

Reflections on social capital, integration, and upward mobility

Introduction

This past August, economist Raj Chetty and colleagues published two new papers in *Nature*, based on a massive dataset and accompanied by detailed maps on Opportunity Insights' new Social Capital Atlas, that continue to build the economic case for integration – bringing children together within communities, schools, and institutions, and across class differences. Using Facebook data linked to IRS and other datasets, the study made an empirical comparison of three classic forms of social capital and found that “connectedness between different types of people, such as those with low vs. high socioeconomic status” was the strongest predictor of upward economic mobility for low income children – and that these positive impacts were further enhanced by the degree to which children were living and going to school in places where “friending bias” (the tendency to be connected to people in your own SES group) was lowest. Policymakers and advocates were already indebted to Professor Chetty and his co-authors for their 2015 finding that children who move from high poverty to low poverty neighborhoods when they are young have dramatically improved outcomes as adults, and this new research has brought us closer to understanding the mechanisms that drive these outcomes. As the following essays illustrate, Chetty’s findings have crucial lessons for federal housing programs, land use, housing mobility, and school integration. (See page 2 for a full Table of Contents)

Social Capital and Economic Connectedness

john powell and Eloy Toppin

This August, 2022, Raj Chetty and his team of researchers published exciting and promising new findings in the field of social capital and network ties. Specifically, Chetty et al. have demonstrated, through an extensive analysis of Facebook friend connections, the importance of cross-class connectivity to the ability to climb up the socioeconomic ladder. The insights that this research illuminates is significant for several reasons.

First, the new information published in these two latest papers confirms what the field has long known and what we at the Othering and Belonging Institute (OBI) have long advocated for. Yet the papers make the novel contribution of backing up these established positions with rigorously collected and analyzed data that, prior to this study, the field was unable to take advantage of. Chetty’s team gathered and ran the numbers on 21 billion Facebook friendships to further our understanding of social networks. From the work of Robert Sampson to that of Robert Putnam and to studies like the well-known mail drop experiment, social capital research has provided evidence in support of the deep

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The Chetty Team’s Social Capital Findings: A Timely Boost for Mixed-Income Development

Mark L. Joseph

The compelling findings on the relationship between economic connectedness and upward mobility from Raj Chetty and his colleagues provide a much-needed shot in the arm and a guiding light for the ever-expanding field of mixed-income policy and practice. For thirty years now, public-private sector partnerships across the country, and indeed across the world, have been designing, financing and implementing mixed-income developments with the objective of creating planned communities that would be home to a socioeconomic mix of residents. Mixed-income policy and practice aims to be an antidote to the racial segregation, persistent poverty and displacement that now pervades the urban landscape. Billions of dollars have been spent to remake segments of U.S. cities into settings where low SES and high SES individuals of varying social backgrounds can live in proximity and have the opportunity to form relationships. The results of the Chetty team’s dazzling analysis of

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importance of relationships and their facilitation of resources. Chetty’s latest work validates social capital theory and affirms that social networks matter.

It is when social interactions occur across class that people from the bottom rungs of economic wellbeing have a real chance at elevating their socioeconomic status.

The key finding of this research is that the most significant factor in upward mobility is what the Chetty team has termed economic connectedness. They define this term as “the degree of interaction between low- and high-income people.” In this revelation, they state that it is in fact bridging social capital, as opposed to bonding, that generates the largest impact. Although racial and economic segregation persist, as this reporting again confirms, it is when social interactions occur across class that people from the bottom rungs of economic wellbeing have a real chance at elevating their socioeconomic status. The practice of bridging is a concept for which we have tirelessly advocated and a core principle that guides our work at OBI. Bridging has the potential to help heal deep social divides and to help us

overcome this period of fragmentation and de-humanization and rising authoritarianism through a commitment to reaching across difference and a willingness to transform ourselves through an openness to see and hear the other. This process does not require agreement. Our acknowledging another’s humanity does not entail our acknowledging that their views are correct. Chetty’s research here shows another dimension of the tangible and material effects of bridging – that it leads to a greater likelihood of upward mobility and increased income over one’s life.

This fact brings us to our next point, which hinges on another crucial finding by Chetty. Consider belonging, which is another central precept at OBI. The concept is multidimensional. It involves not just interpersonal connection but also the right structural arrangement. This point is prompted by Chetty’s finding that the other types of social capital that the research team investigated – social cohesion and civic engagement – did not prove to have the same impact that economic connectedness demonstrated. This is not to say that these types of social capital are unimportant. As mentioned above, interpersonal bridging in the form of joining civic associations and volunteering in one’s community can help to ameliorate contentious schisms and make collective identity more salient than exclusionary identities. Chetty shows that there are some connections that promote economic mobility and some that do not. Importantly, structural arrangements such as how

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Examining Economic Connectedness Through the Lens of Intergroup Contact Theory and Research

Linda R. Tropp and Mohammed Naeem

As income and wealth gaps continue to grow, economic segregation in American society has become increasingly widespread (Horowitz, Igelnik, & Ardit, 2020; Reardon, & Bischoff, 2011) and opportunities for economic mobility are commonly overestimated (Kraus & Tan, 2015). The landmark analysis recently published by Chetty et al. (2022a; 2022b) emphasizes the crucial role of social capital—that is, the constellation of resources and benefits gained through one’s social network—in addressing challenges presented by economic segregation and supporting prospects for economic mobility among those with lower socio-economic status (SES).

Analyzing data based on 21 billion friendships in the social networks of 72.2 million Facebook users between the ages of 25 and 44, the authors highlight the importance of one particular form of social capital, which they refer to as

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How Social Capital Research Can Help Redress Segregation

By Reggie Jackson and Bo McMillan

The Redress Movement is an emerging racial justice organization that aims to organize racially and ethnically diverse local movements in communities throughout the U.S. We help residents to build and wield collective power needed to redress residential segregation of their own and neighboring communities.

The latest research from Professor Raj Chetty and a team of researchers at Opportunity Insights, elucidating the critical role of social capital in upward income mobility, fits into the work Redress is doing. It provides the type of data which helps us in our work to build a community well-informed of practices which can help reduce the damage caused by decades of segregation policies and practices.

