

**The Residential Stratification  
of  
Mixed-Race Couples**

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Abstract

The Residential Stratification  
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Marriage and cohabitation between members of different racial and ethnic groups has increased in the U.S. over recent decades. Despite this demographic shift, we know relatively little about how the growing numbers of mixed-race couples are faring in systems of residential stratification. My dissertation addresses this gap by investigating the extent to which mixed-race couples move into and out of neighborhoods defined by their levels of poverty. I also measure the residential mobility patterns of these couples into and out of diverse neighborhoods. Finally, I focus on the mobility of black-male/white-female and white-male/black-female couples' out of and into neighborhoods defined respectively by their levels of whites, blacks, and ethnoracial diversity.

Through the use of longitudinal data between 1985 and 2013 from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics linked to neighborhood- and metropolitan-level data from multiple censuses, my multilevel models reveal mixed-race couples tend to be located in neighborhoods with higher levels of poverty. In particular, mixed-race couples with black partners often migrate into neighborhoods with higher levels of poverty than couples without a black partner. In terms of neighborhood diversity, mixed-race couples tend to be found in neighborhoods with higher levels of diversity and frequently enter more diverse residential destinations when they move. However, these outcomes vary substantially across types of mixed-race couples. Lastly, the mobility patterns of black-male/white-female and white-male/black-female couples' demonstrate race and gender matter in the residential mobility and attainment of these couples. For instance, black-white couples with black male partners demonstrate a heightened probability of leaving neighborhoods with large concentrations of whites, while their counterparts with white male partners evince the opposite pattern.

My findings further illuminate the residential patterns of a growing segment of the U.S. population who are part of diversifying American neighborhoods. But, despite the potential for mixed-race couples to redefine prevailing patterns of residential stratification, these couples appear subject to the same types of dynamics maintaining sharp distinctions between black and white residential outcomes. In other words, the results presented in my dissertation highlight the continued salience of race in residential attainment.

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DEDICATION

For my family.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Mixed-race coupling has substantially increased in the U.S. In 1960, the U.S. Census recorded only 0.4% of marriages as multi-racial; but, as of 2010, multi-racial marriages represented 8.4% of all married-couple households (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). There are indications the population of mixed-race couples will continue to grow, with approximately 15% of all new marriages in 2010 occurring between individuals of different races and ethnicities (Wang 2012). Growing racial heterogamy has also helped usher in a period of dramatic diversification, with the population of mixed-race children growing by 37 % from 2000 to 2009, an increase from 1.96 million to 2.69 million (U.S. Census Bureau 2012).

The rapid increase in the number of mixed-race couples has been viewed as an indication of a softening of racial boundaries that were once considered largely impermeable and has coincided with a loosening of social proscriptions of mixed-race coupling (Gullickson 2006; Wright et al. 2003). 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 particularly true in the study of residential stratification. The scant evidence on the topic suggests residential outcomes for mixed-race couples are distinct from those of monoracial couples. For example, in their recent study, Wright et al. (2011) found that in 2000, black-white couples were overrepresented in the most diverse neighborhoods of the 12 metropolitan areas included in their analysis. Holloway et al. (2005) found a similar dynamic in their study of residential patterns reflected in 1990 census data. These general findings suggest the growth of mixed-race populations might alter patterns of residential segregation in potentially important ways (Ellis et al. 2012). At the very least, past research

suggests the experiences of mixed-race couples represent important challenges to patterns of racial stratification in residential attainment.

Thus, in my dissertation I investigate the unique residential patterns of mixed-race couples along three lines that will further illuminate our knowledge of how this burgeoning populations fits within the U.S. stratification system, while also informing our modern conception of the color line. First, I explore the extent to which mixed-race couples with black and/or white partners move into and out of neighborhoods defined by their levels of poverty. Second, I measure the residential mobility patterns of these couples into and out of diverse neighborhoods. Third, I focus on the mobility of black-male/white-female and white-male/black-female couples' out of and into neighborhoods defined respectively by their levels of whites, blacks, and ethnoracial diversity.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND

The volume of research conducted on black/white differences in neighborhood attainment in America is expansive (Crowder & South 2005; Jargowsky, 2014; Krivo et al., 1998; Massey & Denton, 1993; Quillian, 2003; Sampson & Sharkey, 2008; Wilson, 1987). This collective research consistently finds that blacks occupy different residential spaces than whites, which can lead to disparities across the life course (Sharkey, 2008). In total, this past research supports the notion of a temporally persistent color line that privileges whites over blacks (DuBois, 2003[1903]:3; Logan 2011; Parisi, Lichter, & Taquino, 2011). However, a growing portion of the population has crossed the color line and entered into mixed-race unions (Wang, 2012). Findings that mixed-race marriage between whites and racial and ethnic minorities has grown significantly over the past 50 years provides an indication of enhanced levels of racial assimilation and a weakening of the color line (Lichter, 2013; Romano, 2003). These couples

have closed the social distance between racial groups and, in turn, serve as indicators of broader racial group closeness for social scientists (Gordon, 1964; Lee and Bean 2010; Qian & Lichter, 2007). But, despite this racial progress, black/white differences in neighborhood attainment remain acute (Firebaugh & Farrell 2015), and with 95% of mixed-race couples consisting of either a black and/or white partner (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010), investigating where mixed-race couples with black and/or white members fall within the well-established system of residential stratification in American allows us to assess how indelible the black/white color line is.

Previous research suggests that the color line remains acute for certain types of mixed-race couples. For instance, persistent resistance to racial intermarriage (Bobo et al., 2012; Dalmage 2000) raises the possibility mixed-race couples may face discrimination that is as strong, or stronger, than that faced by monoracial minority couples. In in-depth interviews of black-white couples, Dalmage found that these couples perceive a form of racism she calls “borderism.” Dalmage (2000:40) defined 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 mixed-race couples—especially those including a black partner—to face significant obstructions in the housing market.

There is also evidence that mixed-race coupling is somewhat selective of the highest-status members of at least some groups (Gullickson, 2006; Kalmijn, 1998). The higher socioeconomic status of these couples might allow mixed-race couples the ability to deploy greater socioeconomic resources than monoracial black couples and, thus, obtain the neighborhoods they find most preferable. Yet, to date, the neighborhood preferences of mixed-race couples remain unclear. A number of scholars assert mixed-race couples have stronger preferences for neighborhood diversity than do monoracial couples (cf. Dalmage, 2000; Datzman

& Gardner, 2000; Holloway et al., 2005; Wright et al., 2011). And 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) argued 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 black-white couples may simply feel more comfortable in diverse neighborhoods where their unique status is less conspicuous. What is apparent though is that we actually know little about the racial-residential preferences of black-white couples, and even less about the preferences of other types of mixed-race couples.

### 1.3 DATA

To investigate the residential stratification of mixed-race couples I utilize the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) linked with neighborhood- and metropolitan-level data gathered from the U.S. Census. Beginning in 1968, the PSID started with roughly 5,000 U.S. families interviewed annually between 1968 and 1997 and every two years thereafter. The PSID is advantageous for my analysis for two reasons. First, the PSID identifies the location of couples at each interview which allows me to track their mobility between neighborhoods across time. Second, the data contain information on individual- and household-level characteristics known to influence residential mobility and attainment. I focus on the panel years between 1985 and 2013, which are the interview years in which the PSID data include information on the race and ethnicity of both the household head and her/his spouse or long-term cohabitor. I include in my 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. Additionally, given the hierarchical nature of the data, I use a multilevel modeling

design in which couple-period observations are nested within individual householders and householders are nested within metropolitan areas.

#### 1.4 OVERVIEW

This dissertation is comprised of three empirical chapters. In Chapter 2, I investigate the extent to which mixed-race couples move into and out of neighborhoods defined by their levels of poverty. My results demonstrate black race is incredibly important in determining residential outcomes. In particular, mixed-race couples with black partners tend to migrate into neighborhoods with higher levels of poverty than couples without a black partner. And the effect of a couple having a black partner on neighborhood poverty exposure remains significant after controlling for well-known individual, household, and contextual characteristics. Especially salient among mixed-race couples with black partners is that even those with substantial income have difficulty in avoiding neighborhood poverty when they move. Conversely, mixed-race couples without black partners appear to experience similar levels of neighborhood poverty as whites, providing further evidence of the profound impact of black race on residential stratification.

Previous research also indicates mixed-race couples tend to be located in diverse neighborhoods, but because this past research has used cross-sectional data and has not focused on actual residential mobility, it is not clear whether mixed-race couples choose diverse neighborhoods or are just more likely to develop in diverse neighborhoods. To provide a more complete picture of this topic, in Chapter 3 I conduct a prospective analysis of the residential location and mobility patterns of mixed-race couples, focusing on the extent to which these couples are more likely than monoracial couples to move into, and/or remain in, diverse neighborhoods. My analysis reveals that in comparison with monoracial couples, mixed-race

couples tend to be located in neighborhoods with higher levels of racial and ethnic diversity and tend to enter more diverse residential destinations when they move. However, these outcomes vary substantially across types of mixed-race couples. Moreover, the outcomes associated with individual- and metropolitan-level conditions provide limited support for the common contention that the residential patterns of mixed-race couples reflect differences in residential preferences, and point to the role of broader patterns of racial stratification in shaping their residential outcomes.

Another topic of substantial research among sociologists is the role of racial residential preferences in creating and maintaining systems of residential stratification between blacks and whites. This past research has observed that failures to racially integrate neighborhoods can be partially attributed to blacks' fears of entering into predominantly white spaces, and white avoidance of black neighbors. Missed by this previous research on racial residential preferences are the increasing numbers of mixed-race couples, especially black-white couples within the U.S. With the inclusion of black-white couples into the study of these residential processes the role of gender is accentuated, allowing us to investigate whether the race of the male partner in black-white couples is associated with the racial composition of the neighborhoods these couples remain in and migrate to. Thus, in Chapter 4, I investigate the mobility of black-male/white-female and white-male/black-female couples' out of and into neighborhoods defined respectively by their levels of whites, blacks, and ethnoracial diversity. My findings show race and gender matter in the residential mobility and attainment of black-white couples with either black or white male partners. For instance, black-white couples with black male partners demonstrate a heightened probability of leaving neighborhoods with large concentrations of whites, while their counterparts with white male partners evince the opposite pattern.

Finally, in Chapter 5, I provide a conclusion to the dissertation. In this chapter I will highlight my findings in each of my empirical chapters, in addition to discussing the implications of my work on the literature on residential stratification and the modern color line. Lastly I will briefly discuss some limitations of the present analysis, while pointing to directions of future research.

## CHAPTER 2: MIXED-RACE COUPLES, RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY, AND NEIGHBORHOOD POVERTY

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Observed blacks/white differences in the ability to avoid poor neighborhoods has been viewed as an important marker of broader racial stratification (Crowder & South, 2005) with salient repercussions for life course outcomes (Sharkey, 2008). Consistently, scholars detail that blacks are overrepresented in impoverished areas, leaving them exposed to a multitude of hazards (Taylor, 2014). Past research has chronicled that poor neighborhoods are often marked by higher unemployment (Mouw, 2000), more crime (Peterson, Krivo, & Hagan, 2010), and indigent schools (Frankenberg, Lee, & Orfield, 2003). Other blights exist in these bankrupt areas. For instance, Massey and Brodman (2014:203) observed a higher likelihood of STD contraction in poor neighborhoods. In another study, Ludwig et al. (2011) discovered an elevated probability of obesity and diabetes in poverty-stricken neighborhoods. High-poverty environments are also linked with dangerous levels of air pollutants (Evans & Kantrowitz, 2002). In sum, poor neighborhoods exact harsh penalties upon their residents.

One prominent assumption in prior studies investigating black/white differences in neighborhood poverty is that the race of the household head represents the entire household (e.g., South, Pais, & Crowder, 2011). Although research on black/white differences in neighborhood poverty has provided critical insight on wider patterns of racial stratification (Massey & Denton, 1993), the assumption that all households are monoracial requires interrogation for two crucial reasons. First, mixed-race coupling has substantially increased in the U.S. In 1960, the U.S. Census recorded only 0.4% of marriages as multi-racial; but, as of 2010, multi-racial marriages represented 8.4% of all married-couple households (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). And, there are indications the population of mixed-race couples will continue to grow, with approximately 15% of all new marriages in 2010 occurring between individuals of different races and ethnicities

(Wang, 2012). Failing to investigate this emerging population has left a major gap in our understanding of racial residential stratification. Second, investigating the residential stratification of mixed-race couples serves as a barometer of U.S. racial and ethnic relations. Findings that mixed-race marriage between whites and racial and ethnic minorities has grown significantly over the past 50 years provides an indication of enhanced levels of racial assimilation and a weakening of the color line (Lichter, 2013; Romano, 2003). Despite this racial progress, black/white differences in neighborhood poverty remain acute (Firebaugh & Farrell, 2015), and with 95% of mixed-race couples consisting of either a black and/or white partner (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010), investigating where mixed-race couples with black and/or white members fall on the spectrum of neighborhood poverty allows us to assess how indelible the black/white color line is in America.

In this article, I address these gaps in the research on residential stratification by utilizing multilevel data drawn from over a quarter-century of data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) linked to neighborhood and metropolitan data from multiple population censuses, presenting the first study of mixed-race couples and their residential mobility out of and into neighborhoods marked by poverty. I leverage the longitudinal design of the PSID through the use of multilevel models to compare several groupings of mixed-race couples with black and/or white partners to monoracial black and white couples. These models utilize an extensive battery of individual, household, and contextual characteristics to isolate the net association between the racial and ethnic composition of couples and neighborhood poverty, thereby, providing a thorough investigation of emerging systems of racial stratification.

## 2.2 BACKGROUND AND THEORY

The volume of research conducted on black/white differences in neighborhood poverty in America is expansive (Crowder & South, 2005; Jargowsky, 2014; Krivo et al., 1998; Massey & Denton, 1993; Quillian, 2003; Sampson & Sharkey, 2008; Wilson, 1987). This collective research consistently finds that blacks occupy higher poverty neighborhoods than whites. This spatial pattern partially contributes to these groups existing in different physical and social spaces, and leads to disparities across the life course. In total, this past research supports the notion of a temporally persistent color line that privileges whites over blacks (DuBois, 2003[1903]:3; Logan, 2011; Parisi, Lichter, & Taquino, 2011). However, a growing portion of the population has crossed the color line and entered into mixed-race unions (Wang, 2012). These couples have closed the social distance between racial groups and, in turn, have frequently served as indicators of broader racial group closeness for social scientists (Gordon, 1964; Lee & Bean, 2010; Qian & Lichter, 2007).

Although mixed-race coupling has served as an indicator of decreasing social distance between racial groups, a dearth of quantitative research exists on mixed-couples after they *form*, especially in regards to their residential attainment patterns. The few scholars who have studied the residential attainment of mixed-race couples have done so in the context of their neighborhood racial composition (Ellis, Holloway, Wright, & Fowler, 2012; Gabriel, 2016; Iceland & Nelson, 2010; Wright, Holloway, & Ellis, 2013). This past research contributes to our understanding of how the burgeoning population of mixed-race couples fares in established structures of residential stratification, yet this research fails to directly assess the socioeconomic status of the neighborhoods mixed-race couples occupy. This gap in the literature is particularly problematic given the rising numbers of mixed-race couples (Frey, 2015) and the deleterious consequences for families residing in poor neighborhoods (Sharkey, 2013).

To provide insight on the association between mixed-race couples with black and/or white partners and neighborhood poverty, extant theoretical arguments used to explore the residential mobility patterns of monoracial groups may be applied. One longstanding theory utilized by researchers is the spatial assimilation theory (Massey & Mullan, 1984; Pais, South, & Crowder, 2012; Timberlake & Iceland, 2007). This theory asserts racial minorities attempt to convert socioeconomic resources, such as education, income and employment stability, into higher status neighborhoods (Iceland, 2009; Massey, 1985). The spatial assimilation theory is built on the understanding that blacks possess lower levels of education (Kao & Thompson, 2003) and family income (Squires & Kubrin, 2005), which leads to the conclusion that racial differences in residential attainment may reflect differences in socioeconomic status (Charles, 2003). Thus, highly resourced couples—no matter their racial combination (e.g., black-white, white-Latino)—are predicted to avoid poor neighborhoods and, in turn, their inimical effects.

While the assertions of the spatial assimilation theory tend to hold for the residential mobility outcomes of non-blacks, this theory frequently fails to describe the residential outcomes of black households (Logan & Alba, 1993). Past studies have observed large black/white disparities in exposure to neighborhood poverty (Briggs & Keys, 2009; Logan, 2011). Evidence of this durable racial gap is particularly stark when we take into account that even highly resourced blacks experience difficulties avoiding poor neighborhoods (Crowder & South, 2005). The substantial concentration of blacks in poor neighborhoods—despite their level of economic resources—translates to a significant portion of blacks exposed to the pernicious effects of poor places (Sharkey, 2014). Not only are numerous blacks exposed to poor neighborhoods but, as compared to whites, are more likely to fall back into poor neighborhoods after they escape

(South & Crowder, 1997) and, once there, tend to experience longer spells of poverty exposure (Quillian, 2003).

Due to the inability of the spatial assimilation theory to explain the prominent gaps in neighborhood poverty between blacks and whites, and their differential abilities in avoiding poor places, scholars have asserted a supplemental theory of residential attainment: the place stratification theory (Charles, 2003; Logan & Molotch, 1987). This theory posits the disparity in neighborhood poverty exposure between blacks and whites is also driven by discrimination. Historically, blacks were victims of various forms of overt discrimination from whites, such as restrictive covenants, redlining, and home owners' associations determined to keep upwardly mobile blacks out of their neighborhoods—resorting to violence if necessary (Massey & Denton, 1993). Modern forms of racial discrimination in the housing market are often not as flagrant, but surely harmful. For example, researchers have noted real estate agents typically show equally qualified blacks fewer homes than whites (Turner et al., 2012). Other scholars have documented that predatory lenders targeted blacks with subprime mortgage loans contributing to the Great Recession (Immergluck & Wiles, 1999). And findings abound that a portion of whites possess a distinct aversion to sharing neighborhoods with meaningful shares of blacks (Bader & Krysan, 2015; Farley, Shuman, Bianchi, Colasanto, & Hatchett, 1978; Krysan, Couper, Farley, & Forman, 2009; Swaroop & Krysan, 2011). The collection of these, and other (Rosignio, Karafin, & Tester, 2009; Rothwell & Massey, 2010; Squires & Chadwick, 2006), modern forms of discrimination most certainly hinder the mobility aspirations of black households attempting to avoid poor neighborhoods.

At its most fundamental, the place stratification theory contends racial differences in neighborhood poverty exposure will continue between couples even after racial differences in

economic resources are controlled for. In addition to this fundamental assertion, the place stratification theory posits the effect of economic resources on the ability to avoid neighborhood poverty varies across racial groups. To address this variation Logan and Alba (1993) advanced two forms of the place stratification theory called the *strong* and *weak* versions. The strong version stresses that due to housing discrimination, blacks who attempt to avoid poor neighborhoods secure a weaker return on their economic resources as compared to whites. Meaning whites, unhindered by housing discrimination, convert their economic resources into low poverty places more successfully than blacks. Conversely, the weak version of the place stratification theory highlights the effect of economic resources on avoiding neighborhood poverty is stronger for blacks than whites. Thus, blacks with substantial economic resources can secure residence in low poverty neighborhoods, while even whites with meager assets can attain similar low poverty spaces (Adelman, Tsao, Tolnay, & Crowder, 2001; Reardon et al., 2015; South, Crowder, & Chavez, 2005).

Because of the dearth of research on the residential attainment patterns of mixed-race couples, the implications of the place stratification theory are relatively unknown in their case. However, the continued salience of the black/white color line (Emirbayer & Desmond, 2015:16-17) suggests patterns of residential stratification for mixed-race couples could be demarcated by the same color line. As detailed earlier, blacks are documented as encountering persistent discrimination in the housing market, thus, the residential outcomes of mixed-race couples with black partners could more closely match monoracial black couples. Some evidence exists for this potential pattern. In a series qualitative interviews of black-white couples, Dalmage observed many of these couples perceive a distinct form of racism she refers to as *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.” Dalmage asserts when the color line is crossed, the notion of biologically based racial categorization is jeopardized; consequently, those who cross the color line must be “explained away or punished” in order for narrowly conceptualized racial boundaries to continue (Dalmage, 2000:41).

Conversely, due to the privileged social status of whites, minority individuals with white partners may receive a level of protection from the residential discrimination that consistently affects members of their race. In some instances, mixed-race couples with white partners might utilize the white partners’ race as a tool in the housing search and acquisition process. For example, white partners in mixed-race couples could meet with real estate agents, lenders, and landlords, effectively mitigating the potential discrimination they might confront if they conducted a housing search in tandem (Romano, 2001:131), or if the minority partner was solely engaged in the residential search process (Fischer & Massey, 2004; Massey & Lundy, 2001). Additionally, a growing acceptance of mixed-race coupling has emerged in recent decades (Wang, 2012). This softening of attitudes—despite the strong tendency for racial boundaries to be heavily guarded (Anderson, 2015; Anderson, 2011:253; Saperstein et al., 2013)—may partially attenuate the racial discrimination mixed-race couples encounter in the housing market, allowing them to more readily avoid poor neighborhoods.

### 2.2.1 HYPOTHESES

As informed by past research and the aforementioned theories of residential attainment, the residential mobility behaviors of mixed- and monoracial couples out of and into neighborhoods characterized by their level of neighborhood poverty is likely associated with differences in individual- and household-level characteristics, leading to a number of hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1:* According to the spatial assimilation theory,

- a. mobile couples with higher socioeconomic status—no matter their racial composition—will enter neighborhoods with lower levels of poverty compared to couples with low socioeconomic status.

*Hypothesis 2:* As informed by the place stratification theory,

- a. the out-mobility response to higher levels of neighborhood poverty for mixed-race couples *without* black partners will be similar to white couples; and
- b. the out-mobility response to higher levels of neighborhood poverty for mixed-race couples *with* black partners will be similar to black couples; and
- c. mobile mixed-race couples *without* black partners will experience a similar level of poverty in their destination neighborhoods as white couples; and
- d. mobile mixed-race couples *with* black partners will experience a similar level of poverty in their destination neighborhoods as black couples.

Testing these hypotheses presents an opportunity to reimagine fundamental theoretical perspectives used to explain racial residential segregation and to enhance our knowledge of the burgeoning population of mixed-race couples.

### 2.3 DATA AND METHODS

To test these hypotheses, I utilize the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) linked with neighborhood- and metropolitan-level data gathered from the U.S. Census. Beginning in 1968, the PSID started with roughly 5,000 U.S. families (approximately 18,000 individuals) interviewed annually between 1968 and 1997 and every two years thereafter. New families have been added to the panel as children and other members of original panel families have split off to form their own households. The PSID is advantageous for my analysis for two reasons. First, the PSID identifies the location of couples at each interview, which allows me to track their mobility between neighborhoods across time. Second, the data contain information on individual- and

household-level characteristics known to influence residential mobility and attainment. I focus on the panel years between 1985 and 2013. These are the interview years in which the PSID data include information on the race and ethnicity of both the household head and her/his spouse or long-term cohabitor.<sup>1</sup> Due to my interest in comparing mixed-race couples to monoracial couples, I focus only on those householders with a spouse or a long-term cohabitating partner present at both the beginning and the end of an observation period (the time between sequential interviews).<sup>2</sup> I include in my 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 my theoretical interest in the effects of the broader metropolitan context on residential outcomes, I 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 allows me to identify the residential location of individual PSID respondents at each interview and attach information about the level of poverty in their neighborhoods as well as features of the broader metropolitan area. I follow much of the prior work in this area (e.g., Firebaugh & Farrell, 2015; Massey, Gross, & Shibuya, 1994; Quillian, 2002) by using census tracts as a proxy for neighborhoods. While census tracts represent imperfect operationalizations of neighborhoods (Lee et al., 2008), they are summarized for a battery of theoretically-relevant measures, and approximate the typical conception of a neighborhood (Jargowsky, 1997; White, 1987). Potential problems associated with changes in

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<sup>1</sup> The PSID defines a long-term cohabitor as an individual who lives as head for at least 12 months. Moreover, due to the small number of same-sex couples in my PSID sample, I only focus on heterosexual partnerships in my analysis.

