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AMERICAN CHILDREN IN MULTIRACIAL HOUSEHOLDS

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ABSTRACT: *This study provides a demographic portrait of multiracial households, using children as the units of analysis. The authors conceptualize three dimensions for understanding multiracialness: (1) the racial composition of a household overall, (2) where in the household a racial difference exists relative to the household head, and (3) where in the household a racial difference exists relative to each child. Using microdata from the 1980 U.S. census, the authors explore the first two of these dimensions and test two propositions about the links between racial diversity and other nonracial attributes of children's household environments. The finding is made, among other things, that the largest proportion of children live in Asian-white households, and that about 60% live in households headed by mixed-race couples. Support for the notion that attributes of multiracial households fall between those of their same-race counterparts was mixed. Nonetheless, there appears to be a link between location of diversity and some nonracial characteristics of the household.*

A large and probably increasing number of American children live in multiracial households, households that include at least one person whose race differs from those of other members. For most children in such households, close interaction with someone of a different race adds important dimensions to growing up. On the one hand, to the extent that race implies distinctive cultural patterns, the cultural milieu of children living in multiracial households is enriched: children's cultural role models multiply and their grasp of the diversity in world views expands (Salgado de Snyder, Lopez, & Padilla 1982: 280; Wilson 1981; Greene 1980; Ladner 1977). On the other hand, these children face more numerous possibilities for conflict. Where racial boundaries are salient, members of racially diverse households may experience intolerance from relatives, former friends,

or other community members (Graham, Moeai, & Shizuru 1985; Aldridge 1978). Children suffer if racial diversity within a household exacerbates other domestic problems (Baptiste 1984). In short, all else being equal, childhood in a multiracial household is altogether more complicated than childhood in a same-race household.

This study provides a portrait of multiracial households, drawn from the perspective of children who live in them. In 1980, we estimate that over 2 million American children, or 3.5% of all American children, were living in 1 million multiracial households, households where one or more members differed from other members by race (as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census).¹ Using mainly children as the unit of analysis, we tap 1980 census data to characterize racially diverse households as environments where children grow up.

This article has two purposes. The first is to describe the demographic variety among multiracial households with children, comparing that variety to the attributes of same-race households with children. The second is to provide a conceptual framework for the further study of mixed-race households.

Our perspective builds upon a method first used to study fertility (Preston 1976), and subsequently adapted for the study of children's home and family environments (Hernandez & Myers 1985; Hernandez 1986; Mott 1986). This method uses individual children, rather than their mothers, as units of analysis. In some cases, using the children's perspective can yield insights widely different from the conventional analysis, which is based on the mothers' perspective (Preston 1976; Mott 1986). We use the children's perspective to address two questions: (1) Do the circumstances of children in mixed-race households diverge from those in same-race households in ways other than racial composition? (2) Within multiracial households, does it matter which specific members differ from each other?

To answer these questions, census data are unsurpassed in population coverage. They are limited, however, in answers they provide to some other questions one could ask about the experience of growing up in a multiracial household. Three limitations of the study should especially be noted. Most important, whereas the census asks about race, ancestry, nativity, and language spoken at home, it lacks other items that might better indicate the extent to which racial diversity in a particular household truly reflects cultural diversity. For example, we do not know about skin color or other physical features of household members, certainly one major component of self-image and external identity (Hall 1980). Neither do we know the racial composition of the children's neighborhoods and schools, which also bears on racial identity and cultural practice (Simon & Altstein 1987; McGuire, McGuire, Child, & Fujioka 1978).

Second, the census bureau's racial categories (based on self-identification) are somewhat inconsistent. Nonetheless, because no widely applied definition of race is entirely satisfactory, we use the bureau's version with only minor modifications.²

Third and finally, space and data limitation precludes separate examination of at least two important groups: children whose race is classified as "American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut" or "Other."³ Further, the sample size restricts our sepa-

rate examination of multiracial households comprising members of more than one racial minority.⁴ Thus, we focus on households combining non-Hispanic whites with Asians or Hispanics (the two groups most amply represented in the sample) and with blacks (for whom the most extensive literature exists).