One of the cities where Redress is working is Milwaukee, WI. Milwaukee has been rated as the most racially segregated metropolitan area for a number of decades (Shelbourne, 2020). This segregation has resulted in wide economic disparities among the Black and Latinx

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Post-Move Supports Can Increase the Likelihood of Long-Term Benefits from Housing Mobility Programs

Adria Crutchfield, Ann Lott, and Valerie Rosenberg

Housing mobility programs provide support and information that fundamentally increase choice and self-determination for voucher holders. This is a benefit in and of itself, but we know, too, that such choice is instrumental in enabling voucher holders to move to neighborhoods with high-performing schools, minimal crime, and low rates of poverty. For years, we have been talking about the very tangible positive effects on future educational attainment and income of such moves during childhood. The 2022 research on social capital and economic mobility from Raj Chetty and colleagues presents a compelling argument that economic diversity should be among our top priorities in fighting generational poverty – and gives us new insights about how we can help families make their moves even more successful.

According to Chetty et al, friendships across class are the single greatest determinant of whether low-income children will improve their socioeconomic status, and for the lowest-income people, friendships are most often forged within neighborhoods. To create the conditions where their

children can interact with and befriend people in higher-income groups, voucher families must be able to relocate to and remain in neighborhoods with higher-income households. All housing mobility programs provide information and assistance to families seeking to locate units in “high-opportunity neighborhoods,” but only a subset provide robust post-move support to help movers settle into and, crucially, remain in these neighborhoods. The Inclusive Communities Project in Dallas and the Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership are two such providers.

We recommend an active posture regarding post-move services in all housing mobility programs. Rather than waiting for mobility participants to contact the program, BRHP and ICP program staff make calls, send emails, administer surveys, and conduct both in-person and periodic virtual home visits. When we open the lines of communication in this way, we invite participants to raise concerns before they develop into intractable problems, and we address them to minimize stress on the family. When checking in, we also

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ask about any feelings of increased safety, comfort, or happiness. It is important to celebrate success directly with participants and to develop a communications strategy to share such positive testimonials with the public, particularly policymakers, philanthropists, and prospective program participants. Narrative change and reduction of the stigma attached to the voucher program require continual effort.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge challenges and develop practices to support voucher families who face discrimination. Voucher holders report feeling this stigma in the form of discrimination by landlords, even in jurisdictions where source of income discrimination is prohibited, and even with support from a mobility program. Families endure the pain and indignity of such discrimination in their housing search, and then sometimes find, once they have moved, that some of their new neighbors are less than enthused about having a family with a voucher next door. Although many families make the transition with little drama, we also hear about everything from microaggressions to outright harassment from homeowner associations, police, and school communities. In a recent survey of ICP families living in higher-opportunity areas, more than one-third of respondents reported experiencing racial discrimination or bias during the prior year, and some of these incidents involved teachers at their children's schools. For these families, who usually want to stay in their new neighborhoods, post-move support from the mobility program is crucial to help parents and children make a successful transition.

In our ongoing fight against the stigma often associated with the housing voucher, one component of post-move services at BRHP and ICP is support for participant leadership, which both organizations are in the process of deepening and expanding. Mobility Works collaborates with mobility participants to bring their experience to more audiences, and presents it as valued, vital expertise in conference presentations, conversations with policymakers, and instruction for trainees. We also help our member organizations and technical assistance clients expand opportunities for participant leadership at their agencies. Leadership programming can support voucher holders to develop their self-advocacy skills, present opportunities for participants to make an impact on programs and policies, and foster fellowship among people with similar experiences. For example, ICP recently worked with participants to testify at a Planning and Zoning Commission hearing in favor of a proposed affordable housing development in Plano, TX. The proposal was denied by the Commission and appealed to the City Council, where the participants again testified, and the proposal was ultimately approved. This kind of activity and outcome can help participants build confidence and a sense of efficacy and teach them about the mechanics of advocacy for use in other contexts. Members of BRHP's Client Advisory Board are working with their liaison to create a peer-led support group. They hope to exchange tips and resources and provide mutual emotional support. Black

women with children head 98 percent of BRHP and 90 percent of ICP households, and while past research suggests that a move to a lower-poverty neighborhood can result in mental health improvements for these women, the stress of being the only Black household on the block has the potential to negate this benefit entirely. Participation in a community of people with similar experiences can help fight feelings of isolation and engender a sense of belonging.

Unclear expectations, cultural differences, and miscommunication can also lead to challenges for participants in their new communities. BRHP has a landlord-tenant mediation process that focuses on collaboration, mutual accountability, and problem-solving. Common issues addressed via mediation include access to the property, pet policies, relationships with neighbors, and property upkeep. Tenants most frequently request mediation when there is a maintenance issue, whereas landlords request mediation when the tenant has not maintained the property as expected. Mediation can clarify the problem, determine responsibility for curing it, and create a mutually agreed upon timeline for remediation.

Preserving the tenancy is the primary goal of mediation, but this is not always possible or even desired by the parties. When the tenancy cannot or should not be preserved, the mediation process serves as a space for negotiating the terms and timeline of a mutual lease rescission, and the mobility program can assist the household in identifying and relocating to a different unit in a high-opportunity neighborhood. Funds for back rent, overdue utilities, and damage mitigation can also help households remain in their units or ensure that properties remain available to other mobility participants.

We equip our staff to make referrals to educational and mental health supports, where needed, to ease children's transition to their new schools. It is also important, keeping in mind the goal of cross-class interaction, to help families select and pay for afterschool and summer activities in their new communities.

Finally, we recommend that mobility program leaders think about how to support the children of families that have moved to high-opportunity neighborhoods. We equip our staff to make referrals to educational and mental health supports, where needed, to ease children's transition to their new schools. It is also important, keeping in mind the goal

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Accountability Systems and the Persistence of School Segregation

By Peter Piazza and James Noonan

When he signed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act into law in January 2002, President George W. Bush perhaps knew that the new federally-mandated testing requirements would not be popular. In the auditorium of an Ohio high school, he insisted, however, that the tests were necessary. “I understand taking tests aren’t fun,” he said. “Too bad. We need to know in America. We need to know whether or not children have got the basic education.” In the time since then, the tests indeed have taught us a lot, though not always in the way that Bush anticipated. Instead, we’ve learned how state accountability systems structure access to schools and communities, and we’ve gathered considerable evidence to evaluate whether the law has lived up to the hopes of the civil rights community.

Notably, the data collection provisions first introduced with NCLB have been lauded by civil rights groups for shining a light on educational inequality (e.g., see statements from the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, 2007 and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, 2015). Moreover, the widespread, systematic collection and public release of student learning data has supported a boon of research on educational equity and opportunity gaps.

And yet, so many years later, NCLB’s promise of more equitable learning outcomes remains elusive. One way to view its limitations is to consider its reforms in light of what is, by far, the most promising intervention related to educational equity in the last 60 years: the movement for holistic, or real school integration, that moves beyond school-level desegregation.