<sup>2</sup> Individuals are included in the analysis only during observation periods in which they are a member of a couple. Members of couples that dissolve during the study period are dropped from the analysis for remaining years, returning only if they form another union. Individuals are only included in the analysis for years in which they completed a PSID interview. In rare cases in which a respondent left the sample and then returned at a later date, observations for both periods are included in the analysis. Moreover, due to the study sample consisting solely of couples the results presented here can only be extrapolated to assess stratification among couples.

tract boundaries across decennial censuses are remedied by my use of the Neighborhood Change Database (NCDB) ([www.geolytics.com/USCensus,Neighborhood-Change-Database-1970-2000,Products.asp](http://www.geolytics.com/USCensus,Neighborhood-Change-Database-1970-2000,Products.asp)), which normalizes census tract data between 1980 and 2010 to 2010 census boundaries. I utilize the NCDB's data on tracts from the 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010 censuses, and use linear interpolation/extrapolation (cf. Bruch, 2014; Quillian, 2003) to estimate values for all tract and metropolitan characteristics in non-census years.

### 2.3.1 SAMPLE SELECTION

I 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. My effective sample for the analysis consists of 56,748 couple-period observations for monoracial couples and 3,913 couple-period observations for mixed-race/ethnicity couples. I contrast couples containing various combinations of several (potentially diverse) racial-ethnic groups<sup>3</sup>: non-Hispanic black (hereafter *black*), non-Hispanic white (*white*), Latino (of any race), and all other non-Latino racial groups (*other*).<sup>4</sup> For example, the *Black-White* couples (N = 731) in my sample have one non-Latino black and one non-Latino white partner. I construct similar categories for *Black-Latino* (N = 346), *Black-Other* (N = 195), *White-Latino* (N = 1,753), and *White-Other* (N = 888) mixed-race couples. I compare these mixed-race couples to two types of monoracial couples: those in which both partners are black (hereafter *black-black*, N = 13,984) and those in which both members are white (hereafter *white-white*, N = 42,764). I 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

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<sup>3</sup> Respondents in the PSID self-report their race/ethnicity to the PSID interviewer.

<sup>4</sup> The *other* category includes individuals self-identifying as Asian, Native American, and other.

were added to the PSID panel using non-random sampling, they do not represent the national populations of these groups.<sup>5</sup>

### 2.3.2 DEPENDENT VARIABLES

I treat inter-neighborhood residential mobility as a two-stage process involving the decision to move and then the choice of destination (Massey et al., 1994). Therefore, the first dependent variable in my 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). My second dependent variable assesses the exposure to neighborhood poverty in the destination tracts of mobile PSID respondents and is measured as:

$$Pov_i = \left( \frac{P_i}{T_i} \right) * 100$$

where  $P_i$  is the number of individuals in tract  $i$  that fall below the poverty line, and  $T_i$  is the total number of individuals in tract  $i$ . For each tract, the value of  $Pov_i$  will range from zero to one hundred—where zero represents a tract with no individuals falling below the poverty line, and a value of one hundred is a tract where the entirety of the population is poor.

Much of the literature on black/white differences in neighborhood poverty applies a dichotomous operationalization of poor and non-poor neighborhoods, where poor neighborhoods are considered as having at least 20% of the population below the poverty level (Kingsley & Pettit, 2003; South, Crowder, & Chavez, 2005; Wilson, 1987). One disadvantage to this operationalization is the amount of observable variation in the distribution of neighborhood poverty is decreased. Given that I hypothesize mixed-race couples experience levels of

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<sup>5</sup> Despite efforts to enhance the representativeness of the PSID by adding Latino and immigrant subsamples, these groups are still underrepresented numerically, and do not represent the broader populations of these groups.

neighborhood poverty exposure between blacks and whites, using a continuous operationalization allows me to observe more potential variation in the neighborhood context of these couples than the dichotomous alternative.

### 2.3.3 INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

I consider the effects of a number of theoretically relevant micro-level sociodemographic and socioeconomic characteristics that may account for group differences in exposure to neighborhood poverty and influence residential mobility. I include a predictor for age (in years) of the household head to measure the life-cycle stage. Residential mobility tends to decrease as individuals transition into their adult years through the establishment of families and by purchasing homes. Families with children might experience increased attachment to neighborhoods through the development of community ties, inhibiting their desires to move. I capture this by including a predictor for the number children in the household. I also include a measure for household crowding, indicated 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. Household crowding may enhance the motivation to move, while having a longer duration of stay in the home might signal residential satisfaction, decreasing the probability of changing neighborhoods.

Measures of socioeconomic status are essential in studying the exposure of mixed-race couples to poor neighborhoods. Socioeconomic resources can provide opportunities for mixed-race couples to avoid areas marked by poverty. Thus, I include a predictor for financial resources as indicated by the total family taxable income, measured in thousands of constant 2010 dollars. Beyond the central role of income in avoiding poor neighborhoods, education may also influence householders' abilities to evade poor places. Education can increase knowledge of available neighborhoods and assist individuals navigating the housing market to move to areas of low

poverty. I control for education by measuring the number of completed school years of the household head. Additionally, I include a measure for the employment status of the household head, coded as 1 for those employed at least part time, and homeownership, coded as 1 for those residing in an owner-occupied housing unit.

Besides socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics of individuals and households, contextual features of neighborhoods and metropolitan areas have been shown to influence neighborhood outcomes (Crowder & South, 2005; South & Crowder, 1997). For instance, neighborhoods of similar socioeconomic status tend to spatially cluster (Massey & Denton, 1993), which, in conjunction with the distance-dependence of migration (Long, 1988), increases the likelihood those residing in poorer neighborhoods will migrate to other relatively high poverty neighborhoods. Due to this spatial clustering, I account for the level of neighborhood poverty at the origin when measuring neighborhood poverty at the destinations of mobile mixed-race couples. In conjunction with this neighborhood-level predictor, I include multiple factors at the metropolitan-level that can influence the opportunities for mixed-race couples to avoid poor neighborhoods. These predictors include a measure of the percentage below the poverty line, the percentage of vacant housing units, and the percentage of housing built in the past 10 years.

Characteristics in the analysis are measured at the beginning of the observation period and are considered time-varying (i.e., level-1 in my multilevel framework). However, one exception is related to the timing of measurement. For those respondents that relocate to a new tract during the mobility interval, their metropolitan-level characteristics refer to their metropolitan destinations because those attributes shape the context of their residential options. Additionally, I include an indicator for the year of observation to account for trends in

neighborhood poverty and mobility, and the length of the migration interval (1 or 2 years) to control for the switch to a biennial survey in 1997.

#### 2.3.4 ANALYTIC STRATEGY

Given the hierarchical nature of the data, I use a multilevel modeling design<sup>6</sup> in which couple-period observations are nested within individual householders and householders are nested within metropolitan areas.<sup>7</sup> For the first part of my analysis I estimate three-level random-intercepts logistic regression models predicting the log-odds of neighborhood out-migration as a function of individual, neighborhood, and metropolitan characteristics. These models allow out-migration to vary across respondents and metropolitan areas. My primary interest in these models is in the differential effect of neighborhood poverty on the likelihood of out-mobility across various types of mixed- and monoracial couples.

In the second stage of my analysis, I predict the neighborhood poverty of movers' destination neighborhoods as a function of individual, neighborhood, and metropolitan characteristics using three-level random-intercepts linear regression models. Because models in the second stage of the analysis are based only on inter-tract movers, I include a Heckman correction (inverse Mills ratio) for the selection of householders into the mover category. In my application of the Heckman procedure, the "selection" equation includes all of the regressors in the out-mobility models (Heckman, 1979), while the "substantive" equation (predicting tract poverty) omits those variables assumed to affect the decision to move but not the characteristics of destinations.

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<sup>6</sup> Models are estimated using the *xt* suite commands in Stata 13 (StataCorp, 2013).

<sup>7</sup> Too little clustering of PSID respondents is present within census tracts to justify the analysis of an additional level of hierarchy.

## 2.4 RESULTS

To convey an initial description of group differences in exposure to neighborhood poverty, Figure 2.1 illustrates the percentage neighborhood poverty at origin for mixed-race and monoracial couples. Figure 2.1 reveals that all mixed-race couple-groups are bookended by mono-racial white (9.17%) and black (20.68%) couples that reside at the extremes of neighborhood poverty exposure. Notably, mixed-race couples with black partners have markedly higher levels of neighborhood poverty exposure than mixed-race couples with white partners. Among those mixed-race couples with black-partners, black-white couples experience the lowest level of poverty (15.85%), while black-other (17.88%) and black-Latino (18.60%) couples have relatively similar levels of poverty concentration as black-black couples. Conversely, white-other (9.87%) and white-Latino (10.72%) partnerships experience levels of neighborhood poverty that are distinctly less than their mixed-couple counterparts with black members, and are relatively close to white-white couples.

The couple-group disparities in mean neighborhood poverty exposure presented in Figure 2.1 can likely be credited to considerable variation in individual, household, and contextual characteristics between couples. To explore this issue, Table 2.1 displays descriptive statistics disaggregated by couple-groups for all variables utilized in my analysis. Mixed-race couples with black partners are more likely to move between interviews as compared to couples without black partners. For instance, 29% of black-other couples migrate to a new neighborhood between interviews as compared to 17% of white-other couples. Also, visible are sharp distinctions between mixed- and monoracial couples in average family income, where mixed-race couples without a black partner have higher average incomes than couples with a black partner. The difference in average family incomes are even larger when mixed-race couples with black partners are compared to white-white couples. Monoracial white couples earn an average family

income of \$101,000, where black-white couples earn approximately \$78,000. This income gap is particularly large for black-other couples who earn \$62,000, followed by black-Latino couples exhibiting the lowest incomes at \$61,000. In contrast, the average incomes for white-other and white-Latino couples are relatively similar to white-white couples at \$108,000 and \$95,000 respectively. Additionally, mixed-race couples with black partners are more likely to rent than white-white couples. 82% of all white-white couples own their homes, the highest among all couple-groups; however, 52% of black-white couples are homeowners, the highest rate across mixed-race couples with a black partner. Homeownership rates for white-other and white-Latino couples also fall behind white-white couples, but have higher average levels of homeownership than other mixed-race couples.

In addition, Table 2.1 presents sociodemographic characteristics known to influence residential out-mobility and neighborhood attainment. Mixed-race couples have lower average ages compared to white-white and black-black couples, which reflects the fact that mixed-race couples tend to consist of younger cohorts (Joyner & Kao, 2005). Typically, most mixed-race couples are likely to have more children 18 and younger living at home than white-white couples, however, white-other couples have slightly fewer children than monoracial white couples. All mixed-race couples tend to live in residences with higher levels of household crowding than white-white couples. Mixed-race couples also are less likely than monoracial white couples to remain in their homes for at least three years, which reflects their higher levels of residential out-mobility between PSID interviews.

Lastly, the metropolitan context for mixed-race couples differs as compared to white-white couples. Mixed-race couples tend to have slightly more vacant housing units in their metropolitan areas than white-white couples and greater amounts of new housing. Particularly

salient for my study, all mixed-race couples evince higher levels of poverty in their metropolitan areas than white-white couples, with the exception of white-other couples. A metropolitan component that likely attributes to mixed-race couples' elevated exposure to neighborhood poverty.

#### 2.4.1 NEIGHBORHOOD POVERTY AND RESIDENTIAL OUT-MOBILITY

The descriptive statistics in Figure 2.1 and Table 2.1 demonstrate distinct couple-group differences in neighborhood poverty exposure. However, my primary aim is to investigate the underlying residential mobility dynamics of these couples relative to neighborhood poverty, and how they function within dominant theories of residential stratification. Hence, Table 2.2 examines the residential out-mobility behaviors of mixed- and monoracial couples using three-level random-intercepts logistic regression models predicting the log-odds of exiting the neighborhood of origin between sequential PSID interviews. Model 1 consists of couple-group categories and a control for neighborhood poverty at origin. The results indicate black-Latino, black-white, and black-other couples all experience higher likelihoods of residential out-mobility as compared to white-white couples. Net of these couple-group differences, the odds of out-mobility are higher for those originating in higher poverty neighborhoods ( $b = .0208, p < .001$ ). Consequently, a difference in neighborhood poverty at origin of 12.039% (one standard deviation from the pooled sample) is associated with a 28% [ $e^{(.0208*12.039)} = 1.284$ ] increase in the odds of out-mobility for couples.

Model 2 adds product terms for couple-groups and neighborhood poverty allowing me to evaluate whether, and the extent to which, the relationship between neighborhood poverty and out-mobility varies across couple-groups. In the case of white-white couples, the effect of poverty is positive and significant ( $b = .0336, p < .001$ ), signifying that a one-standard-deviation difference in neighborhood poverty is related to a 49% [ $e^{(.0336*12.039)} = 1.498$ ] increase in their

odds of residential out-mobility. Conversely, the effect of neighborhood poverty on out-migration is notably weaker for black-black couples. For these couples, a comparable difference in neighborhood poverty is associated with merely a 16% [ $e^{((.0336-.0212)*12.039)} = 1.161$ ] increase in the odds of out-mobility, and supplemental models (not shown) indicate this effect is significantly different from zero ( $b = .1866, p < .01$ ). This strong divergence in out-mobility reactions to neighborhood poverty suggests, in comparison to white-white couples, black-black couples are less likely to escape higher poverty neighborhoods. A similar, but even greater out-mobility disadvantage is present for black-Latino couples ( $b = -.0300, p < .05$ ), for whom a one-standard-deviation increase in neighborhood poverty exposure is related to a 4% [ $e^{((.0336-.0300)*12.039)} = 1.044$ ] increase in their odds of out-mobility. Among mixed-race couples, however, black-white couples are the most limited in their out-migration responses to high neighborhood poverty concentrations. For black-white couples, a similar one-standard deviation increase in neighborhood poverty is associated with a 2% [ $e^{((.0336-.0353)*12.039)} = .9797$ ] decrease in the odds of out-mobility compared to white-white couples. These findings for black-white and black-Latino couples provide initial support for Hypothesis 2b: in comparison to white couples, mixed-race couples with black partners exhibit similar out-mobility responses to higher levels of neighborhood poverty as black-black couples. Model 2 also supports Hypothesis 2a. In particular, white-Latino and white-other couples evince a comparable likelihood of out-mobility as white-white couples, but the coefficients for these mixed-race couples are statistically non-significant. On the whole, it is still unclear whether the couple-group differences appearing in Model 2 simply reflect differences in metropolitan characteristics that affect residential out-mobility from poor neighborhoods.

Model 3 exhibits the percentage of metropolitan poverty is significant and negative ( $b = -$

.0323,  $p < .001$ ), indicating couples are less likely to engage in a residential move in metropolitan areas with higher levels of poverty. This finding potentially highlights that higher poverty metropolitan areas provide fewer desirable locales leading to a decrease in residential out-mobility across couples. The percentage of housing built in the last 10 years is also negatively associated with the likelihood of out-mobility ( $b = -.0164$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Despite the significance of these metropolitan characteristics they have a small influence on the interaction between couple-groups and neighborhood poverty.

Model 4 incorporates controls for a battery of individual- and household-level covariates to further isolate the net effect of higher levels of neighborhood poverty concentration on the out-mobility behaviors of couple-groups. Similar to prior studies assessing the role of sociodemographic characteristics for out-mobility (Crowder & South, 2005; Goyette, Iceland, & Weininger, 2014), I observe the likelihood of moving for couple-groups significantly declines with age, demonstrating those in later stages of the life-cycle tend to decrease their residential mobility.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, significant declines in residential out-mobility are witnessed for households with larger numbers of children, possibly suggesting how the presence of children can strengthen social networks and ties to neighborhoods of residence, effectively deterring a residential move. A similar pattern is witnessed by couples who remain in their homes for at least three years showing an inverse association with residential mobility. Additionally, as households become increasingly crowded—represented by persons per room—they are significantly more likely to move out of their place of residence. And, not surprisingly, the length of time between sequential PSID interviews influences the likelihood of out-mobility for couples during my study period.

Additionally, Model 4 includes socioeconomic characteristics for homeownership,

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<sup>8</sup> Supplemental analysis (not shown) reveals the inclusion of the squared value of age into Model 4 does not alter the substantive findings.

employment status, years of education and family income. Couples who own their homes are significantly less likely to move than couples who rent. Evidenced by the negative and statistically significant coefficient for employment status, those who are currently employed at the time of their PSID interview are less likely to move than those who are unemployed. Alternately, for all couples, increasing levels of income is positively and weakly related to moving out; however, this effect is statistically non-significant. While increasing years of education of the household head is significantly associated with making an residential move.

With the inclusion of sociodemographic and socioeconomic characteristics in Model 4, the only couple-group interactions with neighborhood poverty that remain significant are for white-white and black-black couples. For white-white couples, a one-standard deviation increase in neighborhood poverty is associated with a 10% [ $e^{(.0085*12.039)} = 1.107$ ] increase in the odds of out-mobility. Black-black couples, however, fall far behind white-white couples showing only a 2% [ $e^{((.0085-.0068)*12.039)} = 1.020$ ] increase in the odds of out-mobility with an equivalent difference in neighborhood poverty. Especially salient is the fact that the interaction terms between mixed-race couple-group categories and neighborhood poverty become statistically non-significant with the inclusion of these determinants of residential mobility. Meaning, among mixed-race couples with comparable characteristics, there is effectively no differentiation in their likelihood of out-mobility in neighborhoods with higher levels of poverty concentration as compared to white-white couples. In total, the findings from Model 4 are consistent with Hypothesis 2a, but dispute Hypothesis 2b; instead, mixed-race couples with black partners appear to follow the same out-mobility pattern as mixed-race couples without black partners.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Supplemental analysis (not shown) of Model 4 reveals the movement to non-significance among the main effects for couple-groups and their interaction with neighborhood poverty is primarily attributed to differences in homeownership. Since renters are more likely to move than homeowners (cf. Table 2.1), controlling solely

#### 2.4.2 DESTINATION NEIGHBORHOOD POVERTY FOR MOBILE COUPLES

The previous out-mobility models emphasize part of the difference in exposure to neighborhood poverty for couples is related to couple-group differences in the likelihood of leaving higher poverty areas, but these differences appear to be modest. This leaves the possibility the couple-group variation in neighborhood poverty revealed in Table 2.1 is driven by disparities in poverty levels in the destinations of mobile couples. To investigate this, Table 2.3 displays the results from a three-level random-intercepts linear regression analysis investigating the level of poverty in neighborhoods entered by mobile members of each couple-group. As stated prior, I account for the non-random selection of individuals into the mover category through a Heckman correction strategy in which all predictors included in Model 4 of Table 2.2 are utilized in the selection equation.

Model 1 of Table 2.3 contains the estimate for the sample selection covariate ( $\lambda$ ) which denotes a negative association between the level of neighborhood poverty in the tract of destination and the latent probability of out-mobility. In other words, those couples with a higher latent probability of moving tend to migrate to neighborhoods with lower levels of neighborhood poverty. Upon controlling for this sample selection process, there is a positive and significant relationship between neighborhood poverty at time  $t$  and the level of poverty in the destination neighborhoods of mobile PSID couples ( $b = .2546, p < .001$ ). This positive association partially reflects the spatial contiguity of neighborhoods with similar levels of neighborhood poverty, further signifying that the level of neighborhood poverty for couples in their origin neighborhoods is comparatively similar in the destinations they migrate to.

Also included in Model 1, and most important for my purposes, are the couple-group

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for homeownership reveals that mixed-race couples of a similar housing status as white-white couples are approximately similar in their out-mobility responses to higher levels of neighborhood poverty.

coefficients estimating the percentage of poverty in their destination neighborhoods. Black-black couples demonstrate the highest average levels of neighborhood poverty out of all couple groups, around 7.4 percentage points higher than white-white couples after controlling for neighborhood poverty at the origin and the latent probability of moving. This finding reaffirms past research showing that black households tend to experience higher exposure to impoverished neighborhood settings than whites (Firebaugh & Farrell, 2015). Of all mixed-race couples, the difference in neighborhood poverty between black-Latino ( $b = 5.7981, b < .001$ ) and white-white couples is most prominent, followed by black-other ( $b = 5.1689, b < .001$ ) couples. Black-white couples ( $b = 3.8542, b < .001$ ) emerge with the smallest difference in average neighborhood poverty compared to white-white couples. Thus, the coefficients for couples with black partners tend to support Hypothesis 2d. Conversely, both white-Latino and white-other couples experience roughly equivalent levels of neighborhood poverty as white-white couples. Evidenced by their couple-group differences failing to be statistically significantly different than monoracial white couples, consistent with Hypothesis 2c. In supplemental analysis I explored setting black-black couples as the reference category to assess whether couple-group differences for white-white couples and those couples without black partners were significantly different in their average exposure to neighborhood poverty. Upon investigation, white-white, white-Latino and white-other couples manifested statistically significant and negative coefficients as compared to monoracial black couples. Hence, these supplemental models affirm that couples without black partners appear to migrate to destinations similar in neighborhood poverty to white-white couples, providing further credence to Hypothesis 2c.

Model 2 adds to Model 1 three metropolitan-level determinants of neighborhood poverty exposure: the percentage below the poverty line, the percentage of vacant housing units, and the

percentage of housing built in the past 10 years. Not surprisingly, the percentage below the poverty line is statistically significant and positive, indicating that among movers higher levels of poverty at the metropolitan-level is associated with higher levels of poverty in their destination neighborhoods, net of controls. In contrast, the percentage of vacant housing shows a positive and significant association with destination neighborhood poverty. The level of destination neighborhood poverty for couples is negatively associated with increases in new housing built within metropolitan areas. Past research indicates new housing is frequently built in lower poverty areas (Dwyer, 2011), potentially allowing mobile couples sufficient opportunities to avoid poor spaces. Controlling for these metropolitan-level predictors in Model 2 does little, however, to change the coefficients for mixed- and monoracial couples.

Model 3 includes classical predictors of sociodemographic and socioeconomic status known to influence destination outcomes for mobile households. Net of other predictors, the positive and statistically significant effect for age evinces that older couples tend to move to poorer neighborhoods. Couples that have greater numbers of children are positively and significantly associated with moving to higher poverty areas. The year of observation displays a negative and significant result, indicating that couples moving toward the end of the sample migrate to lower poverty places. Apart from the sociodemographic characteristics added to Model 3, I include three predictors of socioeconomic status: employment status, years of education, and family income. Each of these predictors is significant and negative, controlling for other predictors in the model. Therefore, the spatial assimilation theory (i.e. Hypothesis 1a) receives support in this instance because couples with higher socioeconomic status—the employed, those with higher levels of education, or greater family income—typically move to neighborhoods with lower poverty concentrations. Particularly important, is after adjusting for

these sociodemographic and socioeconomic characteristics of couples, the couple-group coefficients are only slightly attenuated without changing their levels of statistical significance.

