To what extent are differences in exposure to neighborhood diversity driven by differences in the tendency to leave diverse neighborhoods versus the selection of mobility destinations? And, to

what extent are differences in residential processes between different types of couples driven by variations in socioeconomic characteristics and opportunity structures presented by the broader metropolitan area? Pursuing answers to these questions provides a unique opportunity to test, from a new angle, the relative efficacy of core theoretical arguments used to explain segregation by race, and to understand the ways in which growing numbers of mixed-race couples are reshaping the residential landscape of American cities.

Data and Methods

We address these questions using data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) linked to neighborhood-level data drawn from the U.S. Census. The PSID is a well-known longitudinal survey of U.S. residents and their families that began in 1968 with approximately 5,000 families. Members of panel families were interviewed annually between 1968 and 1997 and every two years thereafter, and new families have been added to the panel as children and other members of original panel families form their own households. The PSID is well-suited for our analysis because: 1) its longitudinal nature makes it possible to identify the residential location of individuals at each interview and to track their mobility between neighborhoods across time; and 2) the data contain rich information on a variety of individual- and household-level characteristics known to influence residential location and mobility. Beginning with the 1985 interview year, the PSID data include information on the race and ethnicity of both the household head and her/his spouse or long-term cohabitor. Thus, we focus on observation years between 1985 and 2009, the most recent year for which PSID data are currently available. Because we are interested in comparing mixed-race couples to racially homogenous couples, we focus only on those households with a spouse and partner present at both the beginning and the end of an observation period (the time between sequential interviews). We include in our analysis only those couples containing a black or white member (but married to members of other groups as well) because of the questionable representation of Asian and Latino groups in the PSID. Finally, given theoretical debates about the effects of broader metropolitan context on residential outcomes, we focus on couples living in a census-defined metropolitan area at both the beginning and the end of an observation period.

The PSID's restricted-access Geospatial Match Files allow us to identify the residential location of individual PSID respondents at each interview and attach information about the racial and ethnic composition of their neighborhoods as well as characteristics of the broader metropolitan area. We follow much of the prior work in this area (e.g., Crowder et al. 2012; Massey et al. 1994; Quillian 2002) by using census tracts to represent neighborhoods. Although census tracts are imperfect operationalizations of neighborhoods (Lee et al 2008; Tienda 1991), they provide near-comprehensive coverage of the entire nation during our study period, are summarized for a variety of theoretically-relevant measures, and generally approximate the usual conception of a neighborhood (Jargowsky 1997; White 1987). Potential problems associated with changes in tract boundaries across decennial censuses are overcome by our use of the Longitudinal Tract Data Base (http://www.s4.brown.edu/us2010/Researcher/Bridging.htm), which normalizes census tract data between 1970 and 2000 to 2010 boundaries. We utilize the LTDB's data on tracts from the 1980, 1990, and 2000 censuses, and the 2006-2010 American Community Survey, and use linear interpolation/extrapolation to estimate values for all tract and metropolitan characteristics in non-census years.

We take advantage of the longitudinal nature of the PSID by segmenting each couple's data record into a series of couple-period observations, with each observation referring to the one- or two-year period between PSID interviews. Our effective sample for this analysis consists of 53,680 observations for mono-racial couples and 3,335 observations for mixed-race/ethnicity couples. We contrast couples containing various combinations of several (potentially diverse) racial-ethnic groups: non-Hispanic black (hereafter *black*), non-Hispanic white (*white*), Latino (of any race), and all other non-Latino racial groups (*other*). For example, the *Black-White* couples (N=625) in our sample have one non-Latino black and one non-Latino white partner. We construct similar categories for *Black-Latino* (N=282), *Black-Other* (N=178), *White-Latino* (N=1,476), and *White-Other* (N=774) mixed couples, and compare these couples to two types of mono-racial couples: those in which both partners are black (hereafter *black-black*, N=13,455) and those in which both members are white (hereafter *white-white*, N=40,225). We focus only on couples containing at least one black or one white member because members of other groups are underrepresented in the PSID data and, given that they were added to the PSID panel using non-random sampling, may not represent the national populations of these groups. The focus on couples that contain either a black or white member also enhances the comparability of our research to past aggregate-level studies.

We compare the couple groups in our sample along three residential outcomes. First, we assess overall exposure to neighborhood diversity at the beginning of the observation period, thereby aligning our micro-level analysis with that of aggregate-level studies. Following past research on the topic (Wright et al 2011), we measure neighborhood diversity using a standard Entropy Index expressed as:

$$E = -\sum_{1}^{n} P_i \log(P_i)$$

where P_i is the proportion of population for each group (1 through n) in tract *i*. For each tract, the value of E will range from zero, indicating complete population homogeneity, to 1.609 [log(n) = log(5)], indicating that all racial-ethnic groups are represented in the tract in equal proportions.