Research literature is clear that desegregation efforts were highly effective at improving student learning and narrowing the test score gap between Black and White students (Grissmer et al., 1998; Johnson, 2019; reardon et al., 2015). By contrast, the short-term positive effects of NCLB on student learning were generally modest (Dee & Jacob, 2011; Figlio & Loeb, 2011; Lee, 2008). Meanwhile, during the last two decades of educational accountability, schools in the US have continued resegregating. These observations lead us to an important question for researchers and policy-makers alike: *what, if any, relationship exists between systems of accountability and the persistence of school segregation?* And how, if at all, might accountability

systems be refined in order to contribute constructively to real integration?

We take up these questions in a new research brief written for the National Coalition on School Diversity (NCSD). In particular, we review the research on the relationship between NCLB-style testing and contemporary school resegregation and offer research-based guidance for revising accountability policy in light of the contemporary struggle for racial integration. We further outline suggestions for how the research community can generate new data to better understand the relationship between school accountability and segregation. In this way, our brief joins a growing public conversation about how a future reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) might

return the law to its roots in the civil rights movement (see also DeBray et al., 2022).

Importantly, we believe that the relationship between accountability and segregation is complex, defying simple explanations and solutions. Thanks in part to these accountability systems,

gaps in achievement by students’ race, class, and special education status have been made more transparent. As a result, the range of stakeholders in education systems and in society more broadly have greater insight into the relationship between student test score outcomes and various elements of racially unequal schooling, such as inequity in school funding or access to experienced educators (Cardichon et al., 2020; EdBuild, 2019).

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The most common forms of accountability have created new barriers to racial inclusion in American public education.

In memoriam

This issue of *Poverty & Race* is dedicated to James Gibson, a philanthropic founder and long-time friend of PRRAC, who passed away in August at the age of 88. Jim was a city planner and civil rights advocate who was active in Planners for Equal Opportunity early in his career and later led DC’s Office of Planning and Development under Mayor Marion Barry (among many other leadership positions). When he originally connected with PRRAC, and helped to launch our organization, Jim was Director of the Equal Opportunity Program at the Rockefeller Foundation.

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of cross-class interaction, to help families select and pay for afterschool and summer activities in their new communities. We ensure access to such programs by building relationships with individual donors and partner organizations that can provide the necessary funding and in-kind resources.

We hope that as other organizations and agencies develop housing mobility programs, they will incorporate the types of post-move services we have described, and we urge them to customize the manner of service delivery according to the needs expressed by their participants. In several years, we expect that HUD's new Community Choice Mobility Demonstration will yield insight into the types of services that are most important to enable families to move to high-opportunity areas, but there is also a great

need for research that can help us better understand and demonstrate the facets of services that ensure families can stay and thrive in such areas. To that end, we hope that social capital researchers and mobility program leaders will pursue collaborations with each other. ■

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communities as compared to their White peers, in terms of income and wealth as well as in terms of economic mobility (Levine, 2020).

The study by Opportunity Insights states "...that about half of the social disconnection across socioeconomic lines—measured as the difference in the share of high-socioeconomic status (SES) friends between low- and high-SES people—is explained by differences in exposure to high-SES people in groups such as schools and religious organizations. The other half is explained by *friending bias*—the tendency for low-SES people to befriend high-SES people at lower rates even conditional on exposure." We might think about exposure as the physical fact of segregation, and "friending-bias" as the cultural effects that grow from and sometimes lead to segregation.

In Milwaukee, the data shows very clearly a relationship between segregation and significant differences in economic connectedness across racial and ethnic lines. The lowest ratings are in the predominately Black areas within the city of Milwaukee. By contrast, the areas with higher economic connectedness tend to be found in the mostly White east side of the city and surrounding suburbs. As an example, in the 53206 zip code in Milwaukee, data suggests that only 20.2% of the friends of low income residents have high income (Opportunity Insights, 2022). In Milwaukee's nearest eastern suburb of Wauwatosa, the data shows that 51.7% of the friends of low-income residents have high income friends. This is fairly consistent with other suburban communities within Milwaukee County.

Two things can explain this from the exposure side of the Opportunity Insights study: the pay gap between White

and Black Milwaukeeans (the median Black household income in Milwaukee County in 2021 was \$35,040, compared to \$69,426 for White households) and the fact that low-income Black households are often more economically segregated than low-income White households, in addition to facing racial segregation.

At Redress we are interested in attacking every dimension of segregation. This means we are just as interested in the institutional ways to correct for the "friending bias" that

causes social groups to segregate into different levels of opportunity as well as the residential segregation that conditions "friending bias" in the first place.

Schools are a great place to start from a standpoint of intergenerational mobility. According to a recent report by Marc Levine, of the University of Wisconsin-

Milwaukee Center for Economic Development, Milwaukee has the highest rate of school segregation in the nation's fifty largest cities (Levine, 2022). Per Levine's research, Milwaukee has the highest percentage of Black students attending hyper segregated (90% or more non-white students) schools in the fifty largest metro areas in the country. Seven in ten Black students in Milwaukee attend these hyper segregated schools. A May 2022 report from the Century Foundation confirmed his findings, ranked the Milwaukee metro area as having the highest Black-White levels of school segregation in the nation and the third highest segregation between White students and all students of color.

The data from Opportunity Insights' Social Capital Index shows almost all of the hyper-segregated high schools

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In Milwaukee, the data shows very clearly a relationship between segregation and significant differences in economic connectedness across racial and ethnic lines.

economic connectedness. In their first of two articles, they define economic connectedness as the degree to which people from low-SES and high-SES backgrounds “are friends with each other” (p. 108). One key finding is that people are more likely to be friends with people from their own socio-economic background than with people from another socio-economic background. Importantly, however, the authors also find that in counties or zip codes where people from low-SES backgrounds tend to have more high-SES friends, low-income children have higher rates of upward mobility.

Although the associations observed between economic connectedness and upward economic mobility by Chetty and colleagues were conducted at aggregate levels (county and zip code), the patterns of associations are entirely compatible with a vast, rich, and long-standing research literature that ana-

lyzes connections between people from different social groups at the individual level. On the one hand, studies suggest that people are more likely to become friends with others from their own groups, relative to their propensity to become friends with people from other social groups (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001)—what Chetty and colleagues refer to as a *friending bias*. On the other hand, to the extent that people develop friendships with members of other social groups, they are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward those other groups than people who have fewer or no cross-group friendships (Davies, Tropp, Aron, Pettigrew, & Wright, 2011).