Model 3 signals higher socioeconomic status couples typically move to areas of lower poverty. However, as put forth by the place stratification theory, the role of economic resources in avoiding neighborhood poverty could vary by the racial composition of the couple. To investigate this potential racial variation the place stratification theory advances two variants, the *strong* and *weak* versions. The strong version states that blacks attempting to avoid poor neighborhoods secure a weaker return on their economic resources as compared to whites. The weak version posits the opposite—the effect of economic resources is stronger for blacks than whites. In the case of mixed-race couples, though, the implications of the place stratification theory remain unclear. Therefore, in Model 4 I test the strong and weak versions of the place stratification theory by introducing interaction terms to evaluate the degree to which the effect of economic resources, as measured by total family income, vary across couple-group categories. A portion of the coefficients for the interaction terms point to statistically significant differences in the effects of income across couple-groups. For instance, the effect of income on neighborhood poverty is stronger for black-black couples ( $b = -.0503 = -.0063 + (-.004)$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than for white-white couples ( $b = -.0063$ ,  $p < .001$ ), providing evidence black couples correspond to the weak version of the place stratification theory. Net of the other covariates in Model 4, the interactions for both black-other and black-white couples are consistent with the weak version, with black-other couples displaying a stronger negative slope ( $b = -.0929 = -.0063 + (-.0866)$ ,  $p < .05$ ) than black-white couples ( $b = -.0347 = -.0063 + (-.0284)$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Additionally, I estimated a supplemental analysis of Model 4 (not shown) with black-black couples as the reference category to determine whether the interaction between income and those couples

without black partners were significantly different in the level of neighborhood poverty in their destination neighborhoods. The findings from this analysis demonstrated that the interaction coefficients for white-white, white-Latino and white-other couples were all statistically significant in relation to black-black couples.

To help clarify the interaction effects in Model 4, Figure 2.2 presents predicted values for the relationship between family income (restricted to values within the 10<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile) and the percentage of neighborhood poverty at destination for each of the couple-groups, while holding the remaining covariates at their means. White-white couples tend to experience the lowest levels of poverty exposure, no matter their income, while black-black couples display the highest levels of neighborhood poverty across their income distribution. Also apparent in Figure 2.2 is the general clustering of intercepts and slopes based on whether a couple has a black partner or not. For example, white-white, white-other, and white-Latino intercepts and slopes are all tightly clustered around 10% neighborhood poverty in their destinations, consistent with Hypothesis 2c. Those couples with a black partner—black-black, black-other, black-Latino and black-white couples—show more variation in their intercepts and slopes, but still cluster at higher levels of neighborhood poverty than those couples without a black partner, supporting Hypothesis 2d. Also of note, the lowest levels of neighborhood poverty for those couples with black partners are black-white couples. The position of their intercept and slope suggests blacks with white partners are somewhat shielded from experiencing the higher poverty levels that affect other couples with black partners.

## 2.5 CONCLUSION

The persistent gap in neighborhood poverty between blacks and whites has remained a dominant discussion among generations of sociologists and policy makers (Clark, 1965; Kerner Commission, 1968; Massey & Denton, 1993; Moynihan, 1965; Sanbonmatsu et al., 2011;

Sharkey, 2013; Wilson, 1987). Their consistent efforts to understand and ameliorate the black/white gap in poverty exposure has been seen as vital given the devastating impact of poverty on families. Unappreciated by these prior efforts, though, has been the surge in mixed-race coupling transforming the racial composition households across the U.S. (Frey, 2015). I address this gap by combining distinctive longitudinal data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics linked to neighborhood- and metropolitan-level data compiled from four censuses to provide a first analysis of the residential mobility of mixed-race couples across neighborhoods defined by their levels of poverty.

The results of my analysis demonstrate black race is incredibly important in determining residential outcomes and its influence is only slightly mollified by the presence of a non-black partner. In particular, mixed-race couples with black partners tend to migrate into neighborhoods with higher levels of poverty than couples without a black partner. And the effect of a couple having a black partner on neighborhood poverty exposure remains significant after controlling for well-known individual, household, and contextual characteristics. Especially salient among mixed-race couples with black partners is that even those with substantial income have difficulty in avoiding neighborhood poverty when they move—a result in-line with the *weak* version of the place stratification theory (Logan & Alba, 1993). Conversely, mixed-race couples without black partners seem to experience similar levels of neighborhood poverty as whites, providing further evidence of the profound impact of black race on residential stratification. In total, these findings demonstrate that the “one-drop rule” appears to apply to couples, not just individuals.

My findings also suggest mixed-race couples are not significantly different from white couples in their abilities to escape neighborhoods with higher poverty levels. However, as stated prior, the attempts of mixed-race couples—particularly those with black partners—to avoid

migrating to poor neighborhoods seems frustrated. These results are consistent with past research that observes blacks hold a similar ability as whites to exit poor neighborhoods, but are unable to keep themselves from re-entering poor areas (Quillian, 2003). While this equality between mixed-race and white couples to migrate out of poor neighborhoods appears promising, it remains unclear under what conditions moves are undertaken. Given research demonstrating the higher propensity of eviction for black households (Desmond, 2012), future researchers might develop data to investigate the prevalence of mixed-race couples migrating under this form of financial duress.

Additionally, my results that the residential mobility of mixed-race couples into neighborhoods characterized by poverty varies strongly by race informs broader debates on the modern color line. Some scholars assert a triracial division is the optimal description of the color line (Bonilla-Silva, 2004), while others contend a white/non-white demarcation is most accurate (Warren & Twine, 1997). However, given that I observe couples with black members are significantly associated with higher levels of poverty in their destination neighborhoods lends support for the black/non-black conception of the color line (Lee & Bean, 2004). For instance, Figure 2.2 illustrates white-Latino couples experience markedly lower levels of poverty in their destination neighborhoods than black-Latino couples across their entire income distribution, while holding individual, household, and contextual characteristics at their means. Thus, even with substantial gains in mixed-race coupling eroding barriers between racial groups (Lee & Bean, 2010), black disadvantage remains a principal factor in the residential attainment of this population.

Given I observe that economic factors fail to explain group differences in neighborhood poverty between these couples I could assert discrimination is solely responsible for explaining

the difference in outcomes between these couples. Although a notable share of the variation in neighborhood outcomes of these couples is likely attributed to discrimination, other potential forces exist affecting mobility patterns that remain largely unappreciated in the literature on residential stratification. For instance, differences in neighborhood knowledge could partially shape the set of neighborhood destinations couples choose from. In a 2009 study on racial group differences in neighborhood knowledge in Chicago, Krysan and Bader observed blacks, whites, and Latinos were more aware of neighborhoods in which their own ethnoracial group was dominant, and much less about areas with large concentrations of other ethnoracial groups. Therefore, future research on the residential attainment of mixed-race couples might benefit greatly by studying group differences in neighborhood knowledge. The residential mobility patterns of mixed-race couples might also be influenced by their relationship to kin. Past research has highlighted the spatial proximity to kin can deter residential mobility (Boyd, 2008), and for movers, kin can shape the choice set of destinations (Long, 1988). Although this is beyond the scope of this dissertation, fruitful research would profit from incorporating the role of family and other social factors in shaping the mobility patterns of mixed-race couples.

Future researchers might also use data that provide detailed race and ethnicity measures capturing country of origin. For instance, previous studies find Latinos with Mexican origins demonstrate a higher probability of migrating to poor neighborhoods than their counterparts with Cuban ancestry (South et al., 2005). Thus, incorporating data of sufficient size to allow disaggregation by country of origin for mixed-race couples would afford a more fine-grained analysis than what the current data allow. Surely, scholars could advance research on residential stratification by utilizing longitudinal survey instruments including objective measures of skin color variation through the use of a skin color palette by interviewers to determine the exact skin

tone of respondents (Telles & Steele, 2012). This would allow researchers to track the residential attainment outcomes of mixed- and monoracial couples of various skin tones in a nuanced way, likely yielding profitable findings concerning the power of the color line. However, even without the fine-grained measurement methodology of skin color palettes, the present study suggests neighborhood poverty is strongly linked with the racial and ethnic composition of couples, providing insight on emerging patterns of racial and ethnic stratification.

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Table 2.1 Descriptive Statistics for the Analyses of Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2013

	White-white		White-other		White-Latino		Black-white		Black-other		Black-Latino		Black-black	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<i>Neighborhood outcomes</i>														
% Poverty at origin	9.17	7.37	9.87	8.09	10.72	8.39	15.85	11.95	17.88	12.71	18.60	12.45	20.68	13.10
% Poverty at destination	9.18	7.45	9.90	8.16	10.58	8.25	15.95	12.22	17.32	12.82	18.65	12.78	20.56	13.13
Change tract between interviews	0.14	0.35	0.17	0.37	0.20	0.40	0.24	0.43	0.29	0.46	0.33	0.47	0.18	0.38
<i>Metropolitan characteristics</i>														
% Poverty at MSA	12.21	3.74	12.41	4.01	13.08	3.82	13.11	5.12	12.43	3.32	13.61	2.90	13.24	4.04
% Housing units vacant at MSA	8.65	4.44	8.57	4.06	9.03	3.85	9.44	5.45	8.07	2.84	8.67	3.94	8.65	2.82
% Units built 0-10 yrs. Ago	17.89	8.27	17.31	7.93	20.55	9.48	18.86	7.93	17.76	7.51	18.54	9.53	21.55	8.15
<i>Individual characteristics</i>														
Age	45.20	14.54	44.48	14.03	39.71	34.45	37.35	10.91	39.41	12.38	35.41	8.76	42.82	13.47
Number of children	0.98	1.14	0.94	1.10	1.29	1.26	1.31	1.25	1.67	1.54	1.67	1.22	1.40	1.31
Persons per room	0.52	0.24	0.54	0.30	0.63	0.33	0.69	0.37	0.76	0.35	0.83	0.36	0.71	0.36
Homeowner (1 = yes)	0.82	0.38	0.76	0.43	0.66	0.47	0.52	0.50	0.47	0.50	0.34	0.47	0.59	0.49
Same house 3 + years (1= yes)	0.64	0.49	0.54	0.50	0.47	0.50	0.48	0.50	0.40	0.49	0.38	0.49	0.61	0.49
Employed (1 = yes)	0.81	0.39	0.84	0.36	0.88	0.32	0.84	0.37	0.82	0.39	0.84	0.37	0.78	0.42
Education (in years)	13.79	3.15	14.16	3.04	13.80	3.08	13.45	2.88	13.07	2.31	12.26	2.10	11.92	3.02
Family income (in \$1000s)	101.49	110.90	108.07	92.22	95.88	78.44	78.20	88.30	62.42	36.55	61.27	47.27	65.23	42.12
Year	1996	7.61	1998	7.41	1996	7.91	1997	8.31	1998	7.25	1997	8.91	1995	7.70
Length of observation	1.40	0.49	1.56	0.50	1.32	0.47	1.44	0.50	1.50	0.50	1.38	0.49	1.36	0.48
N of Couple-Period Observations	42764		888		1753		731		195		346		13984	
N of Couples	5296		206		458		194		60		106		2304	

Table 2.2 Multilevel Logistic Regression of Migration Out of Origin Neighborhoods for Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples: Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985 to 2013

Independent Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Couple Combinations (ref. white-white)</i>				
Black-black	.0882 (.0582)	.3857*** (.0797)	.4149*** (.0798)	-.1567* (.0641)
Black-Latino	.8051***† (.1937)	1.2478***† (.3212)	1.2676***† (.3202)	.2868 (.2702)
Black-other	.5224* (.2438)	.2400 (.4016)	.2481 (.4007)	-.4115 (.3447)
Black-white	.5303***† (.1453)	1.0168***† (.2252)	.9985***† (.2250)	-.0594 (.1847)
White-Latino	.0726 (.0979)	.1329 (.1497)	.1453 (.1493)	-.0988 (.1248)
White-other	.0811 (.1381)	.1795 (.2060)	.1616 (.2053)	-.1072 (.1727)
<i>Neighborhood Poverty</i>				
% Neighborhood poverty	.0208***† (.0018)	.0336***† (.0029)	.0357***† (.0029)	.0085*** (.0025)
<i>Interactions</i>				
Black-black X % Neighborhood poverty		-.0212***† (.0038)	-.0226***† (.0038)	-.0068*† (.0032)
Black-Latino X % Neighborhood poverty		-.0300* (.0139)	-.0318* (.0139)	-.0175 (.0119)
Black-other X % Neighborhood poverty		.0102 (.0180)	.0085 (.0179)	.0265† (.0152)
Black-white X % Neighborhood poverty		-.0353** (.0110)	-.0354** (.0110)	-.0078 (.0094)
White-Latino X % Neighborhood poverty		-.0073 (.0101)	-.0070 (.0101)	.0013 (.0085)
White-other X % Neighborhood poverty		-.0105 (.0144)	-.0099 (.0144)	-.0006 (.0125)
<i>Metropolitan Characteristics</i>				
% Poverty			-.0323***† (.0084)	-.0189***† (.0053)
% Housing units vacant			.0089 (.0064)	.0046 (.0045)
% Units built 0–10 yrs. ago			-.0164***† (.0033)	.0172***† (.0029)
<i>Micro-Level Characteristics</i>				
Age				-.0364***† (.0014)
Number of children				-.0943***† (.0138)
Persons per room				.4368***† (.0526)
Homeowner (1 = yes)				-1.6002***† (.0351)
Same house 3 + years (1 = yes)				-.2764***† (.0323)
Employed (1 = yes)				-.3044***† (.0416)
Education (in years)				.0396***† (.0055)
Family income (in \$1000s)				.0002 (.0002)
Length of observation				.8713***† (.0522)
Year				.0061 (.0037)
Constant	-1.9235***† (.0462)	-2.0623***† (.0525)	-1.4262***† (.1431)	-13.1130 (7.2971)
<i>Variance Components</i>				
Between MSA's	.2868***† (.0777)	.2972***† (.0766)	.3366***† (.0756)	.0471***† (.1378)
Between Individuals	1.7351***† (.0211)	1.7240***† (.0211)	1.6917***† (.0214)	.3473***† (.0482)
BIC	48810	48837	48832	43375

Note: N of observations = 60,661; N of couples = 8,624

\*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001

† indicates a statistically significant difference (p < .05) from black-black couples

Table 2.3 Multilevel Linear Regression of Percentage Poverty of Destination Neighborhoods for Mixed-Race and Mono-Racial Monoracial Couples: Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2013

Independent Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Couple Combinations (ref. white-white)</i>				
Black-black	7.4011*** (0.2909)	7.2993*** (.2785)	6.5292*** (.2873)	9.3437*** (.4269)
Black-Latino	5.7981*** (.9377)	5.8073*** (.9258)	4.7784*** (.9131)	6.9403*** (1.8059)
Black-other	5.1689*** (1.2802)	5.4112*** (1.2634)	4.7408*** (1.2463)	9.7426*** (2.3353)
Black-white	3.8542***† (.7365)	3.7959***† (.7250)	3.4107***† (.7180)	5.4760***† (1.0908)
White-Latino	.5786† (.5339)	.2617† (.5254)	.2489† (.5193)	-.0603† (.6650)
White-other	.5221† (.7933)	.3072† (.7805)	.3304† (.7685)	.7738† (1.1384)
<i>Neighborhood Poverty</i>				
% poverty at time <i>t</i>	.2546***† (.0099)	.2266***† (.0098)	.1935***† (.0099)	.1851***† (.0099)
<i>Metropolitan Characteristics</i>				
% Poverty		.5706***† (.0318)	.5559***† (.0306)	.5494***† (.0306)
% Housing units vacant		.0844***† (.0240)	.0822***† (.0243)	.0834***† (.0242)
% Units built 0–10 yrs. ago		-.0360**† (0.0138)	-.0570***† (.0154)	-.0591***† (.0154)
<i>Micro-Level Characteristics</i>				
Age			.0473***† (.0161)	.0453***† (.0161)
Number of children			.3490***† (.0841)	.3043***† (.0837)
Homeowner (1 = yes)			.3381 (.6079)	.2609 (.6055)
Employed (1 = yes)			-1.1301***† (.2975)	-.8591**† (.2974)
Education (in years)			-.3747***† (.0389)	-.3599***† (.0387)
Family income (in \$1000s)			-.0093***† (.0015)	-.0063***† (.0016)
<i>Interactions</i>				
Black-black X Family income				-.0440*** (.0050)
Black-Latino X Family income				-.0354 (.0297)
Black-other X Family income				-.0866* (.0364)
Black-white X Family income				-.0284* (.0124)
White-Latino X Family income				.0041† (.0049)
White-other X Family income				-.0049† (.0093)
Year			-.0466*† (.0214)	-.0425*† (.0213)
Lambda( $\lambda$ )	-.7965***† (.1109)	-.7376***† (.1097)	-1.2623***† (.4115)	-1.1391**† (.4100)
Constant	8.7347***† (.3003)	1.4155**† (.5350)	101.2127*† (42.7380)	92.3198*† (42.5903)
<i>Variance Components</i>				
Between MSA's	3.9079***† (.0966)	1.3338 (.1439)	.8314 (.1696)	.9048 (.1677)
Between Individuals	7.6156***† (.0904)	8.767***† (.0769)	8.1027***† (.0797)	7.5746***† (.0833)
Residual	78.2728***† (.0109)	74.8436***† (.0108)	73.2736***† (.0107)	72.9227***† (.0107)
BIC	68123	67781	67571	67535
Note: <i>N</i> of observations = 9,307; <i>N</i> of couples = 4,870				
* <i>p</i> < .05; ** <i>p</i> < .01; *** <i>p</i> < .001				
† indicates a statistically significant difference ( <i>p</i> < .05) from black-black couples				

Figure 2.1 Percentage Neighborhood Poverty at Origin for Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples:  
Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2013

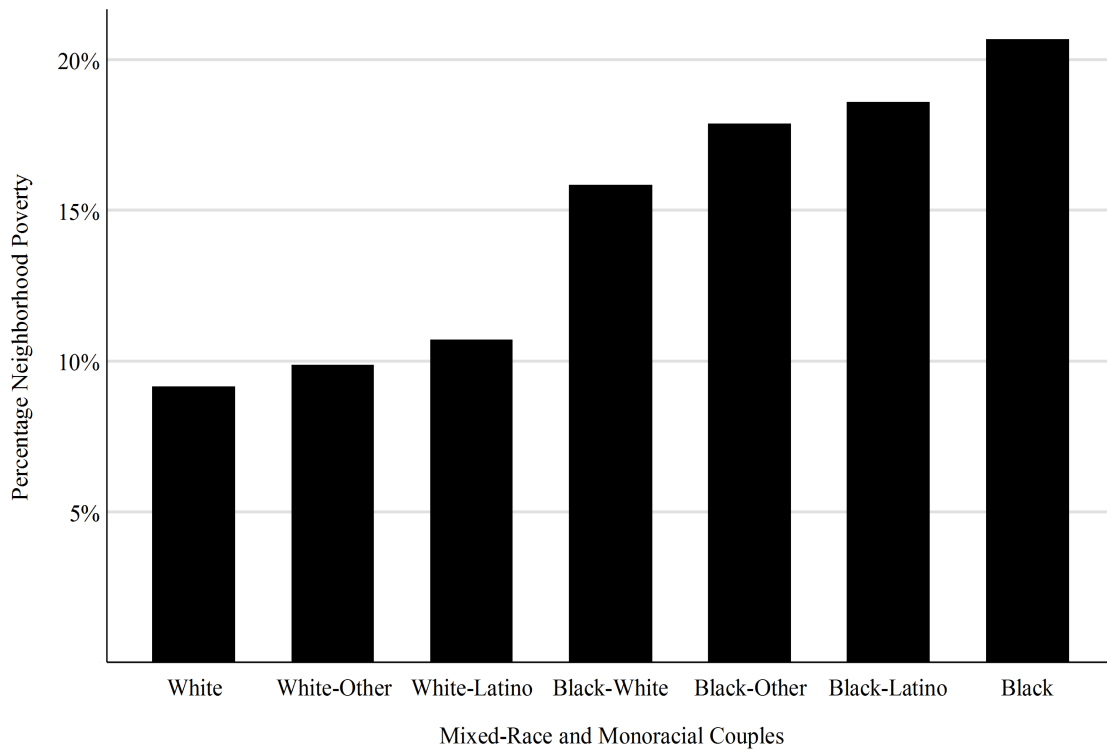
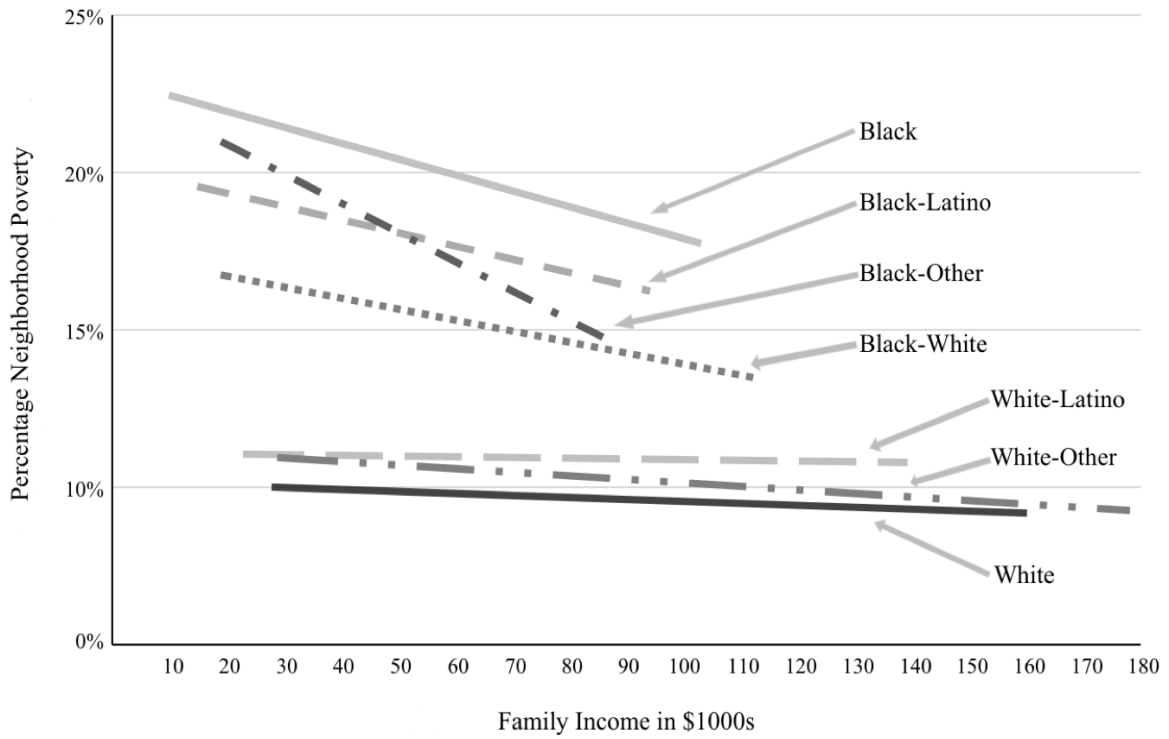


Figure 2.2 Predicted Percentage of Neighborhood Poverty for Mobile Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples and Family Income (10<sup>th</sup> to 90<sup>th</sup> Percentile): Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2013



## CHAPTER 3: THE RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY AND ATTAINMENT OF MIXED-RACE COUPLES

### 3.1 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 (2010) recorded more than 4.5 million married couples with members of different races or Hispanic origins, representing almost 8 % of all married-couple households. Just 40 years earlier, mixed-race couples represented less than 1 % of husband-wife households, numbering just 321,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 1998). Moreover, in 2010, more than 15 % of the growing number of opposite-sex married couples included partners of different races or Hispanic origins (Wang, 2012).

The rapid increase in the number of mixed-race couples has been viewed as an indication of a softening of racial boundaries that were 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, with the population of mixed-race children growing by 37 % from 2000 to 2009, an increase from 1.96 million to 2.69 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

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 particularly true in the study of residential stratification. Work on the residential location of mixed-race couples has relied on cross-sectional, often aggregate-level data (cf. Holloway et al., 2005; Wright et al., 2011), making it impossible to assess the residential processes shaping the neighborhood location of mixed-race couples or to examine micro-level residential outcomes. Especially important is the inability to test the relative roles of the racial characteristics and economic standing of these couples, or the impact of

metropolitan opportunity structures, in shaping their residential mobility patterns and neighborhood location.

