

Social Capital and Segregation: Interracial Friendships and Status in the American Metropolis

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Preview

- ◆ Meanings and measurements of “social capital” in the urban inequality debate
- ◆ Research questions
- ◆ What are “bridging” and “bonding” ties?
- ◆ Data and method
- ◆ Descriptives: friendship networks, segregation
- ◆ Bi/Multi-variate models
- ◆ Summary findings and puzzles ahead

Meanings and Measurements

- ◆ Meanings of social capital in relation to urban inequality:

Tradition	Principal measures/ common level of analysis	Exemplars
1. Civic engagement and bondedness	Associational membership, social trust (micro to macro)	Putnam (1993,2000)
2. Collective efficacy	Proximate trust, social cohesion, networks (micro)	Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls (1997)
3. <i>Individual problem-solving</i>	<i>Networks for social support and attainment (micro)</i>	<i>Hannerz (1969), Stack (1974), Briggs (1998), Lin (1999)</i>
4. Group problem-solving or "community capacity"	Organizational capacity and networks, social trust (micro to meso)	Keyes et al. (1996), Gittell and Vidal (1998), Chaskin et al. (2000)

Research questions

- ◆ BROAD (longer-run)
 - How do space, social connections, and inequality relate to each other in America's metropolitan areas? For example, what are the social consequences of residential segregation by race?
 - How is this changing as America changes?

- ◆ SPECIFIC (short-run)
 - **What explains the presence or absence of interracial friendships (a form of “bridging ties”) in various metro areas?**
 - **How do “race bridges” (friendships with other groups) relate to “status bridges” (friendships up/down in status)? Does this association matter for some racial/ethnic groups more than others?**

Of “bridging” and “bonding”

- ◆ “Bridging” and “bonding” describe ...
 - Across and within-group connections (memberships, networks, psychological attachments)
 - Actions that reinforce such connections
- ◆ Not strictly synonymous with “strong” vs. “weak” ties (though the latter indeed represent a large number of social bridges)
- ◆ Roots in sociology (features of social structure, social distance) and psychology (identity, affect, prejudices), uses in political science (“cross-cutting cleavages” that stabilize diverse polities).
- ◆ Urban inequality literature suggests special attention to: social isolates, linked effects of race/poverty, importance of “social leverage” (ties to higher status people) to getting ahead.

Key concepts

- ◆ “Birds of a feather” (homophily in social relations) phenomenon driven by two factors ...
 - Opportunity for contact (“base” or pool to draw from)
 - In-breeding (actively seeking out one’s own)
- ◆ Interdependence of factors—see Laumann (1973) and current events:
 - Social networks (friends, acquaintances)
 - Ascriptive traits (race/ethnicity, religious preference)
 - Achieved traits (education, employment)
 - Associational involvement (religious/non)
 - Attitudes (toward own/other groups, participation, etc.)

Data and Method

- ◆ Data: Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey
 - National (N=3,003) and 41-community sample (N=26,230)
 - RDD telephone interviews, some oversampling
 - Conducted July – Nov 2000, 26 min. avg, 42% cooperation
 - Items on friendship ties, trust, civic participation, social and political attitudes, sense of community, household
 - *Plus* Census 2000: population, race, racial segregation indices computed by Lewis Mumford Center (U-Albany)
- ◆ Analytic methods
 - Descriptives, logistic regressions and risk (odds ratios)

Race bridges are varied and predictably asymmetrical

Interracial friendship probabilities (41-community sample)

P(j) % R's race	P(white)	P(black)	P(Asian)	P(Hisp)	P(any other)	P(all other)
White	97.3	59.6	35.4	43.1	72.7	24.0
Black	74.9 ⁺	93.3	27.9 [*]	43.2 [*]	94.9 ⁺	21.0
Asian	74.0 ⁺	49.8 [*]	88.7	47.8 [*]	95.3 ⁺	39.4
Hispanic	65.4	45.6 [*]	30.7 [*]	83.2	87.6	27.5

$P(x_j)$ = probability that respondent of race/ethnicity x reports a "personal friend" of race/ethnicity j.

Mean (N) = 24,637; Chi-square for paired differences: ⁺ non-signif., ^{*} $P < 0.05$, all others $P < .01$.