This research emphasis is most prominent in the fields of social psychology and sociology, where the term *intergroup contact* is commonly used to refer to studies that examine the effects of connections between people from different social groups. In the intergroup contact research literature, contact is defined in terms of face-to-face interaction that members of different groups have with each other, whether this interaction is reported by research participants themselves, or observed directly by researchers over the course of a study. Decades of research including survey, experimental, and longitudinal studies provide strong evidence that contact between members of different social groups can be an effective tool for reducing prejudice and improving intergroup attitudes (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011). Moreover, meta-analytic research pooling data from more than 500 studies, conducted in 38 countries and including more than 250,000 research participants, shows that greater contact between groups is typically associated with lower prejudice—and this association between contact and reduced prejudice emerges across studies involving many

different types of social groups (e.g., race and ethnicity, physical disability, sexual orientation, mental illness) and many different social contexts (e.g., schools, workplaces, research laboratories, recreational settings; see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

Whereas the intergroup contact research literature has traditionally focused on effects related to social attitudes, a number of recent studies have tested the effects of intergroup contact on policy attitudes and other outcomes relevant to civic participation, with a particular focus on racial and ethnic relations. For instance, in the U.S., studies show that the more White Americans report having close contact with Black Americans, the more they are willing to support racial justice efforts, and the more they report having participated in Black Lives Matter protests (Selvanathan, Techakesari, Tropp, &

Barlow, 2018). Longitudinal research also indicates that having greater numbers of interracial friendships predicts White Americans’ greater support for affirmative action over time (Northcutt Bohmert & DeMaris, 2015).

Related research also shows how living and learning in racially diverse environments can mold people’s social and political attitudes. For example, compared to those educated in racially homogeneous schools, White children who were educated in racially diverse schools tend to self-report lower racial prejudice in adulthood (Wood & Sonleitner, 1996), as well as greater interest in living and working in racially integrated environments when they become adults (Merlino, Steinhardt, & Wren-Lewis, 2022; Mickelson & Nkomo, 2012). Recent work also shows that White men who grew up with a Black neighbor during their childhoods were more likely to identify as Democrats later in life (Brown, Enos, Feigenbaum, & Mazumder, 2021). In a similar vein, the research presented by Chetty and colleagues reveals how the diversity and nature of social relations in one’s local environment can shape later life outcomes in fundamental ways. Using an intriguing analytic approach, Chetty and colleagues (2022a) link children’s likelihood of social mobility to the degree to which people from high-SES and low-SES backgrounds are more (or less) likely to be connected through social networks in the counties and zip codes in which these children were raised.

Importantly, the authors’ approach brings us closer to understanding the long-term impact of cross-group relations on social mobility, a finding that highlights the perils of residential segregation in our communities. Economic and racial segregation persist in the U.S. (Massey, 2020),

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Greater contact between groups is typically associated with lower prejudice—and this association between contact and reduced prejudice emerges across studies involving many different types of social groups.

As detailed in our new brief, however, underlying systemic inequity remains unchanged long after NCLB. Not only has inequity persisted, but the most common forms of accountability have created new barriers to racial inclusion in American public education. Narrow and flawed measures have taken on outsized significance in how we measure the quality of our schools and even our neighborhoods. Especially considering the way that test scores mirror school demographics, terms like “good schools” and “bad schools” have not only become commonplace in the educational debate, they have also functioned as proxies for school racial composition (Knoester & Au, 2017; Muñiz & Barragán, 2022; Noonan & Schneider, 2022; Piazza, 2022).

Research that we review in the full brief suggests that NCLB-style accountability may even have accelerated trends toward resegregation. For example, responding to NCLB’s strict requirement that schools make progress toward achievement targets, schools had an incentive to exclude students who tended to score lower on standardized tests (students of color and students experiencing poverty). Indeed, some

empirical evidence suggests that public schools operating under high-stakes accountability systems have taken active or tacit steps to boost test scores by managing their student populations: for example, excluding students from testing who were more likely to score lower (Vasquez Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008), drawing attendance zone boundaries to exclude students of color and/or low-income students (Wells & Holme, 2005), or “pushing out” students based on disciplinary records (Kho et al., 2022).

Educational accountability systems also appear to exacerbate housing segregation, which has a direct impact on the racial and economic resegregation of schools. In particular, the use of publicly prominent “school report cards,” which pre-date NCLB (Portz & Beauchamp, 2020), may shape public perceptions about school quality. Figlio and Lucas (2004) found that an “A” on a school report card had significant effects on housing price and nearby property values (see also Hasan & Kumar, 2019). Consistent with these findings, reardon and colleagues (2019) determined that geographic variation in racial achievement gaps were largely explained by differences in family income and school segregation.

Our brief offers a more detailed exploration of this research. We argue that high-stakes accountability and school resegregation have become more deeply entwined in recent

years. Untangling that relationship requires that we consider potential solutions within and parallel to federal law.

Most notably, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) – which succeeded NCLB – required states to define and measure school quality using at least one non-academic indicator of student success (known as the so-called “5th indicator”). In 2016, NCSDE suggested that states include indicators to measure progress on integration in their ESSA accountability systems (see Hilton, 2016). More recently, NCSDE (2020) and its partner organizations have developed a model state policy that would require states to include measures of racial and socioeconomic integration in annual school

ratings. The model policy includes clear guidance on how to measure integration via a proportionality score and how to ensure that historically underserved student subgroups have equitable access to school supports associated with high educational achievement.

Unfortunately, the 5th indicator remains dramatically underutilized as a vehicle for integration. The majority of states use “chronic absenteeism” as their non-academic indicator and several use measures of

student behavior, school discipline or so-called “dropout” rates, all of which mirror the racial bias evident in standardized test scores (Education Commission of the States, 2018; Portz & Beauchamp, 2020).

In 2018, NCSDE reported that only one state proposed using measures of real integration for its 5th indicator. New York’s ESSA plan identifies “Integration of Students” as one of several potential indicators in an accountability system that utilizes multiple measures of school quality. Under this plan, which was formally approved in 2018, the state would consider the extent to which students of various racial and socioeconomic subgroups “are in schools and classrooms together,” compared to their presence in the district as a whole. Importantly, this information would factor into a school’s overall accountability rating. To date, however, officials have not made use of this indicator in their approach to accountability.

Even if more states were interested in using the 5th indicator as a vehicle for real integration, there is little guidance about specific measures that might be used. The same is true for the other potential levers for school integration in ESSA, such as the Competitive Grants for State Assessments program and the Innovation Assessment Development Authority provision. We review each in detail

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...given the ways that state accountability and related sanctions can maintain or exacerbate segregation, it is important to look beyond federal law to understand how states or local coalitions might use alternative forms of accountability to weaken the relationship between school measurement and school composition.