The purpose of this chapter is to assess the residential mobility and attainment of mixed-race couples using multilevel data drawn from almost a quarter-century of data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) linked to neighborhood and metropolitan data from multiple population censuses. I use multilevel models to compare several groupings of mixed-race couples with monoracial couples and examine these couples' access to, and movement between, neighborhoods characterized by their levels of racial and ethnic compositional diversity.

### 3.2 BACKGROUND AND THEORY

The scant evidence on the topic suggests that residential outcomes for mixed-race couples are distinct from those of monoracial couples. For example, in their recent study, Wright et al. (2011) found that in 2000, black-white couples were overrepresented in the most diverse neighborhoods of the 12 metropolitan areas included in their analysis. Holloway et al. (2005) found a similar dynamic in their study of residential patterns reflected in 1990 census data. These general findings suggest that the growth of mixed-race populations might alter patterns of residential segregation in potentially important ways (Ellis et al., 2012). At the very least, past research suggests that the experiences of mixed-race couples represent important challenges to patterns of racial stratification in residential attainment.

However, this past research presents an important issue with the temporal ambiguity between mixed-race coupling and their exposure to neighborhood diversity. Wright and his colleagues argued that the residential patterns of mixed-race couples “reflect a combination of choices and constraints” (2011:6) that lead them 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), at least part of the association between mixed-race coupling and neighborhood diversity likely reflects the fact that mixed-race couples are more likely to be *formed* in diverse neighborhoods than in more homogeneous areas. Investigating this temporal ambiguity can be addressed through the use of longitudinal data that track the residential mobility behaviors of mixed-race couples that are *already formed*. In other words, looking at the mobility behaviors of mixed-race couples after they are formed removes the possibility that their exposure to higher levels of neighborhood diversity at time  $t$  is being partially driven by their formation in already diverse neighborhoods. Thus, investigating common claims in the literature requires a prospective analysis of residential location and mobility patterns, focusing on the extent to which mixed-race couples are more likely to move into, and/or remain in, diverse neighborhoods than are monoracial couples.

Moreover, theoretical arguments of residential attainment point to several factors that might provide insight into 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 economic resources. This perspective suggests that as members of racial and ethnic minority groups increase their economic resources, 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 economic resources. 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 income and education will explain part of the

heightened exposure to diversity among mixed-race couples compared with monoracial minority couples, as well as group differences in underlying mobility behaviors. Some support for the assimilation argument is found in recent studies of the topic. In their analysis of data from the 1990 U.S. Census, Holloway et al. (2005) found that high-income mixed-race couples were more likely to live in neighborhoods with whites than with nonwhites.

A second theoretical perspective—the place stratification model—suggests that discrimination pervades the housing market, taking a variety of subtle and more blatant forms, including unequal treatment by rental agents (Massey & Lundy, 2001), exclusionary zoning (Rothwell & Massey, 2009), and persistent racial biases in mortgage lending and foreclosure practices (Clark, 2013; Rugh & Massey, 2010). Most observers have agreed that the common forms of contemporary housing discrimination are fairly subtle (Roscigno et al., 2009; Squires, 2007; Yinger, 1995), such as racial steering by real estate agents who guide white clients away from minority areas, and minority home-seekers toward minority-dominated areas (Ross & Turner, 2005). Despite the subtlety of modern forms of housing discrimination, the place stratification perspective holds that discrimination 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 then by blacks at the bottom (Alba & Logan, 1993; Logan & Molotch, 1987; Massey & Denton, 1993).

The central argument of the place stratification perspective is that because of the effects of housing market discrimination, group disparities in residential attainment and mobility outcomes will persist even after economic predictors of these outcomes are controlled for. Furthermore, researchers have extended the place stratification perspective in more detailed terms by distinguishing two forms: the strong and weak versions. The strong version asserts that

because of discrimination, minorities are unable to convert their financial resources into higher-status neighborhoods, leading to more pronounced effects of income on residential attainment for whites than for minorities. Alternatively, the weak version of the place stratification theory contends that the effects of income will be less pronounced for whites than for minorities; only highly resourced minorities will gain access to more advantaged areas, whereas even relatively low-income whites will have opportunities to access such places (Logan & Alba, 1993).

The implications of the place stratification perspective for the residential attainment of mixed-race couples are not completely clear. On one hand, discrimination may be less intense for some mixed-race couples than for monoracial 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 economic resources on these outcomes, of mixed-race couples that include a white member to be more similar to those of monoracial white couples than to those of monoracial 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 monoracial minority couples. In in-depth interviews of black-white couples, Dalmage found that these couples perceive a form of racism she calls “borderism.” Dalmage (2000:40) defined 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 in comparison with monoracial white couples, mixed-race couples—and especially those that include a black member—may face obstructions in translating their economic resources into high-status neighborhoods.

A third proposition is that mixed-race couples simply have stronger preferences for neighborhood diversity than do monoracial couples (cf. Dalmage, 2000; Datzman & Gardner, 2000; Holloway et al., 2005; Wright et al., 2011). Certainly, the tendency to view residential outcomes as a reflection of differences in residential preferences is common in the literature on residential stratification (cf. Clark, 2009; Fossett, 2006). Although there is little data suitable for linking preferences to actual locational outcomes, the idea that preferences play an important role is consistent with observations of sharp racial differences in neighborhood preferences at the individual-level (Charles, 2006; Krysan et al., 2009). Additionally, 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) argued 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 less conspicuous.

However, we actually know 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 reflect the combination of preferences held by the 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 diverse neighborhoods as substantially less desirable than mostly white neighborhoods (Charles, 2006; Krysan & Bader, 2007). In comparison with whites, blacks express stronger preferences for balanced residential racial compositions (Charles, 2006; Krysan & Bader, 2007; Krysan & Farley, 2002). Available research also suggests that Latinos and, to a lesser extent, Asians are more tolerant of neighborhood diversity than whites but are somewhat

less tolerant than 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.

Finally, the general housing availability model (South & 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 (Crowder & Tolnay, 2000), it is possible that the higher level of neighborhood diversity experienced by mixed-race couples is 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 (Dalmage, 2000; Wright et al., 2011).

Together, these theoretical arguments raise a number of important research questions about the residential outcomes of mixed-race couples:

*Question 1:* How does the level of neighborhood diversity vary for different types of mixed-race couples compared with monoracial couples?

*Question 2:* Is the association between neighborhood diversity and residential out-mobility different for mixed-race couples than for monoracial couples?

*Question 3:* Among couples that move, do mixed-race couples move to neighborhoods that are more diverse than the neighborhood destinations of monoracial couples?

*Question 4:* To what extent are differences in residential outcomes between different types of couples driven by variations in economic resources, other sociodemographic characteristics, and opportunity structures presented by the broader metropolitan area?

Pursuing answers to these questions provides a unique prospect 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 a part of reshaping the residential landscape of metropolitan America.

### 3.3 DATA AND METHODS

I address these questions using data from the PSID linked to neighborhood-level data drawn from the U.S. Census. The PSID is a 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; new families are added to the panel as children and other members of original panel families form their own households. The PSID is well suited for my analysis for two reasons. First, it identifies the location of couples at each interview, which allows me to track their mobility between neighborhoods across time. Second, the data contain information on individual- and household-level characteristics known to influence residential mobility and attainment. I focus on observation years between 1985 and 2009, interview years in which the PSID data include information on the race and ethnicity of both the household head and her/his spouse or long-term cohabitor. Because I am interested in comparing mixed-race couples with monoracial couples, I focus only on those householders with a spouse or a long-term cohabitating partner present at both the beginning and the end of an

observation period<sup>10</sup> (the time between sequential interviews). I include in my 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 the theoretical debates about the effects of broader metropolitan context on residential outcomes, I 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 me 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. I 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 nation during my study period, are summarized for a variety of theoretically relevant measures, and 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 my use of the Neighborhood Change Database (NCDB),<sup>11</sup> which normalizes 1980–2010 census tract data to 2010 census boundaries. I use the NCDB's data on tracts from the 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010

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<sup>10</sup> Individuals are included in the analysis only during observation periods in which they are a member of a couple. Members of couples that dissolve during the study period are dropped from the analysis for remaining years, returning only if they form another union. Supplemental analysis using a Heckman correction (inverse Mills ratio) for the selection of individuals into couple status produces results that are quite similar to those presented here. Nevertheless, given that this analysis focuses on couples, caution should be exercised in extrapolating the results to residential outcomes for individuals not in couples.

<sup>11</sup> Data are available online ([www.geolytics.com/USCensus,Neighborhood-Change-Database-1970-2000,Products.asp](http://www.geolytics.com/USCensus,Neighborhood-Change-Database-1970-2000,Products.asp)).

censuses, and use linear interpolation/extrapolation<sup>12</sup> (cf. Quillian, 2003) to estimate values for all tract and metropolitan characteristics in noncensus years.

I 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. My effective sample for the analysis consists of 49,814 observations for monoracial couples and 3,183 observations for mixed-race/ethnicity couples.<sup>13</sup> I 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).<sup>14</sup> For example, the black-white couples ( $N = 597$ ) in my sample have one non-Latino black and one non-Latino white partner. I construct similar categories for black-Latino ( $N = 279$ ), black-other ( $N = 168$ ), white-Latino ( $N = 1,405$ ), and white-other ( $N = 734$ ) mixed-race couples. I compare these mixed-race couples with two types of monoracial couples: (1) those in which both partners are black (hereafter, black-black,  $N = 12,715$ ), and (2) those in which both members are white (hereafter, white-white;  $N = 37,099$ ). I focus only on couples containing at least one black or one white member<sup>15</sup> because members of other groups are underrepresented<sup>16</sup> in the PSID data; and given that they were added to the PSID panel using nonrandom sampling, they do not represent the national

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<sup>12</sup> Values for intercensal years are assumed to fall on a straight line between values for endpoints defined by the most recent past and future decennial censuses.

<sup>13</sup> Individuals are included in the analysis only for years in which they completed a PSID interview. In rare cases in which a respondent left the sample and then returned at a later date, observations for both periods are included in the analysis.

<sup>14</sup> The "other" category includes individuals self-identifying as Asian, Native American, and other.

<sup>15</sup> According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 97.3 % of all mixed-race couples contain a black or a white partner (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

<sup>16</sup> Despite efforts to enhance the representativeness of the PSID by adding Latino and immigrant subsamples, these groups are still underrepresented numerically and do not represent the broader populations of these groups.

populations of these groups. The emphasis on couples that contain either a black or white member also enhances the comparability of my research to past aggregate-level studies.

I compare the couple-groups in my sample along three residential outcomes. First, I assess overall exposure to neighborhood diversity at the beginning of the observation period, thereby aligning my micro-level analysis with that of aggregate-level studies (Wright et al., 2011). Following past research on the topic (Wright et al., 2011), I measure neighborhood diversity using a standard entropy index (cf. Iceland, 2004) expressed as follows:

$$E_i = \sum_{r=1}^r (P_{ri}) \ln[1/P_{ri}]$$

where  $P_{ri}$  is a specific racial/ethnic group's<sup>17</sup> proportion of the population in tract  $i$ . For each tract, the value of  $E_i$  will range from 0, indicating complete population homogeneity, to  $\log 4$  (or 1.386), indicating that all racial/ethnic groups are represented in the tract in equal proportions. A maximum entropy score happens when all groups have equal representation within a tract; with four groups, each would contribute 25 % to the tract's total population. In other words, the higher the entropy score, the greater the diversity within each tract.

Next, I 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 destination (Massey et al., 1994). Accordingly, the second dependent variable in my 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

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<sup>17</sup> The racial groups used to compose the entropy score are white, black, Latino, and other.

racial/ethnic diversity, as measured by the entropy index, in the destination tracts of mobile PSID householders.

I 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). Financial resources are indicated by the total family taxable income, measured in thousands of constant 2000 dollars. Other measures of socioeconomic conditions include (1) the education (in completed years) of the household head; (2) employment status of the household head, coded as 1 for those employed at least part-time; and (3) homeownership, coded as 1 for those in an owner-occupied housing unit. I also control for household crowding, measured by the number of persons per room, as well as 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, I include a metropolitan-level entropy index. Paralleling my measure of neighborhood diversity, the metropolitan-level entropy index summarizes the relative concentrations of white, black, Latino, and other populations in the metropolitan area as a whole. All characteristics in the analysis are measured at the beginning of the observation period and are considered time-varying (i.e., Level 1 in my multilevel framework). Additionally, I 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, I use a multilevel modeling design<sup>18</sup> in which couple-period observations are nested within individual householders and householders are nested within metropolitan areas.<sup>19</sup> For the first part of my analysis, I estimate three-level random-intercepts linear regression models predicting the entropy score in the neighborhood of residence at time  $t$  as a function of individual and metropolitan characteristics. My central focus in these models is the pattern of neighborhood diversity experienced by various types of mixed-race couples relative to that experienced by monoracial white and black couples.

In the second set of models, I estimate three-level random-intercepts logistic regression 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. My primary interest in these models is in the differential effect of neighborhood diversity (entropy) across various types of mixed- and monoracial couples.

In the final stage of my analysis, I predict the racial diversity (entropy) of movers' destination neighborhoods as a function of individual, tract, and metropolitan characteristics, using three-level random-intercepts linear regression models. Similar to my first set of analyses, my central interest lies in differential destinations across couple-groups. Because models in the final stage of the analysis are based only on inter-tract movers, I include a Heckman correction (inverse Mills ratio) for the selection of householders into the mover category. In my application of the Heckman procedure, the "selection" equation includes all the regressors in the out-mobility models (Heckman, 1979), whereas the "substantive" equation (predicting tract

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<sup>18</sup> Models are estimated using the *gllamm* and *xt* suite commands in Stata 13 (StataCorp, 2013).

<sup>19</sup> There is too little clustering of PSID respondents within census tracts to justify the analysis of an additional level of hierarchy.

diversity) omits those variables assumed to affect the decision to move but not the characteristics of destinations.

### 3.4 RESULTS

Table 3.1 shows that couple-groups differ dramatically in terms of a number of factors that might affect exposure to neighborhood diversity. For example, mixed-race couples that include a white partner have higher average income than do couples with a black partner. Black-white couples, however, have the highest average income out of couples with black partners. Black-black and mixed-race couples without a white partner, on average, have less education than do white-white couples and their mixed-race counterparts with a white member. Among couples with at least one white member, household heads in black-white couples have the lowest average education. Moreover, all mixed-race couples have lower average levels of homeownership than white-white couples; mixed-race couples with a black partner typically have lower homeownership rates compared with those mixed couples with a nonblack member. When it comes to exposure to metropolitan diversity, all types of mixed-race couples and black-black couples tend to live in metropolitan areas that have higher diversity than those occupied by white-white couples—a factor that likely increases their opportunities to choose diverse neighborhoods.

To convey group differences in exposure to, and types of, neighborhood diversity, Figure 3.1 provides means and standard deviations for neighborhood entropy and average neighborhood racial composition for mixed-race and monoracial couples in my sample across all observation periods. Consistent with past research using aggregate data, the table in Figure 3.1 reveals a high level of neighborhood diversity at time  $t$  for mixed-race couples compared with monoracial couples. For instance, the mean entropy score is higher for each of the mixed-race couple-groups—except for white-other couples (0.601)—than for the average black-black couple (0.603) and especially the average white-white couple (0.407). Among mixed-race couples,

however, experiences of neighborhood diversity vary considerably. Most notably, mixed-race couples with black partners have the highest mean entropy scores, with black-Latino couples living in the most diverse neighborhoods (0.754). In contrast, with the exception of black-white couples, couples containing one white partner tend to live in places that are less diverse than are those occupied by other mixed-race couples, although still more diverse than the average neighborhood occupied by white-white couples.

Figure 3.1 also highlights substantial differences in the specific neighborhood racial composition for couple-groups with similar entropy scores. For instance, white-Latino couples have an average entropy score of 0.645, and black-other couples have a slightly higher value of 0.682. Yet, when looking at the racial composition of their relative neighborhoods, white-Latino couples, on average, have drastically higher concentrations of white neighbors and far fewer black neighbors than do black-other couples. Generally, however, Figure 3.1 confirms the central finding from aggregate-level studies, showing that individual mixed-race couples tend to be exposed to higher neighborhood diversity than are monoracial couples.

#### 3.4.1 NEIGHBORHOOD DIVERSITY

Table 3.2 presents the results of a three-level random-intercepts linear regression analysis of neighborhood entropy at time  $t$  for the couples in my PSID sample. Model 1 includes dummy variables for black-black couples and five mixed-race couple-groups, with white-white couples set as the reference group. Consistent with the statistics in Figure 3.1, all coefficients for the mixed-race couple-groups are positive, indicating that these couple-groups tend to live in more diverse neighborhoods than do white couples. All these group differences in average neighborhood entropy are statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). The results also show that about 14%  $((0.0349)+(0.0437)+(0.0127) = 0.091, 0.0127/0.091 = 14\%)$  of the overall variation in neighborhood entropy is related to variation in entropy across the observations associated with

the same couple, 48% ( $0.0437/0.091 = 48\%$ ) is related to variation between couples in the same metropolitan area, and 38% ( $0.0349/0.091 = 38\%$ ) is attributed to differences in outcomes across metropolitan areas.

In Model 2 of Table 3.2, I add the theoretically key variable of metropolitan entropy to my regression analysis to test whether mixed-race couples are exposed to higher levels of neighborhood diversity as a result of residing in more diverse metropolitan areas. The coefficient for metropolitan-level entropy is positive ( $b = 0.7761$ ) and statistically 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 0.0349 in Model 1 to 0.0072 in Model 2. More important is the fact that metropolitan diversity explains a negligible share of the group differences in neighborhood entropy. The coefficients for black-black, black-white, black-Latino, 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 compared with white-white couples. Overall, though, group differences in neighborhood diversity remain pronounced even when metropolitan diversity is controlled.

In subsequent models, I add controls for sociodemographic characteristics that have been known to influence residential attainment (cf. Wright et al., 2012). Model 3 shows a significant 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 my study as indicated by the positive and statistically significant coefficient for year of observation. Nevertheless, the addition of these measures causes basically no change in the coefficients for the couple-group categories.

In Model 4, I 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 or more years; employment status of the household head; educational attainment (in completed years) of the household head; 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, and longer-term residence is associated with exposure to more neighborhood diversity. Net of couple-group racial status and other measures, employment status, education, and income have negligible effects on neighborhood diversity. With the addition of these socioeconomic measures, the coefficients for couple-groups do not change substantively, indicating that group differences in socioeconomic resources play little role in explaining differences in mixed-race couples' higher exposure to neighborhood diversity at any point in time.

Model 5 of Table 3.2 adds an interactive measure to assess the extent to which the effect of economic resources, as measured by total family income from all sources, vary across couple-group categories, providing a test of the weak and strong versions of the place stratification perspective. The coefficients for these product terms indicate significant differences across couple-groups in the effects of income. Consistent with the weak version of the place stratification perspective, the effect of income on neighborhood diversity is stronger for black-

black couples than for white-white couples. Thus, although income has no net effect on the neighborhood diversity of white-white couples, it tends to be only higher-income black-black couples that 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 (Wright et al., 2011) that black-white couples tend to prefer living in diverse places. Moreover, supplemental models with black-black couples as the reference category reveal a negative ( $b = -0.0006$ ) and significant interaction ( $p < .001$ ) between black-white couples and income, further evincing that black-white couples are not necessarily unique in their preferences for neighborhood diversity.

#### 3.4.2 MOBILITY BEHAVIORS AND NEIGHBORHOOD DIVERSITY

Like previous cross-sectional analyses, the results from the preceding analyses in Table 3.2 are temporally ambiguous: it is not clear whether mixed-race couples occupy more diverse locations because they move into such neighborhoods after they form as a couple or simply form as a couple in those neighborhoods. Thus, in the remaining analyses, I investigate couples that are *already formed* by time  $t$  and then examine their subsequent mobility behaviors in relation to neighborhood diversity. 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. Hence, Table 3.3 presents the results of three-level random-intercepts logistic regression models predicting the log-odds of leaving the neighborhood 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-neighborhood mobility: in comparison with white-white

couples, black-black and black-Latino couples 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, on average, a difference in neighborhood entropy of 0.301 (1 standard deviation from the pooled sample) is associated with a 55% ( $e^{(1.463 \times 0.301)} = 1.553$ ) increase in the odds of out-mobility.

Model 2 includes interaction terms for each couple-group and neighborhood entropy. This approach allows me to assess whether the association between neighborhood entropy and out-mobility varies across couple-groups. For white-white couples, the effect of entropy is strong and positive ( $b = 2.040$ ), indicating that a 1 standard deviation difference in neighborhood entropy is associated with an 84% ( $e^{(2.040 \times 0.301)} = 1.847$ ) increase in the odds of a white-white couple moving out of their neighborhood. In comparison, the effect of neighborhood diversity on out-mobility is significantly weaker for black-black couples. For these couples, a comparable difference in neighborhood entropy is associated with just a 28% ( $e^{((2.040 - 1.199) \times 0.301)} = 1.288$ ) increase in the odds of out-mobility, and supplemental models (not shown) indicate that this effect is not statistically significant ( $b = 0.5331$ ,  $p = .083$ ). This basic contrast in the mobility reaction to neighborhood diversity is consistent with evidence from past research suggesting that blacks have greater tolerance for diverse neighborhoods than do whites.

Also, among the significant interactions in Model 2, the reactions to neighborhood diversity for white-other and white-Latino couples more closely resemble those of white-white couples, whereas black-other couples demonstrate less sensitivity to increasingly diverse neighborhood settings. Conversely, only black-other couples differ significantly ( $b = -2.751$ ,  $p < .05$ ) from black-black couples in terms of the association between neighborhood entropy and out-mobility. Moreover, supplemental models (not shown) indicate that the association between

neighborhood entropy and out-mobility is statistically significantly different from 0 only for white-white couples. These findings are roughly consistent with the argument that, at least among some mixed-race couples, the presence of a nonwhite partner produces a higher level of tolerance for diverse neighborhoods than is typically exhibited by white householders. Overall, these results provide mixed support for the idea that mixed-race couples make mobility decisions that are conducive to exposure to neighborhood diversity. Additionally, 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, I find that the likelihood of out-mobility declines with age; is lower for families with children, homeowners, long-term residents, and the employed; and increases with more people per room. The length of time between sequential PSID interviews also influences the likelihood of observing an inter-neighborhood move during this period.

The results in Model 4 show that the addition of these controls for sociodemographic factors reduces almost all the coefficients for the couple-group indicators to statistical non-significance.<sup>20</sup> Only black-Latino couples are less likely to move than white-white couples. Thus, among couples with similar characteristics, there is essentially no difference in the likelihood of inter-neighborhood migration. Particularly important is that the coefficients for the interactions

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<sup>20</sup> Supplemental analyses controlling for a wide range of other neighborhood characteristics—including the local poverty rate, labor force participation rate, percentage of adults with a college education, median housing values, and housing vacancy rates—had no impact on the observed group differences in the reaction to neighborhood diversity.

between couple-group categories and neighborhood entropy become statistically non-significant.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, a substantial portion of the group differences in the association between neighborhood entropy and residential out-mobility is attributed to the fact that members of some groups have characteristics that increase their mobility in general.<sup>22</sup> Based on the results of these out-mobility models, there is no evidence that preferences for neighborhood diversity are driving a heightened tendency among mixed-race couples to remain in more diverse neighborhoods.<sup>23</sup>

### 3.4.3 RACIAL DIVERSITY OF DESTINATIONS FOR MOBILE COUPLES

Although the preceding analysis raises serious doubts about the argument that mixed-race couples' exposure to relatively high levels of neighborhood diversity 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 3.4 presents the results from a three-level random-intercepts linear regression analysis examining the level of diversity in neighborhoods entered by mobile members of each couple-group. In these models, I account for the non-random selection of individuals into the mover category through a Heckman correction strategy in which all predictors included in Model 4 of Table 3.3 are used in the selection equation.