Next we turn to outcomes related to residential mobility, treating inter-neighborhood residential mobility as a two-stage process involving the decision to move and then the choice of a destination (Massey et al 1994). Accordingly, the second dependent variable in our analysis is a dichotomous variable indicating whether the couple moved out of the census tract of origin between PSID interviews (a value of "1" for those who moved during the mobility interval and "0" for those who remained in the same tract). The third dependent variable measures the level of racial-ethnic diversity, as measured by the Entropy Index, in the destination tracts of mobile PSID householders.

We also consider the effects of a number of theoretically relevant micro-level and contextual characteristics that may account for group differences in residential location and mobility. Key demographic predictors include age (in years) of the household head and the presence of children in the family (1 = yes). Socioeconomic conditions are measured with four variables: 1) the education (in completed years) of the householder; 2) total family taxable income, measured in thousands of constant 2000 dollars; 3) employment status of the householder, coded as 1 for

those employed at least part time; and 4) home ownership, coded as 1 for those in an owner-occupied housing unit. In predicting residential out-mobility we also control for household crowding, measured by the number of persons per room, and length of residence, indicated with a dummy variable taking a value of 1 for those respondents who had lived in their home for at least three years at the beginning of the observation period. Finally, to explore arguments that group variation in exposure to neighborhood diversity, and mobility between neighborhoods characterized by different levels of diversity, reflect differences in metropolitan opportunity structures, we include a metropolitan-level entropy index. Paralleling our measure of neighborhood diversity, the metropolitan-level entropy index summarizes the relative concentrations of white, black, Latino, Asian, and other populations in the metropolitan area as a whole. All of the characteristics in the analysis are measured at the beginning of the observation period and are considered time-varying (i.e., level-1 in our multilevel framework). We also include an indicator for the year of observation in order to account for trends in neighborhood diversity and mobility, and the length of the migration interval (1 or 2 years) to control for the switch to a biennial survey in 1997.

Given the hierarchical nature of the data, we use a multilevel modeling design in which couple-period observations are nested within individual householders and householders are nested within metropolitan areas.[1] For the first part of our analysis we estimate a three-level random-coefficients linear regression models predicting the entropy score in the neighborhood of residence at time t as a function of individual and metropolitan characteristics. Our central focus in these models is the pattern of neighborhood diversity experienced by various types of racially-mixed couples relative to that experienced by racially-homogamous black and white couples. In subsequent models we examine the mobility processes that shape these differentials in neighborhood context. Specifically, in the second set of models we estimate three-level random-coefficients logistic models predicting the log-odds of neighborhood out-migration as a function of individual, tract, and metropolitan characteristics. In these models, out-migration is allowed to vary across respondents and metropolitan areas. Our primary interest in these models is in the differential effect of neighborhood diversity across different types of mixed- and single-race couples. In the final stage of our analysis, we predict the racial diversity (entropy) of movers' destination neighborhoods as a function of individual, tract, and metropolitan characteristics using a three-level random-intercepts model. Similar to our first set of analyses, our central interest lies in differential destinations across couple types. Because models in the final stage of the analysis are based only on inter-tract movers, we include a Heckman correction (inverse Mills ratio) for the selection of householders into the mover category. The model used to generate the sample selection term includes all of the individual-level predictors in the out-migration models (Heckman 1979). In our application of the Heckman procedure, the "selection" equation includes all of the regressors in the out-mobility models, while the "substantive" equation (predicting tract diversity) omits those variables assumed to affect the decision to move but not the choice of destinations. All models are estimated using the *xt* suite of commands in Stata 12 (StataCorp 2011).

Results

[1] There is too little clustering of PSID respondents within census tracts to justify the analysis of an additional level of hierarchy.

To convey basic group differences in exposure to neighborhood diversity, Figure 1 provides means and standard deviations for neighborhood entropy and average tract racial composition for mixed- and single-race couples in our sample. Consistent with past research utilizing aggregate data, the table in Figure 1 reveals a high level of neighborhood diversity for mixed-race couples as compared to single-race couples; the mean entropy score is higher for each of the mixed-race couple categories than for the average black-black couple (.629) and especially the average white-white couple (.425). Among mixed-race couples, however, there is considerable variation in experiences of neighborhood diversity. Most notably, mixed-race couples with black partners have the highest mean entropy scores, with black-Latino living in the most diverse neighborhoods (.784). In contrast, with the exception of black-white couples, couples containing one white partner tend to live in places that are substantially less diverse than are those occupied by other mixed-race couples, although still markedly more diverse than the average neighborhood occupied by white-white couples.

[Figure 1 about here]

What becomes apparent when comparing the table of means and standard deviations for couple-group entropy and the bar chart containing the average concentrations of specific racial and ethnic populations are the differences in the specific neighborhood composition for groups with similar entropy scores. For instance, white-Latinos have an average entropy score of .665, while black-other couples have a slightly higher value of .695. Yet when looking at the racial composition of their relative neighborhoods, white-Latinos' have drastically more whites on average, and far fewer black neighbors, than do black-other couples. Overall, however, Figure 1 confirms the central finding from aggregate level studies, showing that individual mixed-race couples tend to be exposed to dramatically more neighborhood diversity than are single-race couples.