Black students in Milwaukee attend have an economic connectedness rating below 30%. The lowest of these is North Division High School where 97.7% of students are Black and Latinx and not a single White student attends according to 2021–2022 Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction School Report Card data (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2022). Among the students at North Division, only 16.5% of the friends of low-income students have high income friends. By contrast, at Shorewood High School, only a little more than three miles northeast of North Division, 76.9% of low-income students have high-income friends.

Milwaukee has long had racist housing policies which have led to segregated schools (Jackson, 2018). Civil rights leaders in the 1960s also understood that these policies of segregation extended to schools. Through marches and other actions, they protested this injustice.

The University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee’s project “March on Milwaukee” documents how Lloyd Barbee formed a coalition of over a dozen civil rights, religious, labor, social, and political groups under an umbrella organization known as the Milwaukee United School Integration Committee (MUSIC) in March 1964 (University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee Libraries, March on Milwaukee Timeline). MUSIC’s primary goal was to eliminate segregation in Milwaukee’s public schools through coordinated direct action, such as sit-ins and boycotts.” Later attorney Barbee filed a federal lawsuit challenging the segregation of schools in Milwaukee, *Amos et al. v. Board of School Directors of the City of Milwaukee*. On January 19, 1976, Federal judge John Reynolds issued a ruling: “I have concluded that segregation exists in the Milwaukee public schools and that this segregation was intentionally created and maintained by the defendants.”

A year earlier, in 1975, Wisconsin lawmakers created the Chapter 220 program which provided busing for black city students to attend suburban schools, and suburban students to attend specialty “magnet schools” in the city. This was the first attempt by the state of Wisconsin to address the segregated schools in Milwaukee. Since the program was ended by the state legislature in 2015 the pathway to integrated schools has made a 180-degree shift back to where it was in the 1960s, when efforts were first made to fight segregated schooling in the city (Children in Urban America Project). The city’s schools now have the same percentage of Black students attending hyper segregated schools as it did in the mid-1960s (Levine, 2020). This is not just a city problem, but a metropolitan one. The state’s open enrollment program, which offers students the ability to attend outside of their neighborhood schools has largely taken the place of Chapter 220 (Quirk, 2014). The Open Enrollment program does not provide transportation assistance like Chapter 220, so many poorer students within the city cannot get out to the suburban schools.

Chapter 220 led to a large increase in integrated schools in Milwaukee. This created a higher threshold for economic connectedness in metro Milwaukee while the Chapter 220 program lasted. Though the program never had the number of students participating that the state expected, it did increase the number of Black students attending suburban schools. A look at the usage of Open Enrollment versus Chapter 220, shows a large loss of Black students in most suburban school districts since the Chapter 220 program ended. The social capital gained by those students will not be available for that smaller number of Black students in suburban schools today.

Dynasty Caesar, a field organizer for the Redress Movement and a former Chapter 220 student, offers perspective on the potential reasons for this low participation. She felt the program was lacking in two very important ways. First, in the schools she attended, there was not a specific support mechanism to help the Black students who were placed into formerly nearly all-white schools. She said the students had to depend on each other as they navigated the constant racism they faced in the suburbs. The other main issue she found was that the program, by placing Black students in an environment with students of much higher socioeconomic status, left them paying for breakfast and lunch in the new schools, whereas in Milwaukee these meals were provided for free because of families’ low incomes. Dynasty felt the biggest benefit for her personally was the ability to see firsthand the racism in the suburban school environment, and learning how to recognize it and deal with it proactively by advocating for the Chapter 220 students. Learning and growing from that recognition was not necessarily an easy path.

Chapter 220-style programs are also not the only or necessarily best path that local governments can have to take in order to foster economic connectedness. Another city where Redress works, Charlotte, North Carolina, formerly provided a great example of one such alternative. Following the *Swann* desegregation case of 1971, Charlotte organized its public school system so that each school in the system had a student population that matched the overall demographics of the Charlotte area. Both Black and White students had to participate in desegregating schools, rather than a minority of Black students being forced to move to fix their own segregation (Grundy, 2020). For decades, Charlotte had the most integrated public school system in the U.S. and students—Black and White—thrived in this setting (Smith, 2016). It was such a point of local pride that Charlotteans legendarily greeted Ronald Reagan with an icy quiet in the 1980s when he talked negatively of forced busing (Nazaryan, 2018). Though a lawsuit from a white suburban parent then ended the desegregation program in Charlotte by the early 2000s, its impact on fostering economic connectedness by providing an institutional envi-

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(*Social Capital and Economic Connectedness*, Continued from page 2)

we organize educational institutions and how we build neighborhoods are important in either enhancing or depressing these connections. These insights are equally true for belonging mobility. To put it differently, interactions happen through structures.

Not only does this latest research confirm much about social capital theory, it also raises further questions and encourages new directions of study. One such question is the level of disaggregation of the present data. Past research that Chetty conducted, namely his study entitled “Race and Economic Opportunity in the United States: An Intergenerational Perspective,” found that Black American and Native American males have lower rates of upward mobility than members of other demographic groups. This includes a gap between Black boys and girls. The current study concludes that while past work showed that poverty and racial segregation have a strong impact on upward mobility, the present findings provide evidence that economic connectedness still powerfully predicts upward mobility after controlling for other factors. These two conclusions taken together would suggest that if Black and Native boys have lower upward mobility and when race is held constant economic connectedness predicts upward mobility, then Black and Native boys have fewer cross-class connections. Subsequent research should dig further into this topic as well as seek to achieve the granularity of examining intersectional differences of race and gender. This also suggests that our situatedness within structures matter and that this situatedness is gender and race sensitive.

Another inquiry that the research raises is the extent to which the present research calls attention to the structure of economic opportunity. For instance, Chetty and his team state in the present research that “differences in economic connectedness can explain why racially segregated communities and areas with high poverty rates have lower rates of upward mobility.” However, this seems to be more of an outcome of the economic structure than an explanation for it. This reminds us of a quotation from Stuart Hall in an essay in which he contemplates the differences in economic vs. sociological explanations for society’s inequities. He writes that “racial structures cannot be understood adequately outside the framework of quite specific sets of economic relations” (*Selected Writings on Race and Difference*, 2021). Applied to this research, we must ask to

what degree the exclusion of the racially marginalized from cross-class connectedness structures our system of economic opportunity itself.

Additionally, we may ask how we can reform our structures so that opportunity is available to more people instead of improving access to exclusionary social circles. In addition to the economic connectedness, are there other ways of supporting mobility that might be accessible to a larger number of people? Could a universal basic income or a jobs guarantee be a solution? A recent *Washington Post* article (“Unions are on a roll. And they unite a divided nation,” by E.J. Dionne Jr, Sept 4, 2022) points to the growing popularity of labor unions, which increase multi-racial solidarity, act as a form of civic engagement, and redistribute resources.

