Brother's Keeper or Only Child?
Black Middle Class Responses to Residential Mobility Initiatives in
Prince George's County, MD

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Abstract

The implications of urban revitalization, gentrification, and residential migration have attracted widespread interest and ongoing debate among scholars across a range of disciplines. While a significant body of literature explores race and class interactions within urban gentrifying neighborhoods, few have examined the environments that await those displaced by this process. This study explores the social and political impact of urban gentrification and class stratification within the black community by examining responses of black middle class residents in Prince George's County, MD to the growing in-migration of low-income and minority residents from Washington, DC. Drawing on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, a multi-neighborhood sample of ninety-five black middle class residents of Prince George's County, and informal interviews with subject-area experts, this study explores how race and class shape residential decisions and their impact on residential mobility initiatives. Residents responded to a 26-item survey that covered demographic information, political and community engagement, and their attitudes and beliefs about the poor, changes in their community, and racial unity and responsibility. Findings from cross tabulations and binary logistic regression indicate that lower middle class residents are the most likely to resist in-migration by exiting their communities and/or voting against proposals to create affordable housing options. Core and upper middle class residents were the most likely to stay in their neighborhoods despite increases in low-income migration, to vote in support of policies to create affordable housing options and to believe their responsibility to poor blacks could include sharing residential space.

Keywords: Gentrification; Residential Migration; Black Middle Class; Washington, DC; PG County, MD

Introduction

Urban centers throughout the country are experiencing rapid transformation as affluent residents migrate from other areas or return from the suburbs. In the District of Columbia, the energy of urban renewal is palpable, with the sights and sounds of demolition and construction on almost every street. Former DC Mayor Vincent Gray noted, "On any given day, you will have sixty or more cranes that are operating" (Merica 2013). Multi-phase revitalization and construction projects will continue into the next decade to include new housing, retail and office space, and new attractions throughout the District (Cooper 2014).

The landscape is not the only thing transforming in the capital once dubbed "Chocolate City", the racial and socioeconomic composition are rapidly shifting as well. Since 2000, Washington's white population jumped by 31 percent while the black population declined by 11 percent. The city simultaneously ranked third in median income growth among large cities (Tavernise 2011). Further, "in the past decade, the district lost nearly 40,000 black residents, many driven out by skyrocketing rents fueled by an influx of mostly white professionals flocking to increasingly gentrified neighborhoods" (Khalek 2014). In 2011, the first American city to have an African American majority lost that status after more than half a century.

Given the almost certain prospects for a greater tax base to fill city coffers, local officials often appear eager to meet the demands of developers and new residents — frequently at the expense of long-time residents (Anderson 1990; Hwang and Sampson 2014; Milloy 2014; Smith 1996; Thomson 2014). With land among the most in-demand commodities, Washington's housing authority (DCHA), for example, has demolished over one thousand housing units in the past

decade (Khalek 2014). Modeled after the federal Hope VI program, the city's New Communities Initiative targets public housing properties that are considered distressed and demolishes them with the promise of quick renovation and redevelopment into mixed-income communities.[1] Frequently, however, public housing units are not replaced at an equal rate and often only one-third of residents are able to return (Cunningham 2001; Patillo 2007). Washington's Temple Courts properties, for example, were demolished in 2008 by then-mayor Adrian Fenty. Residents were promised a $700 million mixed-income community that would include at least 570 affordable units for displaced families by 2009.   Today, what used to be Temple Courts is a parking lot that charges $8 an hour, and only 22 of the more than 200 families have moved back in (Khalek 2014).

Table 1 illustrates changes in racial composition, growth in family income, and housing costs for residents across the eight wards. White populations have consistently increased in wards 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6, where average family income has also increased significantly. In fact, average family income has increased significantly in each of these wards and home sales have almost doubled (ward 2) or more than doubled in value since 2000 (wards 1, 4, 5, 6). Black populations have consistently increased in only ward 8, which currently has both the lowest average family income and home values. In communities like wards 1 and 6, where black residents have gone from being the majority in 1990 to less 33% and 43% respectively, the city's transformation takes on new meaning. Fears of being pushed out are tangible, as 55% of black residents reported in 2014 that redevelopment is bad for people like them, up from 39 percent the previous year (Schwartzman, Hauslohner and Clement 2014).