Table 1, shows that these groups also differ dramatically in terms of a number of other factors that might affect exposure to neighborhood diversity. For example, all types of mixed-race couples and black mono-racial couples tend to live in metropolitan areas that have higher diversity than those occupied by white couples, a factor that likely increases their opportunities to choose diverse neighborhoods. Mixed-race couples that include a white partner have higher average income than do couples with a black partner, while black mono-racial and mixed couples without a white partner, on average, have less education than do white mono-racial couples and their mixed-race counterparts with a white member. Among couples with at least one white member, black-white couples have the lowest average education.

[Table 1 about here]

These descriptive statistics provide a basic picture of the residential situation of mixed-race couples but to glean a fuller understanding requires a theoretically based modeling strategy. In the remaining analysis we focus on the neighborhood diversity of mixed-race couples while controlling for relevant variables. First, we assess overall exposure to neighborhood diversity at the beginning of the observation period, thereby aligning our micro-level analysis with that of

much of the existing cross-sectional research. Next, we explore the effect of neighborhood entropy on the likelihood of moving. Finally, we select those who move and examine the racial and ethnic diversity of their destination neighborhoods. Following this analytic strategy allows us to test well-established theoretical perspectives concerning the residential mobility and attainment of mixed-race couples.

Neighborhood Diversity

Table 2 presents the results of a multilevel OLS regression analysis of neighborhood entropy at time t for the couples in our PSID sample. Model 1 includes dummy variables for black couples and five mixed-race couple categories with white couples set as the reference group. Consistent with the statistics in Figure1, all of coefficients for the mixed-race couple categories are positive, indicating that these couple-types tend to live in more diverse neighborhoods than those occupied by white couples. All of these group differences in average neighborhood entropy are statistically significant ($p < .001$). The results also show that about 13% [$(.192)^2 + (.216)^2 + (.13)^2 = .96$, $.13/.96 = 13\%$] of the overall variation in neighborhood entropy is related to variation in entropy across the observations associated with the same individual, 48% [$.46/.96 = 48\%$] is related to variation between individuals in the same metropolitan area, and 39% [$.37/.96 = 39\%$] is attributed to differences in outcomes across metropolitan areas.

[Table 2 about here]

In Model 2 of Table 2 we add the theoretically key variable of metropolitan entropy to our regression analysis to test whether mixed-race couples are exposed to higher levels of neighborhood diversity simply as a result of residing in more diverse metropolitan areas. The coefficient for metropolitan-level entropy is both positive ($b = .8797$) and highly significant ($p < .001$), indicating that residents of more diverse metropolitan areas tend to experience substantially higher levels of diversity in their neighborhoods of residence. Controlling for this significant effect also explains a sizable portion of the cross-metropolitan variation in the average neighborhood diversity. This is demonstrated by a decrease in the estimate for cross-metropolitan variation from Model 1 to Model 2, of .191 to .109. More important is the fact that metropolitan diversity explains a non-negligible share of the group differences in neighborhood entropy. The coefficients for black, black-white, black-Latino, and black-other, and white-other groups decline slightly when metropolitan diversity is controlled, indicating that the relatively high level of neighborhood diversity experienced by these groups partially reflects their location in more diverse metros. Overall, though, group differences in neighborhood diversity remain pronounced even when metropolitan diversity is controlled.

In subsequent models we add controls for the sociodemographic characteristics that, according to extant theoretical arguments, influence residential attainment. The coefficients in Model 3 shows a negative association between neighborhood entropy and age, indicating that

younger couples tend to be located in neighborhoods that are more diverse than those occupied by older couples. Families with children are exposed to significantly lower levels of neighborhood diversity than are those without children, and the average level of neighborhood diversity increased over the period of our study as indicated by the positive and statistically significant coefficient for year of observation. With the inclusion of these three sociodemographic variables there is a drop in the effect of metropolitan diversity from Model 2 of (b = .8797) to (b = .6565). Nevertheless, the addition of these measures causes basically no change in the coefficients for the couple-type categories.

In Model 4 we assess the extent to which neighborhood diversity is shaped by housing and socioeconomic characteristics: homeownership, whether a couple group was in the same home for three plus years, employment status of the householder, educational attainment (in completed years) of the householder, and total family income (measured in thousands of constant 2000 dollars). All else being equal, homeowners tend to live in less diverse places than do non-owners, while longer-term residence is associated with exposure to more neighborhood integration. Net of couple racial status and other measures, employment status, education, and income have negligible effects on neighborhood diversity. With the addition of these socioeconomic measures there is no substantive change in the coefficients for couple groups, indicating that group differences in socioeconomic resources play a small role in explaining differences in mixed-race couples' higher exposure to neighborhood diversity.