Solutions that democratize the economy should be on the table as we think through the implications of Chetty’s research. These should be explored in tandem with the important insights highlighted in Chetty’s work. And of course, how do we better understand and address these issues for Black and Native

We must ask to what degree the exclusion of the racially marginalized from cross-class connectedness structures our system of economic opportunity itself.

American males? Are there other outliers?

On the whole, Chetty has once again produced extraordinary research that not only validates some of our most prominent social theories, he has also given us direction toward eliminating some of society’s most persistent inequalities. Chetty concludes these latest papers by advocating for institutional reform, stating that zoning laws and other changes of this sort can overcome cross-class disconnection. We fervently second this call. At OBI, we have been advancing just these types of reforms, from our work on mapping single-family zoning to our opportunity maps and inclusiveness index to just-transition initiatives. We applaud Chetty on the progress made in this research and enthusiastically look forward to how this work can be used to achieve a world of greater opportunity and belonging for all. ■

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(The Chetty Team's Social Capital Findings: A Timely Boost for Mixed-Income Development, Continued from page 1)

mind-boggling amounts of Facebook data on friendship networks is a boon to the mixed-income field in two ways: the results provide powerful confirmation of the bridging social capital hypothesis underlying these complex redevelopment efforts and they conclusively indicate that mixing people in a place is a vital first step but *not sufficient* to generate the desired economic mobility outcomes.

Mixed-income development has long been a policy that benefits from a win-win dynamic in the highly contested arena of urban redevelopment and social investment. By assuring the inclusion of long-term, quality affordable housing, in many cases for those with extremely low incomes, while generating market-rate housing and high-quality amenities, mixed-income development has garnered the support of mayors, private investors, real estate developers and antipoverty and affordable housing advocates alike. Starting in 1992, the federal HOPE VI program funded about 240 redevelopment efforts across the country (but also led to a significant overall reduction in public housing units). Its more comprehensive successor, the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative launched in 2010 with stronger replacement housing and tenant protection provisions, and has now funded over 100 planning grantees and 40 implementation grantees in the U.S. Furthermore, inclusionary housing efforts, with mandated set-asides of affordable housing within newly developed buildings, have generated hundreds of thousands of mixed-income units. And proliferating efforts at affordable housing preservation within gentrifying neighborhoods are generating hundreds more neighborhoods that are home to an intentional economic mix of residents. These efforts are successfully transforming many inner-city neighborhoods physically and economically, are incredibly complex and costly to implement, and have fallen short of their true potential for promoting social and economic inclusion among a greater number of the urban poor. Our recent volume *What Works to Promote Inclusive, Equitable Mixed-*

Income Communities provides an array of essays on this topic and our podcast *Bending the Arc* delves deeper into state of the field.

Turning then to the opportune timing and importance of the Chetty team's confirmatory results. Mixed-income policy and practice is based on the idea that while *bonding* social capital among individuals with similar backgrounds is important for "getting by," *bridging* social capital among those with different backgrounds is crucial for, as Xavier de Souza Briggs put it, "getting ahead." These results confirm a number of things. First, the analysis demonstrates that this specific form of social capital, Chetty and colleagues call their measure "economic connectedness," indeed has an impact on economic mobility, all else being equal. Even more important, they find that relative to the two other forms of social capital that they measure – social cohesion and civic engagement – cross-class connections have a far higher impact. Perhaps most influential for future social policy investments, they find that economic connectedness explains economic outcomes more than anything else they measure including racial segregation, economic inequality, educational outcomes, and family structure. So, social mix indeed matters and in this era of increasing inequity, polarization and housing instability we have to redouble our efforts to generate mixed-income communities where low SES and high SES individuals have a chance to connect.

But there's so much more to the findings. Where the real rocket boost to the mixed-income field should come is the analysis to which Chetty and team dedicate their entire second article published in *Nature*. In examining the relative influence of exposure to high SES individuals versus the "friending bias" of individuals forming relationships with others similar to them, they find that friending bias can offset as much as half of the economic mobility impact of being in a mixed setting. In diverse settings, low- and high-

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(Accountability Systems and the Persistence of School Segregation, Continued from page 8)

in the brief, ultimately arguing that a future iteration of the law could incentivize equity-oriented changes to state assessments by relaxing its most onerous requirements.

Especially given the ways that state accountability and related sanctions can maintain or exacerbate segregation, it is important to look beyond federal law to understand how states or local coalitions might use alternative forms of accountability to weaken the relationship between school measurement and school composition. Professional organizations

have offered visions for a broader approach to assessment and accountability, while district and non-profit advocates have begun similar experiments at the local level. Instead of focusing on narrow measures of academic learning, state and/or district efforts can be more holistic, and their low-stakes nature allows these efforts the freedom to experiment.

A recent report from the Beyond Test Scores project at UMass Lowell detailed promising practices from various state and local accountability efforts (Carey & Schneider, 2022). For

example, the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment (MCIEA) measures school quality according to 34 indicators, including students' perspectives on cultural responsiveness in curriculum. MCIEA's full data collection portfolio – including its survey scales and administrative data measures – are publicly available as source material for other states, districts, or coalitions pursuing similarly holistic forms of school quality measurement. In addition, as with state accountabil-

(Continued on page 12)

ity systems, MCIEA data are posted publicly on an online dashboard. (See <https://mciea-dashboard.herokuapp.com/welcome>.)

In addition to providing a broader range of data to drive real integration in schools and districts, alternative forms of accountability also contribute to continuing research on the benefits of school integration. A fuller range of school quality data can generate more evidence about student experiences in schools and challenge the “good” schools versus “bad” schools binary reinforced by test-based measurement. For example, using MCIEA survey responses from over 25,000 students, Schneider and colleagues (2020) compared student experience in “diverse” schools with those in comparatively more segregated schools. They found that White students in diverse schools reported more positive experiences than their White counterparts in more exclusively segregated White schools, including higher levels of physical safety, engagement, sense of belonging, and civic participation. Consistent with recommendations from major school integration advocacy organizations (Potter et al., 2021), research in this vein helps illustrate the benefits of school integration for all students, and it would not be possible without alternative forms of school quality measurement.

Even if parallel accountability systems don’t reach the level of fed-

eral or state policy, they provide schools with a broader spectrum of meaningful and relevant data to create more inclusive learning environments, and these data can generate new research that complicates narrow and overly simplistic conceptions of school quality. Along those lines, we conclude the brief by outlining suggestions for how the research community might build on a strong, but nonetheless, emergent research base on school accountability and segregation.

