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Stereotypes and Segregation: Neighborhoods in the Detroit Area[1]

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Two opposing hypotheses seek to explain why black-white residential segregation persists despite open housing laws. One perspective argues that discriminatory practices in the marketing of real estate are responsible. Another view contends that it is the preferences of both blacks and whites for their own neighborhoods that maintain segregation. Using data from the Detroit Area Study of 1976 and 1992, the authors test the hypothesis that stereotypes among whites play an important role in explaining their resistance to integrated neighborhoods. They conclude that stereotype use links white preferences to discriminatory real estate practices in a way that helps to explain the persistence of segregation in the Detroit area.

> I think many of them have an institutionalized racism; whether they want it or not, it's there, it seems. And when they see us coming, the stereotypes come with us. [A black minister speaking about his white neighbors (Feagin and Sikes 1994)]

INTRODUCTION

Despite the Fair Housing Act of 1968 and increasingly liberal white attitudes about principles of racial equity (Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo 1985, pp. 73–85), African-Americans remain residentially segregated from whites. The 1990 census identified 47 metropolises of one million or more.

[1] The 1992 Detroit Area Study was supported, in part, by the Ford Foundation, the Federal National Mortgage Association, and the University of Michigan. Correspondence may be addressed to Reynolds Farley, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan, 1225 South University Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-2590.

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The average segregation score comparing the residences of blacks and whites in such places was 69.[2] The similar score comparing Asians to whites was 44, while that comparing Latinos to non-Hispanic whites was 48 (Frey and Farley 1993, appendix). Detroit had the greatest segregation and was the only location in which this segregation increased during the 1980s. Its score was 89—two standard deviations above the mean for large metropolises.

Why does segregation persist? Three causes have traditionally been cited: economic differences between the races, the preferences of blacks and whites, and discriminatory practices by brokers and lenders. The economic explanation has largely been jettisoned (Denton and Massey 1988; Farley 1977; Taeuber 1965). If residential segregation were a matter of income, rich blacks would live with rich whites and poor blacks with poor whites. This does not happen.

Figure 1 presents residential segregation scores for metropolitan Detroit in 1990 controlling for household income or for educational attainment. The index comparing black households with incomes under $5,000 to similarly poor white households was 80; for households with incomes exceeding $100,000 the same index was 83. Similarly, the segregation of whites from blacks hardly decreased with rises in educational attainment.

There is now a lively debate about which of the remaining two causes is more important, a debate closely linked to policies about open housing. In *The Declining Significance of Race,* William Julius Wilson (1978, 140–41) asserted that income was overtaking skin color as a determinant of where blacks lived and that blacks who had the requisite financial resources could move into the suburbs. Subsequently, William Clark (1986, 1988, 1989, 1991) analyzed residential preferences and concluded that both African-Americans and whites wished to live in neighborhoods in which their race was numerically dominant. Supposedly, segregation levels would remain high even if real estate dealers and lenders complied with fair housing laws because both races would seek neighborhoods where they would feel comfortable; that is, areas where their group dominated. According to these studies, reducing segregation apparently awaits changes in racial preferences, rather than levying larger fines against discriminatory brokers and lenders (for the argument that discrimination

[2] The measure of segregation is the index of dissimilarity. It would equal its maximum value of 100 in a situation of apartheid and would approach its minimum value of zero were individuals randomly assigned to their place of residence. These indexes were computed from block-group data from the censuses of 1980 and 1990 (Farley and Frey 1994; Frey and Farley 1993).

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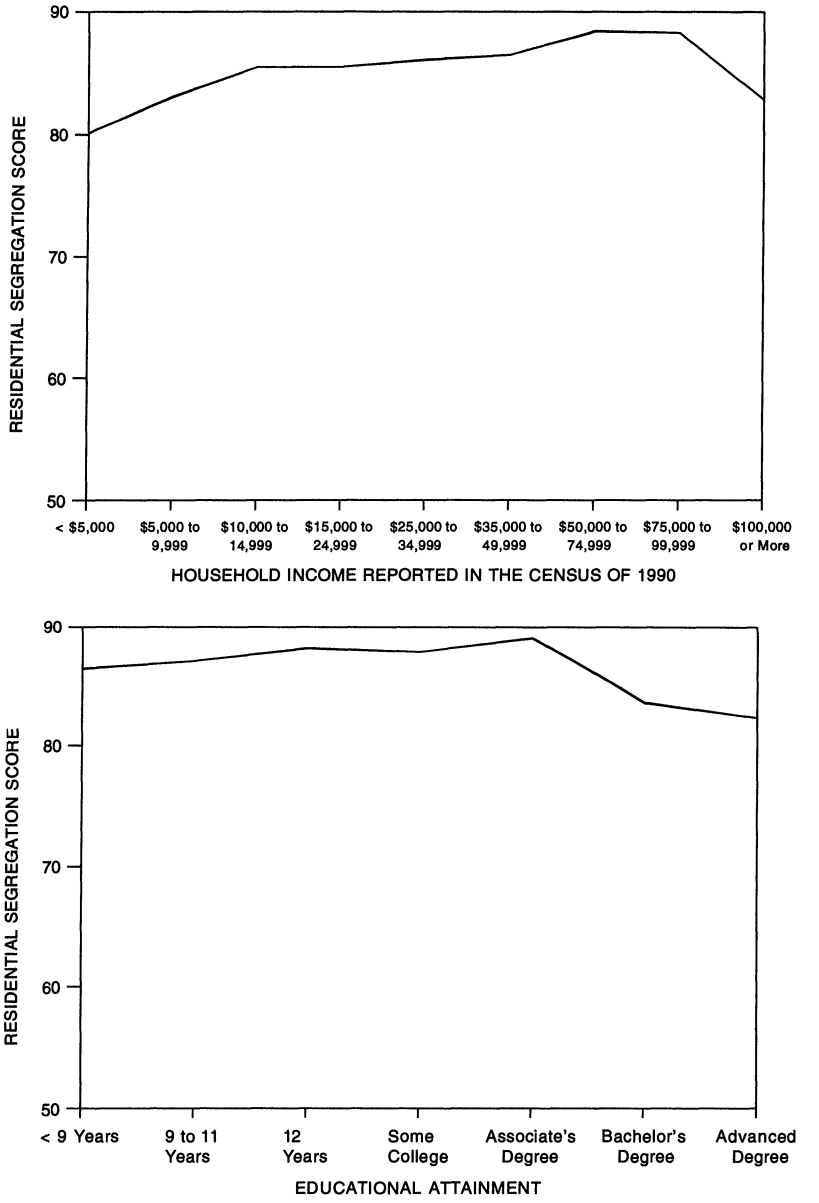

FIG. 1.—Residential segregation of blacks from whites, Detroit metropolitan area, 1990 (segregation scores were computed from census tract data and refer to Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne counties). *Panel 1:* Residential segregation controlling for income (households were classified by reported income in 1989 and race of head). *Panel 2:* Residential segregation controlling for education (based on population 25 years old and older, classified by race and educational attainment). *Source:* U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population and Housing 1990,* summary tape file 3A.

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in the housing market is not responsible for segregation see Muth [1969, 1986] and Clark [1986]).

George Galster (1986, 1988, 1990 and 1992), John Yinger (1986), and previous investigators (Pearce 1979; Jackson 1985) stress the other cause. They argue that racial discrimination in the real estate market helped create and now maintains segregation. They cite many studies reporting that white and black home seekers are treated differently by real estate agents and that mortgage funds are generally more available to whites than to blacks with comparable financial circumstances (Bradbury, Case, and Dunham 1989; Carr and Megbolugbe 1993; Munnell et. al 1992; Turner, Struyk, and Yinger 1991; Yinger 1991). Using data from audit studies sponsored by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, George Galster and Mark Kenney (1988, table 1) demonstrate that discrimination by brokers increases segregation, a finding that implies that if the Fair Housing Act of 1968 were strictly enforced, discrimination might decrease and increasing numbers of blacks and whites would live alongside one another.