[Insert Table 1]

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[1] Established in 2005, the New Communities Initiative is a partnership between the DC Housing Authority and the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development.

With land among the city's most in-demand commodities, Washington's housing authority (DCHA), has demolished over one thousand housing units in the past decade (Khalek 2014). Modeled after the federal Hope VI program, the city's New Communities Initiative targets public housing properties that are considered distressed and demolishes them with the promise of quick renovation and redevelopment into mixed-income communities.[2] Initiatives for mixed-income housing developments are supplemented with residential mobility programs. Bolstered by evidence from Chicago's Gautreaux program and HUD's Moving to Opportunity demonstration (MTO)[3], housing authorities suggest that blending different economic groups provides economic, political, and social benefits for the poor (Clark 2005; Joseph 2010). Residents are offered housing choice vouchers and encouraged to seek out homes in low-poverty communities. Among the target destinations are neighborhoods largely comprised of black middle and working class residents.

For Washington, DC residents, Prince George's County, MD (PG County) has been an early target for the displaced. "With its relatively affordable housing prices and middle-income character, Prince George's County seems to serve as a pathway to the middle class for large numbers of lower-income, working minorities from Washington, DC" (DeRenzis and Rivlin 2007, ii). The Washington Examiner reports that PG County averaged 13,775 migrants from DC between 2006 and 2010, 81 percent of whom were black and predominantly lower-income (Connolly 2013).   Between 2000 and 2010, the black population in the county increased by 10 percent, while comparatively declining in the District (Urban Institute 2011). Research by Brooke DeRenzis and Alice Rivlin (2007), of the Brookings Institute, indicates however, that as low-income minority residents are moving into the county, the middle class is moving out. Of

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[2] Established in 2005, the New Communities Initiative is a partnership between the DC Housing Authority and the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development.

[3] "MTO is a 10-year research demonstration that combines tenant-based rental assistance with housing counseling to help very low-income families move from poverty-stricken urban areas to low-poverty neighborhoods" (HUD.gov).

particular interest to this research is whether awareness of incoming low-income residents is a key-motivating factor in the relocations of middle-income residents.

Table 3 illustrates the migration patterns between Washington and PG County from 2006 to 2010 and 2008 to 2012. During the first four-year cycle, migration from Washington into PG County comprised almost a third of all in-migration. Despite losing almost 6,000 residents to DC, the county netted almost 8,000 new residents from Washington. The second four-year cycle also indicates net gains in the county from Washington. Almost 12,000 DC residents moved to Prince George's, comprising almost a quarter of all in-migrants. After accounting for residents who left the county for Washington, PG County gained a little over 5,000 residents from Washington, DC.

Table 3
Migration Flows between Prince George's County and District of Columbia

| Time Period | In-Migration | | Out-Migration | | Net Migration |
	From: Estimate	Percent	To: Estimate	Percent	Estimate
2006 - 2010	13,775	26.6%	5,951	11.2%	7,824
2008 - 2012	11,810	23.8%	6,529	13.6%	5,281

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Since 2000, the majority of migrants coming into the county came from Washington, DC and Montgomery County and were predominantly lower-income and minority workers (DeRenzis and Rivlin 2007). Those coming from the District represented a quarter to a third of all in-migration to Prince George's each year and had the lowest median adjusted incomes. The Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services (2007), reported that between 1994-2004, the average median adjusted gross incomes of in-migrants of PG County was $3,340 less than the average median income of those moving out. Further, the adjusted gross incomes of in-migrants to PG County was 67% of the incomes of current county residents. In recognizing the current

population trends in the county, Prince George's County Community Planning Division published

the following caution in its Consolidated Plan for FY 2016-2020:

> "The numbers of households with incomes at or below the poverty level are growing by
> the thousands… The continued substantial growth in population and households living in
> poverty implies that, in the absence of strategies to bring about significant improvements
> in the educational attainment, job skills, potential for high-wage employment, and earning
> capacity, economic conditions of many residents will remain poor. The result will be large
> numbers of residents struggling to afford decent housing, many households living in
> substandard housing in overcrowded conditions, and many communities lacking quality
> amenities and services" (PG County 2015, 36).