In Model 1, the coefficient for the sample selection variable ( $\lambda$ ) indicates 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, I find a strong positive

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<sup>21</sup> When the reference category is black-black couples, only the interaction for black-Latino couples and neighborhood entropy is positive ( $b = 1.798$ ) and significant ( $p < .05$ ), meaning that as neighborhood entropy increases, black-Latino couples have a higher likelihood of out-mobility than black-black couples.

<sup>22</sup> Supplementary analyses find that group differences in homeownership are the main source of group differences in residential mobility and the interaction between couple-groups and neighborhood entropy.

<sup>23</sup> Supplemental models estimating polynomials of both neighborhood and metropolitan entropy provide little indication of nonlinear effects of either neighborhood or metropolitan diversity, and the inclusion of these squared terms does not alter the substantive findings from the main models.

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 (Long, 1988), increases the likelihood that those originating in high-entropy neighborhoods will move to other relatively high-entropy neighborhoods.

Particularly salient is the fact that controlling for neighborhood entropy at the origin and the latent probability of moving, the coefficients for almost all the couple-groups are positive and 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 ( $b = 0.1719$ ) and white-white couples is most pronounced, but even those mixed-race 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 ( $b = 0.3645$ )—slightly attenuates most of the group differences in destination characteristics: a majority of the coefficients for the couple-groups are smaller in Model 2 than in Model 1. The exceptions to this pattern are the coefficients for black-white ( $b = 0.1211$ ) and white-other ( $b = 0.0978$ ) couples, which increase slightly with the control for metropolitan diversity.

In Model 3, I add controls for the sociodemographic variables of age, presence of children, homeownership, employment, education, family income, and year. Net of their influence on the latent probability of out-migration (captured in the coefficient for  $\lambda$ ), and controlling for metropolitan diversity and the diversity of origin neighborhoods, the effects of these individual-level characteristics are modest. Only the coefficient for year of observation ( $b =$

0.0051) is statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ), 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.

Although the pattern of destination differences revealed in Table 3.4 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. Furthermore, 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, with one exception: black-Latino couples tend to enter slightly more diverse neighborhoods than do mobile black-black couples ( $b = 0.1072, p < .05$ ). Thus, the positive coefficients for couple-groups in the models in Table 3.4 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.

### 3.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I 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 theoretical arguments on neighborhood attainment, I have tested the relative roles of the racial characteristics, in addition to the sociodemographic and economic standing of these couples. Moreover, I have assessed the significance of metropolitan opportunity structures that shape residential patterns.

The results of my analysis of multilevel data from the PSID linked to neighborhood-level data drawn from the U.S. Census confirm past aggregate-level research showing that mixed-race

couples face somewhat distinctive residential experiences. Especially in comparison with monoracial white couples, couples containing members of two different racial/ethnic groups tend to reside in neighborhoods with significantly higher levels of racial diversity—and, importantly, these differences remain significant even after controls are added 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 mixed-race 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, my prospective analysis of residential mobility behaviors provides only limited support for this argument. Specifically, I find no support for the argument that mixed-race couples are more likely than monoracial couples to remain in highly diverse neighborhoods, net of the effects of other individual- and contextual-level factors that affect the likelihood of out-mobility. And, although I 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 monoracial black 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 my analysis—especially those related to variations in the effects of economic resources on neighborhood location—suggest that forces affecting the residential experiences of mixed-race couples extend beyond the realm of preferences.

These findings are important because they further illuminate the emerging residential patterns of a growing segment of the U.S. population who are part of diversifying American neighborhoods. However, despite the potential for the growing population of mixed-race couples to redefine prevailing patterns of residential stratification, these couples still appear to be subject to the same types of dynamics that maintain sharp distinctions between black and white residential outcomes. In other words, the results presented here, in part, highlight the continued salience of race in residential attainment.

This initial investigation provides insight about the relevance of existing theoretical arguments to the residential experiences of mixed-race couples, but there are some limitations in its scope. For instance, past research found that individuals who enter into couples might have different types of residential outcomes than single individuals (Woldoff, 2008). Thus, because of the non-random selection into couple status, the results of this analysis cannot be generalized to represent the residential outcomes of single individuals. Additionally, the data used in the present study do not contain information on individual preferences for neighborhood diversity and, therefore, are unable to distinguish the negotiation of personal preferences within couples.

Future research would benefit greatly from data with specific measures of the residential preferences of mixed-race couples: how they differ from those of monoracial couples as well as 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. At this point, no data provide the information necessary to disentangle the relative effects of neighborhood preferences and racial discrimination experienced based on race.

Fruitful research might also be found in data that provide detailed race and ethnicity measures that capture broader dimensions of skin color and country of origin. Moreover, future research would profit from data that provide contextual information on other combinations of mixed-race couples. Furthermore, as 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. Additionally, research focusing on neighborhood disadvantage is likely to provide important insights into variations in more general processes of residential attainment. Scholars should also investigate how mobility decisions are negotiated within mixed-race couples and the potentially unique strategies they employ to navigate the housing search and acquisition process. What is apparent is that the study of residential patterns of mixed-race couples provides a unique opportunity to understand the complex and ever-changing dynamics of racial-residential stratification.

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Table 3.1 Descriptive Statistics for the Analyses of Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2009

	White-White		White-Latino		White-Other		Black-Black		Black-White		Black-Latino		Black-Other	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<i>Neighborhood outcomes</i>														
Entropy at origin	0.40	0.27	0.64	0.31	0.60	0.31	0.60	0.30	0.70	0.30	0.75	0.34	0.68	0.35
Entropy at destination	0.41	0.27	0.65	0.31	0.61	0.31	0.60	0.30	0.70	0.30	0.75	0.35	0.67	0.33
Change tract between interviews	0.05	0.21	0.09	0.29	0.07	0.25	0.07	0.25	0.10	0.30	0.13	0.34	0.14	0.35
<i>Metropolitan diversity</i>														
Entropy of MSA	0.63	0.28	0.83	0.26	0.75	0.28	0.82	0.18	0.76	0.22	0.92	0.21	0.88	0.20
<i>Individual characteristics</i>														
Age	44.90	14.65	37.97	11.28	44.04	13.64	42.42	13.63	37.18	10.61	34.72	8.03	38.64	12.82
Presence of children	0.52	0.49	0.64	0.47	0.50	0.50	0.68	0.46	0.70	0.45	0.87	0.32	0.74	0.35
Persons per room	0.52	0.24	0.63	0.30	0.52	0.29	0.71	0.35	0.68	0.36	0.81	0.32	0.75	0.36
Homeowner (1 = yes)	0.81	0.38	0.66	0.47	0.74	0.43	0.58	0.49	0.51	0.50	0.34	0.47	0.40	0.49
Same house 3 + years (1= yes)	0.64	0.47	0.47	0.49	0.53	0.49	0.61	0.48	0.49	0.50	0.37	0.48	0.39	0.49
Employed (1 = yes)	0.81	0.38	0.88	0.32	0.85	0.35	0.77	0.41	0.85	0.35	0.87	0.33	0.82	0.37
Education (in years)	13.66	3.19	13.79	3.15	14.16	3.11	11.77	3.06	13.35	2.86	12.22	2.07	13.04	2.50
Family income (in \$1000s)	78.45	82.5	73.72	53.85	85.56	69.53	50.62	32.29	61.99	75.12	49.20	39.54	49.35	31.19
Year	1994	6.35	1994	6.06	1996	6.31	1993	6.38	1994	6.72	1993	6.73	1996	6.24
Length of observation	1.34	0.47	1.21	0.41	1.50	0.50	1.29	0.48	1.34	0.47	1.23	0.42	1.48	0.50
<i>N</i> of Couple-Period Observations	37099		1405		734		12715		597		279		168	
<i>N</i> of Couples	5716		399		200		2719		176		94		67	

Table 3.2 Multilevel Linear Regression of Entropy Index of Origin Neighborhoods for Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples: Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985- 2009

Independent Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
<i>Couple Combinations (ref. white-white)</i>										
Black-Black	.1037 ***	.0059	.0920 ***	.0055	.0951 ***	.0055	.0913 ***	.0056	.0843 ***	.0062
Black-Latino	.1413 ***†	.0166	.1356 ***†	.0156	.1340 ***†	.0155	.1291 ***	.0155	.1252 ***†	.0184
Black-Other	.1455 ***†	.0180	.1273 ***	.0161	.1138 ***	.0168	.1111 ***	.0168	.1524 ***†	.0273
Black-White	.1342 ***†	.0127	.1174 ***†	.0118	.1133 ***	.0118	.1102 ***	.0118	.1350 ***†	.0137
White-Latino	.0301 ***†	.0075	.0421 ***†	.0070	.0434 ***†	.0070	.0437 ***†	.0070	.0535 ***†	.0099
White-Other	.0461 ***†	.0085	.0284 ***†	.0079	.0259 **†	.0079	.0253 **†	.0079	.0138 †	.0105
<i>Metropolitan Diversity</i>										
Metropolitan Entropy			.7761 ***†	.0083	.6149 ***†	.0140	.6146 ***†	.0139	.6154 ***	.0139
<i>Micro-Level Characteristics</i>										
Age					-.0017 ***†	.0001	-.0015 ***	.0001	-.0015 ***	.0001
Presence of children					-.0102 ***†	.0016	-.0088 ***†	.0017	-.0088 ***†	.0017
Homeowner (1 = yes)							-.0193 ***	.0020	-.0197 ***	.0020
Same house 3 + years (1= yes)							.0036 **†	.0014	.0036 **†	.0014
Employed (1 = yes)							.0001	.0021	-.0003	.0020
Education (in years)							.0007	.0006	.0007	.0006
Family income (in \$1000s)							.0000	.0000	.0000 †	.0000
<i>Interactions</i>										
Black-Black X Income									.0002 **	.0001
Black-Latino X Income									.0001	.0002
Black-Other X Income									-.0008 †	.0004
Black-White X Income									-.0004 ***†	.0001
White-Latino X Income									-.0001 †	.0001
White-Other X Income									.0001	.0001
Year					.0038 ***†	.0002	.0038 ***†	.0002	.0038 ***†	.0002
Constant	.4436 ***†	.0090	-.0034 †	.0072	-7.509 ***†	.4033	-7.507 ***†	.4058	-7.465 ***†	.4046
<i>Variance Components</i>										
Between MSA's	.0349 ***†	.0013	.0072 ***†	.0004	.0069 ***†	.0004	.0068 ***†	.0004	.0068 ***†	.0004
Between Individuals	.0437 ***†	.0004	.0403 ***†	.0003	.0396 ***†	.0003	.0394 ***†	.0003	.0393 ***†	.0003
Residual	.0127 ***†	.0000	.0109 ***†	.0000	.0109 ***†	.0000	.0109 ***†	.0000	.0109 ***†	.0000
Note: N of observations = 52,997; N of couples = 9,371										
*p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001										
† indicates a statistically significant difference (p < .05) from black-black couples										

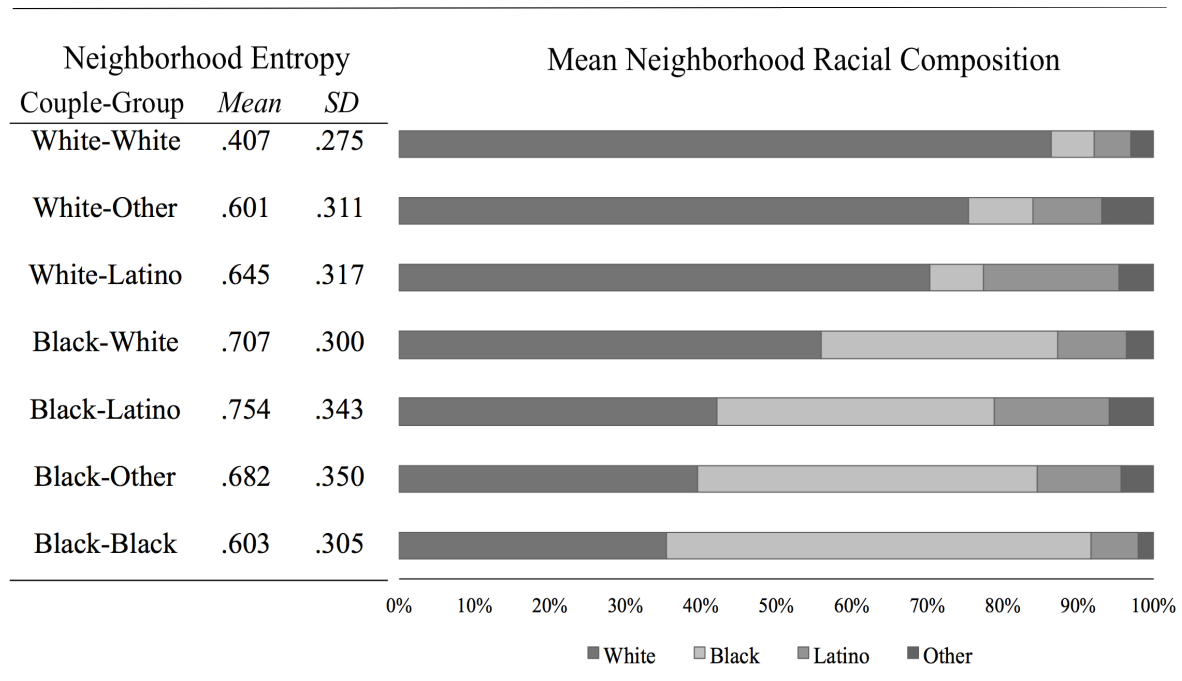
Table 3.3 Multilevel Logistic Regression of Migration Out of Origin Neighborhoods for Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples: Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2009

Independent Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
<i>Couple Combinations (ref. white-white)</i>								
Black-Black	.2851 **	.1177	.9900 ***	.2064	.9083 ***	.2128	-.2184	.1556
Black-Latino	.8626 *	.4421	.8523	1.045	.7568	1.041	-1.578 *	.7456
Black-Other	.5275	.4534	3.319 *	1.080	3.189 *†	1.048	.7958	.6936
Black-White	.5856	.3195	1.601 *	.7954	1.557 *	.7922	-.3584	.5354
White-Latino	.3134	.2019	1.168 **	.4630	1.129 **	.4624	.3590	.3364
White-Other	.2446	.2994	1.168 *	.5736	1.149 *	.5733	.3536	.4453
<i>Neighborhood Diversity</i>								
Neighborhood Entropy	1.463 ***†	.1358	2.040 ***†	.1782	1.893 ***†	.1957	.6147 ***	.0776
<i>Interactions</i>								
Black-Black X Entropy			-1.199 ***	0.277	-1.102 ***	.2815	-.2443	.2113
Black-Latino X Entropy			-.2280	.1.169	-.1088	1.158	1.554 †	.8330
Black-Other X Entropy			-3.951 **†	1.323	-3.801 **†	1.310	1.630	.9294
Black-White X Entropy			-1.590	1.026	-1.513	1.021	-.0328	.6947
White-Latino X Entropy			-1.375 *	.6167	-1.328 *	.6144	-.4880	.4589
White-Other X Entropy			-1.706 *	.8950	-1.690	.8972	-1.058	.7015
<i>Metropolitan Diversity</i>								
Metropolitan Entropy					.5331	.3072	.2896	.1748
<i>Micro-Level Characteristics</i>								
Age							-.0452 ***†	.0030
Presence of children							-.2531 ***†	.0621
Persons per room							.3307 ***†	.0811
Homeowner (1 = yes)							-2.121 ***†	.0714
Same house 3 + years (1 = yes)							-4.005 ***†	.1442
Employed (1 = yes)							-.2442 **†	.0810
Education (in years)							.0173	.0006
Family income (in \$1000s)							-.0010	.0006
Length of observation							1.135 ***†	.1092
Year							.0324 **†	.0079
Constant	-4.818 ***†	.1221	-5.071 ***†	.1347	-5.318 ***†	.1960	-66.16 ***†	15.70
<i>Variance Components</i>								
Between MSA's	.9959 ***†	.1943	.9841 ***†	.2005	1.044 ***†	.4262	.0834 ***†	.0279
Between Individuals	9.099 ***†	.5243	8.914 ***†	.5107	8.836 ***†	.5175	1.378 ***†	.1512
Note: N of observations = 52,997; N of couples = 9,371								
*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001								
† indicates a statistically significant difference (p<.05) from black-black couples								

Table 3.4 Multilevel Linear Regression of Entropy Index of Destination Neighborhoods for Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples: Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2009

Independent Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>
<i>Couple Combinations (ref. white-white)</i>						
Black-Black	.1045 ***	.0123	.0834 ***	.0120	.0869 ***	.0127
Black-Latino	.1719 ***	.0438	.1672 ***	.0433	.1940 ***†	.0435
Black-Other	.0556	.0535	.0278	.0527	.0366	.0526
Black-White	.1192 ***	.0350	.1211 ***	.0342	.1155 ***	.0342
White-Latino	.0829 **	.0166	.0542 *	.0235	.0638 **	.0235
White-Other	.0932 *	.0377	.0978 **	.0368	.0945 **	.0367
<i>Neighborhood Diversity</i>						
Neighborhood Entropy at time <i>t</i>	.3838 ***†	.0177	.2575 ***†	.0113	.2724 ***	.0191
<i>Metropolitan Diversity</i>						
Metropolitan Entropy			.3645 ***†	.0278	.3293 ***†	.0285
<i>Micro-Level Characteristics</i>						
Age					-.0008	.0006
Presence of Children					-.0160	.0102
Homeowner (1 = yes)					-.0183	.0193
Employed (1 = yes)					-.0031	.0140
Education (in years)					.0020	.0018
Family Income (in \$1000s)					-.0001	.0001
Year					.0051 ***†	.0009
Lambda( $\lambda$ )	-.0207 ***†	.0044	-.0199 ***†	.0043	-.0020	.0086
Constant	.3413 ***†	.0160	.1581 ***†	.0203	-9.913 ***†	1.867
<i>Variance Components</i>						
Between MSA's	.0057 ***†	.0006	.0030 ***†	.0004	.0030 ***†	.0004
Between Individuals	.0000 ***†	.0000	.0023 ***†	.0013	.0024 ***†	.0013
Residual	.0673 ***†	.0008	.0627 ***†	.0016	.0618 ***†	.0015
<i>Note: N of observations = 3,069; N of couples = 2,206</i>						
<i>*p &lt; .05; ** p &lt; .01; *** p &lt; .001</i>						
<i>† indicates a statistically significant difference (p&lt;.05) from black-black couples</i>						

Figure 3.1 Neighborhood Entropy and Racial Composition of Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples: Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2009



## CHAPTER 4: GENDER AND THE RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY AND ATTAINMENT OF BLACK-WHITE COUPLES

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Blacks' and whites' residential mobility and attainment patterns are a central component of residential stratification in the U.S. Past research on the topic has demonstrated blacks' residential mobility into neighborhoods with sizeable shares of whites is quite low (Crowder, Pais, & South, 2012; Quillian, 2002). Moreover, when blacks and/or other non-white populations move into neighborhoods with large concentrations of whites, white households frequently flee (Crowder & South, 2008). Past scholars have asserted black and white group differences in preferences for neighborhoods for certain racial and ethnic compositions plays a key role in shaping the disparate mobility patterns between these groups. A number of researchers argue neutral in-group preferences naturally filter blacks and whites into neighborhoods dominated by their own racial group (Clark, 1992; Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 1997). While other scholars contend blacks' fears of white hostility function as a proximate determinant of their avoidance of white spaces (Krysan & Farley, 2002). In addition, researchers have documented whites' preferences for predominantly white neighborhoods are related to their concerns for social class problems associated with black neighborhoods (Swaroop & Krysan, 2011), but there remains a share of whites for whom the race of their neighbor matters, above and beyond class (Krysan, Couper, Farley, & Forman, 2009).

Studies empirically assessing the role of neighborhood preferences of black and white households in contributing to residential stratification function under the assumption that households are monoracial. But, mixed-race coupling is increasing, particularly among black-white couples. As of 1960, black-white marriages consisted of only 1.7% of all monoracial black marriages, however, by 2010, the percentage increased to 12.3% (Frey, 2015). The low number

of black-white couples in 1960 is most surely associated with the extraordinary legal and extralegal proscriptions against black-white couples up to that point. Nevertheless, the numbers of black-white couples increased after anti-miscegenation laws prohibiting mixed-race unions were repealed in the 1967 U.S. Supreme Court case *Loving v. Virginia*. Concomitantly, public sentiment around black-white unions began to soften leading to a slow, yet increasing trend in black-white coupling. Due to this exceptional history, researchers have argued contemporary black-white couples serve as a powerful indicator of racial group relations leading a small number of scholars to quantitatively investigate how black-white couples manage in existing systems of residential stratification (Iceland & Nelson, 2010; Wright et al., 2003). This past research has observed black-white couples tend to evince relatively low segregation from whites, and are often found in ethnoracially diverse neighborhoods (Gabriel, 2016; Wright, Ellis, & Holloway, 2011).

These past studies on the residential stratification of black-white couples provide a fundamental understanding of where black-white couples fall in existing structures of stratification, along with giving clues about black-white couples' preferences for neighborhoods with certain ethnoracial compositions. However, they fail to account for the potentially disparate mobility and locational attainment processes associated with black-male/white-female and white-male/black-female couples (cf. Holloway, Ellis, Wright, & Hudson, 2005). Assessing this gap is important for a multitude of reasons. First, there is a prominent race/gender imbalance within black-white couples (Wang, 2012). In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau recorded the percentage of marriages between black men and white women more than doubled (0.65%) those of white men and black women (0.28%) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). This gender imbalance in black-white coupling is vital to examine because black-male/white-female and white-male/black-female

couples historically experienced drastically different societal treatments. For instance, during the Jim Crow era many black men who were perceived as making advances towards white women faced extreme violence (Fiemster, 2006:92–93) and, conversely, white men who sexually assaulted black women functioned with virtual impunity (Romano, 2003:236). Though less severe, these two different societal reactions potentially linger in the modern day milieu these black-white couple pairings function within, potentially influencing what types of neighborhoods they prefer and, therefore, affecting their residential mobility and attainment outcomes.

Second, studying the race/gender pairings of black-white couples also brings gender into sharp relief, allowing us to gain insight on how gender is associated with foundational theories of residential stratification. This assertion is supported by previous research on gendered power disparities within couples and research on racial differences in preferences for neighborhoods with specific racial compositions. First, there is empirical evidence the desires of men who want to move are more likely to actualize than their female partners' (Coulter, Van Ham, & Feijten, 2012). Second, previous scholars highlight preferences for specific ethnoracial compositions of neighborhoods vary by race (Charles, 2006; Krysan et al., 2009). These studies on neighborhood racial preferences conclude whites tend to desire neighborhoods with high concentrations of whites, while blacks favor more balanced shares of whites and blacks in their neighborhoods (Charles, 2003). Although minimal, research on the neighborhood preferences of black-white couples report they have a heightened desire for ethnoracially diverse spaces. Based on these two threads of research—gendered power disparities within couples, and preferences for neighborhood racial compositions—we might assume the race of the male partner is associated with the racial composition of the neighborhoods black-male/white-female and white-male/black-female couples remain in and migrate to. Therefore, assessing the neighborhood

migration patterns of both black-white race/gender pairings might provide insight on how race and gender interact to shape preferences of neighborhood racial composition and how those preferences translate to residential mobility and attainment outcomes.

I address these issues in this chapter by utilizing multilevel data drawn from almost a quarter-century of data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) linked to neighborhood and metropolitan data from multiple population censuses to assess how disparate race and gender pairings of black-white couples interact to shape their residential mobility and attainment into neighborhoods of varying ethnoracial composition. In particular, I investigate the propensity of black-male/white-female and white-male/black-female couples to move out of and into neighborhoods defined respectively by their levels of non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks, and overall ethnoracial diversity.