In their authoritative book, *American Apartheid,* Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton (1993, chap. 4) advance the discussion by hypothesizing that the preferences of whites result from the continued use of racial stereotypes. So long as whites believe that blacks lack a work ethic, are prone to criminal activity, and are less intelligent than whites they will disparage them as neighbors. Bankers and real estate agents may share these stereotypes and then market housing consistent with such beliefs. As Donald DeMarco and Galster (1993, p. 146) state, "Most discriminatory behavior in the housing market is founded upon either the personal prejudices of agents or their belief that it is in their financial interest to cater to the presumed prejudices of their Anglo customers." Massey and Denton hypothesize that blacks often experience discrimination when they seek housing, and, knowing they will be unwelcome if they enter white neighborhoods, they "prefer" locations where blacks are numerically dominant. Thus the preferences of blacks may be rooted in our history of racial antagonism.

This article has three purposes. We focus upon the nation's most segregated large metropolis: Detroit, one of 16 places labeled *hypersegregated* by Massey and Denton (1989). We use data collected during two waves of the Detroit Area Study (DAS) to examine the following: First, we summarize changes between 1976 and 1992 in the racial residential preferences of whites and blacks. Second, we test hypotheses developed by Massey and Denton that relate the use of stereotypes by whites to their preferences for white neighborhoods. Third, we discuss implications of

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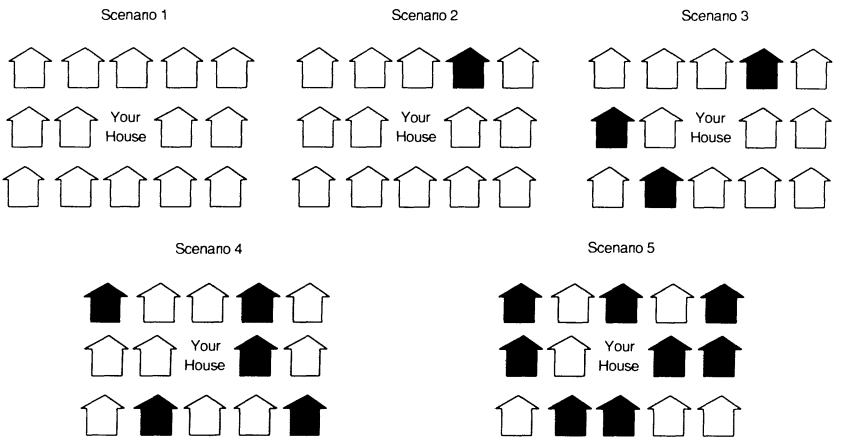

FIG. 2.—Neighborhood diagrams used for white respondents, DAS 1976 and 1992.

our findings for policies that might provide equal opportunities in the housing market.

RACIAL RESIDENTIAL ATTITUDES OF WHITES, 1976 AND 1992

Living with Blacks on the Block

Racial transition occurred in many neighborhoods within older metropolises such as Detroit after World War II (Hirsch 1983; Mayer 1960; Taeuber and Taeuber 1965, chap. 5). Whites resisted the entry of blacks to their neighborhoods, but eventually a few moved in. Shortly thereafter whites began to leave, often using federally backed loans to buy homes in exclusively white suburbs. After some years, the old neighborhood had a largely black population. This drastically altered the city of Detroit, whose white population fell by 86% as it changed from 16% black in 1950 to 76% black in 1990 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1952, table 34; 1991, table 4). The number of whites in the city declined from 1,546,000 to 222,000.

To determine the preferences of *whites* in our 1976 and 1992 studies of the metropolis,[3] we presented every respondent with five cards, each of which showed 15 homes (see fig. 2). With the first card, we asked

[3] The DAS secured random samples of the population 21 years old and older in the Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne County areas, including the city of Detroit. The total sample size was 1,104 in 1976, 1,543 in 1992. Respondents and interviewers were matched with regard to race.

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them to imagine that they lived in an all-white neighborhood—a realistic assumption for most—using the center home as theirs. They were then shown a second card, which indicated one house occupied by blacks and 14 by whites. We asked how comfortable they would feel if their own neighborhood came to resemble that minimally integrated neighborhood. If they said "very comfortable" or "somewhat comfortable," they were shown cards with successively greater proportions of blacks until a card elicited a response of "somewhat uncomfortable" or "very uncomfortable," or they came to the fifth card showing a majority black neighborhood. (For summary of 1976 findings, see Farley et al. [1978].)

There are reasons for optimism about whites' changing attitudes. In 1976, three-quarters of our respondents said they would be comfortable living with one black family but, in 1992, this had increased to 84%. By 1992, seven out of 10 whites claimed they would feel comfortable if their neighborhood came to have the racial composition of the metropolis; that is, if it looked like card 3, which showed 12 white and three black households. This information is provided in figure 3.

As the ratio of blacks to whites increased, the comfort of whites declined, and, quite clearly, most whites—in both 1976 and 1992—felt uncomfortable when they were the racial minority. Just 35% of whites in 1992 said they would be comfortable in an eight-households-black, seven-households-white neighborhood, but this is a significant increase from 28% in 1976.

Interracial neighborhoods will never be stable if there is extensive "white flight" when blacks move in. We sought to measure whether whites would leave if blacks moved into their neighborhoods. We took the first mixed-neighborhoods card that elicited a response of "uncomfortable" from a white respondent and asked if he or she would try to move away should their own neighborhood come to have the racial composition pictured. If the respondent said no, we presented a card showing the next highest representation of blacks and repeated the "moving away" question. Responses are shown in the middle panel of figure 3. This question was posed to the 65% of white respondents who said they would feel uncomfortable if their neighborhood came to look like one of the mixed areas shown on the cards (the base for these percentages is the total white sample). We assume, for example, that a white who would try to move away from a three-households-black, 12-households-white neighborhood would certainly try to leave an area with eight black households and seven white households.

Few whites would try to move away if one black entered their neighborhood. In 1992, only 4% would do so, a significant drop from the 7% who would have moved away in 1976. If Detroit-area residents selected their neighborhoods randomly, the typical neighborhood would resemble

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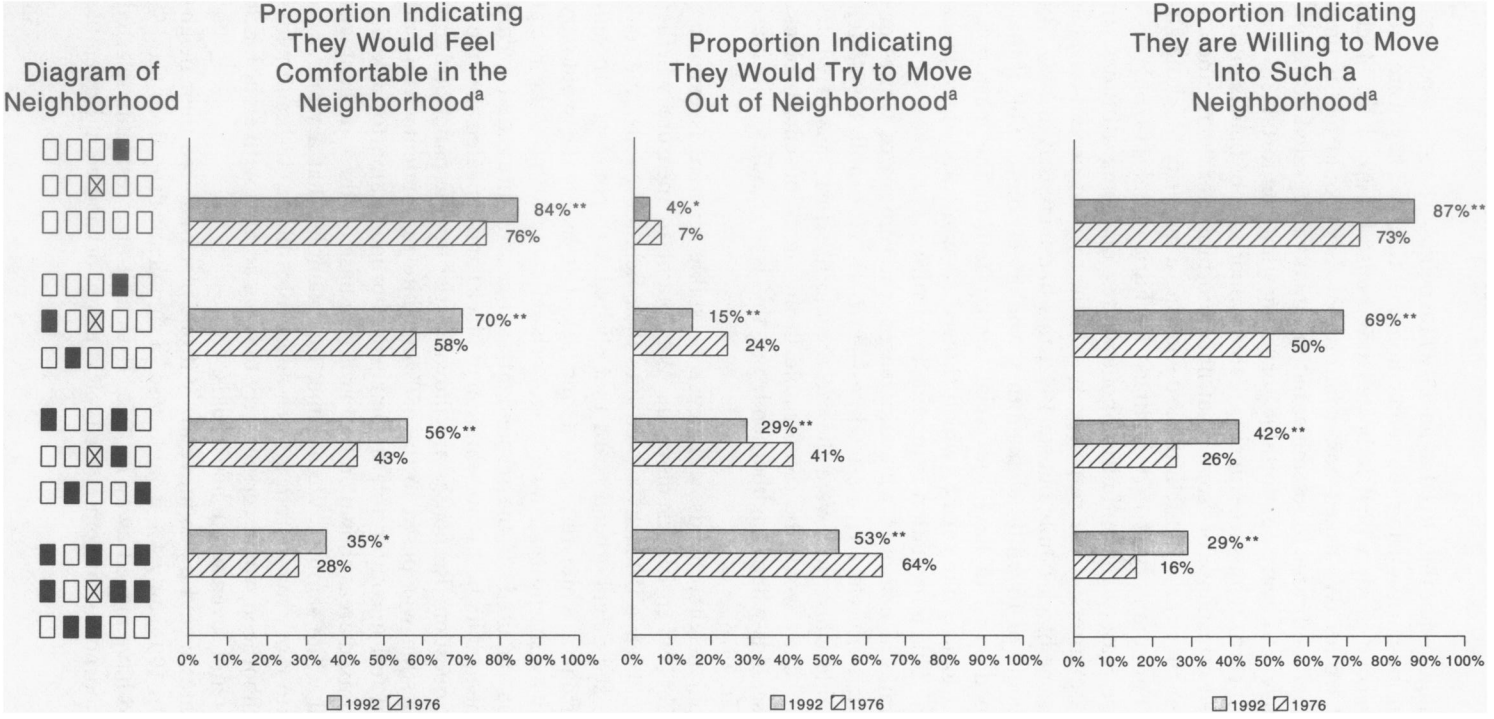