With the active revitalization and gentrification occurring in Washington, DC, population

trends indicate that social distress formerly tied to the District's poorer neighborhoods is migrating

to Prince George's County. Wayne K. Curry, the Prince George's first black county executive

(1994 – 2002), attributed the county's slow economic progress to strained resources as a result of

low-income residents migrating to Prince George's after being pushed out of gentrifying D.C.

neighborhoods (Schwartzman 2010). Research indicates that as low-income minority residents are

moving into the county, the middle class is moving out (DeRenzis and Rivlin 2007). Of particular

interest to this research is to determine whether the incoming demographic is a key-motivating

factor in the relocations of middle-income residents.

A significant body of literature has explored the ramifications of race and class encounters

within gentrifying environments (Cunningham 2001; Hwang and Sampson 2014; Lee, Spain, and

Umberson 1985; Patillo 2001) and the impacts of residential mobility and mixed income

communities (Briggs and Turner 2006; Clark 2005; Turner and Popkin, 2010). The focus of most

of these studies, however, is overwhelmingly on urban centers, inter-racial interactions, or solely

the impact on the poor. What we know less about is the how the new destinations of the urban

displaced are affected by and responding to the shifting demographic landscape. The ways

suburban environments are impacted by gentrification and mixed-income initiatives have yet to be adequately addressed; particularly in intra-racial residential contexts. The purpose of the current study is to begin to fill this gap.

This study explores the social and political impact of urban gentrification and class tensions within the black community by examining responses of black middle class residents to incoming low-income and public housing tenants in Prince George's County, MD. The racial character of PG County may lead some to assume residents would welcome the opportunity to share resources with poorer racial peers (Patillo 2007). However, the potential threat of low-income migrants to their middle-class suburban lifestyle could incite the opposite response (Haynes 2001). The success of residential mobility efforts is in large part dependent on the willingness of current residents to stay in their communities.

Empirically, this study relies on data collected from a sample of 95 black middle class residents in Prince George's County, MD through telephone interviews. In line with a growing body of literature that identifies heterogeneity within the black middle class, residents were categorized into three class positions – lower middle class, core middle class, and upper middle class – based on level of income, education, and occupation. Residents responded to a 26-item survey that covered demographic information, political and community engagement, and their attitudes and beliefs about the poor, changes in their community, and racial unity and responsibility. Analysis of the results center on answering two (2) research questions:

1. Are there differences among middle class blacks in how they respond to the changing demographics of their communities – exit (out-migration), voice (voting/political mobilization/agitation), loyalty (remaining in community)?
2. Are there differences among Lower, Core, and Upper middle class blacks' sense of obligation and responsibility to provide social and economic resources to low-income and public housing residents?

Using cross tabulations and logistic regression, the predictive power of class position on residential behaviors to exit or stay in one's community and to use voice in opposition or support of low-income housing accommodations in one's community. Results provide new insights into the degree to which class impacts racial solidarity and residential outcomes, and how class preferences among African Americans may impede the progress of social programs intended to eradicate concentrations of poverty.

Theoretical Framework

This research draws on the concepts of linked fate, exclusionary boundaries, and exit, voice, and loyalty to shape the direction and scope of inquiry. Each theory provides important clues into the beliefs and behaviors of the black middle class across political and social contexts. The blending of these concepts can explain the attitudes and beliefs, and likely responses of black middle class residents in Prince George's County as a new demographic begins to infiltrate their communities.

While literature indicates that the black middle class shares a sense of loyalty and responsibility for their poorer racial peers (Dawson 1995; Patillo 2007), these sentiments are also complicated by boundaries erected to protect social status and class identities (Lacy 2007; Weise 2006). A desire to maintain racial solidarity, both in sentiment and action, are complicated by the need to maintain class boundaries to protect the material interests of residents and the community. Lori Martin (2010) adds that blacks in the middle class may not perceive their destinies as tied to other blacks with lower socioeconomic status; and in fact, may feel that they impede progress.