This article is organized as follows. In the first section we develop a conceptual framework, outlining three dimensions of racial diversity. Using these dimensions, we derive hypotheses to be explored in subsequent sections. In subsequent sections we discuss data and methods, and then the results.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Important social characteristics, such as family structure, educational attainment, occupational status, economic well-being, and nativity, vary across racial boundaries. Where multiracial households fall with respect to these boundaries should indicate how children's environments combine the socioeconomic and cultural characteristics of their constituent racial groups. How then should the "multi-racialness" of children's households be measured? The variety in multiracial households can be summarized along three dimensions of increasing specificity: mix, location of diversity at the household level, and location of diversity at the child level.

Mix

Mix simply indicates the racial composition of a household's members: a black child living with a white father and black mother lives in a household whose mix is black-white; an Asian child living with white parents and siblings lives in a household whose mix is Asian-white, and so on. An imposing number of combinations exists, but practicality restricts analysis to the more common mixes: white-minority (Asian, Hispanic, black) and same-race (all-white, all-Asian, all-Hispanic, all-black).

Besides the specific combination of races in a household, *who* in the household is of one or another race—and, consequently, where in the family structure racial differences exist—is also important. This "location" of racial diversity significantly affects children's environments, for three reasons. First, because race interacts with sex in determining a parent's potential earnings, whether it is a child's mother, father, or sibling who is (say) black can alter his or her economic prospects (Heer 1974: 257). Second, because household members fill different roles in child socialization, whether it is a child's mother, father, or sibling who is (say) Asian can alter his or her cultural milieu. Third, differences in the location of racial diversity reflect the variety of processes leading to the formation of multiracial households; these processes also have consequences for children's environments.

The concept of location has been implicit in studies of racial intermarriage at least since the 1940s, when it was argued that factors leading to the marriage of black grooms and white brides differed from those leading to the marriage of white grooms and black brides (Davis 1941; Merton 1941). Interest in exogamy sex differentials still persists (see, for example, Yuan [1980] and Kitano, Yeung,

Chai, & Hatanaka [1984]), but no other investigators have applied "location" in the context of total households. We attempt to do exactly that: broaden and specify the concept, extending it to include not only couples, but also children and non-nuclear members of households.

In the present framework, location can be specified at two levels, the household level and the child level. In the first instance, the household is the unit of analysis and the household head serves as the reference person. In the latter instance, individual children are the unit of analysis, and different children in a household serve successively as reference persons.

Location at the Household Level

For households, we specify where—relative to the household head (or couple heading the household)—a racial difference exists. In order of increasing distance from the heads, the main possibilities are: (1) households headed by an interracial couple, (2) households headed by a same-race couple whose children are different, and (3) households comprising a same-race nuclear family and non-nuclear members of a different race. Within each category, variation is important. For instance, either the husband or wife of an interracial couple may be white; an eldest, middle, or youngest child may be black; or the "different" non-nuclear person may be a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, or a surrogate spouse.

Each category of location reflects different circumstances leading to the formation of multiracial households. For instance, a household headed by an interracial couple is formed by intermarriage; a household headed by a same-race couple with children who are different is often the product of transracial adoption, but may also be the consequence of remarriage. The circumstances surrounding the few households belonging to the third and final category, in which same-race nuclear families coreside with a different-race non-nuclear member, are more difficult to surmise; probably a significant proportion involve consensual interracial unions. We argue in this analysis that location of diversity at the household level affects children's environments because it is associated with these processes of household formation.

Location at the Child Level

At the child level, each of a household's children is used in turn as an "index child" (Mott 1986) in relationship to whom the location of a racial difference is specified. Because household members vary in their influence on child socialization, whether mother instead of father, or parent instead of sibling has a different race should strongly affect salience of racial and cultural elements in a child's upbringing (see McGuire, et al. [1978: 513] for a similar argument in the classroom context). This implies a hierarchy of importance descending from mother to father, through siblings, to nonconjugal relatives, and finally to nonrelatives. The importance of mothers in defining a child's cultural environment is suggested in one British study, where the burden of teaching children about the "minority" culture invariably fell on mothers, even when fathers were the ethnic minority

parent (Wilson 1981: 213). Also suggestive is a large-scale study of mixed-nativity marriages in Hawaii, which found that the offspring of such marriages themselves usually selected mates from their mother's rather than their father's group of origin (Jedlicka 1984).