FIG. 3.—Attractiveness of neighborhoods of varying racial compositions for white respondents, DAS 1976 and 1992 (significance shown for change from 1976 to 1992; $*P < .05$; $**P < .01$; the denominator for % is the total white population).

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the three-black-, 12-white-households situation. In 1992 15% said they would try to move away from a neighborhood like this, suggesting that the overwhelming majority of whites would remain and meaning that whites are willing to accept a representation of blacks on their own block equal to that of the metropolis. Greater representations of blacks, however, led more whites to say they would try to leave, and in 1992, as in 1976, the majority of whites would move away from a majority-black neighborhood, although even here there was a significant liberalization of white responses.

Because integrated neighborhoods will remain racially mixed only if some whites replace those blacks and whites who move away from such locations every year, we also assessed the willingness of whites to move into mixed areas. Each respondent was presented with the same five cards and was asked if there were any of these neighborhoods they were willing to move into should they find an attractive home they could afford.

Are Detroit-area whites willing to move into neighborhoods that already have black residents? The answer is yes if there are just a few, but no if there are many. In 1992, almost 90% of whites said they *would* move into a neighborhood with one black and 14 white residents (see fig. 3). Considering the neighborhood resembling the racial composition of the metropolis—three black households and 12 white households—almost 70% would move in, but 30% would not. The racial tolerance of whites has a limit, and neighborhoods with five or eight black households were not attractive to whites in either 1976 or 1992. White demand for housing in an area is clearly affected by its racial composition.

How Widespread Were the Changes in White Attitudes about Residential Integration?

Were changes between 1976 and 1992 in attitudes widespread or were they restricted to younger whites or the extensively educated? We calculated scores indexing white attitudes concerning two dimensions of integration. Each had a minimum value of zero, which indicates the acceptance of residential integration, and a maximum of 100, which reports strong opposition.

First, if a white said he or she would be "very uncomfortable" should their neighborhood come to have one black resident, he or she received the maximum score of 100. If a person said they would be "very comfortable" in the eight-black-, seven-white-households neighborhood, he or she got the minimum score of zero on this index of *white discomfort* with black neighbors. Second, a white who said he or she *would not* consider moving into an attractive, affordable home should it be located in a

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neighborhood with a single black household received the maximum score of 100, while someone who said they *were willing to enter* the majority-black neighborhood shown on card 5 got a score of zero. Note that high scores indicate a white rejection of residential integration, low scores an acceptance of it.

Table 1 presents information about the index of *white discomfort* with black neighbors and the measure of white unwillingness to enter integrated neighborhoods. The average score on this discomfort index fell from 47 to 40 between 1976 and 1992. This means that, on average, the first card to produce an "uncomfortable" response from whites in 1976 was the five-black-, 10-white-households neighborhood while, in 1992, it was the eight-black-, seven-white-households neighborhood. The willingness of whites to move into racially mixed neighborhoods changed in a similar manner, and all of these changes were significant.

Two primary determinants of racial attitudes among whites are their birth cohort and their educational attainment. Younger persons report more liberal attitudes than older ones and people who spent many years as students typically espouse different attitudes than those who did not complete high school. Table 1 classifies whites by five characteristics associated with racial attitudes. Younger whites said they were more comfortable with blacks on their block than did older whites, and they also reported more willingness to move into integrated neighborhoods. Educational attainment was strongly linked to attitudes about integration. On both of these measures, whites with college degrees were about one-half a standard deviation different from those who did not have a secondary school diploma.

We anticipated that family income would be related to these attitudes about residential integration in a fashion similar to education. Persons in prosperous families, we presumed, would be more tolerant of black neighbors since they possess the resources to move to a different neighborhood should that be desirable. But family income was not significantly linked to these attitudes. Gender differences were modest, but there is clear evidence that women, more than men, reported being comfortable with black neighbors.

For more than two decades, whites in the city of Detroit have lived in a majority-black municipality, although most of their close neighbors are whites. Many locations in the suburban ring have specific reputations with regard to racial integration. Dearborn and Livonia—just outside Detroit—have reputations for hostility toward blacks; Macomb County has a reputation for greater hostility toward blacks than does Oakland County. We hypothesized that individuals might be influenced by these reputations when they selected a suburban home and that living in particular locations would reinforce strongly held attitudes. However, we

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TABLE 1

ATTITUDES OF WHITES CONCERNING RACIAL RESIDENTIAL INTEGRATION, DETROIT AREA, 1976, 1992

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS	INDEX OF DISCOMFORT WITH BLACK NEIGHBORS[a]			INDEX OF UNWILLINGNESS TO MOVE INTO MIXED NEIGHBORHOODS[b]		
	1976	1992	Change	1976	1992	Change
Age:						
Under 35 years old	41[c]	30[c]	−11*	53[c]	35[c]	−18*
35–44 years old	47	34	−13*	56	41	−15*
45–54 years old	50	36	−14*	60	45	−15*
55–64 years old	50	45	−5*	65	56	−9*
65 and older	53	48	−5*	71	58	−13*
Educational attainment:						
Fewer than 12 years	51[c]	46[c]	−5*	64[c]	54[c]	−10*
12 years	51	41	−10*	64	50	−14*
13–15 years	39	36	−3*	51	42	−9*
16 or more years	38	29	−9	49	36	−13*
Family income (constant 1991 dollars):						
Not reported	53	44	−9*	65	49	−16*
Under $20,000	43	39	−4*	55	50	−5*
$20,000–$39,999	45	35	−10*	57	43	−14*
$40,000–$59,999	49	38	−9*	61	43	−17*
$60,000–$79,999	46	38	−8*	61	45	−16*
$80,000 or more	47	32	−15*	58	41	−17*
Gender:						
Men	50[d]	39	−11*	61	44	−17*
Women	44	36	−8*	58	45	−13*
Place of residence:						
City of Detroit	44	33	−11*	61	45	−16*
Remainder of Wayne County	47	39	−8	59	46	−13*
Oakland County	46	35	−11*	58	44	−14*
Macomb County	51	40	−11*	61	42	−19*
Mean	47	40	−7*	59	45	−14*
SD	33	38		36	35	
N	706	723		706	723	

[a] Whites who said they would feel "very *un*comfortable" should their neighborhood come to have one black and 14 white households score "100"; whites who said they would feel "very comfortable" should their neighborhood come to have eight black and seven white households score "0."

[b] Whites who said they "would *not* consider" moving into a neighborhood of one black and 14 white households score "100"; whites who said they "would consider" moving into a neighborhood of eight black and seven white residents score "0."

[c] The ANOVA model reports that residential integration scores differ among categories of this variable at the .01 level.

[d] The ANOVA model reports that residential integration scores differ among categories of this variable at the .05 level.

* $P < .01$.

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found that whites living in the four locations shown in table 1 did not differ significantly in their attitudes about residential integration. We were not surprised that, by 1992, whites in the city of Detroit expressed the greatest comfort with black neighbors. They are, of course, the residual of whites who remain in a largely black central city.