#### 4.2 BACKGROUND AND THEORY

Household considerations of what is preferable in a neighborhood is a subjective feature unique to each household, generally consisting of a constellation of individual preferences. Out of the collection of neighborhood features households' consider preferable, past research has shown the racial and ethnic composition of a neighborhood is a salient factor. This is particularly important given preferences for neighborhoods of certain racial and ethnic composition diverge by the racial and ethnic status of households (Farley, Shuman, Bianchi, Colasanto, & Hatchett, 1978) and this divergence contributes to broader patterns of ethnoracial stratification. Case in point, when whites are asked to rank neighborhoods by "attractiveness" they frequently select neighborhoods with the highest shares of whites and lowest shares of blacks as most attractive (Charles, 2001). These findings are mirrored in research documenting increasing shares of blacks are associated with a higher likelihood of whites migrating out of their neighborhoods (Crowder & South, 2008). Not only are white households sensitive to increasing shares of blacks, they

seem to avoid ethnoracially diverse neighborhoods when they move, ending up in neighborhoods with high white shares (Crowder et al., 2012). Conversely, blacks are more likely to prefer neighborhoods with more balanced levels of racial and ethnic diversity (Krysan & Farley, 2002). Although diverse neighborhoods are increasing in number (Logan & Zhang, 2011), they are still relatively uncommon; thus, blacks frequently reside in neighborhoods that fail to reflect their stated preferences. Moreover, in-depth interview research conducted by Krysan and Farley (2002) found blacks are willing to move into predominantly white neighborhoods, but avoid doing so out of fears of white hostility. Some of the fears black respondents provided included, “being ignored, harassed, discriminated against, and having crosses burned on their lawns or damage done to their property.”

While past research has extensively documented black and white preferences for neighborhoods of certain ethnoracial compositions, no research to date has investigated how black-white couples rank neighborhoods of various racial compositions by attractiveness, and their reasons for doing so. Despite this gap in the literature, there exists some qualitative studies that point to diverse neighborhoods as highly preferable among this population for a multitude of reasons (Moran, 2001). For example, Romano (2003:258) discovered in a series of qualitative interviews of black-white couples that many stated they chose to reside in a diverse neighborhood “because if they had lived in a ‘predominantly white suburban community’ their children would not have enough opportunities to interact with blacks.” Furthermore, Dalmage’s (2000) in-depth interviews of black-white couples highlight these couples may simply feel more comfortable in diverse neighborhoods where their unique status is less conspicuous. Dalmage (2000) also noted some black-white couples preferred ethnoracially diverse neighborhoods to

avoid the discrimination they encountered in predominately white neighborhoods—similar to what monoracial black households have noted for avoiding white spaces.

Past research on black-white couples' relationship with the housing market emphasizes the discrimination they encounter may be unique because their racial status threatens the black/white color line (Romano, 2001). For example, using data from roughly 750 instances of housing discrimination in the state of Ohio verified by civil rights investigators following government mandated guidelines, Roscigno and colleagues (2009) discovered occasions of housing discrimination that were strictly motivated by the fact a couple had chosen to cross the color line and enter into a black-white relationship. Therefore, by crossing the color line, black-white couples test strongly defended racial boundaries that can lead them to confront distinct forms of interpersonal racism.

One apparent gap in these prior studies on the residential stratification of black-white couples is that they amalgamate these couples into a homogeneous group, failing to assess their heterogeneous race/gender composition. It is critical to disaggregate black-white couples into their respective race/gender pairings given previous research pointing out black-white couples with black male partners typically face a much harsher social reception than their counterparts with white male partners. In some instances the invidious relationship black-white couples with black male partners have with their social milieu might shape their preferences for neighborhoods of certain ethnoracial compositions, potentially leading to disparate residential mobility patterns.

Currently, only one study assesses the race and gender combinations of black-white couples and their neighborhood attainment. In their cross-sectional analysis using 2000 U.S. Census data, Wright, Holloway, and Ellis (2013) found the presence of white male partners in

black-white couples did not reduce the likelihood a couple would live in a less diverse neighborhood, but did increase the likelihood they would reside in neighborhoods with higher percentages of whites and lower percentages of blacks compared to black-white couples with black male partners. This study provides much needed knowledge on the role of race and gender in neighborhood attainment, but the cross-sectional data utilized in their study make it impossible to assess the relative roles of the racial characteristics and human capital resources of these couples in shaping their residential mobility and attainment patterns.

Currently, no data exists capturing various racial and ethnic groups' stated preferences for neighborhoods with specific ethnoracial compositions and their subsequent residential mobility patterns. However, the ability to assess preferences for neighborhoods of various racial compositions is enhanced—however indirect—through a prospective analysis which investigates the extent to which black-white couples with black or white male partners are more likely to move into, and/or remain in, neighborhoods of varying ethnoracial composition compared to monoracial couples. This analytic strategy is buttressed by research showing gender is associated with residential mobility and attainment outcomes. For instance, prior studies demonstrate the likelihood of conducting a residential move is more strongly associated with the desires of men than the desires of their female partners (Coulter et al., 2012); and, other studies observe when couples do move, women's future employment status is negatively impacted (Boyle, Feng, & Gayle, 2009; Cooke, Boyle, Couch, & Feijten, 2009). Hence, my first hypothesis is informed by past studies on gendered power disparities within couples and the literature on racial differences in preferences for neighborhoods of certain ethnoracial compositions; *Hypothesis 1*:

- a. black-white couples with black male partners will have a *higher* likelihood of out-mobility as the percentage white increases in their neighborhoods as compared to

- white couples; and
- b. black-white couples with white male partners will have a *similar* likelihood of out-mobility as white couples as the percentage white, percentage black, and diversity increases in their neighborhoods; and
  - c. black-white couples with black male partners will have a *lower* likelihood of out-mobility as the percentage black or diversity increases in their neighborhoods as compared to white couples; and
  - d. mobile black-white couples with black male partners will have a *higher* percentage black and diversity in their destination neighborhoods as compared to white couples; and
  - e. mobile black-white couples with white male partners will have a *similar* percentage white, percentage black, and diversity in their destination neighborhoods as compared to white couples.

Besides preferences being posited as shaping residential mobility and attainment outcomes, scholars have asserted racial group differences in the ability to actualize neighborhood preferences are strongly determined by racial differences in economic resources. Early theories of residential attainment focused on an ecological framework that asserted racial and ethnic groups were sorted into neighborhoods matching their socioeconomic resources and stage in the life course (Park et al., 1925). Thus, racial and ethnic groups attempted to convert enhanced social and economic resources into the neighborhoods they found *most desirable* (Logan & Alba, 1993; South & Crowder, 1997). This broad theory of human capital for residential sorting was further specialized by scholars arguing racial and ethnic minorities utilized their economic resources to gain entrance into white neighborhoods, becoming spatially assimilated with the

dominant majority group in the U.S. (Massey & Mullan, 1984). However, the minimal research on black-white residential preferences points to the fact these couples might not find neighborhoods with pronounced shares of whites desirable since some whites are known to have extreme antipathy towards black-white couples—especially those with black male partners.

Given this theoretical guidance, and the aforementioned findings on gendered power disparities within couples favoring the desires of the male partner, I posit human capital resources of both race/gender combinations of black-white couples will be utilized to attain neighborhoods more closely matching the race of the male partner. Based on this logic,

*Hypothesis 2* asserts:

- a. the positive effect of income for mobile black-white couples with black male partners on the percentage white in their destination neighborhoods will be *weaker* than for white-white couples; and
- b. the positive effect of income for mobile black-white couples with black male partners on the percentage black and diversity in their destination neighborhoods will be *stronger* than for white-white couples; and
- c. the effect of income for mobile black-white couples with white male partners on the percentage white, percentage black and diversity in their destination neighborhoods will be *similar* to that for white-white couples.

#### 4.3 DATA AND METHODS

To test these hypotheses, I utilize the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) linked with neighborhood- and metropolitan-level data gathered from the U.S. Census. Beginning in 1968, the PSID started with roughly 5,000 U.S. families (approximately 18,000 individuals) interviewed annually between 1968 and 1997 and every two years thereafter. New families have been added to the panel as children and other members of original panel families have split off to

form their own households. The PSID is well-suited for my 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 mobility and attainment. 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, I focus on the panel years between 1985 and 2013. Due to my interest in comparing mixed-race couples to monoracial couples, I focus only on those householders with a spouse or a long-term cohabitating partner present at both the beginning and the end of an observation period (the time between sequential interviews).<sup>24</sup> Lastly, given my theoretical interest in the effects of the broader metropolitan context on residential outcomes, I focus on couples living in a census-defined metropolitan area at both the beginning and the end of an observation period.<sup>25</sup>

The PSID's restricted-access Geospatial Match Files allows me to identify the residential location of individual PSID respondents at each interview and attach information about the level of poverty in their neighborhoods as well as features of the broader metropolitan area. I follow much of the prior work in this area (e.g., Firebaugh & Farrell, 2015; Quillian, 2002) by using census tracts as a proxy for neighborhoods. While census tracts represent imperfect operationalizations of neighborhoods (Lee et al., 2008), they are summarized for a battery of theoretically-relevant measures, and approximate the typical conception of a neighborhood

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<sup>24</sup> Individuals are included in the analysis only during observation periods in which they are a member of a couple. Members of couples that dissolve during the study period are dropped from the analysis for remaining years, returning only if they form another union. Individuals are only included in the analysis for years in which they completed a PSID interview. In rare cases in which a respondent left the sample and then returned at a later date, observations for both periods are included in the analysis. Moreover, due to the study sample consisting solely of couples the results presented here can only be extrapolated to assess stratification among couples.

<sup>25</sup> My sample consists of individuals making both inter- and inter-metropolitan moves.

(Jargowsky, 1997; White, 1987). Potential problems associated with changes in tract boundaries across decennial censuses are overcome by my use of the Neighborhood Change Database (NCDB) ([www.geolytics.com/USCensus,Neighborhood-Change-Database-1970-2000,Products.asp](http://www.geolytics.com/USCensus,Neighborhood-Change-Database-1970-2000,Products.asp)), which normalizes census tract data between 1980 and 2010 to 2010 census boundaries. I utilize the NCDB's data on tracts from the 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010 censuses, and use linear interpolation/extrapolation (cf. Bruch, 2014) to estimate values for all tract and metropolitan characteristics in non-census years.

#### 4.3.1 SAMPLE SELECTION

I take advantage of the longitudinal structure 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. My sample for the analysis consists of 57,480 couple-period observations for mixed-race and monoracial couples. I include black-white mixed-race couples consisting of two opposite-sex racial combinations: couples that consist of white males and black females (N = 188), and couples composed of black males and white females (N = 543). I compare these two black-white couple categories to two types of monoracial couples: those in which both members are white (hereafter *white-white*, N = 42,764), and those in which both partners are black (hereafter *black-black*, N = 13,985).

#### 4.3.2 DEPENDENT VARIABLES

I treat inter-neighborhood residential mobility as a two-stage process involving the decision to move and then the choice of destination (Massey et al., 1994). Therefore, the first dependent variable in my 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 second stage of my analysis assessing the choice of destination for mobile PSID couples consists of three dependent

variables: 1) the percentage of the population that is non-Hispanic white in the destination neighborhood; 2) the percentage of the population that is non-Hispanic black in the destination neighborhood; and, 3) following past research on the topic (Wright et al., 2011), I measure racial and ethnic diversity in the destination neighborhood using a standard entropy score (cf. Iceland, 2004) expressed as follows:

$$E_i = \sum_{r=1}^r (P_{ri}) \ln[1/P_{ri}]$$

where  $P_{ri}$  is a specific racial/ethnic group's<sup>26</sup> proportion of the population in tract  $i$ . For each tract, the value of  $E_i$  will range from 0, indicating complete population homogeneity, to  $\log 4$  (or 1.386), indicating that all racial/ethnic groups are represented in the tract in equal proportions. A maximum entropy score happens when all groups have equal representation within a tract; with four groups, each would contribute 25 % to the tract's total population.

#### 4.3.3 INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

To better isolate couple category differences in residential mobility I control for a number of theoretically relevant sociodemographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Key characteristics include a predictor for age (in years) of the household head to measure the life-cycle stage. The number of children in the home under the age of 18 is captured by a continuous predictor. I also include a measure for household crowding, indicated 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. I measure the financial resources of couples by their total family taxable income, measured in thousands of constant 2010 dollars. I control for education by measuring the number of

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<sup>26</sup> The racial groups used to compose the entropy score are white, black, Latino, and other.

completed school years of the household head. Additionally, I include a measure for the employment status of the household head, coded as 1 for those employed at least part time, and homeownership, coded as 1 for those residing in an owner-occupied housing unit.

Besides socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics of individuals and households, contextual features of neighborhoods and metropolitan areas have been shown to influence neighborhood outcomes (Crowder & South, 2005; South & Crowder, 1997). There is evidence neighborhoods of similar racial and ethnic compositions tend to spatially cluster (Massey & Denton, 1993), which, in tandem with the distance-dependence of migration (Long, 1988), increases the likelihood of mobility into neighborhoods with similar racial and ethnic compositions. Because to this spatial clustering, I control for the racial and ethnic composition of neighborhoods at the origin when measuring the racial and ethnic composition of destinations of mobile couples in my analysis. For instance, when estimating the percentage of non-Hispanic whites in the destination neighborhoods of mobile couples I include a measure of non-Hispanic whites at origin. This same strategy is utilized for my other two dependent variables. In conjunction with these neighborhood-level predictors, I include parallel measures of racial and ethnic composition at the metropolitan-level. Given couple category variation in mobility between neighborhoods characterized by their racial and ethnic composition is partially determined by their metropolitan opportunity structures, I include predictors of the metropolitan-level percentage of non-Hispanic whites, the metropolitan-level percentage of non-Hispanic blacks, and the metropolitan-level entropy score which summarizes the relative concentrations of white, black, Latino, and other populations in the metropolitan area as a whole.

Characteristics in the analysis are measured at the beginning of the observation period and are considered time-varying (i.e., level-1 in my multilevel framework). However, one

exception is related to the timing of measurement. For those respondents that relocate to a new tract between a mobility interval, their metropolitan-level characteristics refer to their metropolitan destinations because those attributes shape the context of their residential options. Additionally, I include an indicator for the year of observation to account for trends in the racial and ethnic composition of neighborhoods and mobility, and a control variable for the length of the migration interval (1 or 2 years) is included to account for the PSID's switch to a biennial survey in 1997.

#### 4.3.4 ANALYTIC STRATEGY

Given the hierarchical nature of the data, I use a multilevel modeling design<sup>27</sup> in which couple-period observations are nested within individual householders and householders are nested within metropolitan areas.<sup>28</sup> For the first stage of my analysis I estimate three-level random-intercepts logistic regression models predicting the log-odds of neighborhood out-migration as a function of individual, neighborhood, and metropolitan characteristics. These models allow out-migration to vary across respondents and metropolitan areas. My central focus in these models is in the differential effect of neighborhood percentage non-Hispanic white, neighborhood percentage non-Hispanic black, and neighborhood diversity (entropy), respectively, on the likelihood of out-mobility across various couple categories.

In the second stage of my analysis, I estimate the percentage non-Hispanic white, percentage non-Hispanic black, and racial and ethnic diversity (entropy) of movers' destination neighborhoods as a function of individual, neighborhood, and metropolitan characteristics using three-level random-intercepts linear regression models. Because models in the second stage of

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<sup>27</sup> Models are estimated using the *xt* suite commands in Stata 13 (StataCorp, 2013).

<sup>28</sup> Too little clustering of PSID respondents is present within census tracts to justify the analysis of an additional level of hierarchy.

the analysis are based only on inter-tract movers, I include a Heckman correction (inverse Mills ratio) for the selection of householders into the mover category. In my application of the Heckman procedure, the “selection” equation includes all of the regressors in the out-mobility models (Heckman, 1979), while the “substantive” equation (predicting either neighborhood percentage non-Hispanic white, neighborhood non-Hispanic black, or neighborhood diversity) omits those variables assumed to affect the decision to move but not the characteristics of destinations.

#### 4.4 RESULTS

Figure 4.1 presents the mean neighborhood percentage white, percentage black, and entropy for black-white couples with black or white male partners and monoracial black-black and white-white couples across all observation periods in my analysis. Figure 4.1 highlights both types of black-white couples are typically exposed to more whites in their neighborhoods than are black-black couples, but markedly less whites than white-white couples. Black-white couples with black male partners have roughly similar levels of whites in their neighborhoods (56.86%) compared to their counterparts with white male partners (56.20%). Following past studies, white-white couples evince extremely low percentages of blacks in their neighborhoods (5.66%), while the average black-black couple has roughly 10 times more blacks in their neighborhoods (55.27%). Again, black-white couples with black or white male partners emerge with similar levels of exposure to blacks in their neighborhoods with 29.69% and 30.23%, respectively. In terms of neighborhood entropy, black-white couples with black male partners (0.71) and those with white male partners (0.75) possess the highest levels of diversity in their neighborhoods, followed by black-black couples, with white-white couples demonstrating the lowest exposure to

ethnoracial diversity.<sup>29</sup>

Table 4.1 provides means and standard deviations of the neighborhood outcomes utilized in my analysis.<sup>30</sup> Of particular interest in Table 4.1 are the statistics for couples changing tracts between interviews. Out of all couples, black-white couples with black male partners possess the highest likelihood of changing tracts between interviews (26%), followed by black-white couples with white male partners (20%) and black-black couples (18%), with white-white couples demonstrating the lowest likelihood of residential mobility (14%).

#### 4.4.1 PATTERNS OF RESIDENTIAL OUT-MOBILITY

Even though group differences in neighborhood racial composition between black-white couples with black or white male partners are not substantively different, each type of black-white couple may follow variant residential out-mobility and destination patterns leading them to similar neighborhood racial compositions. Thus, my focus in the models included in Table 4.2 is on the differential effect of neighborhood percentage white, neighborhood percentage black, and neighborhood entropy, respectively, on the likelihood of out-mobility across various couples. To investigate these patterns I utilize three-level random-intercepts logistic regression models predicting the log-odds of leaving the neighborhood of origin between sequential PSID interviews.

In Model 1 I utilize product terms which allow me to examine the influence of larger white shares at the neighborhood of origin on residential out-mobility for all couples in my analysis. For white-white couples, larger shares of whites at the neighborhood-level is negative

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<sup>29</sup> Supplemental analysis (not shown) reveals basic group differences in neighborhood racial composition (percent white, percent black, and entropy) between black-white couples with black male partners and black-white couples with white male partners are not statistically significantly different from each other.

<sup>30</sup> Appendix A1 provides descriptive statistics for individual, household, and contextual characteristics utilized in my analysis of the residential mobility and attainment patterns of mixed-race and mono-racial couples.

and significant ( $b = -.0218, p < .001$ ), signifying that white-white couples are less likely to migrate when their neighborhoods have high concentrations of whites. Similar to prior research, black-black couples emerge with a positive and significant coefficient ( $b = .0241, p < .001$ ), thus, a one standard deviation increase in the percentage of whites is associated with 7% [ $e^{(-.0218+.0241)*29.479} = 1.070$ ] increase in the odds of changing tracts between interviews. As indicated by the non-significant coefficient for the interaction between black-white couples with white male partners and neighborhood percent white, I fail to reject the null hypothesis that black-white couples with white male partners are significantly different from white-white couples. This suggests the effect of larger concentrations of whites for both of these groups is approximately equal, giving tentative support to Hypothesis 1b. Conversely, the effect of higher shares of whites at the neighborhood-level is notably strongest for black-white couples with black male partners, where a one standard deviation increase in the share of whites is associated with a 41% [ $e^{(-.0218+.0335)*29.479} = 1.411$ ] increase in the odds of out-mobility as compared to white-white couples, providing initial support for Hypothesis 1a.

Model 2 of Table 4.2 includes control variables known to influence residential out-mobility, allowing me to further isolate the net association between couple status, percentage white at the neighborhood-level and out-mobility. Most important for my purposes is the assessment of the product terms between couples and the percentage white in the neighborhood at origin. With the inclusion of the control variables the coefficient for neighborhood percentage white—representing the effect of higher white shares on white-white out-mobility—slightly attenuates from Model 1 to Model 2 ( $b = -.0085, p < .001$ ). Alternately, black-black couples evince a slightly more pronounced likelihood of out-mobility from Model 1 to Model 2, with a one standard deviation increase in the percentage of whites is related to a 9% [ $e^{(-.0085+.0115)*29.479}$ ]

= 1.092] increase in the odds of out-mobility. Similar to Model 1, the product term between black-white couples with white male partners and the neighborhood percentage white fails to reach statistical significance, giving support to Hypothesis 1b. In contrast, and confirming Hypothesis 1a, the product term for black-white couples with black male partners and neighborhood percentage white remains positive and significant, but the coefficient size slightly lessens from the previous model ( $b = -.0085 + .0115 = .0030, p < .001$ ).

To gain further insight into the product terms presented in Model 2, Panel A of Figure 4.2 presents the predicted probability of out-mobility by each type of couple in my analysis by the percentage white at the neighborhood-level (restricted to values within the 10<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile), while holding the remaining covariates at their means. Figure 4.2 highlights the probability of out-mobility for white-white couples is low no matter the concentration of whites in their neighborhoods. In contrast, black-black couples display a positive probability of out-mobility as their neighborhoods contain higher concentrations of whites. Consistent with Hypothesis 1b, black-white couples with white male partners emerge with the a similar negative slope as white-white couples, however, the probability of out-mobility for black-white couples with white male partners is higher across all points of their slope. In the case of black-white couples with black male partners, their positive slope supports Hypothesis 1a. Hence, black-white couples with a black male partners become increasingly likely to migrate as their neighborhoods contain higher concentrations of whites.

Returning to Table 4.2, Model 3 adds product terms allowing me to analyze the association between the level of percentage black in the origin neighborhood of couples on their likelihood of changing tracts between interviews. Consistent with past literature on whites fleeing neighborhoods with high black shares (Crowder & South, 2008), white-white couples

demonstrate a positive and significant coefficient for out-mobility with larger shares of blacks in their neighborhoods ( $b = .0221, p < .001$ ). Conversely, black-black couples are less likely to change tracts between interviews as compared to white-white couples when their neighborhoods consist of large shares of members of their own race ( $b = .0221 - .0264 = -.0043, p < .001$ ). The negative and significant coefficient for black-white couples with white male partners ( $b = .0221 - .0233 = -.0012, p < .05$ ) demonstrates larger shares of blacks at the neighborhood-level is associated with a lower likelihood of out-mobility for this group. However, while the coefficient for these couples is negative, its small size provides initial support for Hypothesis 1b. Black-white couples with black male partners evince the most acute negative association between larger black concentrations within their neighborhoods and residential out-mobility; hence, a one standard deviation increase in the percentage of blacks within their neighborhoods is related to a 35% [ $e^{((.0021 - .0373) * 28.118)} = .6522$ ] decrease in the odds of out-mobility for these couples, signaling tentative support for Hypothesis 1c.

Model 4 of Table 4.2 includes control variables prior research has identified as influencing residential out-mobility. Net of these control variables, the product terms between couples and the percentage black at the neighborhood-level partially change from Model 3. For instance, white-white couples still reveal a positive and significant ( $b = .0087, p < .001$ ) association between the percentage of blacks in their origin neighborhoods and changing tracts between interviews, but now their coefficient is attenuated. For black-white couples with white male partners their coefficient remains negative but fails to reach statistical significance; therefore, it appears the effect of the percentage neighborhood black on the out-mobility for black-white couples with white partners is approximately similar to white-white couples, signaling support for Hypothesis 1b. The effect of higher levels of blacks at the neighborhood-

level and residential out-mobility for black-white couples with black male partners remains significant, yet is slightly reduced from Model 3. Now a one standard deviation increase in the percentages of blacks within their neighborhoods is related to a 19% [ $e^{((.0087-.0161)*28.118)} = .8121$ ] decrease in the odds of out-mobility, lending support for Hypothesis 1c.