The conflict between Dawson's (1995) heuristic concept of linked fate and Fredrik Barth's (1969) theory of ethnic boundaries demonstrates the tensions "stemming from the black middle-class embodiment of the political interests of race, on the one hand, and the material interests of

class, on the other" (Haynes 2001, xix). To Mary Patillo (1999), such material interests include better homes, safer neighborhoods, higher quality schools, and more amenities with their increased earnings. In an effort to protect these material benefits, black middle class residents "attempt to fortify their neighborhoods against the encroachment" of the poor (Patillo 1999, 24). Steven Gregory (1992) contends that, black middle class homeowners are more politically aligned with "middle class values" of neighboring white communities than with the "black community". As such, the black middle class is more inclined to organize around issues related to "their interests as homeowners than with interests that could be associated with race" (255).

Hirschman's (1970) theory of exit, voice, and loyalty identifies likely behavioral responses of current residents to the looming class changes and how those actions will affect neighborhood stability. Once the environment no longer embodies residents' desired characteristics, residents are prone to exit their community, use their voice (political action) to prevent the transformation, and/or remain loyal to their community (Hirschman 1970). Black middle class residents will be forced to consider the degree to which these changes necessitate the abandonment of their communities, the use of collective action to resist the migration, and/or the decision to remain in their communities. This study is particularly interested in investigating the extent to which residents are willing to organize to maintain effective social control (i.e. curbing deviance in public spaces and keeping out undesirable populations).

This study challenges the concept of linked fate by arguing that sentiments of racial unity and obligation are expressed to different degrees based on position within class categories. Contrary to scholarship that depicts the black middle class as one homogenous group, a growing body of literature identifies three distinct categories: Lower, Core, and Upper middle class, based on factors such as median income, occupation, level of education, and neighborhood composition

(DeRenzis and Rivlin 2007; Lacy 2007; Rothman 1999).   Sentiments of linked fate and exclusionary boundaries are oppositional constructs that influence decision-making. The degree to which they influence behavioral responses to the changing environment will depend heavily on the security within class position and stability of middle class identity.

Methodology

This study utilizes descriptive statistics and logistic regression to evaluate PG County residents' response to the changing demographics in their communities. Analysis relies on quantitative analysis of telephone survey responses from a random sample of 95 black middle class residents of Prince George's County. Residents responded to a 26-item partially structured questionnaire. Responses closed-ended questions were evaluated to identify the potential predictive power of class position on residential choice to exit one's community, use voice to challenge local policies, and/or to be loyal to one's community and stay. Informal telephone and Skype interviews were secured with Alice Rivlin, Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution, Kreg Steven Brown, Affiliated Scholar, The Urban Institute, and Bart Landry, Professor Emeritus, University of Maryland. While the qualitative component is not empirically analyzed, consideration of the vantage point of subject-area experts adds greater depth to the understanding of the goals and challenges of residential mobility initiatives.

Using U.S. Census (2012) data on PG County median household income, level of education, and Department of Labor occupational categories, participants were identified to represent each category of black middle class: Lower, Core, and Upper. Table 4 provides the racial and socio-economic criteria for the target sample population.

Table 4
Target Population Characteristics

	Lower	**Core**	**Upper**
Race	Black/African American	Black/African American	Black/African American
Income	$40,000 - $59,000	$60,000 - $79,000	$80,000+
Level of Education	H.S. Degree and/or College+	College+	College+
Occupation	Blue Collar/Labor Intensive	White collar technicians, low-level administrators, clerical	White collar administrators and managers; physicians

Evaluation of the quantitative data from the questionnaire will determine the predictive power of class position on residential choice/behavior. Characteristics such as gender, family size, and length of time in neighborhood will function as moderator variables. These variables may affect the direction and/or strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The independent variable is defined as Class Position (within the middle class), which is divided into three categories of social class (Lower, Core, Upper)[4]. The dependent variable for this study is: (1) Behavioral Response (Exit-Voice-Loyalty). In line with literature on the Exit-Voice-Loyalty model: Exit is the expressed preference to leave one's neighborhood, Voice is the likelihood to vote in favor of mixed income neighborhoods, and Loyalty is a preference to remain in one's community despite the changing demographics. The moderating variables in this analysis are: Gender of Respondent, Family Size, and Length of Time in Community. Because sentiments of linked fate may influence decisions of residential mobility, it will also be considered a moderating variable.