The shift toward more liberal attitudes was not restricted to particular groups of whites. Table 1 shows a widespread pattern of significant changes between 1976 and 1992. The trend toward more liberal white attitudes will likely continue as older whites and their limited educations are replaced by younger more extensively educated whites.

While these results tell us about the neighborhood preferences of whites, they do not tell us anything about what constitutes those attitudes. Why do whites prefer neighborhoods with a certain racial composition? Why do they say they would leave a neighborhood with a particular composition? To go beyond the information from forced-choice questions, we laced the survey with open-ended questions, thereby securing insight into how respondents understood or explained racial residential segregation. Respondents who indicated in the "would move out" questions that they would try to leave a racially mixed area—53% of all white respondents—were asked to explain why, in their own terms.

Regardless of which particular neighborhood a person indicated they would move out of, the most frequently mentioned reason was a concern about declining property values. Approximately 40% of respondents who said they would move out gave this as their reason. As one respondent put it: "I'd like to feel I'm not racist, but as a homeowner, I'd be concerned that my property value would go down. That seems to be what happens. It's not the African-American's fault, but the whites' reactions."

A respondent who would move out of a neighborhood with just one black family explained: "That would have a significant impact on the value of my property—which is the single biggest investment I have, and I wouldn't risk that." And a white who would move out if his neighborhood came to have five black families referred to "past experiences." When asked to explain, the respondent stated, "Values of houses go down when blacks move in. It's not right, but you have to go with what everybody else does. For Sale signs would pop up and I can't afford to lose on my house."

The second most common theme, mentioned by just under one in five respondents who would move out (or about 10% of all white respondents) was that the arrival of blacks would bring increases in crime, violence, and drug problems. They would move out, they said, because they feared for their safety. Two respondents who each stated they would move out of a neighborhood with three black families illustrate this theme: "Be-

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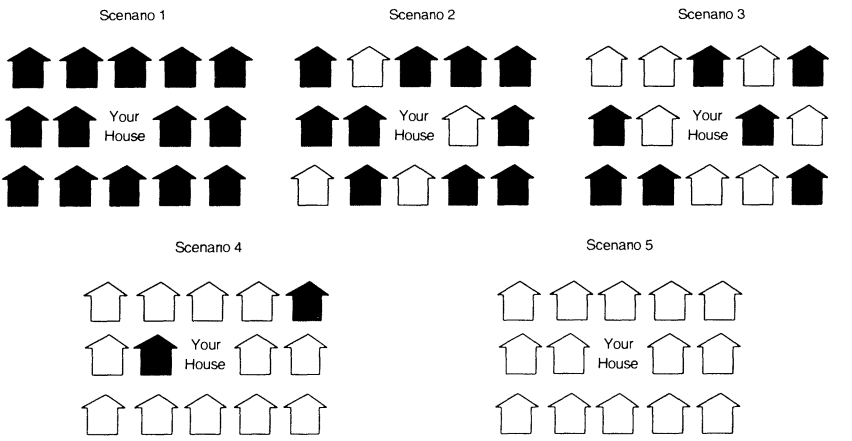

FIG. 4.—Neighborhood diagrams used for black respondents, DAS 1976 and 1992.

cause the neighborhood is turning black—I assume crime rates would rise." And "When you get one black family, you get a whole bunch of them. A lot of drug addicts come in."

Whites in our survey gave many reasons for wanting to move out of certain neighborhoods, but the two most common were beliefs that property values would fall, and, to a lesser degree, the perception that crime rates would rise in such areas. These explanations give a different meaning to Clark's hypothesis that white and black preferences are the driving force behind residential segregation: the preferences do not reflect so much a desire to "live with my own kind" or to "be around people that are like myself" (a response given by fewer than 10% of respondents to this question) as they reflect a desire to maintain the property values and safety of their neighborhood.

RACIAL RESIDENTIAL ATTITUDES OF BLACKS, 1976 AND 1992

Living with Whites on the Block

Few, if any, Detroit neighborhoods went from black to white, so it was pointless to ask African-Americans if they would be upset by the arrival of whites in their neighborhoods; thus, the residential preference questions for blacks differ from those for whites. We showed blacks five diagrams of neighborhoods varying in composition from all-black to all-white, as illustrated in figure 4.

Blacks were asked to imagine that they were searching for a house and found a nice one they could afford. This home was designated at

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the center of each neighborhood. They were then given the cards and asked to rank the neighborhoods from the one most attractive to them to the one least attractive.

When the residential preferences of Detroit blacks in 1976 and 1992 are compared, we find little change. Figure 5 shows the percentage of black respondents who rated each neighborhood as their first or second choice. Most African-Americans preferred areas that were racially mixed where there already was a substantial representation of blacks. The ideal neighborhood was one in which blacks comprised at least one-half the residents. Figure 5 illustrates that there have been statistically significant declines in the proportion of blacks who ranked the "3 black/12 white" or "8 black/7 white" neighborhood as their first or second choice and a significant increase in the percentage who highly rated the "11 black/4 white" area as the first or second choice. Shifts in the preferences of blacks were away from residential integration.

If the American apartheid system is to disappear, some blacks will move into largely or exclusively white neighborhoods. Are blacks willing to be the pioneers who change the racial composition of an area, or do they strongly prefer already integrated areas? We gave the cards to blacks, asked them to imagine that they had been searching for a home and had found an attractive one they could afford. It could be located in any of the areas shown on the cards ranging from all-black to all-white. We then asked them which neighborhoods they would be willing to enter.

There were no significant differences between 1976 and 1992 in the willingness of blacks to move where there already were black residents. Figure 5, however, shows that racially mixed neighborhoods are more popular with blacks than the all-black area. In 1976 31% of blacks said they *would not* enter an all black neighborhood; in 1992 that figure had declined to 25%.

In addition, most Detroit area blacks are reluctant to be the first of their race in a white neighborhood. Less than one-third of the 1992 respondents are willing to take this risk, a significant decrease from the 38% who were willing to move into an all-white area in 1976.

In order to understand the meaning of these percentages for blacks, we need to relate them to the similar percentages for whites. A careful comparison of the percentages of black and white respondents who would move into integrated neighborhoods reveals that opinions are asymmetrically distributed between the races across neighborhoods. In both 1976 and 1992, black respondents reject only the segregated alternatives. However, they are almost as willing to move into neighborhoods that reflect the overall racial composition of the Detroit metropolitan area (25% black, 75% white), as they are to move into neighborhoods that are more predominantly black (e.g., 50%–75% black). In other words,

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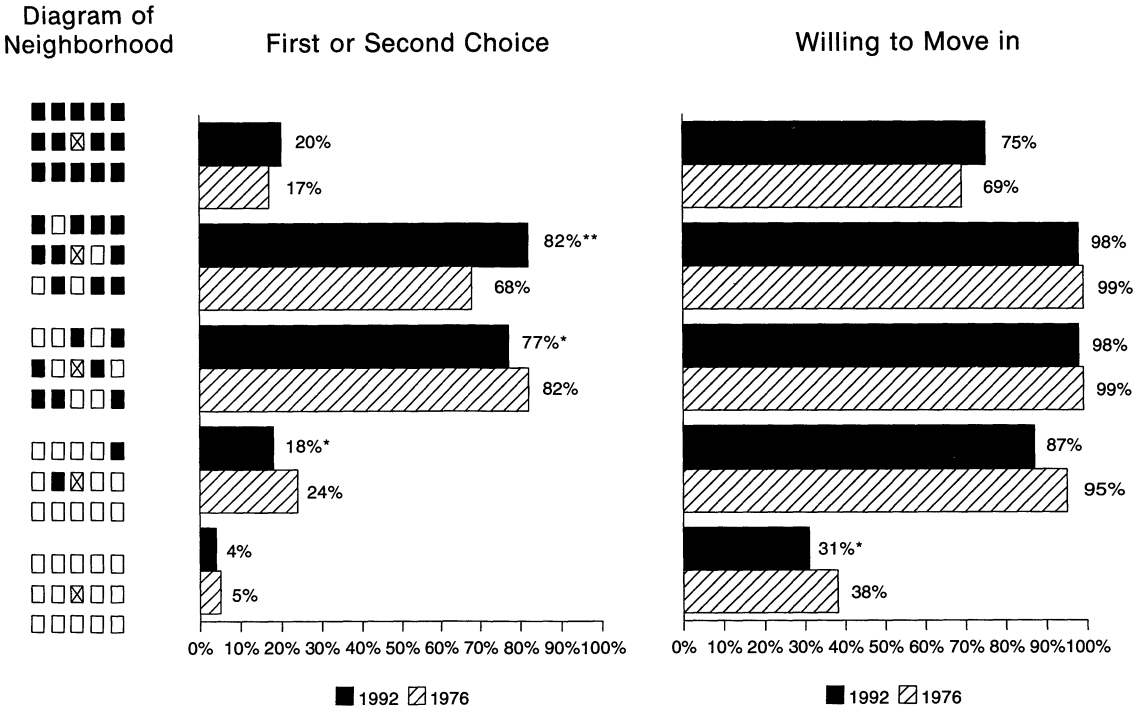