Model 5 of Table 2 adds interactive measures to assess the extent to which the effects of socioeconomic resources vary across couple categories, providing a test for the basic tenets of the stratification perspective. We have created two sets of interactions, one between each couple-group category and family income, and another between the group categories and level of education. The coefficients for these product terms indicate that the effects of income and education do vary significantly across some mixed-race couple categories, but not in completely consistent ways. Consistent with the weak version of the place stratification perspective, the effect of income is stronger for black mono-racial couples than white mono-racial couples. Thus, while income has no net effect on the neighborhood diversity of whites, we see that higher-income black couples tend to buy their way into more diverse neighborhoods. In contrast, the effect of income is significantly more negative for black-white couples than for white-white couples. The fact that higher-income black-white couples – those presumably best able to afford a location that matches their preference – tend to be located in areas with significantly less diversity than those occupied by lower-income black-white couples would appear to contradict claims that black-white couples simply tend to prefer living in integrated places. Yet, the coefficient for the interaction between education and black-white couple status is positive (b = .0094) and statistically significant ($p < .05$), indicating a stronger effect of education compared to that of white couples and suggesting that black-white couples with the highest level of education tend to be located in neighborhoods that are more diverse than those occupied by their lower-educated counterparts. A similar pattern emerges in the interaction of education and

black-other couple status.

Mobility Reactions to Neighborhood Diversity

In the remaining analyses we assess the mobility behaviors affecting group differences in residential location. This allows us to evaluate theoretical arguments related to group differences in reactions to neighborhood diversity, and to distinguish these differences from the effects of neighborhood diversity on the formation of mixed-race couples. Specifically, if, as past research has indicated, mixed-race couples have a heightened affinity for diverse neighborhoods, we would expect these couples to exhibit a relatively low likelihood of leaving diverse neighborhoods and a tendency to choose diverse areas when they do move.

Table 3 presents the results of multilevel logistic regression models predicting the log-odds of leaving the census tract of origin between sequential PSID interviews. Model 1 includes the couple-group categories and a control for neighborhood entropy. The results show fairly modest group differences in the likelihood of inter-tract mobility; in comparison to white couples, all couples containing at least one black member are more likely to move. Controlling for these group differences, the odds of out-mobility are also higher for those originating in diverse neighborhoods. Specifically, a difference in tract entropy of .308 (one standard deviation from the pooled sample) is associated with a 41% ($e^{1.112*.308} = 1.408$) increase in the odds of out-mobility.

[Table 3 about here]

Model 2 includes interaction terms for each couple group and neighborhood entropy. This allows us to assess whether those couple groups where entropy increases, show an increase in the likelihood of moving out of their neighborhoods. For white couples, the effect of entropy is strong and positive ($b = 1.540$), indicating that the likelihood of out-mobility increases with the diversity of the neighborhood. Hence, a one-standard-deviation increase in neighborhood entropy for white couples is a 61% [$e^{(1.540*.308)} = 1.607$] increase in the odds of them moving out of their neighborhood. In comparison, the effect of neighborhood diversity on out-mobility is significantly weaker for couples with two black members. For these couples, a difference in tract entropy is associated with just a 15% [$e^{(1.540-1.090)*.308)} = 1.149$] increase in the odds of out-migration. This basic contrast in the mobility reaction to neighborhood diversity is consistent with evidence from past research suggesting that, in comparison to whites, African Americans have greater tolerance for integrated neighborhoods.

Most important for our purposes is the fact that for most mixed-race couples, the mobility reaction to neighborhood diversity falls between the extremes defined by racially-homogamous black and white couples. Significant negative interactions in Model 2 indicate that the out-mobility reaction to neighborhood diversity is less pronounced among both white-Latino and white-other couples than among single-race white couples. Specifically, a one-standard-deviation increase in neighborhood entropy increases the odds of out-mobility by 15% [$e^{(1.540-}$

$^{1.090)*.308)}$ = 1.149] for white-Latino couples and by 19% [$e^{(1.540-.9737)*.308)}$ = 1.190] for white-other couples, both less than a third of the effect exhibited by white-white couples. These results are roughly consistent with the argument that, at least among some mixed-race couples, the presence of a non-white partner produces a higher level of tolerance for integrated neighborhoods than is typically exhibited by white householders.

The coefficients for the interaction terms involving black-Latino, black-other, and black-white couples are also all negative, but none are statistically significant. Hence, there is limited evidence that mixed-race couples with a black member differ much from white families in terms of their mobility reaction to neighborhood diversity. Supplemental analyses (not shown) indicate that these groups also do not differ significantly from black-black couples in terms of their reaction to neighborhood diversity. Thus, support for the idea that mixed-race couples make mobility decisions that are conducive to exposure to neighborhood diversity is mixed at best. Moreover, it is not clear whether the differences that do emerge reflect stronger preferences for diverse neighborhoods or the effects of sociodemographic or contextual factors that affect mobility decisions.

Model 3 shows that metropolitan entropy has little effect on the likelihood of mobility or, more importantly, group differences in reactions to neighborhood diversity. Model 4 includes controls for a broad array of individual and household level sociodemographic variables that have been shown in past research to affect neighborhood out-mobility. As in past research, we find that the likelihood of out-mobility: declines with age; is lower for homeowners, long-term residents, and families with children; and increases with education. The length of time between sequential PSID interviews also influences the likelihood of observing an inter-tract move during this period.