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[4] Class categories are distinguished by several indicators: household income, level of education, and occupation.

Findings

This study explores two research questions to evaluate whether there are attitudinal differences within the black middle class. Specifically, I explored whether class position indicates differences in attitudes toward the changing demographics in one's community, and differences in residents' expressions of linked fate. Cross tabulations were used to examine responses to seven survey questions regarding the aforementioned topics. Statistical significance was calculated using chi-square (p <.05). Additional descriptive data on all additional survey questions are provided in the Appendix.

R1: Are there differences among Lower, Core, and Upper middle class blacks in how they respond to the changing demographics of their communities?

The first research question explores heterogeneity within black middle class attitudes and behaviors in response to unwanted change. Survey items #15, #21 and #23 were used to examine this question. Table 5 illustrates the findings to question #15: "*As housing authorities relocate some of the DC public housing residents, among their goals is to place them in mixed income communities or low-poverty areas in nearby suburbs. Do you think this is a good idea or bad idea for yourself and your community*?" Survey question #21 asks: "*If the influx of public housing hits your community, do you anticipate moving out or staying in your neighborhood?*" The findings are statistically significant and reported in Table 6. Table 7 demonstrates findings to question #23 asks: "*If your local government proposed a policy to provide more affordable housing options for public housing and low- and moderate-income families, would you vote in favor of such a policy?*" Table 7 reports respondents who believed they would use voice to oppose the policy, support the policy unconditionally, or support the policy on the condition that residents do not move into their

neighborhoods (NIMBY). The data reports the raw number and percentage of respondents who felt good or bad about mixed income communities.

[Insert Table 5]

[Insert Table 6]

[Insert Table 7]

Across class positions, residents are generally not in favor of efforts to integrate suburban low-poverty communities with public housing and low-income residents. Lower middle class residents are the most likely to want to leave their community in response to the in-migration of low-income and public housing residents into their communities (89.5%). The majority of core and upper middle class residents would stay in their communities despite the change in demographics (57.6% and 55.0% respectively). Though small percentages, core and upper middle class blacks were the only group to indicate that they would definitely stay in their neighborhoods (6.1% and 5.0% respectively). The p value for this analysis is .015, indicating that the differences between each class category is not a matter of chance.

Lower middle class residents are also the most likely to resist policies that provide affordable housing for public housing and low-income residents (52.6%). Further, among those that would support such policies, lower middle class blacks are more likely to prefer that new residents not be located in their neighborhoods (42.1%). The majority of core and upper middle class would vote in favor of policies to provide affordable housing options in their communities (69.7% and 85% respectively). Chi-Square = .005, indicating that the differences between class positions is significant and not a matter of chance.

Core and upper middle class residents are more inclined to remain in their communities despite changes in the demographic composition and to vote in support of low-income housing

provisions. The findings for both Exit-Loyalty and Voice were statistically significant, indicating that class differences are not a matter of chance. One core middle class resident, a married father of two and retail manager, said "You know, everyone needs a place to stay. As long as they don't bring a lot of crime or drugs to the community, I don't see a problem with it. PG was my step up to better opportunities. I can't see standing in the way of someone else". A 39-year-old, married upper middle class government analyst and mother of one was only mildly concerned about the changes taking place. Although she lives in Greenbelt, MD, a city that experienced a population increase of 12.4% since 2000, she did not anticipate low-income migration impacting her own community. She stated, "I've seen some changes around other areas of the county, but I don't think it will be as bad here" (Respondent 109, 2015).

When asked where they would go, should residents decide to leave the community, 61% indicated they would remain in Prince George's County, 23% preferred to relocate to Montgomery County, MD, and just under 12% stated they would move elsewhere in the state of Maryland. While much of the literature on gentrification asserts that suburban residents are moving to the city, only 2.1% of respondents stated they would want to move to Washington, DC.