FIG. 5.—Attractiveness of neighborhoods of varying racial compositions for black respondents, DAS 1976 and 1992 (significance shown for change from 1976 to 1992; $*P < .05$; $**P < .01$; 1976 $N = 404$; 1992 $N = 750$).

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TABLE 2

RANGE OF NEIGHBORHOOD-COMPOSITION RESPONSES

TYPE OF NEIGHBORHOOD	% WILLING TO ENTER			
	Whites[a]		Blacks	
	1992	1976	1992	1976
All white	95	99	31*	38*
20% black	69*	50*	87	95
53% black	29*	16*	98	99
All black	0	0	75	69

[a] We have assumed 0% for all-black neighborhoods. In actuality, had we measured this alternative, we would expect to find a small percentage of whites willing to move to an all-black area.

* $P < .05$ for the difference between 1976 and 1992.

black willingness to move into a neighborhood does not increase monotonically with a rise in the percentage of black residents.

On the other hand, the responses of whites suggest that almost all would be willing to move to an all-white neighborhood and, we assume, they would reject becoming a white pioneer in one of Detroit's black neighborhoods. Thus, in both 1976 and 1992 white willingness to move to a neighborhood is quite monotonic with the degree of its whiteness. The percentages of each race who would be willing to live in neighborhoods with different racial compositions can be arrayed as shown in table 2.

The contrast between blacks and whites is unmistakable. At least *some* African-Americans (close to one-third) would be willing to move into the segregated white neighborhood even though almost *no* whites would choose an all-black area. Furthermore, the racial mix that mirrors the composition of the metropolitan region commands much more approval among blacks (87%) than it does among whites (69%), a difference that is highly significant ($\chi^2 = 40.85$; $P < .001$). While it is true that neither blacks nor whites want to live in areas that are occupied solely by members of the other race, it is also true that blacks are much less opposed to being among large numbers of whites than whites are to being among large numbers of blacks. These data, in and of themselves, cast considerable doubt on the proposition that racial residential segregation continues to exist because each race prefers to live where it is numerically dominant. Instead, the results suggest that this attitude has been more prevalent among whites in the past and may only now be gaining some ground among blacks, a possibility we consider below.

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TABLE 3

ATTITUDES OF BLACKS CONCERNING RACIAL RESIDENTIAL INTEGRATION, DETROIT AREA, 1976, 1992

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS	INDEX OF NEIGHBORHOOD RACIAL PREFERENCE[a]			% WILLING TO ENTER AN ALL-WHITE NEIGHBORHOOD		
	1976	1992	Change	1976	1992	Change
Age:						
Under 35 years old	65	68	+3	39	21	−17**
35–44 years old	61	70	+9**	36	24	−12
45–54 years old	62	70	+8	38	26	−12
55–64 years old	61	67	+6	30	30	0
65 and older	60	67	+7	43	38	−5
Educational attainment:						
Fewer than 12 years	65	70	+5	35	25	−10**
12 years	61	70	+9**	37	31	−6
13–15 years	59	67	+8**	48	25	−23**
16 or more years	71	65	−6	17	24	+7
Family income (constant 1991 dollars):						
Not reported	60	71	+11*	37	28	−9
Under $20,000	65	69	+4	38	27	−11**
$20,000–$39,999	63	67	+4	43	25	−18**
$40,000–$59,999	60	73	+13**	33	29	−4
$60,000 or more	64	59	−6	25	30	+5
Gender:						
Men	64	68	+4	33	30	−3
Women	62	69	+7**	39	26	−13**
Place of residence:						
City of Detroit	62	68	+5**	38	27	−11**
Suburban ring	67	68	+1	19	30	+11
Mean	63	68	+5**	38	31	−6*
SD	24	20		48	45	
N	379	750		379	750	

[a] Blacks who ranked an all-black neighborhood as their first residential preference score "100"; those who ranked an all-white neighborhood as their first residential preference score "0."

* $P < .05$.

** $P < .01$.

How Widespread Were the Changes in Black Attitudes about Residential Integration?

Changes in the residential preferences of blacks were small, but they suggest a slight shift away from residential integration. We wished to investigate whether these changes typified all groups of blacks. Table 3 presents these findings.

We calculated a score indexing the preferences of blacks based upon

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their ratings of the five neighborhoods. If a respondent ranked the all-black area first and then ranked the others in order of their blackness such that the all-white area was least attractive, he or she received the maximum score of 100. On the other hand, a black respondent who ranked the all-white neighborhood as their first choice, and then rated the others by their racial composition such that the all-black area was last, received the minimum score of zero. High scores on this index report a preference for black areas, while low scores were associated with a preference for residentially integrated neighborhoods. Table 3 shows these scores as well as the percentage of blacks—in 1976 and 1992—who said they were willing to move into an exclusively white neighborhood.

Overall, the score for blacks on this index of residential preference increased between 1976 and 1992 by five points. This change was consistent among blacks in all birth cohorts, at all educational or income levels, and among both black men and women. The shift in residential preferences away from integration characterizes all components of Detroit's black population except those at the highest income and educational levels. Blacks who graduated from college or whose family income exceeded $60,000 (in 1991 dollars) favored residential more in 1992 than in 1976.

The percentage of blacks willing to pioneer in all-white neighborhoods fell significantly from 38% to 31%. A roughly similar change characterized all subgroups of the black population with the exception of those at the top of the educational or income distribution, who were more willing to pioneer in white neighborhoods in 1992. Blacks who graduated from college and who are now earning sizable incomes may frequently work with white peers and thus have the financial resources and social skills to live wherever they please. And they may be seen by their white neighbors as "acceptable" African-Americans. (See Feagin and Sikes [1994] for evidence of the discrimination and hostility these blacks endure, nevertheless; also see Cose 1993.)

The attitudes of Detroit-area whites and blacks changed in surprisingly different ways between 1976 and 1992: whites reported more liberal attitudes about neighborhood mixing, while blacks increasingly preferred largely black areas and were less willing to enter all-white ones.

As with our analysis of whites' residential preferences, our open-ended questions give us insight into why blacks hold the preferences they do. The interviewer pointed to the neighborhood the black respondent selected as his or her first choice and asked, "Could you tell me why you think that is the most attractive neighborhood?" Following Clark's argument that residential segregation persists because blacks prefer to live with blacks and whites with whites, we were interested in understanding why blacks hold such preferences, if, in fact, they do. We focus

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on the extreme case—those 14% of the 750 black respondents whose first choice was the all-black neighborhood.

Among these respondents, nearly one-half mentioned that they "wanted to live with blacks," they "had always lived with blacks," or they "wanted to live with their own kind." This response, however, is really just a restatement of their preference. The second most frequently mentioned reason provides more insight into why they hold this preference: nearly one-quarter of those who said they wanted to live in an all-black neighborhood indicated it was because they felt it was safer and more welcoming. For example, one respondent explained: "I'd rather live among my own people. . . . I feel more comfortable. . . . My people have told me how I would be treated living around all whites." Another respondent illustrates a related sentiment: "Because white people are prejudiced against us. . . . If they don't want me living in their neighborhood, then I don't want to be there."