In principle then, each child in a multiracial household has a "reference relationship" signifying the most important (from the viewpoint of socialization) ego-to-other tie that is characterized by a racial difference. Categorization of children by that tie suggests much about the basic distribution of multicultural environments among children in multiracial households. In this article, we assign categories like this: consider a white couple and their biological son who have adopted a younger black daughter. For the elder white child, the reference tie is ego-sib (because he differs from his sibling). For the younger black child, the reference tie is ego-parent (because she differs from her parents). Even though the black child also differs from her brother, we assign an ego-parent reference because, all else being equal, parents are more central to socialization than brothers.

The foregoing example demonstrates that even within households, the experience of multiracialness can diverge for each child; hence each child's point of view should be included in any analysis. That household position, defined by age as well as generation, makes a difference in the experience of multiracialness is poignantly illustrated by the observation that adolescents in multiracial families sometimes attempt to dissociate themselves from darker half-sibs, for fear of public embarrassment about having an unconventional family (Baptiste 1984: 377). The importance of sibling position is also illustrated in a study of transracial adoption, which reveals that black-only adoptees in white families have exaggerated feelings of being different compared to those in families with more than one black child (McRoy, Zurcher, Lauderdale, & Anderson 1984; see also Heer [1985] for a general discussion of sibling position).

In sum, our framework emphasizes "location," or the relational aspects of racial diversity, as determined not only with the household as a unit of analysis, but as seen from the perspective of individual children within the household. These dimensions of children's experience have not been adequately explored; and our analysis is a step toward filling the gap. Location is, of course, only one among many elements that shapes a child's environment. How significant this factor is needs to be studied, and the circumstances under which it becomes salient should be specified.

PROPOSITIONS

Two propositions about the characteristics of multiracial households as compared to same-race households are advanced here. These concern (1) the demographic and socioeconomic position of multiracial households vis-à-vis other households, and (2) the variation of nonracial characteristics of multiracial households according to the race of specific members. Because our comparisons are basic, it is impossible to systematically take into account all the unique historical and demographic features that characterize each racial subgroup.

Instead, we attempt to lay out a general framework within which more intensive investigations of race and family may be carried out in the future.

Proposition 1: Mixed-Race versus Same-Race Households

Do multiracial households differ from same-race households in other ways beside racial composition? For instance, do the family configurations or parental resources of children in multiracial households differ significantly from those in same-race households? If so, in what direction do they differ?

We propose that the attributes of mixed households will fall somewhere between those of their same-race counterparts. For example, the income of black-white households should fall somewhere between the widely divergent averages for all-black and all-white households. Other attributes included in this proposition are household-family configuration, and parents' educational, occupational, and linguistic characteristics.

This proposition derives indirectly from research concerning the characteristics of intermarried couples. Most adults in multiracial households are mixed-race partners (in our sample, two-thirds of children in mixed households have interracially married parents [Table 2], and a significant proportion of the remainder live in households that once included such a couple or that now involve interracial common-law marriages). Adults mainly influence the characteristics of households, therefore the selectivity of intermarriage provides a basis for anticipating the characteristics of multiracial households.

Studies of selectivity in racial intermarriage have focused on two issues: whether partners tend to come most often from the low, middle, or upper strata of their respective groups, and the extent to which various groups use intermarriage as a path for upward social mobility. Little consensus on these issues of exogamy and social mobility has been reached, in part because of limited data, in part because of changes in laws and public attitudes regarding intermarriage, and in part because of historical and cultural diversity of the groups in question. Early work suggesting that miscegenation was a lower-class phenomenon has been discredited by data showing that intermarriages occur across the whole social spectrum (Monahan 1976). Some now hypothesize that interracial marriage selects mainly for the highly educated because they have structural opportunity and resources to overcome societal conventions (Goode 1982: 63-64). Early arguments about intermarriage as a means of caste-class mobility (beginning with Davis [1941] and Merton [1941]) have begun to yield with evidence suggesting that racially mixed marriages are most often homogamous on nonracial characteristics (Simpson & Yinger 1985: 301).