Steven Brown (2016), Urban Institute Affiliated Scholar, believes that the response of black middle class residents to the potential influx of low-income residents typifies NIMBY-ism (Not in My Backyard Syndrome). "They're basically saying, 'I want the best for them; I just don't want them in my neighborhood'" (Brown 2016B). Further, he believes that the impact that low-income migration has on a community is more a matter of perception than actual change. What truly impacts the neighborhood conditions is the resultant flight. Once a neighborhood reaches its tipping point of tolerance for lower income residents, residents will move. "There isn't a strong

case to be made that having an influx of poor people will ruin a neighborhood. It's the flight that

hurts the neighborhood the most, not the influx" (Brown 2016B).

R2: Are there differences among Lower, Core, and Upper middle class blacks' sense of obligation
and responsibility to provide social and economic resources to low-income and public housing
residents?

The second research question explores heterogeneity within black middle class beliefs in

and expressions of linked fate. Specifically, it addresses whether lower, core, and upper middle

class blacks have different beliefs about their connectedness to other black people in the country

and whether they feel a sense of obligation to help less fortunate racial peers. Survey items #9,

#10, #24, #25, and #26 were used to examine this question.

Tables 8 – 9 illustrate the findings to questions about sentiments of linked fate. The first

question examines whether black middle class residents feel connected to other blacks; it asks:

"*Do you think that what happens generally to black people in this country will have something to*

do with what happens in your life?" The second explores the degree to which they believe they are

impacted: "*Will it affect you a lot, some, or not very much?*" The data reports the raw number and

percentage of responses.

[Insert Table 8]

[Insert Table 9]

Virtually all respondents believe that their fate is linked to that of other black people in the

United States. The largest proportion of respondents within each class category believes that their

lives are somewhat impacted by what happens to other blacks. Ninety percent of upper middle

class, 82% of core middle class, and 74% of lower middle class residents believe their lives are

affected some or a lot by what happens to other blacks. Differences between the groups, however, are not statistically significant.

Table 10 illustrates findings to the question: "*Would you say you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: Black people who have made it are doing a lot to improve the social and economic position of poor blacks*". The data reports the raw number and percentage of responses within each class category. Findings indicate that class position is a significant indicator of belief in the continued service to poor blacks by more successful counterparts (p = .011). Most respondents also agree or strongly agree that blacks who have attained success continue to help improve the life conditions of lower class counterparts. Core and upper middle class blacks are more likely to strongly agree, while lower middle class overwhelmingly agree with the statement. One respondent, 41-year-old lower middle class wife and mother of one, agreed that successful blacks have done a lot to help poor blacks, "but now it's time for [the poor] to step up on their own" (Respondent 3, 2014).

[Insert Table 10]

Table 11 illustrates findings to the question: "*Do you think the black middle class has a responsibility to remain in their communities in order to maintain social and economic stability for low-income residents to benefit from?*" The data reports the raw number and percentage of respondents' different degrees of racial responsibility in sharing residential space.

[Insert Table 11]

The opinions of residents toward a responsibility to stay in their community to benefit lower class peers were somewhat mixed. Lower middle class residents are the least likely to believe they have a responsibility to lower class counterparts to stay in their communities in order to provide social and economic stability. The majority of core and lower middle class respondents

believe they definitely or slightly do not have a responsibility to share residential space with low-income residents (63.6% and 68.4% respectively). Equal proportions of core middle class residents believe they are somewhat or definitely not responsible for assisting lower class counterparts by remaining in their communities. One resident, a 31-year-old dental hygienist said lower-income groups often bring crime and drugs to a community and there's very little any of the residents can do about it. For that reason, she was currently looking to move further into Prince George's or Montgomery County (Respondent 33, 2015). Upper middle class residents are the most likely to believe they have a responsibility to remain in their communities to assist lower income residents. One resident, a 62-year-old retired wife and PG County resident of 13 years stated, "I believe I have to give back, but not put myself in danger to give back to the community. When there's crime I will leave. I want a safe community" (Respondent 5, 2014).

The above-analysis explored differences between lower, core, and upper middle class residents of PG County in their expected behavioral responses to an influx in low-income residents, their attitudes toward the poor, and degree of belief in linked fate and a responsibility to blacks as a whole. While the analysis was challenged due to low sample size, it nonetheless yielded interesting results.