The results in Model 4 show that the addition of these controls for sociodemographic factors reduces all of the coefficients for the couple-combination indicators to statistical non-significance. Thus, among couples with similar characteristics, there is essentially no difference in the likelihood of inter-neighborhood migration. More important for our purposes is the fact that the coefficients for the interactions between couple-group categories and neighborhood entropy are also substantially reduced with controls for other mobility predictors; all of these coefficients are reduced to less than half of their original size in Model 2 and all except the interaction involving black-black status and entropy become statistically significant. Therefore, a substantial portion of the group differences in the impact of neighborhood entropy on residential out-mobility is due to the fact that members of some groups have characteristics that increase their mobility in general.[2] While there is evidence that black couples are more likely than their white counterparts to remain in high-diversity neighborhoods, there is no evidence that preferences for integrated living are driving a heightened tendency among racially-mixed

[2] In supplementary analysis (not included) we found that group differences in homeownership are the main source of group differences in residential mobility and the interaction between couple-combination and neighborhood entropy.

couples to remain in more diverse neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Diversity for Mobile Couples

While the preceding analysis raises serious doubts about the conventional argument that mixed-race couples' exposure to relatively high levels of neighborhood diversity simply reflects stronger preferences for diverse neighborhoods, it is possible that these differences are reflected in the choice of destinations rather than in out-mobility decisions. Hence, Table 4 presents the results from a multilevel OLS regression analysis examining the level of diversity in neighborhoods entered by mobile members of each couple-group. In these models we account for the non-random selection of individuals into the mover category through a Heckman-correction strategy in which all of the predictors included in Model 4 of Table 2 are used in the selection equation.

In Model 1 the coefficient for the sample selection variable (λ) indicate a negative association between the level of neighborhood diversity in the tract of destination and the latent probability of out-mobility. Controlling for this selection process, there is a strong positive association between the level of diversity in the tract of destination and neighborhood entropy at time t. At least in part, this reflects the spatial clustering of neighborhoods with similar racial and ethnic compositions which, in combination with the distance-dependence of migration, increases the likelihood that those originating in high-entropy neighborhoods will move to another relatively high-entropy neighborhood.

[Table 4 about here]

More central to our purpose is the fact that, controlling for neighborhood entropy at the origin and the latent probability of moving, the coefficients for all couple combinations are statistically significant, indicating that mixed-race couples tend to move to destinations that are significantly more diverse than those entered by mobile whites. The contrast between black-Latino and white-white couples is most pronounced, but even those mixed couples containing a white member tend to move into neighborhoods that are substantially more diverse than those selected by mobile white-white couples. Model 2 shows that controlling for metropolitan diversity – a key determinant of opportunities for the selection of diverse neighborhood destinations (b = .3783) – slightly attenuates the group differences in destination characteristics; almost all of the coefficients for the couple combinations are smaller in Model 2 than in Model 1 and the coefficient for black-other couples goes to statistical non-significance. The one exception to this general pattern is the coefficient for black-white couples, which actually increases slightly (from 1145 to .1203) with the control for metropolitan diversity.

In Model 3, we add controls for the sociodemographic variables of age, presence of children, year, homeownership, employment, education and family income. Net of their influence on the latent probability of out-migration (captured in the coefficient for λ), and controlling for metropolitan diversity and the diversity of origin neighborhoods, the effects of

these individual-level characteristics are modest. In fact, only the coefficient for year of observation is statistically significant, indicating that mobile couples have tended to enter increasingly diverse neighborhoods over time. Given these modest effects, it is not surprising that controlling for individual characteristics does nothing to explain the relatively higher level of diversity in the destinations selected by mobile mixed-race couples.

While the pattern of destination differences revealed in Table 4 are roughly consistent with arguments related to group differences in preferences for neighborhood diversity, it is not clear that preferences for neighborhood diversity are uniquely high among mixed-race couples. In fact, supplemental analyses indicate that most mobile mixed-race couples that include a black member do not differ significantly from black-black couples in terms of the diversity of their destination neighborhoods. There are just two notable exceptions to this general pattern. First, black-Latino couples tend to enter slightly more diverse neighborhoods than do mobile black-black couples. Second, and in sharp contrast, mobile white-other couples and white-Latino couples tend to enter neighborhoods that are less diverse than those entered by black-black couples, although the latter difference just fails to reach statistical significance at conventional levels ($p=.068$). Thus, the positive coefficients for couple combination in the models in Table 4 may be seen more as a reflection of the strong preferences for low-diversity neighborhoods among couples containing white (but not black) members than the unique destination choices made by mixed-race couples.