Finally, another reason given for wanting to live in an all-black neighborhood was a desire to live around people with common interests and values and to be a part of a community. One respondent explained: "I love to live around black people because of a communality of values. I don't have anything against living with whites either, but I prefer to live around blacks."

While blacks' residential preferences are complex and driven by a variety of forces, this analysis suggests one important factor underlying their preferences: many blacks feel that whites would not welcome them or that their lives would be less comfortable and perhaps endangered if they shared a neighborhood with whites.

It is difficult to assess the prevalence of these sentiments. Our data provide indirect evidence of this dynamic. When we asked all blacks to explain why residential segregation existed, they commonly reported that "whites don't want to live around us." Thus, it appears that part of blacks' residential preferences can be attributed to the perceived hostility of whites toward blacks. In addition, recent analyses of in-depth interviews with several hundred middle-class, black professionals indicate that some African-Americans recognize fully the personal disadvantages of living in integrated settings. These interviews reveal as well the determination of some highly educated and articulate African-Americans to face uncomfortable and discriminatory situations and claim for themselves the accoutrements of success—a nice house, good schools, a desirable neighborhood (Feagin and Sikes 1994, chap. 6). The data in table 3 support this aspect of Feagin and Sikes's portrait by showing that highly educated and prosperous African-Americans in the Detroit area, in contrast to others, have become more favorable to integration since 1976.

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STEREOTYPES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD PREFERENCES OF WHITES

The Massey and Denton (1993, chap. 4) explanation for continued segregation posits stereotypes as the key variable linking the preferences of whites to discriminatory real estate practices. Do whites hold negative stereotypes about blacks and, if so, do those stereotypes influence attitudes about being comfortable with blacks on the block or whites' willingness to move into integrated areas?

To measure the endorsement of stereotypes, we used questions developed elsewhere (Bobo and Kluegel, 1991; Bobo, Johnson and Oliver, 1992; Smith 1991) and first asked in the 1990 General Social Survey.

Detroit respondents—both black and white—were given a card showing a seven-point scale with a positive characteristic such as "tends to be intelligent" at one end and the opposite characteristic, such as "tends to be unintelligent," at the other. Respondents were told to rank their own race and the other race on this scale. For example, assigning a score of "7" to a race meant the respondent felt they tended to be intelligent, while assigning a score of "1" meant the respondent thought the group tended to be unintelligent. The direction of the scale differed from item to item. The dimensions asked about in the 1992 DAS were

rich versus poor;
tends to be intelligent versus tends to be unintelligent;
prefers to be self-supporting versus prefers to live off welfare;
tends to be hard to get along with versus tends to be easy to get along with;
tends to speak English well versus tends to speak English poorly.

We began with the rich-poor dimension to introduce respondents to the task in an easy, nonthreatening manner. The census of 1990 found that 38% of Detroit-area black households had incomes below the poverty line compared to 8% of whites. If having an income exceeding five times the poverty line qualifies a household as "secure," then 15% of blacks and 34% of whites were secure according to the decennial enumeration (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1993).

To assess stereotypes, we asked about "tendencies," "preferences," and subjective judgments. To be sure, blacks are less extensively educated than whites: the census of 1990 reported that 17% of Detroit-area blacks over age 24 completed college compared to 25% of whites. And blacks—more so than whites—obtained payments from the welfare system. In 1989, 21% of black households, in contrast to 4% of white households, received such benefits (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1993). But the stereotype questions did not focus on these objective matters; rather they asked whites their evaluations of both races with regard to economic

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status, self-support, intelligence, the speaking of English, and how difficult or easy it is to get along with the group.

We were not surprised to find that an analysis of reliability involving the five dimensions found that the "rich and poor" answers did not correlate highly with those concerning the other four items. The question about financial status is a factual one and should not, we believe, enter into the development of a stereotype score.[4] (A ranking of white responses to all five dimensions is given in appendix table A1.)

Given the opportunity, we presume that most people would select neighbors whom they deem intelligent, self-supporting, easy to get along with and, especially if they have children, proficient speakers of English, since this will facilitate learning in the schools. Although some whites consistently rank blacks alongside whites, *most* whites believe that blacks tend to be less intelligent than whites, prefer more than whites to live off welfare, tend to be more difficult to get along with, and speak English much more poorly than whites.

Figure 6 presents the scores whites gave to the two races, the scale having been altered so that "7" is the most positive, "4" neutral, and "1" the most negative. Whites saw the largest gaps with regard to a preference for self-support and the ability to speak English, while they view the racial discrepancy as small with regard to getting along with blacks. Fifty-six percent of whites ranked whites ahead of blacks in intelligence, 71% ranked whites higher with regard to self-support, and more than three-quarters said that whites spoke English better than blacks.

To derive a stereotype index for whites, we subtracted the score they gave blacks from the score they assigned to whites on each dimension, summed them, and adjusted the result so that it had a 100-point range. A white who placed whites at the top of every dimension and blacks at the bottom got the maximum stereotype score of 50, while whites who ranked whites and blacks the same, got a score of zero. Eighty-five of the 691 whites—or 12%—received this value, while 20 whites rated blacks, on average, higher than whites, so they got negative scores on this index.

Table 4 reports the average white stereotype score was +10, implying that, on average, whites ranked blacks about one point below whites on each of the four dimensions. It also shows the relationship of five

[4] The four items concerning evaluations of blacks and whites with regard to "tends to be intelligent vs. tends to be unintelligent," "prefers to be self-supporting vs. prefers to live off welfare," "tends to be hard to get along with vs. tends to be easy to get along with," and "tends to speak English well vs. tends to speak English poorly" were used to produce a stereotype index. Cronbach's α for this scale is +.64.

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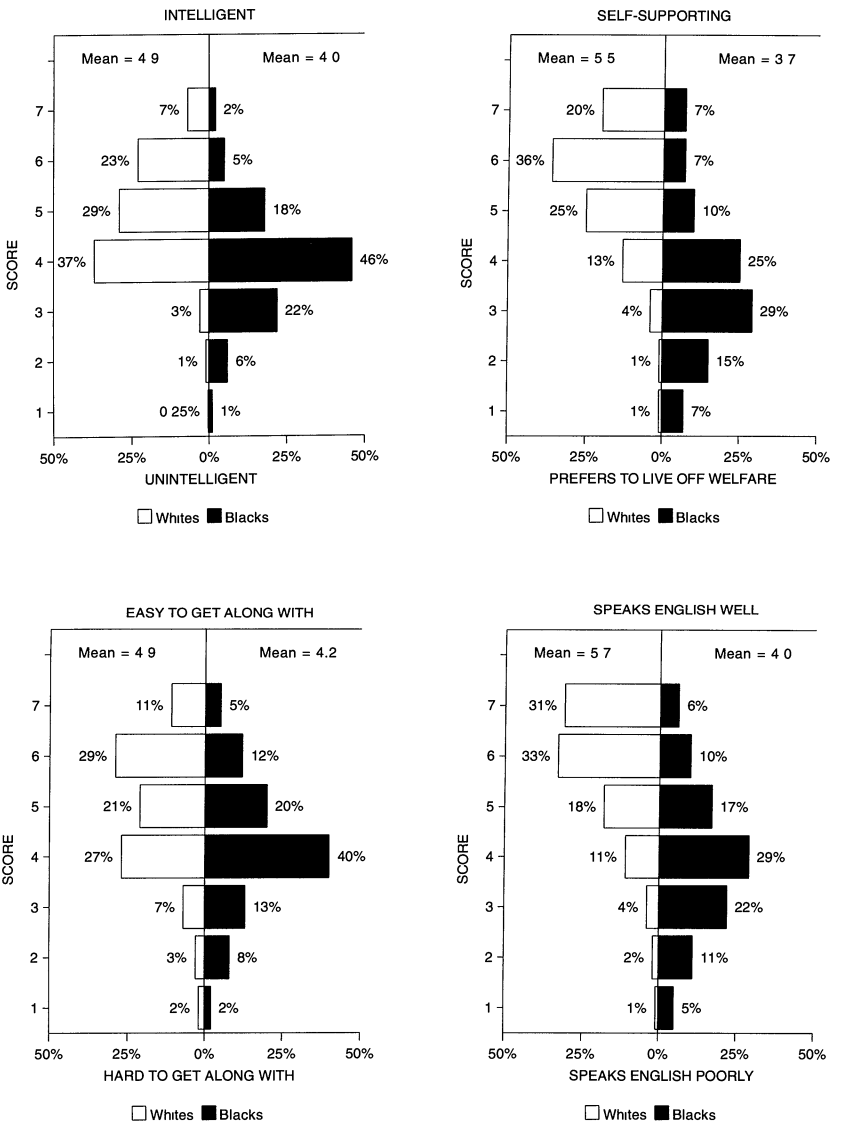

FIG. 6.—Whites' ratings of blacks with regard to the four components of the stereotype index.