Minority groups more likely to self-select, as expected

	Percent of sample	Ratio of friendship self-selection (S)
White	74.5	1.3
Black	12.9	7.2
Asian	3.8	23.3
Hispanic	8.8	9.5

$S = (\text{Observed selection of own group}) / (\text{group as \% of whole})$

**For people of color, low income and
education status are associated with
isolation from whites ...
Odds of having a white friend (41-community sample)**

Effects, by Group	Odds*	95% CI		(N)
		Lower	Upper	
Income < \$20K				
Black	.69	.61	.79	(2,851)
Asian	.51	.39	.65	(834)
Hispanic	.56	.50	.63	(1,938)
No HS Diploma				
Black	.80	.68	.94	(3,177)
Asian	.36	.27	.49	(942)
Hispanic	.46	.41	.52	(2,137)

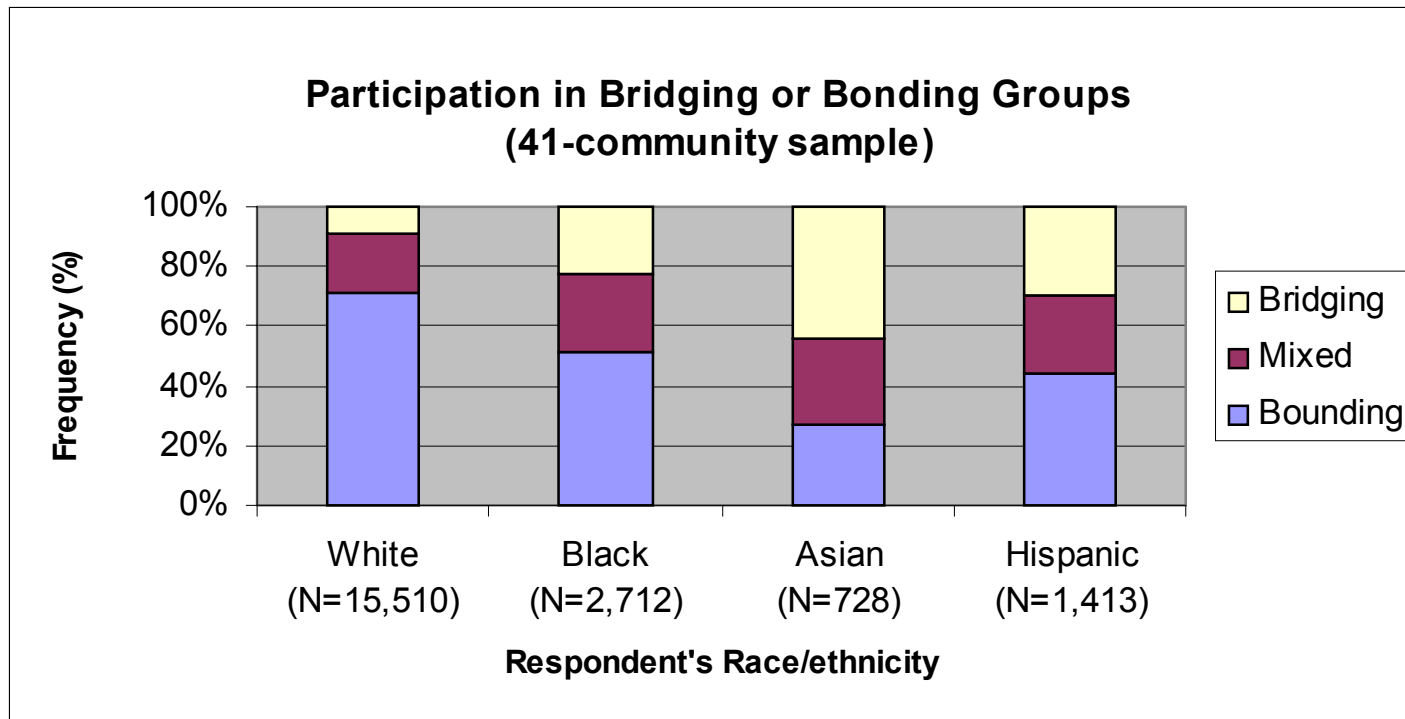
* Expresses the odds values (risk estimates) relative to the excluded categories: income over \$20K, HS/GED or better.

**While having white friends is associated
with status and inter-faith bridges**
**Odds of knowing someone who owns a business or is of
another religious preference (41-community sample)**

Effects, by Group	Odds*	95% CI		(N)
		Lower	Upper	
Has friend who owns a business				
Black	1.84	1.71	1.99	(3,179)
Asian	1.76	1.56	1.98	(945)
Hispanic	1.91	1.79	2.05	(2,162)
Has friend of other religious preference				
Black	2.51	2.28	2.76	(3,116)
Asian	2.73	2.26	3.30	(929)
Hispanic	2.67	2.39	2.98	(2,114)

* Expresses the odds values (risk estimates) relative to the excluded category: does not have a “personal friend who is white.”