Findings from the first research question revealed that there are real differences between lower, core, and upper middle class residents in their response to the changing demographics in their communities.[5] Overall, black middle class residents are opposed to integrating low-income households in their neighborhoods. Strongest disapproval for such efforts came from lower middle class respondents. If faced with the influx, core and upper middle class residents opted most often to stay in their communities while lower middle class preferred to leave. Similarly, core and upper

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[5] All three survey items used for this question yielded statistically significant results.

middle class would vote to support policies to provide low-income housing accommodations while most lower middle class residents would vote against them.

Evaluation of the second research question indicates that that the black middle class overwhelmingly believes their lives are connected to other blacks in America, although the strength of that connection is moderate. In general, the black middle class believes that blacks who have made it continue to work toward improving conditions for poor blacks. This is also reflected in the community involvement of the respondents. Strong majorities of core and upper middle class groups are actively committed to social improvement of blacks through civic and church involvement. Interestingly, despite the acknowledged connection to blacks in general and commitment to working toward racial uplift, few black middle class believe that this commitment translates into sharing residential space. Majorities of lower middle class and core middle class disagreed with having a responsibility, while the majority upper middle class blacks felt they "somewhat" had a responsibility to stay in their communities to provide social and economic stability.

Conclusion/Discussion

For the subjects in this study, belief in linked fate was a widely shared sentiment across all class positions. In line with Dawson's (1994) findings, core and upper middle class blacks were more likely to believe their fates were linked than lower middle class residents. Pew's (2007) study also found that blacks with lower incomes and less education are more likely to see few shared values between middle class and poor blacks. One core middle class administrative assistant and mother said that the sense of connection to other blacks and the importance of working toward racial uplift were major emphases in her upbringing. A member of the National Association of Colored Women's Club, she said "Lifting as we climb [the mantra of NACWC] has been engrained in me

since I was a little girl. My parents made sure we knew the importance of serving the race" (Respondent 30, 2015). Commitment to the black community through service organizations was also a widely shared responsibility among core and middle class black residents.

The findings of this study indicate that there are limits to how linked fate is expressed. The sense of shared experience and responsibility to serve less fortunate blacks does not seem to translate into sharing residential space. Across class positions, residents are generally not in favor of efforts to integrate low-poverty communities with public housing and low-income residents. Lower middle class residents, especially, would want to exit their communities should the influx of low-income residents reach their neighborhoods. The majority of core and lower middle class respondents believe they definitely or slightly do not have a responsibility to share residential space with low-income residents (63.6% and 68.4% respectively). Those in the highest class bracket were the most likely to believe their responsibility to poor blacks could include sharing residential space.

While the black middle class shares a sense of loyalty and responsibility for their poorer racial peers (Dawson 1995; Patillo 2007), these sentiments seem to be complicated by boundaries erected to protect social status and class identities (Lacy 2007; Weise 2006). If, as Wilson (1987) states, "it is difficult to speak of a uniform black experience when the black population can be meaningfully stratified into groups whose members range from those who are affluent to those who are impoverished" (x), it is unlikely that their attitudes and beliefs about racial unity will be uniform. As the findings indicate, black middle class residents hold different views based on their position within the class. In majority-black contexts, "the fact of racial homogeneity does not preclude the importance of difference, divisions, and distinctions" (Patillo 2007, 12). As class

differences and divisions translate into tangible disparities, the sense of community and communal

responsibility may be diminishing.

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Figures and Tables

Table 1

Washington, DC Black/White, Income and Housing Profiles by Ward

	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	Ward 7	Ward 8
Race/Ethnicity								
Black, 1990	60%	19%	4.9%	79%	86%	66%	96%	92%
Black, 2000	47%	15%	6.2%	71%	88%	64%	97%	93%
Black, 2010	33%	9.8%	5.6%	59%	77%	43%	95%	94%
White, 1990	20%	65%	84%	15%	11%	30%	2.4%	6.4%
White, 2000	24%	66%	80%	15%	7.4%	29%	1.5%	4.9%
White, 2010	40%	70%	78%	20%	15%	47%	1.5%	3.2%
Family Income								
Avg. family income, 1979	$57,495	$125,535	$153,822	93,673	$65,842	$66,659	$58,428	$47,582
Avg. family income, 1989	$62,693	$162,694	216,207	$100,527	$72,700	$83,418	$61,411	$49,131
Avg. family income, 1999	$75,905	$191,986	244,553	$106,672	$71,305	$84,371	$58,880	$46,770
Avg. family income, 2009	$99,428	$222,345	240,044	$115,482	$79,153	$129,674	$57,387	$43,255
Housing								
Median sales price, 2000	$207,000	$668,000	$608,000	$209,000	$167,000	$214,000	$126,000	$129,000
Median sales price, 2010	$570,000	$1,141,000	$934,000	$519,000	$368,000	$584,000	$249,000	$239,000