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TABLE 4

STEREOTYPE INDEX SCORES FOR WHITE RESPONDENTS, DETROIT AREA, 1992

Characteristics of Respondents	Stereotype Index Score[a]
Age:	
Under 35 years old	9[b]
35–44 years old	10
45–54 years old	10
55–64 years old	11
65 and older	13
Educational attainment:	
Fewer than 12 years	11[b]
12 years	12
13–15 years	11
16 or more years	7
Family income (constant 1991 dollars):	
Not reported	9
Under $20,000	12
$20,000–$39,999	11
$40,000–$59,999	10
$60,000–$79,999	10
$80,000 or more	9
Gender:	
Men	11
Women	10
Place of residence:	
City of Detroit	10
Remainder of Wayne County	11
Oakland County	10
Macomb County	11
Mean	10
SD	9
N	683

[a] The stereotype index has a 100-point range (+50 – −50). Respondents were given a seven-point scale and asked to rate blacks and whites with regard to four characteristics:

tends to be unintelligent *vs.* tends to be intelligent;
prefers to be self-supporting *vs.* prefers to live off welfare;
tends to be hard to get along with *vs.* tends to be easy to get along with;
tends to speak English well *vs.* tends to speak English poorly.

The score a white respondent gave to blacks was subtracted from the score he or she gave to whites. If respondent gave the maximum difference between blacks and whites on each of the four dimensions he or she received the maximum stereotype score of +50. If, on average, a respondent rated blacks and whites the same on these dimensions, his or her score was 0. A respondent who consistently rated blacks at the top of each scale and whites at the bottom received the minimum stereotype score of −50.

[b] A one-way ANOVA model reports that the mean values of the stereotype scores differ by categories of this variable at the .01 level.

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demographic factors to these stereotype scores. Age and educational attainment were strongly linked to the endorsement of these traditional stereotypes. Women had insignificantly lower scores than men, and neither family income nor place of residence within the Detroit metropolis was significantly related to stereotype use.

A multivariate model assessed the independent effects of demographic variables shown in table 4 upon the stereotype index. Two whites, similar in other characteristics, who differed by 20 years in age, differed by about 1.5 points on the stereotype score (mean = 10; SD = 9). Four additional years of schooling—net of other variables—reduced the stereotype scores of whites by just under three points, but family income, gender, and place of residence had no statistically significant impact.

STEREOTYPES AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD PREFERENCES OF WHITES

Are negative stereotypes a key variable accounting for the persistence of segregation? Detroit-area whites say they are increasingly comfortable with blacks on their block, are less likely to flee when blacks move in, and claim to be more willing to buy homes in integrated neighborhoods. And when asked about the *principle* of equal opportunities in the housing market, 85% of the 1992 white sample rejected the idea that "white people have a right to keep black people out of their neighborhood if they want to and black people should respect that right." Yet when asked the stereotype items, 85% of whites ranked blacks below whites.

To assess the consequences of stereotypes, three racial neighborhood indexes, calculated from the responses of whites, were treated as dependent variables. We sought to explain them, first with demographic variables and then with the stereotype index to determine if it altered our findings. Many would contend that white aversion to living with blacks is based primarily on economics, not race. We took this into account by using the responses of whites to the item asking them to rank both races on the rich versus poor scale. Eighty-three percent rated whites as the more prosperous race. If the reluctance to live with blacks is rooted in economics, this variable, rather than the stereotype index, should explain whites' racial attitudes.

We described two of the dependent variables in table 5 previously: the index of discomfort with black neighbors and the index of unwillingness to move into mixed neighborhoods. We also computed an index of white flight, with high scores going to whites who said they would move away from areas with only one black household and low scores to those who would remain in majority-black neighborhoods.

Considering the demographic variables, table 5 shows that birth cohort

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TABLE 5

DETERMINANTS OF WHITE ATTITUDES ABOUT RACIAL RESIDENTIAL INTEGRATION, DETROIT AREA, 1992

	INDEX OF DISCOMFORT WITH BLACK NEIGHBORS		INDEX OF WHITE FLIGHT		INDEX OF UNWILLINGNESS TO MOVE INTO MIXED NEIGHBORHOODS	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
Intercept	39.1	22.3	32.5	17.6	42.9	28.9
Age in years	+.4**	+.3**	+.3**	+.2*	+.5**	+.4**
Education in years	−2.1**	−1.3*	−2.1**	−1.3*	−2.1**	−1.4*
Family income (constant 1991 dollars):[a]						
$20,000–$39,999	+4.3	+4.4	+5.6	+5.7	+3.0	+3.1
$40,000–$59,999	+7.2	+8.4	+8.8*	+9.5	+6.3	+7.0
$60,000–$79,999	+9.0	+9.2	+13.2**	+13.3**	+10.0	+10.1
$80,000 or more	+3.4	+5.3	+3.8	+5.5	+4.4	+6.1
Gender[a]	−3.9	−3.1	−4.9	−4.2	+.1	+.7
Place of residence:[a]						
Remainder of Wayne County	+4.6	+3.3	+2.3	+1.2	+.4	−.7
Oakland County	+1.8	+1.4	−.6	−1.0	−1.7	−2.0
Macomb County	+4.2	+3.8	+2.0	+1.7	−5.2	−5.5
Perception of racial difference in economic status	+1.8	−.2	+2.1*	+.4	+2.2*	+.5
Stereotype index score		+1.2**		+1.1**		+1.0**
Adjusted R^2	.06	.18	.05	.16	.08	.14
Mean of dependent variable	36.9		24.6		44.1	
SD of dependent variable	31.5		29.4		34.1	

NOTE.—"A" indicates model excluding stereotype index; "B" indicates model including stereotype index.

[a] The omitted categories for these series of dichotomous variables are "Under $20,000" for family income, "Men" for gender, and "City of Detroit" for place of residence. Persons not reporting income were placed in modal response category.

* $P < .05$.

** $P < .01$.

SOURCE:—Detroit Area Study, 1992. $N = 671$.

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and educational attainment were consistently significant since young and extensively educated whites accepted residential integration more than older or less educated whites. Recall that high scores on the dependent variables indicate opposition to racial integration. Suburban residents expressed more conservative attitudes than did those whites remaining in largely black Detroit, and women were also more willing than men to accept racial mixing on their blocks. Income had few significant net effects but those toward the middle of the income distribution were more likely to say they would try to leave when blacks moved into their neighborhoods than whites at the top or bottom of the income distribution, perhaps reflecting their anxiety about property values.

When models including the stereotype index (table 5, col. B) are contrasted to those without it (table 5, col. A), we find strong support for the hypothesis that whites who endorsed negative stereotypes were more uncomfortable with black neighbors, would try to move away from lower proportions of blacks in neighborhoods, and were less willing to move into mixed areas. A 10-point difference on the stereotype score in 1992—about one standard deviation unit—led to a net 13-point difference on the index of discomfort with blacks on the block, a net 12-point difference with regard to white flight, and a 10-point difference on the index assessing white unwillingness to move into already integrated neighborhoods. The effects of education and birth cohort remained significant when the stereotypes measured were used, revealing that endorsing stereotypes has an effect on important racial attitudes apart from the respondents' age and schooling. In all comparisons in table 5, the explained variance doubled or tripled when stereotypes were used to explain white attitudes about racial integration.