Because the resources and characteristics of households within which children live are largely determined by the parents, we are interested in selectivity into mixed-race marriages. The limited information available suggests that the most plausible assumption is that the characteristics of brides and grooms resemble the characteristics of their origin groups. This leads to the proposition that the socioeconomic position of multiracial households is, in the aggregate, intermediate to that of the two same-race counterparts.

Proposition 2: Within-Household Location of Racial Diversity

Do the nonracial characteristics of multiracial households vary according to the race of specific members? We propose that they do. Moreover, mother-father differences in particular should be correlated with households' socioeconomic resources and cultural characteristics. For example, among Asian-white households, those headed by Asian fathers and white mothers should differ in income, parents' education, occupation, and nativity and language, from those headed by white fathers and Asian mothers, which in turn should differ from households headed by same-race couples.

The underlying reasons were introduced earlier. First, both race and sex are related to parental income and education, and in effect, to children's access to economic resources. Second, different racial configurations within households reflect a variety of paths leading to formation of the household, including intermarriage (in the modal black-white marriage the bride is white, whereas in Asian-white marriages the groom is usually white) or transracial adoption (nearly always a white couple adopts a minority child).

DATA AND METHODS

When the focus is on children's experience of household racial diversity, one cannot rely exclusively on household-based or adult-based data. Conventionally employed estimates of the number of multiracial households, or of the number of biracial couples with children, do not reflect children's experience of racial diversity adequately, primarily because the number of children in any given household or family may vary considerably. To capture the experience of children, children themselves must be the unit of analysis. The importance of using child-based data to study the consequences for children of demographic events is demonstrated in the research of a growing number of scholars (Bumpass 1984; Bumpass & Rindfuss 1979; Eggebeen 1988; Heer 1985; Hernandez & Myers 1985; Hernandez 1986; Preston 1976). Individual children, therefore, are the units of our analysis.

The data examined are from the 1980 U.S. Census Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), a nationally representative 1-in-1,000 sample. Information for all multiracial households *with children* was extracted, and from this a file of person-records for all children living in multiracial households was constructed. Each "own child" age 17 or younger is represented by a record comprising information not only on the child, but also on the child's parents, siblings, and other household members. Thus, the number of times a family appears in the file depends on its number of resident children under age 18.

A number of indicators of the cultural, social, and economic resources available in children's households were constructed from the census records. These include:

1. *Cultural resources*: Parents' nativity and language.
2. *Economic resources*:
 - a. Total and per capita household income, and whether or not the household is below the U.S. government-defined poverty level. Comparisons

- of these indicators are head-specific in order to control for racial differences in the prevalence of one-parent households.
- b. Parents' socioeconomic status, as reflected by their education and by the father's occupation.
3. *Social resources:*
 - a. Household and family configuration, including total number, sibship size (siblings per household), and child-adult ratio (ratio of all persons age 17 or under to all adults).
 - b. Marital history of parent(s) (not married, in first marriage, or remarried); this history affects the stability of children's environments and the nature of their kin networks.
 - c. Maternal employment, which affects not only economic well-being but parenting style, is also included.

Nearly all these measures are crude, suited only for first approximations. For instance, in measuring maternal employment, we lack sufficient numbers to stratify for children's ages. Because of such limitations, our tests are not formal and results should be taken as suggestive and preliminary.

RESULTS

The results are reported in three sections. The first deals with univariate distributions, including the geographic location, and the distribution of children along the three dimensions of racial diversity: mix, location at the household level, and location at the child level. The second and third sections deal with bivariate distributions, each corresponding to a proposition concerning the linkage between racial diversity and other household characteristics.

I. Univariate Distributions

Geographical Distribution

The spatial pattern of multiracial households may indicate areal differences in race relations, for instance, differences in regional levels of interracial accommodation. Although such issues lie beyond the scope of this article, some description of residential patterns is basic.

Over half of the children in multiracial households live in just six states. California's share, at 26% of the total, overshadows those of the next five states—Texas, New York, Illinois, Washington, and Hawaii—which range from 9% to 3%. Although each state's share is affected by its total size and its racial composition, certain states' shares are still disproportionate: Hawaii, for example, has eight times its proportion of the total U.S. population.