Conclusion

In this paper we have endeavored to describe the association between mixed-race coupling and neighborhood location, as well as the role of underlying micro-level residential processes. Following extant theoretical arguments on processes of neighborhood attainment, we have tested the relative roles of the racial characteristics, in addition to the sociodemographic and socioeconomic standing of these couples. Moreover, we have assessed the significance of metropolitan opportunity structures that shape residential patterns.

The results of our analysis of multilevel data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics linked to neighborhood-level data drawn from the U.S. Census, confirm past aggregate level research showing that mixed-race couples face somewhat unique residential experiences. Especially in comparison to racially-homogamous white couples, couples containing members of two different ethno-racial groups tend to reside in neighborhoods with significantly higher levels of racial diversity and, importantly, these differences remain significant even after controlling for pronounced group differences in individual- and family-level characteristics and the conditions of the metropolitan areas in which different groups are located.

Following past research, such unique residential experiences might be seen as a reflection of unmeasured racial group differences in residential preferences, with racially-mixed couples presumed to choose diverse neighborhoods that match the combined preferences of their

individual members or offer some protection against the unique discrimination faced by mixed-race couples. However, our prospective analysis of residential mobility behaviors provides only limited support for this argument. Specifically, we find no support for the argument that mixed-race couples are more likely than single-race couples to remain in highly-diverse neighborhoods, net of the effects of other contextual- and individual-level factors that affect the likelihood of out-mobility. And, while we do find evidence that the relatively high level of diversity faced by mixed-race couples is likely shaped by their movement into neighborhoods that are more diverse than those selected by mobile white couples, the destinations of most types of mixed-race couples do not differ substantially from those of racially-homogamous black couples. The biggest exception being white-other couples that show destination outcomes similar to white-white couples. Based on these results, it is difficult to claim that mixed-race couples are unique in terms of their affinity for diverse neighborhoods. In fact, the results of our analysis – especially those related to variations in the effects of socioeconomic resources on neighborhood location – suggest that forces affecting the residential experiences of mixed-race couples extend well beyond the realm of simple preferences.

These findings are important because they illuminate the emerging residential patterns of a growing segment of the U.S. population at the leading edge of the diversification of American neighborhoods. However, while this initial investigation provides clues about the relevance of existing theoretical arguments to the residential experiences of mixed-race couples, it leaves open a number of important issues for further exploration. Future research would, of course, benefit greatly from data with specific measures of the residential preferences of mixed-race couples, how they differ from those of mono-racial couples, and how they vary by individual characteristics, household composition, and the broader residential context. Similarly, direct measures of the potentially unique forms of discrimination faced by mixed-race couples would prove extremely useful in assessing the relative support for prevailing theoretical arguments on the topic. Yet, there is still considerable knowledge to be gained from existing data, despite its limitations. As has been noted earlier, the racial and ethnic neighborhood composition of mixed-race couples can be vastly different despite having relatively similar entropy scores. Hence, future work should test various measures of residential composition to illuminate the disparate neighborhood compositions of varying types of mixed-race couples.

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Figure 1. Neighborhood Entropy and Racial Composition for Couple Groups: PSID; 1985-2009

Couple Group	Entropy *Mean*	*SD*
White-White	.425	.284
White-Other	.632	.323
White-Latino	.665	.330
Black-White	.731	.308
Black-Latino	.784	.353
Black-Other	.695	.367
Black-Black	.629	.306

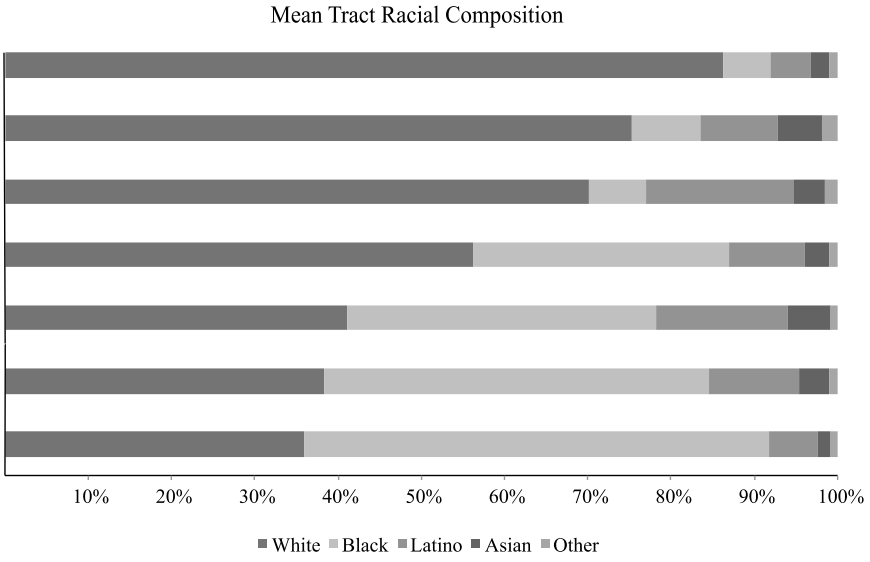

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the Analyses of Couple Groups from the PSID; 1986-2009