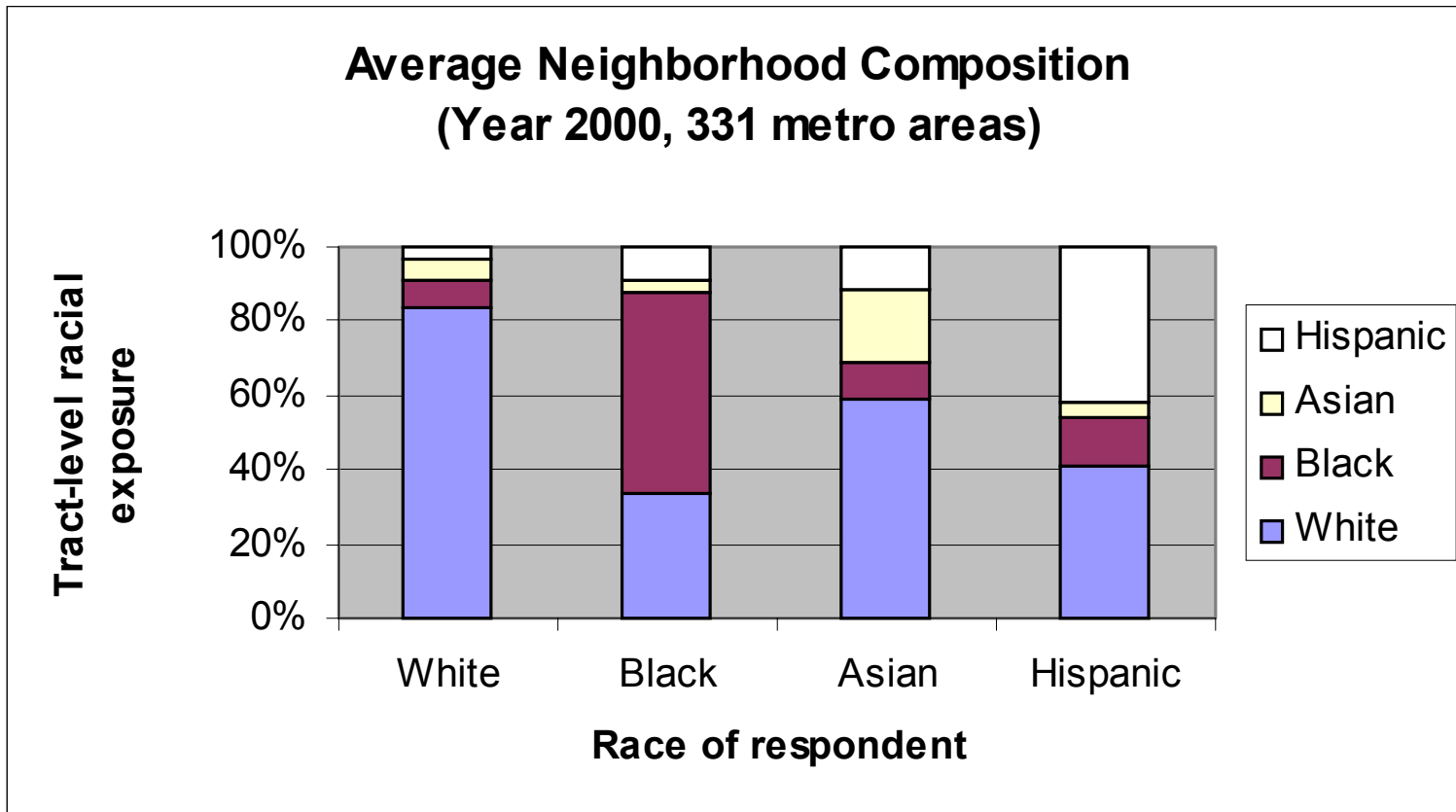
Asians and Hispanics most likely to report important civic bridges, Whites most “bonded”



Q: “Please think of the [group you are involved with] that is most important to you and about the members of this group you are involved with. [How many are the same race as you ...]?”

Chi-square: all differences $P < .01$.