Americans, in general, express ambivalence toward racial intermarriage (Day 1977; Simpson & Yinger 1985: 304), but urban residents are more tolerant of nontraditional behavior than those living in rural areas (Fischer 1984: 216). Thus we expect children in multiracial households to be disproportionately concentrated in metropolitan areas. This clearly is the case for households headed by black-white parental couples. In our sample, 100% of such households ($N = 117$)

Table 1
Multiracial Households with Children by Ethnic Mix

<i>Ethnic Mix^a</i>	<i>Households (%) (N = 1,015)</i>	<i>Percentage of Children in Multiracial Households (N = 2,151)</i>
1. White-black	13.4	12.6
2. White-Asian/Pacific	22.7	21.2
3. White-Hispanic ^b	19.5	20.1
4. White-American Indian ^c	18.4	17.2
5. White-other	6.5	5.8
6. Black-other minority	4.9	4.9
7. Asian/Pacific-Asian/Pacific	1.9	2.3
8. Other	12.7	15.9
	100.0	100.0

Source: 1980 1-in-1,000 Public Use Microdata Sample, U.S. Census of Population.

Notes: ^aFor the most part, categories in the left-hand column are derived from the matrix below, whose cells represent possible two-way combinations of race (see notes "b" and "c"). Matrix cells numbers correspond to category numbers above.

	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Asian/Pacific</i>	<i>American Indian</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>Other</i>
<i>White</i>						
<i>Black</i>	1					
<i>Asian/Pacific</i>	2	6				
<i>American Indian</i>	4	6	8			
<i>Hispanic</i>	3	6	8	8		
<i>Other</i>	5	6	8	8	8	

The seventh category (Asian/Pacific-Asian/Pacific), included because of its multicultural nature, comprises a small group that is defined in the census but not necessarily in common usage as multiracial: mixtures such as Chinese-Japanese, or Filipino-Korean.

The eighth category, a residual one, has two components. First and foremost, it comprises a number of relatively infrequent two-way combinations (see matrix). The remainder (22% of households in this category) comprises households with members from three or more races (for example, a family with a white married couple, one black child and one Korean child).

^b"Spanish write-in entry." Please see note 2.

^cAlso includes Eskimos and Aleuts.

were located in metropolitan areas. However, children in other kinds of multiracial households (including black-white households not headed by black-white parents) were only slightly more likely to live in metropolitan areas than were the general population.⁵

Mix

Although the bulk of U.S. research on intermarriage, transracial adoption, and other aspects of multiracial households concerns blacks and whites, our figures suggest that this emphasis is based on something other than the numerical dominance of this type. According to our estimates, the largest proportion of multiracial households with children, and the type containing the largest proportion of children in multiracial households, is Asian-white (Table 1). The Asian-white share is followed closely by Hispanic-white, American Indian-white, and then by children in black-white households.

Table 2
Distribution of Children by Parents' Minority Status

Minority Status of Parents	Percentage of Children in ... ^a		
	Asian-White Households (N = 456)	Hispanic-White Households (N = 433)	Black-White Households (N = 271)
1. Father is, mother is not	23.2	30.0	29.5
2. Mother is, father is not	48.9	25.2	10.3
3. Both minority	2.2	10.9	5.5
4. Neither minority	17.5	11.5	16.2
5. Single parent	8.1	22.4	38.4
	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: ^aNumbers may not total 100 due to rounding.

Location of Household-Level Diversity

In the total population of multiracial households with children, most (about 60%) are headed by an interracial couple. The remainder are evenly divided between households headed by single parents (some of whom live with different-race partners), and households headed by same-race married couples. These figures underline the importance of looking beyond couple characteristics when constructing a sample of multiracial families because 40% of the households are *not* headed by an interracial couple.

Among interracial couples, whether the mother or the father is more often nonwhite (or white) varies widely from one racial group to another. The non-white partner in Asian-white households, for instance, tends to be the mother, whereas in black-white households, the nonwhite partner tends to be the father. As Table 2 shows, children in households headed by Asian-white couples are twice as likely to have an Asian mother as to have an Asian father; by contrast, children in households headed by black-white couples are only one-third as likely to have a black mother as to have a black father. For children in households headed by Hispanic-white couples, the odds that the mother as opposed to the father is Hispanic are more even.