Panel B of Figure 4.2 displays the predicted probability of out-mobility by each type of couple and percentage black at the neighborhood-level (restricted to values within the 10<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile), while holding the remaining covariates at their mean values. White-white couples demonstrate a sharply positive slope of out-mobility with higher concentrations of blacks in their neighborhoods. In the case of black-black couples, their negative slope highlights their decreasing residential mobility with higher levels of percentage black within their neighborhoods. In terms of black-white couples with white male partners, they emerge with a higher probability of out-mobility at all points of their distribution than white-white couples and a slightly negative slope. Yet, overall, across all points of their distribution black-white couples with white male partners are relatively unresponsive to larger shares of blacks in their neighborhoods. Potentially signaling black-white couples with white male partners are comfortable residing in neighborhoods with substantial shares of blacks. Black-white couples with black male partners, however, display the sharpest negative slope with larger concentrations of blacks.

Model 5 of Table 4.2 includes control variables and product terms for each type of couple and neighborhood diversity (entropy). This approach allows me to assess whether the association between neighborhood entropy and out-mobility varies across couples. White-white couples emerge notably with the highest likelihood of out-mobility with larger concentrations of neighborhood diversity, where a one standard deviation increase in diversity is related to a 57%

$[e^{((1.4900 \cdot .3029)} = 1.5703]$  increase in the odds of out-mobility. Whereas, black-black couples with the same one standard deviation increase in diversity are significantly associated with a markedly lower likelihood in the odds of out-mobility at 11%  $[e^{((1.4900 - 1.1379) \cdot .3029)} = 1.1125]$ . Particularly salient is the fact the coefficients for the product terms between both types of black-white couples and neighborhood diversity fail to be statistically different from white-white couples.

In the final model of Table 4.2, Model 6 evinces that with the inclusion of control variables there is some attenuation of the product terms between couples and neighborhood diversity. For example, white-white couples now exhibit an 18%  $[e^{((.5704 \cdot .3029)} = 1.1885]$  increase in the odds of out-mobility with a one standard deviation increase in diversity, while a similar increase in neighborhood diversity for black-black couples is only associated with a 4%  $[e^{((.5704 - .4262) \cdot .3029)} = 1.0446]$  increase in the odds of out-mobility. Despite the inclusion of socioeconomic and sociodemographic controls in Model 6, the product terms for both types of black-white couples remain statistically non-significant. Indicating the effects of neighborhood diversity on the out-mobility behavior for both types of black-white couples appear similar to white-white couples, providing support for Hypothesis 1b but not 1a.

Lastly, Panel C of Figure 4.2 illustrates the predicted probability of out-mobility by each type of couple and neighborhood diversity (restricted to values within the 10<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile), while holding the remaining covariates at their mean values. All couples in the analysis demonstrate an increasing probability of out-mobility associated with higher levels of diversity in their neighborhoods. White-white couples have the lowest intercept of out-mobility out of all couples and also have the shortest range of entropy values given they typically reside in the lowest diversity places. Black-black couples display a slightly positive slope for out-mobility across their entire distribution. Black-white couples with white male partners emerge with the

strongest positive slope out of all couples. Signifying the probability these couples change tracts between interviews is higher in neighborhoods with substantial diversity, providing support for Hypothesis 1b. Black-white couples with black male partners display the highest probability of out-mobility out of all couples in the analysis, a finding counter to the theoretical expectation of Hypothesis 1c.

#### 4.4.2 NEIGHBORHOOD RACIAL COMPOSITION FOR MOBILE COUPLES

Extant theories of residential mobility and attainment highlight the importance of residential out-mobility in explaining group differences in residential location, but also point to the selection of destinations as central in understanding broader patterns of ethnoracial stratification. Thus, Table 4.3 displays results from a three-level random-intercepts linear regression analysis investigating destination neighborhood percentage white, neighborhood percentage black, and neighborhood diversity (entropy), respectively, for the couples in my analysis. Additionally, in Table 4.3 I account for the non-random selection of individuals into the mover category through a Heckman correction strategy (Heckman, 1979).<sup>31</sup>

In Model 1 of Table 4.3, I observe significant couple differences in the percentage white in their destination neighborhoods, net of controls. For instance, black-black couples have the lowest shares of whites in their destination neighborhoods ( $b = -25.487, p < .001$ ). Black-white couples with white male partners exhibit the highest concentrations of whites in their destination tracts ( $b = -14.5372, p < .001$ ) out of all couples with a black partner. Confirming Hypothesis 1d, black-white couples with black male partners ( $b = -16.7257, p < .001$ ) reside in

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<sup>31</sup> In my application of the Heckman procedure, the “selection” equation includes all of the regressors in the out-mobility models (Model 2, 3, or 4 of Table 4.2), while the “substantive” equation (predicting neighborhood percentage white, neighborhood percentage black, or neighborhood diversity (entropy)) omits those variables assumed to affect the decision to move but not the characteristics of destinations.

neighborhoods with significantly lower concentrations of whites as compared to white-white couples.

Model 2 of Table 4.3 tests the human capital theory that economic resources assist couples in actualizing their neighborhood racial composition preferences. The effect of economic resources—as measured by total family income—on increasing shares of whites in the destination neighborhoods of white-white couples is positive and significant ( $b = .2333, p < .001$ ). Black-black couples also evince a positive and significant ( $b = .2333 + .0718 = .3051, p < .001$ ) effect of economic resources on the shares of whites in their destination neighborhoods. The effect of income on the percentage of whites in the destination neighborhoods of black-white couples with white male partners fails to reach statistical significance, supporting Hypothesis 2c. A similar effect is witnessed for black-white couples with black male partners, for whom the effect of income on the percentage of whites in their destination neighborhoods is statistically non-significant from whites.

To add further clarity concerning the role of economic resources on the concentration of whites in the neighborhoods couples migrate to, Panel A of Figure 4.3 illustrates the predicted percentage of neighborhood white by couples and family income (restricted to values within the 10<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile), while holding the remaining covariates at their mean values. Immediately apparent is the presence of high concentrations of whites in the destination neighborhoods of white-white couples, no matter their level of income. Although high earning white-white couples are associated with higher concentrations of whites in their destination neighborhoods, even the lowest earning white-white couples possess startlingly similar concentrations of whites. Standing in contrast to that pattern are black-black couples who evince a stronger positive association between their level of income and the amount of whites in the

neighborhoods they migrate to, where only the highest earning couples can actualize their preferences for neighborhoods with more balanced shares of whites. Black-white couples with white male partners and those with black male partners demonstrate a positive association between income and the concentrations of whites in the neighborhoods they migrate to. Also of note, is that the slopes of both of these types of couples fall roughly between black-black and white-white couples.

Model 3 of Table 4.3 assess the percentage black in the destination neighborhoods of the couples in my analysis, net of controls. Following past research on the residential attainment of blacks, black-black couples evince the highest concentration of blacks in their destination neighborhoods ( $b = 23.1599, p < .001$ ) relative to white-white couples. Tentatively confirming Hypothesis 1d, black-white couples with black-male partners evince slightly higher percentages of blacks in their destination neighborhoods ( $b = 13.2822, p < .001$ ) than black-white couples with white partners ( $b = 10.0427, p < .001$ ) in comparison to white-white couples.

In Model 4 of Table 4.3 I assess how the effect of family income varies for couples in their attainment of neighborhoods defined by their concentrations of blacks. The effect of income on the level of blacks white-white couples are exposed to in their designation neighborhoods is null, meaning white-white couples—no matter their income level—have minimal black shares in the neighborhoods they migrate to. Given black households state preferences for neighborhoods with more balanced representations of black and non-black racial and ethnic groups (Charles, 2003), the fact that enhanced human capital resources in the form of family income are associated with fewer shares of blacks in their destination neighborhoods is not surprising ( $b = -.0029 - .0865 = -.0894, p < .001$ ). Providing support for Hypothesis 2c, the effect of income on the level of blacks in the destination neighborhoods of black-white couples with white male

partners is not significantly different than white-white couples. Going counter to Hypothesis 2b, black-white couples with black male partners tend to utilize their economic resources to buy their way into neighborhoods with lower shares of blacks ( $b = -.0029 - .0665 = -.0694, p < .05$ ), an unexpected finding given theory on the race of the male partner being a strong determinant of the racial composition of destinations.

Panel B of Figure 4.3 displays the predicted percentage of neighborhood black by couples and family income (restricted to values within the 10<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile), while holding the remaining covariates at their means. Confirming the findings of Model 4 of Table 4.3, Panel B illustrates that white-white couples—no matter their income—have markedly low levels of blacks in their destination neighborhoods. Additionally, only the highest earning black-black couples seem to be associated with lower concentrations of members of their race, congruent with previous research on their stated preferences. Similarly black-white couples with black male partners tend to purchase their way into neighborhoods with lower shares of blacks. Black-white couples with white male partners demonstrate a slightly negative slope, but emerge with a relatively stable percentage of blacks in their destination neighborhoods at all points along their income distribution.

Model 5 of Table 4.3 investigates couple differences in the level of neighborhood diversity (entropy) for mobile couples. Net of controls, black-black couples demonstrate a positive and significant ( $b = .0794, p < .001$ ) association with diversity in their destination neighborhoods compared to white-white couples, potentially signaling their preferences for meaningful levels of diversity. Couple differences are most pronounced for black-white couples with black male partners, emerging with a positive and significant ( $b = .0977, p < .001$ ) association with neighborhood diversity relative to white-white couples, aligning with

Hypothesis 1d. Conversely, black-white couples with white male partners are not statistically different than white-white couples in the level of diversity in the neighborhoods they migrate to, aligning them with Hypothesis 1e.

In Model 6, I include product terms to evaluate the degree to which the effect of economic resources, as measured by total family income, for couples is associated with the level of diversity in their destination neighborhoods. For white-white couples the effect of income on destination neighborhood diversity is negative and significant ( $b = -.0001, p < .001$ ), a finding consistent with past research showing whites attempt to avoid non-white populations when migrating (Crowder et al., 2012). Standing in contrast, and inline with stated preferences for diversity, black-black couples tend to use enhanced economic resources to purchase their way into neighborhoods with greater racial and ethnic diversity ( $b = .1685 + .0007 = .1692, p < .001$ ). Moreover, and most central to my purposes, Hypothesis 2c is confirmed by the effect of income on neighborhood diversity for black-white couples white male partners failing to reach statistical significance. Meaning the effect of income for this type of couple appears similar to white-white couples. A similar effect of income is witnessed for black-white couples with black male partners who emerge with a non-significant product term.

Panel C of Figure 4.3 highlights the predicted percentage of neighborhood diversity by couples and family income (restricted to values within the 10<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile), while holding the remaining covariates at their means. Similar to Panel B, high income white-white couples are associated with neighborhoods that possess relatively low levels of racial and ethnic diversity. Also clear in Panel C of Figure 4.3 is the general clustering of intercepts and slopes of those couples with a black partner. However, among this clustering there are differences in the directions of the slopes. Black-black couples show a positive slope, again potentially signaling a

preference for neighborhood diversity (Clark, 2007). And both types of black-white couples exhibit a negative association between increased economic resources and neighborhood diversity. However, given their relatively high intercept values and weakly negative slopes, these couples still display relatively high levels of diversity across their income distributions as compared to white-white couples.

#### 4.5 CONCLUSION

The role of racial residential preferences in creating and maintaining systems of residential stratification between blacks and whites has been topic of abundant research. This past research has consistently observed failures to racially integrate neighborhoods can be partially attributed to blacks' fears of entering into predominantly white spaces, and white avoidance of black neighbors. Missed by this previous research on racial residential preferences are the increasing numbers of mixed-race couples, especially black-white couples within the U.S. With the inclusion of black-white couples into the study of these residential processes the role of gender is accentuated, allowing us to investigate whether the race of the male partner in a black-white couple is associated with the racial composition of the neighborhoods these couples remain in and migrate to. Thus, in this chapter, I investigated this gap by combining longitudinal data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics linked to neighborhood- and metropolitan-level data compiled from four censuses to assess the propensity of black-male/white-female and white-male/black-female couples' mobility out of and into neighborhoods defined respectively by their levels of whites, blacks, and overall ethnoracial diversity.

My findings show race and gender matter in the residential mobility and attainment of black-white couples with either black or white male partners. Returning to Figure 4.2, black-white couples with black male partners demonstrate a heightened probability of leaving neighborhoods with large concentrations of whites. Potentially, this pattern represents a lack of

comfort these couples feel in neighborhoods where some individuals might stand in strong opposition to their relationships. In stark contrast, black-white couples with white male partners follow the opposite pattern. These couples show a decreasing probability of exiting neighborhoods with large shares of whites, which highlights how black-white couples with white male partners might encounter less discrimination from the occupants of their neighborhoods than their counterparts with black male partners. Overall, these findings are important for what they say concerning the continuing impact of the black/white color line. The fact these two different black-white couple pairings evince drastically different out-mobility responses to increasing shares of whites points to a continued antipathy towards black men in general and those in relationships with white women in particular. This is echoed by the finding black-white couples with black male partners are likely to move to neighborhoods with high ethnoracial diversity where their race/couple status is least threatening to the color line.

Also of importance is the relatively flat slope in Panel B of Figure 4.2 predicting the probability of out-mobility for black-white couples with white male partners when faced with higher shares of blacks in their neighborhoods. This out-mobility pattern might suggest these couples receive a level of acceptance in their neighborhoods that their counterparts with black male partners fail to experience in neighborhoods with substantial shares of whites. This interpretation fits with previous studies which highlight black neighborhoods have served as a refuge for black-white couples, where residents in these neighborhoods typically being more accepting of black-white pairings than residents of predominantly white areas (Dalmage, 2000; Romano, 2001).

Although this study gives important insight on the residential mobility and attainment of these couples, there are improvements to be had in future research. For example, future studies

assessing the role of gender, race, and neighborhood attainment would be greatly served by data that provide measures of racial residential preferences of couples, while also tracking their subsequent residential mobility behavior. Moreover, future research might also focus on race and gender beyond the black-white case. Although other scholars have provided some foundational insight on other types of mixed-race couple race/gender pairings, there is room to expand on their findings (Wright et al., 2013). Scholars might utilize longitudinal survey instruments to analyze the residential mobility and attainment of white-Asian race/gender pairings. This focus would illuminate if the “most” socially acceptable mixed-race couple type in the U.S. experiences disadvantaged treatment in the housing market when they include a Asian-male partner. Hence, expanding future studies in these directions would surely enhance our understanding on how increasing numbers of ethnoracially diverse households function within long established systems of residential stratification, while also informing our understanding of broader racial and ethnic group relations.

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Table 4.1 Neighborhood Outcomes for the Analyses of Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples  
 Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2013

	White-white		Black-white white male		Black-white black male		Black-black	
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
% white at origin	85.68	15.57	56.20	27.13	56.86	28.56	35.79	29.98
% white at destination	85.27	15.75	56.19	27.69	54.61	29.60	35.43	29.88
% black at origin	5.66	10.14	30.43	28.35	29.69	28.93	55.27	32.10
% black at destination	5.73	10.09	29.92	28.51	31.33	30.11	55.24	32.06
Entropy at origin	0.43	0.28	0.75	0.26	0.71	0.31	0.62	0.31
Entropy at destination	0.44	0.29	0.75	0.25	0.71	0.32	0.62	0.31
Change tract between interviews	0.14	0.35	0.20	0.40	0.26	0.44	0.18	0.38

Table 4.2 Multilevel Logistic Regression of Migration Out of Origin Neighborhoods for Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples: Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2013

	Neighborhood % White		Neighborhood % Black		Neighborhood Entropy	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
<i>Couple Combinations (ref. white-white)</i>						
Black-black	-1.5127*** (0.1298)	-1.0163*** (0.1068)	0.7522*** (0.0807)	0.0274 (0.0634)	0.8889*** (0.0997)	-0.0082 (0.0806)
Black-white/white male	-0.6872 (0.5727)	-0.3754 (0.4983)	0.7221 (0.4223)	-0.1420 (0.3452)	0.2820 (0.8135)	-0.6181 (0.7084)
Black-white/black male	-1.7599*** (0.3860)	-1.2162*** (0.3295)	1.2951*** (0.2283)	0.1291 (0.1816)	0.7174 (0.4183)	-0.0073 (0.3351)
<i>Interactions</i>						
Black-black X neighborhood % white	0.0241*** (0.0018)	0.0115*** (0.0015)				
Black-white/white male X neighborhood % white	0.0109 (0.0093)	-0.0015 (0.0083)				
Black-white/black male X neighborhood % white	0.0335*** (0.0057)	0.0152** (0.0049)				
Black-black X neighborhood % black			-0.0264*** (0.0023)	-0.0121*** (0.0019)		
Black-white/white male X neighborhood % black			-0.0233* (0.0093)	-0.0092 (0.0081)		
Black-white/black male X neighborhood % black			-0.0373*** (0.0062)	-0.0161** (0.0054)		
Black-black X neighborhood entropy					-1.1379*** (0.1342)	-0.4262*** (0.1104)
Black-white/white male X neighborhood entropy					-0.1320 (1.0106)	0.3611 (0.8758)
Black-white/black male X neighborhood entropy					-0.4587 (0.5222)	-0.3127 (0.4204)
<i>Neighborhood Characteristics</i>						
Neighborhood % white at time <i>t</i>	-0.0218*** (0.0014)	-0.0085*** (0.0011)				
Neighborhood % black at time <i>t</i>			0.0221*** (0.0020)	0.0087*** (0.0017)		
Neighborhood entropy at time <i>t</i>					1.4900*** (0.0819)	0.5704*** (0.0683)
<i>Micro-Level Characteristics</i>						
Age		-0.0364*** (0.0015)		-0.0364*** (0.0015)		-0.0363*** (0.0015)
Number of children		-0.0888*** (0.0144)		-0.0912*** (0.0144)		-0.0893*** (0.0144)
Persons per room		0.4509*** (0.0550)		0.4620*** (0.0550)		0.4471*** (0.0550)
Same house 3 + years (1 = yes)		-0.2688*** (0.0335)		-0.2653*** (0.0335)		-0.2700*** (0.0334)
Homeowner (1 = yes)		-1.6019*** (0.0365)		-1.6134*** (0.0365)		-1.5946*** (0.0365)
Employed (1 = yes)		-0.3341*** (0.0431)		-0.3343*** (0.0431)		-0.3307*** (0.0431)
Education (in years)		0.0374*** (0.0057)		0.0373*** (0.0058)		0.0373*** (0.0057)
Family income (in \$1000s)		0.0001 (0.0002)		0.0001 (0.0002)		0.0001 (0.0002)
Length of observation		0.8786*** (0.0537)		0.8803*** (0.0537)		0.8787*** (0.0535)
Year		-0.0029 (0.0034)		-0.0014 (0.0034)		-0.0049 (0.0034)
Constant	0.1047 (0.1215)	5.9310 (6.8034)	-1.8701*** (0.0450)	2.2719 (6.7635)	-2.4123*** (0.0562)	9.0347 (6.8012)
<i>Variance Components</i>						
Between MSA's	0.5456*** (0.0895)	1.8735*** (0.1180)	0.4089*** (0.0820)	1.6212*** (0.1075)	0.5752*** (0.0912)	1.9707*** (0.1228)
Between Individuals	0.0819*** (0.0216)	0.2581*** (0.0490)	0.0865*** (0.0216)	0.2594*** (0.0490)	0.0728*** (0.0219)	0.2571** (0.0490)
BIC	45536	40469	45657	40496	45460	40468
<i>Note: N of observations = 57,480; N of couples = 7,794</i>						
<i>*p &lt; .05; ** p &lt; .01; *** p &lt; .001</i>						

Table 4.3 Multilevel Linear Regression of Percentage White, Black, and Neighborhood Entropy of Destination Neighborhoods for Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples: Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985 to 2013

	Neighborhood % White		Neighborhood % Black		Neighborhood Entropy	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
<i>Couple Combinations (ref. white-white)</i>						
Black-black	-25.4827*** (0.6918)	-30.1921*** (0.9473)	23.1599*** (0.6623)	28.9619*** (0.9171)	0.0794*** (0.0078)	0.0368** (0.0112)
Black-white/white male	-14.5372*** (3.1219)	-17.6081*** (4.3585)	10.0427*** (2.9659)	11.1605** (4.1410)	0.0646 (0.0401)	0.0959 (0.0560)
Black-white/black male	-16.7257*** (1.6428)	-20.8745*** (2.5868)	13.2822*** (1.5567)	18.0386*** (2.4583)	0.0977*** (0.0212)	0.0983** (0.0333)
<i>Interactions</i>						
Black-black X family income		0.0718*** (0.0100)		-0.0865*** (0.0095)		0.0007*** (0.0001)
Black-white/white male X family income		0.0390 (0.0418)		-0.0102 (0.0398)		-0.0004 (0.0005)
Black-white/black male X family income		0.0586 (0.0311)		-0.0665* (0.0296)		-0.0000 (0.0004)
<i>Micro-Level Characteristics</i>						
Age	-0.0315 (0.0339)	-0.0282 (0.0338)	0.0219 (0.0324)	0.0178 (0.0322)	-0.0008 (0.0004)	-0.0008 (0.0004)
Number of children	-0.0943 (0.1771)	-0.0163 (0.1768)	0.0805 (0.1685)	-0.0151 (0.1679)	-0.0035 (0.0023)	-0.0028 (0.0023)
Homeowner (1 = yes)	0.4191 (1.2746)	0.5413 (1.2709)	-0.9443 (1.2214)	-1.0919 (1.2157)	-0.0168 (0.0163)	-0.0160 (0.0163)
Employed (1 = yes)	0.9446 (0.6242)	0.4743 (0.6254)	-0.9080 (.5968)	-0.3430 (0.5969)	0.0065 (0.0081)	0.0024 (0.0081)
Education (in years)	0.4140*** (0.0816)	0.3839*** (0.0814)	-0.2636*** (0.0771)	-0.2292** (0.0767)	0.0001 (0.0011)	-0.0002 (0.0011)
Family income (in \$1000s)	0.0147*** (0.0031)	0.0089** (0.0032)	-0.0096** (0.0030)	-0.0029 (0.0030)	-0.0001* (.0000)	-0.0001*** (0.0000)
<i>Neighborhood Characteristics</i>						
Neighborhood % white at time <i>t</i>	0.2374*** (0.0097)	0.2333*** (0.0097)				
Neighborhood % black at time <i>t</i>			0.2783*** (0.0098)	0.2701*** (0.0098)		
Neighborhood entropy at time <i>t</i>					0.1715*** (0.0103)	0.1685*** (0.0103)
<i>Metropolitan Characteristics</i>						
Metropolitan % white	0.5184*** (0.0203)	0.5164*** (0.0206)				
Metropolitan % black			0.4232*** (0.0255)	0.4113*** (0.0257)		
Metropolitan entropy					0.5851*** (0.0111)	0.5890*** (0.0203)
Year	-0.0514 (0.0424)	-0.0624 (0.0424)	0.0086 (0.0400)	0.0200 (0.0398)	0.0027*** (0.0005)	0.0026*** (0.0005)
Lambda( $\lambda$ )	1.6541 (0.8592)	1.4450 (0.8572)	-0.7941 (0.8201)	-0.5417 (0.8168)	-0.0037 (0.0111)	-0.0055 (0.0111)
Constant	117.9494 (84.9143)	141.9795 (84.8119)	-11.7691 (79.7114)	-36.2106 (79.3561)	-5.3114*** (1.0881)	-5.1101*** (1.0869)
<i>Variance Components</i>						
Between MSA's	1.0238*** (0.1173)	8.5865*** (0.1142)	0.8476*** (0.1075)	5.8661*** (0.1043)	0.0048*** (0.0626)	0.0048*** (0.0625)
Between Individuals	1.9069*** (0.0641)	43.3800*** (0.0659)	35.3395*** (0.0718)	33.5353*** (0.0738)	0.0071*** (0.0672)	0.0068*** (0.0693)
Residual	2.8202*** (0.0117)	280.8441*** (0.0116)	262.9069*** (0.0114)	261.3864*** (0.0113)	0.0462*** (0.0118)	0.0462*** (0.0118)
BIC	74647	74620	73859	73801	-444.61	-446.40
<i>Note: N of observations = 8,631; N of couples = 4,451</i>						
<i>*p &lt; .05; **p &lt; .01; ***p &lt; .001</i>						