These models also demonstrate that white attitudes about integration are not rooted in economic class factors. That is, whites who view the racial gap in economic status as large said they were more likely to leave and less likely to enter mixed areas than whites who saw a small racial gap. But when the stereotype index was entered, the significant effect of the class measure disappeared.

The educational attainment and age of whites play a role in explaining their attitudes about residential integration, but another important factor is their endorsement of negative stereotypes. That is, many whites endorse stereotypes about blacks, and increases in that endorsement are linked to an aversion to living with blacks.

STEREOTYPES AND PREFERENCES IN OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

The above analysis demonstrates the strong statistical relationship between holding negative evaluations about blacks as a group and a prefer-

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ence for not living in integrated neighborhoods. Again drawing on responses to open-ended questions, we are able to get some idea of the way in which stereotypes enter into residential preferences. We asked respondents to explain, in their own words, why blacks and whites lived in different areas in the Detroit metropolitan area. In their responses, some whites illustrate how stereotypes about blacks shape residential preferences in much the way Massey and Denton hypothesized and as is implied in our regression models. However, it is important to note that because this open-ended question did not ask directly about stereotypes, we use its results not to address the prevalence of stereotypes of blacks among whites, but as an illustration of the mechanisms by which these stereotypes may determine preferences about living in integrated neighborhoods. The stereotypes that emerged in response to this question range from specific beliefs about blacks as bad neighbors (e.g., they let their property run down) to more general beliefs about the behavior of blacks (e.g., they are prone to criminal behavior or they lack the motivation to work).

Following are direct quotes taken from whites in our 1992 study. We stress that these selections are illustrative and are not meant to be representative of all responses given to this question.

> Why do I think it happens? I think blacks, a lot of them, don't keep up their homes. They tend to hang out on street corners instead of in school where they belong. More drugs, alcohol problems. Whites don't want to be around them.

> Because they are different. The two races have different ideas as to their responsibilities to a neighbor. [Tell me more]. A "black neighborhood" vs. a "white neighborhood" is dirtier, less maintained, more inclined to be abused by the residents—throw garbage out the back door and kicking the windows out.

The answers to our question about why a person would move out of a particular neighborhood help us see how, in some cases, whites' stereotypes about blacks as bad neighbors form the basis for their belief that property values would decline in an integrated neighborhood. For example, one respondent explaining why she would try to move away if her neighborhood came to have three black residents said: "It seems like that property values drop when black families move in because they do not keep up their houses." A 31-year-old white woman put it this way: "The niggers, I shouldn't say that, they tend to not take care of where they live. It is a fact. It turns into a crack house. [Anything else?] I don't want to be that close to that kind of people. Run down neighborhoods with their lack of consideration for human people."

Finally, in other cases, explanations for residential segregation invoke

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more general negative stereotypes about blacks: "Because I think that the majority aren't enthused, not motivated, and don't care. I know what I want to say. The opportunity is there if they want to take advantage. I don't think most blacks want to work for anything."

CONCLUSION

Debates about causes of continued residential segregation point to (*a*) discriminatory practices by real estate brokers and lenders and (*b*) the divergent neighborhood preferences of blacks and whites. These are not conflicting explanations. Rather, the actions of real estate brokers and bankers reflect, to some degree, their own views and their perceptions of what their clients want. If there is consensus that both blacks and whites wish to live in segregated neighborhoods, homes and apartments will likely be marketed to perpetuate the presumed values of customers.

We examined how the neighborhood preferences of Detroit-area residents changed since 1976 and what led to such preferences. We measured the direct impact of racial stereotypes on the preferences of whites. The results show a link between whites' racial attitudes and their residential preferences, but it is a complicated one. Whites' attitudes about neighborhood integration became significantly more liberal over the recent past, as reflected in their increasing reports that they would be comfortable in mixed neighborhoods and would remain should modest numbers of blacks come to their area. When we asked whites who said they would try to move away when blacks came about their motivation for flight, the majority *did not* invoke racial stereotypes.

Still, the overall aversion toward living among blacks remains strong, and a substantial minority of whites mention stereotypes when asked direct questions about living with blacks on their block. The more integrated the neighborhood, the fewer the whites who would remain. And, although almost all whites say they would move into a minimally integrated neighborhood, less than half express a willingness to move into neighborhoods with more than a token representation of African-Americans.

Black preferences for mixed neighborhoods have weakened. As was the case 16 years ago, the majority of blacks prefer neighborhoods that are more than minimally integrated. However, black preferences for integrated neighborhoods—in contrast to those of whites—declined except among the black elite. Whether this trend is attributable to an increasing ideological commitment to develop and live in largely black communities, to growing apprehensions about white hostility, or to the belief that integration offers few benefits is unclear.

This study addressed the relationship between whites' use of negative

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stereotypes and their attitudes about living among blacks. Our evidence supports Massey and Denton's (1993, chap. 4) position that stereotypes contribute to the persistence of residential segregation, since whites who endorse negative stereotypes were more likely to say they would flee integrated neighborhoods and were less likely to consider moving into them. In addition, qualitative analyses of reasons given for moving out of integrated neighborhoods indicate that whites are concerned about decreasing property values and increasing crime with the arrival of blacks. These may be guided to some extent by their stereotypical perceptions of African-Americans. However, demographic and economic trends play a role in shaping such attitudes. The population of the city of Detroit went from 45% black in 1970 to 76% in 1990, while the average value of a single-family home (in constant 1989 dollars) fell from $49,000 to $26,000 (U. S. Bureau of the Census 1972, table 10; 1982, table 49; 1992, table 51).

If the liberal shift in white attitudes is genuine and continues, cohort replacement and the continuing trend toward greater educational attainment assure a further liberalization of white racial attitudes and, we hope, attitudes about living in integrated neighborhoods. But it is unrealistic to expect that the slow process of cohort replacement will be sufficient to stem the tide of residential segregation in a metropolis as riven by race as Detroit. Indeed, even if there were no steering and no racial discrimination in the marketing of housing, segregation would likely persist at high levels. The "Chocolate City, Vanilla Suburbs" (see Malbix/Ricks 1976) pattern sung about two decades ago on soul music stations is alive and well in Detroit. If residential integration is to be achieved in Detroit, programs to encourage it will have to be implemented and strongly encouraged. Real estate brokers need to be aware of the liberalization of white attitudes and of the apparent willingness of most of their potential black clients to live in mixed neighborhoods, including overwhelmingly white ones. Homeowners need to be assured that neighborhood services and the flow of credit will be maintained should their area become integrated. A variety of successful prointegration strategies have been effective for several decades in Shaker Heights (near Cleveland), Oak Park (near Chicago), and many other areas (DeMarco and Galster 1993; Saltman 1990). These include community efforts to prevent white flight and welcome members of the minority race, programs to protect against sharp falls in property values and slight discounts in interest rates for first-time home buyers who purchase in a neighborhood where they are the racial minority. Federal housing agencies, lending institutions, and the real estate industry may be able to capitalize on both the liberalization of white attitudes and the willingness of most blacks to live in mixed areas.

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APPENDIX

TABLE A1

RELATIVE RANKINGS OF BLACKS GIVEN BY DETROIT-AREA WHITES, 1992

	DIMENSIONS OF STEREOTYPE INDEX				
	1	2	3	4	5
Ranked whites higher than blacks:					
4 points or more	6	4	18	6	15
3 points	17	8	17	7	14
2 points	35	18	19	13	22
1 point	25	26	17	20	26
Ranked whites and blacks equal	12	38	26	45	18
Ranked blacks higher than whites:					
1 point	2	3	1	5	3
2 points	2	2	1	2	1
3 points or more	1	1	1	2	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100

NOTE.—The five dimensions are (1) rich vs. poor; (2) tends to be intelligent vs. tends to be unintelligent; (3) prefers self-support to welfare; (4) tends to be easy to get along with vs. tends to be hard to get along with; (5) tends to speak English well vs. tends to speak English poorly. White respondents ranked whites and blacks on these five dimensions using a seven-point scale. This table reports—in %—the differences between the ranking whites gave to whites and the ranking whites gave to blacks. $N = 737$.

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