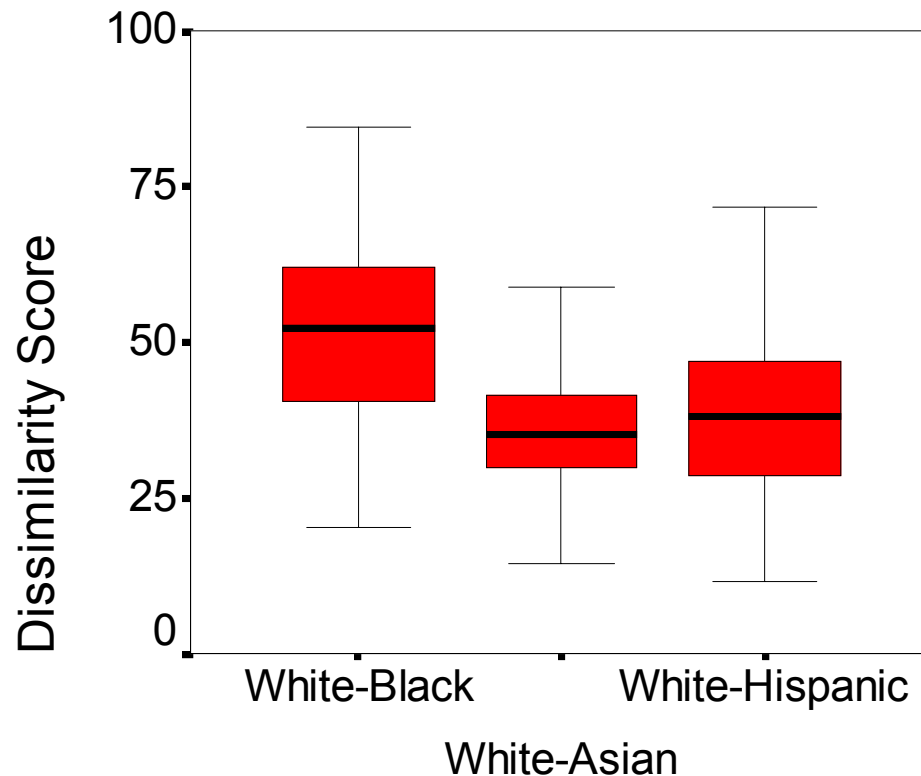
Segregation: Asians and Hispanics are More Exposed to Out-groups in their Neighborhoods



Source: Lewis Mumford Center, University at Albany, using U.S. Census Bureau data

Segregation: Blacks-whites most unevenly distributed

Indexes of dissimilarity, Year 2000, 331 metro areas (boxplots)



Source: Lewis Mumford Center, University at Albany, using U.S. Census Bureau data

Predicting Friendships

Probability (Respondent has race bridge) =

[PERSONAL: race, gender, life stage] +

[HOUSEHOLD: married/partner, kids, employed] +

[SES: income, education] +

[RELIGION: member of faith institution, involvement] +

[ASSOCIATIONS: involvement, diversity of key group] +

[NETWORK SIZE: number of friends]

[METRO ECOLOGY: group population sizes, segregation]

. . . For various bridges: pairwise, any other, all other

Bridges to whites linked to life stage, education, work contacts, and organizational activism

Selected variables, by block	Black Exp(B)	Asian Exp(B)	Hispanic Exp(B)
Woman	.73	---	---
Senior	1.52	.31	4.24
College grad	2.01	2.80	2.71
High org activism	1.98	1.94	2.50
Key group is mixed/othr	1.26	1.56	---
Socializes often with co-workers	2.00	2.11	2.90
Many close friends	3.98	5.80	3.59
Chi-square/df (N)	227/21 (2,478)	114/21 (478)	242**/21 (1,354)

Dependent variable is having a “personal friend who is white.” 41-community sample.
All Exp(B)’s are for B’s significant at $P < .05$.

Note: For Hispanics, citizenship and language of interview are also highly significant.

Race bridges also shaped by metro segregation and size of the co-ethnic pool

METRO Variables	Black		Asian		Hispanic	
Metro status						
Central City	---	---	---	---	---	---
Suburb						
Co-ethnic pool						
Percent own group	-.01* (.006)		-.05*** (.012)		-.02*** (.006)	
Segregation						
Dissimilarity (Whites/Own group)		-.02*** (.006)		-.13*** (.03)		-.03** (.01)
Chi-square	199	209	112	116	260	254
Log likelihood	2282	2273	615	612	1192	1198
(N)	(2,228)	(2,228)	(455)	(455)	(1,255)	(1,255)

Dependent variable is having a “personal friend who is white.” 28-community sample.
 B’s and (standard errors) shown in table. * P < .05, ** P < .01, *** P < .001

Summary

- ◆ For **people of color**, race bridges and status bridges are strongly associated in interracial friendships with whites.
- ◆ For **whites** (data not shown), ties in the other direction not nearly as dependent on status achievement.
- ◆ For **all groups**, organizational activism, contacts made at work, size of network, and membership in “bridging” groups are clear pro-bridging factors.
- ◆ **Metro effects matter**: Linked factors of group population size and racial segregation also shape friendship bridges, though segregation seems the more important factor for blacks’ reporting white friendships.
- ◆ **Hispanics and Asians exhibit bridging** on more dimensions; black-white segregation black-white remains highest, most persistent.

Puzzles Ahead

- ◆ What are the mechanisms through which metro effects operate on network patterns?
 - How do [spatial segregation] and [segregated associational structures, informal socializing, etc.] co-evolve?
- ◆ Is it the neighborhood or the metro? Or both?
 - Are “metro effects” a proxy for more proximate ecological patterns that distinguish high-segregation communities from less segregated ones? What defines outlier neighborhoods?
- ◆ What exactly is the “capital” in those networks?
 - What contents and uses distinguish various bridging ties?
- ◆ How do “intentional bridgers” fare in more and less segregated environments?

Appendix: References

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