Figure 4.1 Mean Neighborhood Percentage White, Percentage Black, and Entropy by Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples: Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2013

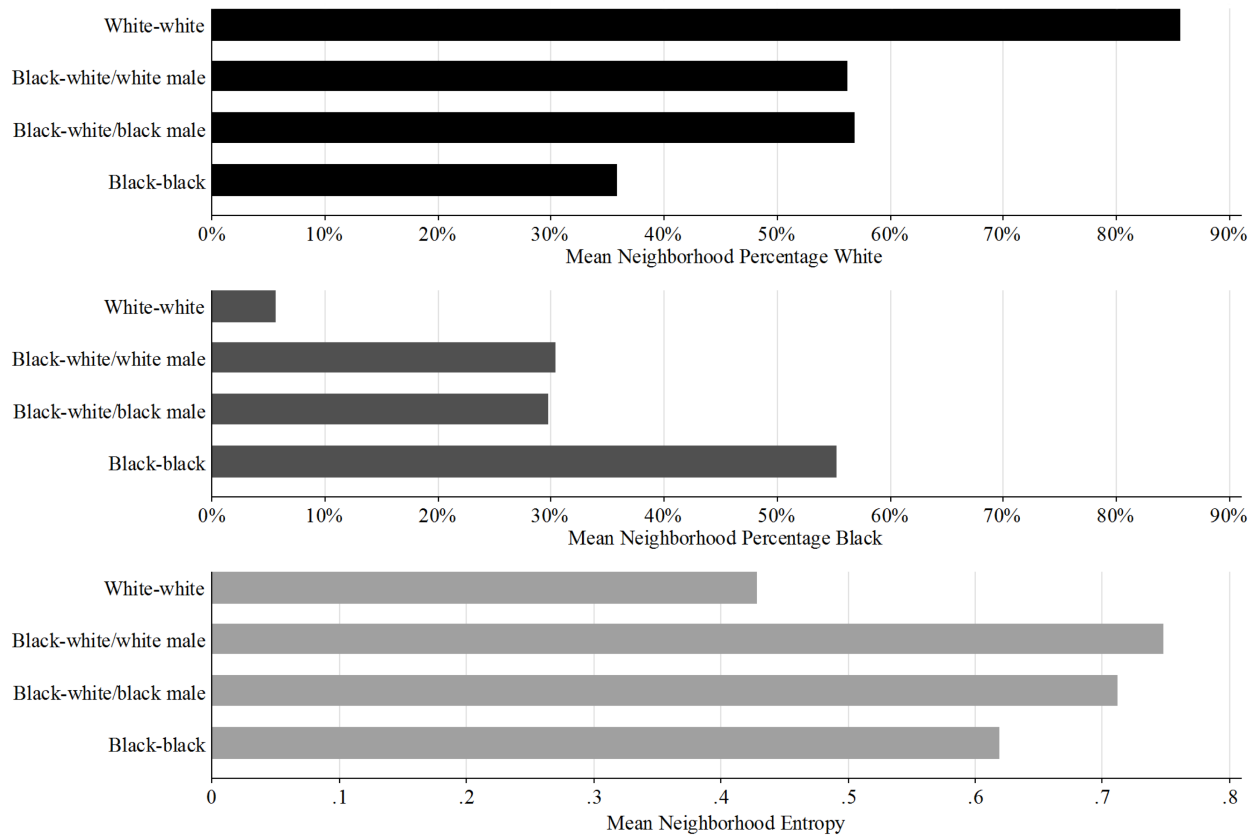


Figure 4.2 Predicted Probability of Out-Mobility by Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples and Percentage White, Black, and Entropy (10th to 90th Percentile): Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2013

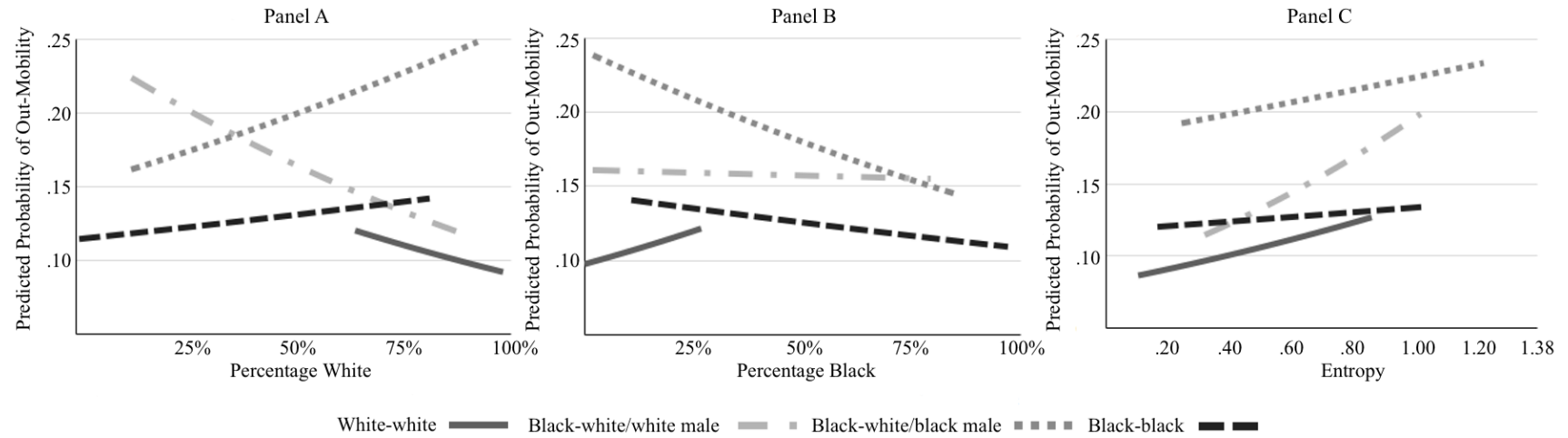
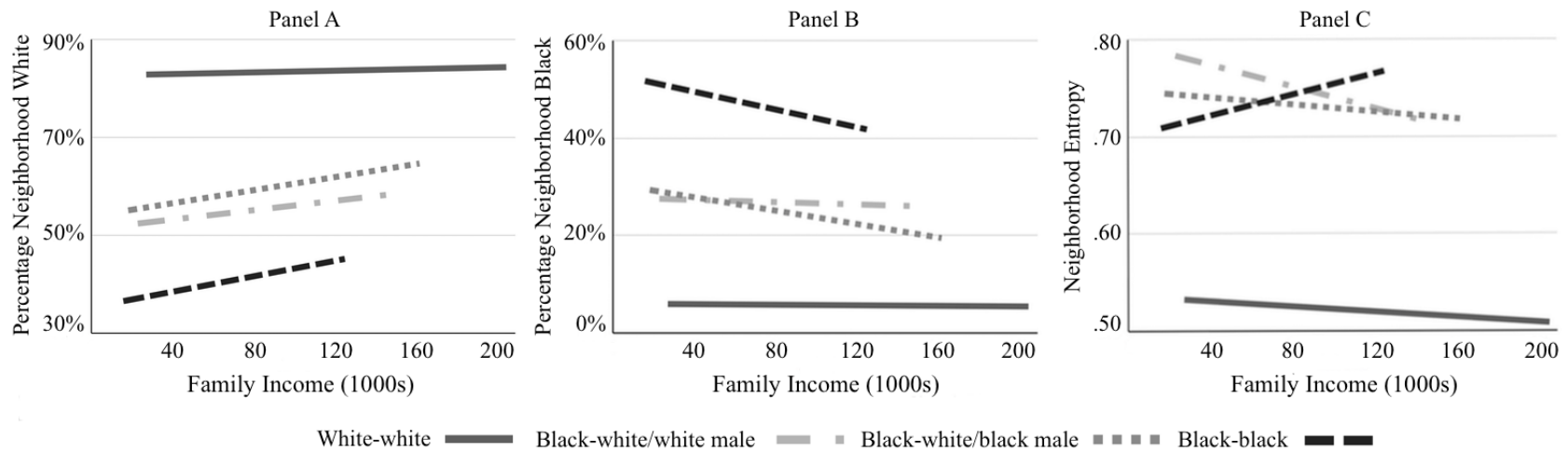


Figure 4.3 Predicted Percentage of Neighborhood White, Black, and Entropy by Mobile Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples and Family Income (10th to 90th Percentile): Panel Study of Income; 1985-2013



## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

In my dissertation I utilize the Panel Study of Income Dynamics linked to neighborhood- and metropolitan-level data compiled from four censuses to investigate the residential mobility and attainment of mixed-race couples. In this Conclusion I will highlight my findings in each of my empirical chapters, in addition to discussing the implications of my work on the literature on residential stratification and the modern color line. Lastly I will briefly discuss some limitations of the present analysis, while pointing to directions of future research.

The results of my analysis in Chapter 2 demonstrate that black race is incredibly important in determining residential outcomes and its influence is only slightly lessened by the presence of a non-black partner. For instance, mobile mixed-race couples with black partners tend to migrate to neighborhoods with higher levels of poverty than couples without a black partner. Particularly striking among mixed-race couples with black partners is that even those with considerable economic resources have trouble evading neighborhood poverty when they move. Alternately, mixed-race couples without black partners seem to experience similar levels of neighborhood poverty as whites.

In Chapter 3 the results of my analysis demonstrate mixed-race couples encounter relatively unique residential experiences. Couples containing members of two different racial/ethnic groups tend to reside in neighborhoods with significantly higher levels of racial diversity as compared to monoracial white couples. Past research would suggest such unique residential attainment patterns are a reflection of unmeasured racial group differences in residential preferences, with mixed-race couples presumed to select diverse neighborhoods that match the combined preferences of their individual members or offer some protection against the discrimination they encounter in the housing market. Yet, my prospective analysis of residential

mobility behaviors provides only limited support for this argument. I find no support for the argument that mixed-race couples are more likely than monoracial couples to remain in exceedingly diverse neighborhoods. While I do find evidence that the relatively high level of diversity faced by mixed-race couples is likely formed by their mobility into neighborhoods that are more diverse than those chosen by mobile white couples, the destinations of most types of mixed-race couples do not differ substantially from monoracial black couples.

In Chapter 4, my findings show race and gender matter in the residential mobility and attainment of black-white couples with either black or white male partners. For instance, black-white couples with black male partners demonstrate a heightened probability of exiting neighborhoods with substantial concentrations of whites. This pattern might represent a lack of comfort these couples have in neighborhoods where some individuals might stand in strong opposition to their unions. Conversely, black-white couples with white male partners follow the opposite pattern. These couples demonstrate a decreasing probability of migrating out of neighborhoods with large shares of whites, which highlights black-white couples with white male partners might encounter less discrimination from the occupants of their neighborhoods than their counterparts with black male partners. Also of importance is the relatively low probability of out-mobility for black-white couples with white male partners when faced with higher shares of blacks in their neighborhoods. This out-mobility pattern potentially suggests these couples receive a level of acceptance in their neighborhoods their counterparts with black male partners fail to experience in neighborhoods with substantial shares of whites. This interpretation fits with previous studies that assert black neighborhoods have served as a refuge for black-white couples, where the residents in these neighborhoods were typically more

accepting of black-white pairings than occupants of predominantly white areas (Dalmage, 2000; Romano, 2001).

## 5.1 CONTRIBUTIONS

The findings from my analysis on the residential stratification of mixed-race couples informs broader debates on the color line. For instance, my observation that couples with black partners are significantly associated with higher levels of poverty in their destination neighborhoods lends support for the black/non-black conception of the color line (Lee & Bean, 2004). Additional support for the black/non-black color line is bolstered by three other findings. First, mixed-race couples, especially those with black partners, are more apt to migrate to neighborhoods with higher levels of diversity than whites. Second, black-white couples with black male partners demonstrate a heightened probability of exiting neighborhoods with substantial concentrations of whites. Third, mixed-race couples without black partners tend to evince similar residential mobility and attainment patterns as white couples.

These findings point to the notion that even though the U.S. is becoming increasingly diverse through mixed-race coupling, old racial divisions are proving incredibly durable. This is not especially surprising given the deep historical roots separating blacks from others. Surely, increasing numbers of mixed-race couples are a general sign of diminishing racial group barriers, however, mixed-race couples with black partners seem to fall into an already existing system of racial stratification rather than helping to redefine it.

On the other hand, given that mixed-race couples with non-black partners appear to follow relatively similar residential outcomes as whites, these couples seem to be at the forefront of normalizing mixed-race coupling. However, because of their advantaged position, mixed-race couples without black partners are simultaneously reinforcing the black/non-black color line by falling into the latter category. In the future though, mixed-race coupling between blacks and

non-blacks will most likely contribute to a partial erosion of the black/non-black color line. There is some evidence that this might be occurring. Qian and Lichter (2011) observe that net of changing socioeconomic status, marriage between blacks and whites increased three-fold between 1980 and 2008. And while this news seems promising it should be seen from a conservative vantage point because marriages between blacks and whites only represented approximately 1% of all marriages in the U.S. in 2010. Thus, black-white marriage—the relationship that most directly challenges the foundation of the color line—has increased in recent decades, the absolute number of black-white couples will probably remain rather small for the foreseeable future, limiting their ability to redefine racial stratification.

## 5.2 FUTURE RESEARCH

Although my study gives important insight on the residential mobility and attainment of mixed-race couples, there are improvements to be had in future research. In Chapter 2, since I observe economic factors fail to explain couple-group differences in neighborhood poverty, I could assert discrimination is solely responsible for explaining the difference in outcomes between these couples. While a notable share of the variation in neighborhood outcomes of these couples is likely attributed to discrimination, other potential forces exist affecting mobility patterns that remain largely unappreciated in the literature on residential stratification. For instance, the residential mobility patterns of mixed-race couples might be influenced by their relationship to kin. Past research has highlighted the spatial proximity to kin can deter residential mobility (Boyd, 2008), and for movers, kin can shape the choice set of destinations (Long, 1988). Although this is beyond the scope of this dissertation, fruitful research would profit from incorporating the role of family and other social factors in shaping the mobility patterns of mixed-race couples.

In assessing mixed-race couples and their association with neighborhood diversity, fruitful research might be found in data that provide detailed race and ethnicity measures that capture broader dimensions of skin color and country of origin. For instance, previous studies find Latinos with Mexican origins demonstrate disparate mobility patterns from their counterparts with Cuban ancestry (South et al., 2005). Thus, incorporating data of sufficient size to allow disaggregation by country of origin for mixed-race couples would afford a more fine-grained analysis than what the current data allow.

There is also worthwhile research to be done in extending the study race and gender beyond the black-white case. Although other scholars have provided some foundational insight on other types of mixed-race couple race/gender pairings, there is room to expand on their findings (Wright et al., 2013). Scholars might utilize longitudinal survey instruments to analyze the residential mobility and attainment of white-Asian race/gender pairings. This focus would illuminate if the most socially acceptable mixed-race couple type in the U.S. experiences disadvantaged treatment in the housing market when an Asian-male partner is present.

And, more generally, no data provide the information necessary to disentangle the relative effects of neighborhood preferences and racial discrimination experienced based on race. The literature on residential stratification would be enhanced through data with specific measures of the residential preferences of mixed-race couples: how they differ from those of monoracial couples as well as 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. But even without these data, my current study makes significant progress in our understanding of the residential stratification of mixed-race couples and their relationship with the color line.

Appendix A1 Descriptive Statistics for the Analyses of Mixed-Race and Monoracial Couples from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics; 1985-2013

	White-white		Black-white white male		Black-white black male		Black-black	
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Metropolitan Characteristics</i>								
% white of MSA	77.03	15.10	69.49	12.68	69.99	14.37	65.27	11.17
% black of MSA	11.39	9.79	17.87	11.49	17.87	12.82	24.14	10.36
Entropy of MSA	0.65	0.29	0.81	0.21	0.77	0.24	0.83	0.19
<i>Individual Characteristics</i>								
Age	45.20	14.54	40.19	10.78	36.37	10.79	42.82	13.47
Number of children	0.98	1.14	1.44	1.18	1.27	1.28	1.40	1.31
Persons per room	0.52	0.24	0.68	0.30	0.69	0.39	0.71	0.36
Same house 3 + years (1= yes)	0.64	0.48	0.50	0.50	0.47	0.50	0.61	0.49
Homeowner (1 = yes)	0.82	0.38	0.55	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.59	0.49
Employed (1 = yes)	0.81	0.39	0.90	0.30	0.82	0.39	0.78	0.42
Education (in years)	13.79	3.15	14.04	2.81	13.24	2.88	11.92	3.02
Family income (in \$1000s)	101.49	110.90	108.25	154.11	67.79	43.40	65.22	42.12
Year	1996	7.61	1997	8.33	1997	8.32	1995	7.70
Length of observation	1.40	0.49	1.45	0.50	1.44	0.50	1.36	0.48
<i>N</i> of couple-period observations	42764		188		543		13985	
<i>N</i> of couples	5296		45		149		2304	

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### **ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS**

2016–          Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Brigham Young University

### **AREAS OF INTEREST**

Residential Segregation, Residential Mobility and Attainment, Race/Racism,

Stratification, Diverse Populations, Historical Demography, Quantitative Methods

### **PUBLICATIONS**

#### ***Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles***

2016          Gabriel, Ryan. “A Middle Ground? Residential Mobility and Attainment of

Mixed-Race Couples.” *Demography* 53(1): 165–188.

#### ***Works in Progress***

“Mixed-Race Couples, Residential Mobility, and Neighborhood Poverty.”

“Gender and the Residential Mobility and Attainment of Black-White

Couples.”

“The Racial Couple Continuum: A Study of the Neighborhood Attainment of  
Multiracial individuals and Mixed-Race Couples.” (with Jacob Rugh)

“Mixed-Race Coupling and Self-Rated Health.” (with Michael Esposito).

“Mixed-Race Couples, Residential Mobility and Attainment: A Discrete-  
Choice Approach.” (with Amy Spring).

“Neighborhood Diversity, Residential Mobility, and Mixed-Race Couples.”  
(Kyle Crowder and Kivan Polimis).

“Neighborhood Foreclosures and Residential Out-Mobility.”  
(with Kyle Crowder, Matthew Hall, and Amy Spring).

“Housing Foreclosure, Neighborhood Migration, and Racial/Ethnic  
Residential Inequality.” (with Matthew Hall, Kyle Crowder, and Amy  
Spring).

“Segregation within Integration: Exploring Micro-Level Segregation in  
Seattle’s Integrated Tracts.” (with Tim Thomas).

“The Legacy of Lynching? An Empirical Replication and Conceptual  
Extension.” (with Stewart Tolnay).

### **OTHER PUBLICATIONS**

2014 “Will America’s Growing Number of Racially Mixed Families Ensure that  
Neighborhoods Become More Diverse?” Scholars Strategy Network.

### **FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS**

2016 University of Washington College of Arts & Sciences Dean’s Medal –  
Outstanding Graduate Student in the Social Sciences

- 2016 ICPSR Panel Study of Income Dynamics Data User Workshop, Sponsored Participant
- 2015–16 Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship Alternate
- 2014–15 Scholars Strategy Network Northwest Graduate Fellow (\$500)
- 2014–15 American Sociological Association Minority Fellow (\$18,000 – plus tuition)
- Association of Black Sociologists/Midwest Sociological Society Fellow
- 2014 Measuring the Diverging Components of Race in Multiracial America Workshop – Texas A&M University, Sponsored Graduate Student
- 2012–15 Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology Fellow
- 2012–14 NICHD Funded Trainee – Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology – University of Washington (\$36,000 – plus tuition)
- 2011–12 Graduate Opportunity Minority Achievement Program Fellowship – University of Washington (\$18,000 – plus tuition)
- 2011 Clarence Schrag Endowment – University of Washington (\$3,000)
- 2010–11 Cardon Neuberger Scholarship in Sociology – Utah State University (\$500)
- 2010 A-Pin Award – Utah State University

### **PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS**

- 2016 “The Racial Couple Continuum: A Study of the Neighborhood Attainment of Multiracial individuals and Mixed-Race Couples.” (with Jacob Rugh). Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Seattle, August.

- 2016 Moderator for “Toxic Communities: Environmental Racism, Industrial Pollution, and Residential Mobility” by Dorceta Taylor. Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Seattle, August.
- 2016 “Neighborhood Foreclosures and Residential Out-Mobility.” Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Washington, D.C., April.
- 2015 “Mixed-Race Couples, Residential Mobility, and Neighborhood Poverty.” Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, August.
- 2015 “Segregation within Integration: Exploring Micro-Level Segregation in Seattle’s Integrated Tracts Using Spatial and Qualitative Analysis.” (with Tim Thomas) Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, San Diego, April.
- 2014 “Our Past Betrays Us: Collective Memory, Lynching and Southern Homicide.” Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, August.
- 2013 “The Residential Mobility and Attainment of Interracial Couples.” (with Kyle Crowder). Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, New Orleans, April.

### **SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE**

- 2016 Keeley, Sean. “Seattle’s Neighborhoods have Experienced Segregation within Integration.” seattle.curbed.com. <http://seattle.curbed.com>

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- 2016 O'Connell Walters, Kate. "Seattle's 'Diverse' Neighborhoods Are Surprisingly Segregated." *KUOW.ORG*. <http://kuow.org/post/seattles-diverse-neighborhoods-are-surprisingly-segregated>
- 2015 Bach, Deborah. "Study: Mixed-Race Couples with Black Partners More Likely to Live in Poor Neighborhoods." *UW Today*. Retrieved from <http://www.washington.edu/news/blog/study-mixed-race-couples-with-black-partners-more-likely-to-live-in-poor-neighborhoods/>
- 2015 Holeywell, Ryan. "When 'Diverse' Neighborhoods are More Segregated than they Appear." *The Urban Edge Blog*. Retrieved from <https://kinder.rice.edu/Blog/holeywell061115/>

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

- 2015 Guest Lecturer – Department of Sociology, University of Washington
- SOC 300 – Foundations of Social Inquiry
- 2014 Co-Teacher – Department of Sociology, University of Washington
- SOC 401 – Urban Sociology
- 2009 Undergraduate Teaching Fellow – Department of Sociology, Utah State University
- SOC 1010 – Introduction to Sociology
- 2008, 2009 Supplemental Instruction Group Leader – Department of Sociology, Utah State University
- SOC 1010 – Introduction to Sociology

## **REVIEWER**

*Social Science Research*

## **PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE**

- 2014–15 Department of Sociology Job Search Committee, University of Washington
- 2014–15 Scholars Strategy Network Northwest Graduate Fellow
- 2012 Society for Advancement of Hispanics/Chicanos and Native Americans in  
Science, National Conference – University of Washington
- Presenter for the Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology
- 2008–09 Dean of Humanities & Social Sciences Undergraduate Advisory  
Committee – Utah State University
- 2008 Alpha Kappa Delta Sociology Honors Society, President – Utah State  
University
- 2007 Bridgerland Literacy Tutor – Logan, Utah

## **CERTIFICATIONS**

- 2014 Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology Demographic Methods  
Certificate
- 2014 ASA Professional Development Certificate
- 2009 Tutor Certification through the College Reading and Learning Association

## **SKILLS**

Stata, R

## **MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS**

American Sociological Association

Population Association of America

Scholars Strategy Network

Alpha Kappa Delta