Source: U.S. Census 2010

Table 5[6]
"As housing authorities relocate some of the DC public housing residents, among their goals is to place them in mixed income communities or low-poverty areas in nearby suburbs. Do you think this is a good idea or bad idea for yourself and your community?"

	Good Idea	Neutral	Bad Idea
Lower Middle Class	1 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)	19 (94.7%)
Core Middle Class	1 (3.0%0	3 (9.1%)	29 (87.9%)
Upper Middle Class	1 (5.0%)	0 (0.0%)	19 (95.0%)

* p = .429

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[6] Original response categories include: Very Good Idea, Good Idea, Somewhat Good Idea, Neutral, Somewhat Bad Idea, Bad Idea, and Very Bad Idea. Response categories were collapsed; Good idea includes those who also indicated very good and somewhat good and Bad Idea includes those who also indicated somewhat bad and very bad. It's important to note that none of the respondents felt it was a very good idea.

Table 6[7]
"If the influx of public housing hits your community, do you anticipate moving out or staying in your neighborhood?"

	Stay	Neutral	Move
Lower Middle Class	1 (5.3%)	1 (5.3%)	17 (89.5%)
Core Middle Class	19 (57.6%)	0 (0.0%)	14 (42.4%)
Upper Middle Class	11 (55.0%)	3 (4.2%)	38 (52.8%)

* p = .015

Table 7
"If your local government proposed a policy to provide more affordable housing options for public housing and low- and moderate-income families, would you vote in favor of such a policy?"

	No	Yes	Yes, NIMBY
Lower Middle Class	10 (52.6%)	1 (5.3%)	8 (42.1%)
Core Middle Class	7 (21.2%)	12 (36.4%)	11 (33.3%)
Upper Middle Class	3 (15%)	12 (60.0%)	5 (25.0%)

* p = .005

Table 8
"Do you think that what happens generally to black people in this country will have something to do with what happens in your life?"

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Lower Middle Class	19 (100%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Core Middle Class	33 (100%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Upper Middle Class	19 (95%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.4%)

* p = .268

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[7] Original response categories include: Definitely Stay, Maybe Stay, Neutral, Maybe Move, and Definitely Move. Cells for "Stay" and "Move" report results from collapsed categories.

Table 9
"Will it affect you a lot, some, or not very much?"

	A lot	Some	Not very much	Don't Know
Lower Middle Class	5 (26.3%)	9 (47.4%)	1 (5.3%)	3 (15.8%)
Core Middle Class	8 (24.2%)	19 (57.6%)	4 (12.1%)	0 (0.0%)
Upper Middle Class	4 (20.0%)	14 (70.0%)	2 (10.0%)	0 (0.0%)

* p = .193

Table 10
"Would you say you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: Black people who have made it are doing a lot to improve the social and economic position of poor blacks?"

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree
Lower Middle Class	1 (5.3%)	15 (78.9%)	2 (10.5%)
Core Middle Class	15 (45.5%)	17 (51.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Upper Middle Class	12 (60.0%)	7 (35.0%)	1 (5.0%)

* p = .011

Table 11
"Do you think the black middle class has a responsibility to remain in their communities in order to maintain social and economic stability for low-income residents to benefit from?"

	Somewhat	Neutral	Slightly Not	Definitely Not
Lower Middle Class	4 (21.1%)	2 (10.5%)	5 (26.3%)	8 (42.1%)
Core Middle Class	10 (30.3%)	2 (6.1%)	11 (33.3%)	10 (30.3%)
Upper Middle Class	10 (50.0%)	3 (15.0%)	3 (15.0%)	4 (20.0%)

* p = .339