	Whites		White-Latino		White-Other		Blacks		Black-White		Black-Latino		Black-Other	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
Neighborhood outcomes														
Entropy at origin	.43	.28	.66	.33	.63	.32	.63	.31	.73	.31	.78	.35	.70	.37
Entropy at destination	.44	.29	.68	.33	.64	.32	.63	.31	.73	.31	.79	.36	.68	.35
Change tract between interviews	.14	.34	.19	.39	.18	.39	.18	.38	.23	.42	.30	.46	.30	.46
Metropolitan diversity														
Entropy of MSA	.60	.28	.80	.28	.71	.29	.79	.19	.73	.24	.91	.22	.86	.21
Individual characteristics														
Education	13.6	3.20	13.72	3.14	14.07	3.18	11.72	3.07	13.33	2.84	12.24	2.06	13	2.46
Family income ($1,000)	76.68	80.5	72.55	53.22	84.02	68.56	49.89	32.03	62.02	73.56	49.40	39.46	50.11	31.01
Employed (1 = yes)	.81	.39	.88	.32	.86	.35	.78	.42	.86	.35	.87	.34	.84	.37
Homeowner (1 = yes)	.82	.39	.67	.47	.75	.43	.60	.49	.52	.50	.35	.47	.44	.50
Age	45	14.77	37.88	11.23	44.13	13.58	42.48	13.58	37.10	10.48	34.86	8.17	38.89	12.55
Presence of children	.53	.50	.65	.48	.50	.50	.69	.46	.71	.46	.87	.33	.75	.43
Same house 3 + years (1= yes)	.65	.48	.48	.50	.54	.50	.63	.48	.49	.50	.38	.49	.41	.49
Year	1994	6.32	1994	6.16	1996	6.26	1993	6.36	1995	6.70	1993	6.79	1996	6.15
Length of observation	1.35	.48	1.23	.42	1.51	.50	1.30	.46	1.35	.48	1.24	.43	1.51	.50
N of Couple-Period Observations	40225		1476		774		13455		625		282		178	
N of Couples	6159		425		213		2879		181		95		67	

Table 2. Multilevel OLS Regression Analysis of Entropy Index at Origin: PSID; 1985 to 2009

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
Independent Variables	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*
Couple Combinations										
Black-Black	.1241 ***	.0058	.1103 ***	.0055	.1136 ***	.0054	.1108 ***	.0055	.0915 ***	.0173
Black-Latino	.1560 ***	.0167	.1484 ***	.0157	.1460 ***	.0156	.1422 ***	.0157	.2718 ***	.0704
Black-Other	.1627 ***	.0172	.1273 ***	.0161	.1256 ***	.0160	.1243 ***	.0161	-.0405	.0900
Black-White	.1533 ***	.0129	.1351 ***	.0121	.1310 ***	.0120	.1285 ***	.0120	.0319	.0518
White-Latino	.0247 ***	.0074	.0367 ***	.0069	.0376 ***	.0069	.0381 ***	.0069	.1262 ***	.0298
White-Other	.0528 ***	.0082	.0344 ***	.0077	.0324 ***	.0077	.0318 ***	.0077	.0446	.0331
Metropolitan Diversity										
Metropolitan Entropy			.8797 ***	.0093	.6565 ***	.0158	.6563 ***	.0158	.6570 ***	.0158
Micro-Level Characteristics										
Age					-.0016 ***	.0010	-.0014 ***	.0001	-.0014 ***	.0001
Presence of Children					-.0099 ***	.0016	-.0086 ***	.0016	-.0087 ***	.0016
Homeowner (1 = yes)							-.0196 ***	.0020	-.0200 ***	.0020
Same house 3 + years (1= yes)							.0041 **	.0014	.0041 **	.0014
Employed (1 = yes)							.0002	.0020	-.0004	.0020
Education (in years)							.0009	.0006	.0008	.0007
Family Income (in $1000s)							.0000	.0000	.0000	.0000
Interactions										
Black-Black X Income									.0002 **	.0001
Black-Latino X Income									.0000	.0002
Black -Other X Income									-.0007	.0004
Black-White X Income									-.0004 ***	.0001
White-Latino X Income									.0000	.0000
White-Other X Income									.0001	.0001
Black-Black X Education									.0009	.0013
Black-Latino X Education									-.0109	.0057
Black-Other X Education									.0159 *	.0068
Black-White X Education									.0094 *	.0039
White-Latino X Education									-.0064 **	.0022
White-Other X Education									-.0018	.0024
Year					.0042 ***	.0002	.0042 ***	.0002	.0042 ***	.0002
Constant	.4709 ***	.0093	.0007	.0080	-8.256 ***	.4045	-8.216 ***	.4058	-8.138 ***	.4073
Variance Components										
Between MSA's	.0369 ***	.0014	.0119 ***	.0005	.0092 ***	.0005	.0091 ***	.0005	.0091 ***	.0005
Between Individuals	.0469 ***	.0004	.0438 ***	.0003	.0431 ***	.0003	.0429 ***	.0003	.0429 ***	.0003
Residual	.0132 ***	.0000	.0114 ***	.0000	.0113 ***	.0000	.0113 ***	.0000	.0113 ***	.0000