First, because outcomes of accountability systems are in part a reflection of the measurement tools they employ, we urge further research on the development and potential impact of new school quality frameworks and measures. For example, there is a considerable amount of unexplored potential in the development of culturally-relevant performance assessments as well as the use of growth scores and/or student-centered survey data in state accountability systems. Alternative forms of school quality measurement, however, are relatively new and more information is needed to better understand how accountability systems would (or would not) change with the incorporation of new measures.

Second, as grassroots initiatives to broaden school quality measurement and accountability take shape, research is needed to assess the impact

of these initiatives and how – if at all – they might complement or even replace local, state, or federal accountability systems. We detail evaluation and empirical research on MCIEA above, but similar efforts are underway with consortia in California, Colorado, New York, and more (see Carey & Schneider, 2022). These are sites for experimentation in school accountability as well as settings for research on alternative forms of accountability. With access to a wider array of school quality data, researchers, for example, can ask questions about how parents use new information in their school choice decisions or about how school or district leaders can develop strategies for responding to settings where survey data indicate that students of color may not feel fully included in the school community. Ultimately, more holistic data emerging from these initiatives can help shape public perceptions of “bad” schools and “good” schools in a way that contributes constructively to the movement for real integration.

Finally, too often research efforts on accountability and on segregation are siloed, but as this research brief helps make clear, these two domains are in fact closely interwoven. While research exists on the relationship between segregation and accountability broadly speaking (e.g., reardon et al., 2022), there are fewer studies

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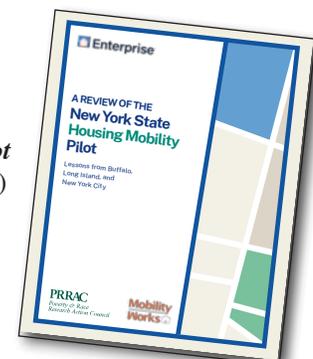


Housing Mobility Programs in the U.S. 2022 (PRRAC & Mobility Works, November 2022)

Supporting social housing and tenant protections in the 2024 budget (Alliance for Housing Justice, October 2022)

A Review of the New York State Housing Mobility Pilot (Enterprise NY, PRRAC, Mobility Works, October 2022)

Expanded protections for families with Housing Choice Vouchers (PRRAC, September 2022)



exploring the way that accountability systems interact with the many residual impacts of segregation such as funding inequities, teacher shortages, curriculum quality, school closures, or parental decision-making. Studies that trace the downstream effects of accountability within and across schools and communities could lead to new conceptual frameworks and language for talking about racial equity.

Shortly after NCLB was enacted, Gary Orfield and Chungmei Lee (2007) argued that “the basic educational policy model in the post-civil rights generation assumes that we can equalize schools without dealing with segregation through testing and accountability.” Indeed, test-based accountability systems have become embedded in the social structures that shape students’ access to schools and neighborhoods. Over time, the legacies of school segregation and educational accountability – and the effects of each on student learning – have come to mirror one another. Each has been characterized by the firing or voluntary attrition of teachers, the closing or restructuring of schools, and a narrowing of the curriculum. As described in the full brief, research can help us make stronger arguments about the link between school accountability and segregation. Research can also help us look forward to alternatives. By asking new kinds of questions and piloting alternative models for school accountability, the research and advocacy communities can work together to imagine a future for accountability that includes real integration. ■

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(*The Chetty Team's Social Capital Findings: A Timely Boost for Mixed-Income Development*, Continued from page 11)

SES students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds are *less likely* to be friends. This confirms what my colleagues and I at the National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities and so many of our practitioner partners have been learning, experiencing and proselytizing about for many years now – mixed-income housing is not enough, we must intentionally craft and steward community network-building *within* that housing. It is not sufficient to generate a mixed-income building, or housing complex, or neighborhood, and then sit back and hope the social mix will organically produce economic connectedness and upward mobility. *We must activate the mix*. In fact, our research, and that of others, on mixed-income development, suggests that, left uncurated, without an intentional strategy for promoting interaction and inclusion, social mix can actually perpetuate stigma and marginalization, what Robert Chaskin and I have called “incorporated exclusion.” As Chetty and his colleagues (Social Capital II, p.128, italics added) put it: “these results imply that increasing economic connectedness—the form of social capital most strongly associated with

economic mobility—would require efforts to both increase integration (exposure) and reduce friending bias within groups.”

What then are the implications of the Chetty team’s findings for the mixed-income development field? Policymakers should accelerate and expand their efforts to require economic mix as a component of any local housing or urban redevelopment investment strategy. And these efforts must be designed with careful attention to centering the meaningful and sustained participation of low SES households, especially African Americans and other traditionally-marginalized households of color, as designers, beneficiaries and long-term stewards of these mixed-income environments. Practitioners of mixed-income development must increase their time, attention and resources to establishing a shared vision and commitment to *inclusive community building* as a component of their mixed-income strategy, with clear roles, responsibilities and workplans to operationalize this commitment. Funders, universities and anchor institutions, community development corporations, neighborhood associations and other local

stakeholders in community development must leverage their spheres of influence to hold

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(*The Chetty Team's Social Capital Findings: A Timely Boost for Mixed-Income Development*, Continued from page 14)

developers and investors accountable to the design, construction and management of properties that prioritize social bridging not just physical integration.

Lest readers of *Poverty & Race* feel that these prescriptions are overly daunting and infeasible, I'll close this essay with a shout out to some exemplar mixed-income practitioners who have been making steady progress innovating and refining strategies to increase residential integration and reducing friending bias in mixed-income housing around the country. Trusted Space Partners, based in North Carolina, has honed the art of recruiting resident and staff stewards to promote a more inclusive operating culture in housing and neighborhoods through devices such as NeighborUp Nights, unity circles and hospitality covenants. The Trek Development Group in Pittsburgh is demonstrating the potential for a mission-driven for-profit real estate developer and property management company to integrate inclusionary intentionality across its portfolio. The Washington Housing Conservancy in Washington, D.C. is weaving a social impact strategy into its novel affordable housing preservation financing model in order to add the north star of economic mobility to its housing stability mission. Mercy Housing California has implemented the Community Connect model of resident engagement across its housing portfolio in order to promote social bridging with greater intentionality. Regent Park in Toronto and Yesler Terrace in Seattle are standout examples of large-scale mixed-income transformation initiatives that have prioritized community building as an essential feature of the design and management of the housing, community facilities, cultural amenities and retail establishments in their redevelopments.

The mixed-income development field has a long, long way to go to achieve its promise of social and economic inclusion. These high-profile social capital findings from Chetty and his team provide a welcome affirmation of the importance of this policy arena and incisive guidance on the imperative of community network-building as a core component of any mixed-income effort. ■

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(*Examining Economic Connectedness through the Lens of Intergroup Contact Theory and Research*, Continued from page 7)

reinforcing troubling trends toward racial segregation in U.S. schools (Tegeler & Hilton, 2017) and high levels of racial isolation for youth from racial and ethnic minority backgrounds (Geiger, 2017). Yet in their article, Chetty and colleagues (2022b) are correct to recognize that desegregation is not the same as integration, and that shifting the composition of groups in a given setting or institution is not the same as guaranteeing that members of different groups will necessarily develop social ties or connections to one another. Thus, beyond examining the effects of exposure (or lack of exposure) to people from other socio-economic backgrounds within one's local environment, Chetty and colleagues (2022b) also stress that a *friending bias* may also limit the degree to which friendship networks will afford opportunities for social mobility; specifically, the authors state that "the relationship between economic connectedness and upward mobility is not merely driven by the presence of high-SES peers... instead, interaction with those peers is what predicts upward mobility most strongly" (p. 128).

Consistent with Chetty et al.'s (2022b) interpretation, friending bias has been well-established established in the research literature, referred to as the concept of *homophily*: people are generally more likely to become friends with people who are members of their own social groups (McPherson et al., 2001). At the same time, prior research has demonstrated links between exposure to other social groups and weaker friending bias tendencies; for instance, a greater representation of students from another racial backgrounds in the classroom predicts students' own propensities to choose cross-race friends (Hallinan & Teixeira, 1987).

Notwithstanding, it remains difficult to discern from the present set of papers how much of the upward mobility effect observed by Chetty and colleagues may be due to the actual contact or direct ties individual people from low-SES backgrounds have with those from higher-SES backgrounds, as compared to how much of the effect may be due

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(How Social Capital Research Can Help Redress Segregation, Continued from page 9)

ronment in which all children had a fair chance to make friends while also disincentivizing segregation is clear. One study following up on the results of the end of the *Swann* desegregation program found that a return to neighborhood schools led to an uptick of residential segregation in the city (Liebowitz and Page, 2014).

The data from the Social Capital Report will certainly be a valuable tool for the Redress Movement. We can take a closer look at segregation's impacts on students while developing tools to redress the damage caused by segregated schools in places like Milwaukee and Charlotte.

The impact of programs like Wisconsin's Chapter 220 program are necessarily limited by the fact that the cross-class exposure children experience occurs only at school. The questions that we therefore have as researchers and as advocates based on our studies of Milwaukee and Charlotte are as follows: How can we extend these social networks to spaces outside of school, and how can we make the schools where children interact more inclusive for low-income children of color? And how does the continuing "friending bias" caused by segregated lives outside of school affect children's experience of integration in a program like Chapter 220? These are crucial questions we will need to understand as Professor Chetty's optimistic research moves into practice. ■

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to local norms that support integration across economic lines. Studies show that the more people observe others in their community engaging in contact across group lines, or approving of such contact, the more they themselves report being willing to interact with people from other groups (Mazziotta, Mummendey, & Wright, 2011; Meleady, 2021; Tropp, O'Brien, & Migacheva, 2014). Other social psychological research indicates that, beyond the effects of one's own direct contact experience, a contextual effect of contact emerges whereby more supportive norms for integration emerge the more that people in one's local community have positive contact with other groups (Christ et al., 2014). Examining these finer distinctions in predictors of upward mobility could be a worthwhile direction for further research; future work would be particularly valuable if it were to merge investigations of economic and social outcomes by linking aggregate data available through large-scale datasets with responses gathered at the individual level.

Additionally, to the extent that contact is measured at the individual level in this future work, it would be useful to distinguish between varied forms of contact that are commonly assessed in the existing intergroup contact research literature. For example, people's cross-group experiences may vary in terms of being relatively superficial to intimate, from being commonplace and numerous to very rare, and in being experienced as positive and warm to being very negative and hostile in nature (Hayward, Tropp, Hornsey, & Barlow, 2017). Moreover, people differ in how they use and sustain friendship networks on social media outlets like Facebook, such that their social networks may reflect a more narrow circle of intimate relationships, or a broader circle of more superficial acquaintances, or some combination of the two (see Lambert, 2013). Other social science research also suggests that relatively close and weak ties to others may shape one's prospects for economic advancement in different ways (Gee, Jones, & Burke, 2017). Closer examination of the nature of people's experiences across group lines could thus offer greater insights regarding the types of contact between groups that would be most likely to propel opportunities for social mobility.

As Chetty and colleagues noted, communities need to invest in strategies and design spaces that facilitate interaction across group lines. Very much in line with this view, some local and national organizations, foundations, and the private sector have all recognized this distinct need and have begun to deploy considerable resources and energy toward this goal. As one example, the Center for Inclusion and Belonging at the American Immigration Council (AIC, <https://inclusion.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/>) has been making early-stage investments in organizations seeking to scale community-based programming through contact-based strategies. Partners in this effort are using varied approaches, including pilot bridge-building projects in

public spaces and cross-sector programs that bring local communities together. These efforts are being designed intentionally to ensure that interactions between social groups occur repeatedly over time, with people from different groups working together toward shared goals, to reflect insights from the research literature on intergroup contact.

As these efforts have grown, we have come to recognize that many local communities and organizations desire additional guidance regarding how their programs could be designed and evaluated toward maximum effectiveness. Through a partnership between AIC's Center for Inclusion and Belonging, Welcoming America, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst, we therefore recently released a new guide entitled *Cultivating Contact: A Guide to Building Bridges and Meaningful Connections Between Groups* (Tropp & Dehron, 2022), which distills lessons from decades of intergroup contact research and describes strategies for building trust and belonging among people from different backgrounds through community-based programs and initiatives. Of particular note, the guide offers concrete examples of how optimal conditions for contact (e.g., equal status, institutional support, cooperative interdependence) may be implemented in practice, and how desired outcomes of contact programs can be assessed and evaluated. Already being amplified by practitioners and organizations across civil society, government, and the private sector, this guide is now helping to set the stage for building meaningful and sustained contact in communities across the country.

The work of Chetty and colleagues has helped to illuminate how profoundly connected social networks can influence one's life outcomes. It is now incumbent upon all of us to learn from their example, and to rely on the broader base of knowledge on contact between groups, to expand the ecosystem of actors seeking to build bridges and forge relationships across lines of difference, toward a more promising future for our society. ■

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