Note: N of observations = 57,015; N of mixed-race couples =10019
**p < .05; ** p <. 01; *** p < .001.*

Table 3. Logistic Regression Coefficients of Migration Out of Origin Census Tract: PSID; 1985 to 2009

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
Independent Variables	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*
Couple Combinations								
Black-Black	.1678 **	.0554	.8366 ***	.1042	.8043 ***	.1059	.0928	.0870
Black-Latino	.7300 **	.2243	1.273 *	.5247	1.244	.5244	-.3190	.4441
Black-Other	.5304 *	.2570	1.086 *	.5428	1.053	.5431	-.0891	.4535
Black-White	.4136 *	.1631	1.033 *	.4096	1.022 *	.4095	.1904	.3305
White-Latino	-.0207	.1107	.6517 **	.2397	.6375 **	.2398	.1371	.2015
White-Other	.2082	.1473	.7555	.3050	.7480 *	.3050	.2921	.2621
Neighborhood Diversity								
Neighborhood Entropy	1.111 ***	.0679	1.539 ***	.0859	1.475 ***	.0936	.6147 ***	.0776
Interactions								
Black-Black X Entropy			-1.090 ***	.1415	-1.049 ***	.1435	-.4882 ***	.1186
Black-Latino X Entropy			-.8326	.5937	-.7994	.5934	.3002	.5038
Black-Other X Entropy			-.8834	.6409	-.8509	.6411	.0503	.5517
Black-White X Entropy			-.9760	.5114	-.9576	.5112	-.5541	.4130
White-Latino X Entropy			-1.089 ***	.3174	-1.074 ***	.3175	-.4055	.2684
White-Other X Entropy			-.9737 *	.4439	-.9677 *	.4438	-.4996	.3776
Metropolitan Diversity								
Metropolitan Entropy					.2611	.1528	.0004	.1029
Micro-Level Characteristics								
Age							-.0408 ***	.0016
Presence of Children							-.0919 **	.0327
Homeowner (1 = yes)							-1.566 ***	.0365
Same house 3 + years (1= yes)							-.2280 ***	.0340
Employed (1 = yes)							-.3306 ***	.0447
Education (in years)							.0127 *	.0058
Family Income (in $1000s)							.0000	.0002
Length of observation							.7555 ***	.0548
Year							.0126 **	.0042
Constant	-2.229 ***	.0531	-2.428 ***	.0587	-2.538 ***	.0877	-25.22 **	8.319
Variance Components								
Between MSA's	.1953 ***	.0194	.1996 ***	.0198	.2195 ***	.0220	.0488 ***	.0070
Between Individuals	2.035 ***	.0446	2.046 ***	.0448	2.039 ***	.0448	.5226 ***	.0225

Note: N of observations = 57,015; N of mixed-race couples =10,019
**p < .05; ** p <. 01; *** p < .001.*

Table 4. Multilevel OLS Regression Analysis of Entropy Index at Destination: PSID; 1985 to 2009

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
Independent Variables	*B*		*SE*	*B*		*SE*	*B*		*SE*
Couple Combinations									
Black-Black	.1239	***	.0078	.1112	***	.0077	.1133	***	.0084
Black-Latino	.1645	***	.0296	.1626	***	.0295	.1829	***	.0296
Black-Other	.0807	*	.0371	.0629		.0370	.0671		.0369
Black-White	.1145	***	.0226	.1203	***	.0223	.1194	***	.0224
White-Latino	.0829	***	.0166	.0758	***	.0165	.0818	***	.0166
White-Other	.0607	**	.0229	.0579	*	.0226	.0578	*	.0226
Neighborhood Diversity									
Neighborhood Entropy at time *t*	.3281	***	.0108	.2575	***	.0113	.2576	***	.0122
Metropolitan Diversity									
Metropolitan Entropy				.3783	***	.0211	.3226	***	.0216
Micro-Level Characteristics									
Age							-.0009		.0006
Presence of Children							-.0033		.0064
Homeowner (1 = yes)							-.0308		.0204
Employed (1 = yes)							-.0065		.0093
Education (in years)							.0009		.0011
Family Income (in $1000s)							.0000		.0001
Year							.0056	***	.0009
Lambda(λ)	-.0247	***	.0033	-.0226	***	.0033	.0066		.0149
Constant	.3722	***	.0109	.1871	***	.0145	-10.96	***	1.691
Variance Components									
Between MSA's	.0075	***	.0005	.0044	***	.0004	.0041	***	.0003
Between Individuals	.0025	***	.0007	.0044	***	.0007	.0045	***	.0007
Residual	.0651	***	.0008	.0617	***	.0008	.0609	***	.0008

Note: N of observations = 8,645; N of mixed-race couples =5,165
**p < .05; ** p <. 01; *** p < .001.*