Large intergroup differences also hold for children living in households not headed by interracial couples (Table 2: lines 3-5). The proportion in single-parent families ranges from a low 8% for those in Asian-white households, up to 38% for those in black-white households. The level for children in Hispanic-white households is intermediate.

Finally, children whose parents are same-race couples are much more likely to have two white parents rather than two parents who are nonwhite. This holds especially for the Asian-white subsample, and almost as strongly for the black-white subsample (although hardly at all for the Hispanic-white). These imbalances probably reflect current practice in transracial adoption, which usually involves white couples adopting nonwhite children.

Table 3
 Distribution of Children in Multiracial Households
 by Own Race and Difference with Household Members

	<i>Child's Race (in percent)^a</i>						<i>Total</i> (N = 2,151)
	<i>White</i> (N = 891)	<i>Black</i> (N = 255)	<i>American Indian</i> (N = 206)	<i>Asian- Pacific</i> (N = 297)	<i>Hispanic</i> (N = 312)	<i>Other</i> (N = 187)	
1. Differs from both parents	6	8	6	17	6	55	12
2. Different mother; father same	32	34	36	30	25	4	29
3. Different father; mother same	29	15	37	38	21	17	27
4. Different mother; father absent	6	28	13	3	10	16	10
5. Different father; mother absent	2	1	3	1	1	2	1
6. Mother and father same; sibling(s) different	13	8	4	5	32	6	13
7. Nuclear same; nonrelative different	13	7	1	6	5	1	8
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Note: ^aNumbers may not total 100 due to rounding.

Location of Diversity at Child's Level

In only a minority of cases (12%) do the races of children differ from those of both parents; more typically, children match one parent and differ from the other (56%; see Table 3). Among children in households with two parents, odds are slightly higher that a child will differ from his or her mother rather than his or her father. Eleven percent of children differ from a single-parent head, whereas 13% of all children are identical either to both parents or to their single parent, differing in race only from a sibling(s). Just 8% live in households where the only ego-other difference is with a nonrelative (perhaps a common-law parent). In short, most children differ from at least one important adult, usually a parent; only a third either differ from all adult relatives or differ from none.

Whatever the general case, disaggregation reveals high subgroup variability. Table 3 categorizes child-level differences by children's race. Notable differences exist in three areas:

1. *Children differing from both parents.* About twice the proportion of Asian children as white, black, or Hispanic children differ from both parents (reflecting international transracial adoption). An even greater disproportion of "other" children (55% differ from both parents. That a majority of "other"-race children differ from both parents suggests that many are "hybrids," Eurasians for example, who combine the attributes of their parents into a third category. Not

evident are the conditions under which interracial parents report their offsprings' races to be that of the mother, of the father, or of neither.

2. *Children differing from mothers, not fathers.* As noted above, children with two parents are somewhat more likely to differ from mothers than from fathers (except Asians, for whom the opposite holds). The odds of differing from mothers over fathers become even more lopsided when children with solo parents are included. Among black children in multiracial households, more than one-fourth live in mother-only households. When solo-parent households are included, we find 62% of black children in multiracial families having white mothers, compared to a range of 33% to 38% for Asian, Hispanic, and white children.

3. *Children matching all nuclear adults.* Hispanic and white children are more likely than blacks or Asians to be the same race as parent(s), differing only from sibling(s). That whites are more likely than Asians or blacks to differ only from a sibling is once again consistent with transracial adoption patterns. By contrast, the process behind the high number of Hispanic children (32%) with just an "odd"-sibling-out is not at all evident. White children are also more likely than average to match all members of their nuclear families differing only from a non-nuclear household member, perhaps a cousin or grandparent, but more often a parent's live-in partner, we suspect.

We turn now to describing two-way relationships between the location of racial diversity and other characteristics of children's environments.

II. Mixed-Race versus Same-Race Households

How do the cultural, economic, and social resources available in mixed-race households compare to those in same-race households? We hypothesized that the averages for mixed-race households would fall between the averages of their two same-race counterparts. Our findings indicate considerable variation by resource area, and to a smaller extent along racial lines.

Cultural Resources

Consistent with our hypothesis, the cultural milieu of multiracial households do fall between those of their same-race counterparts, at least as measured by parents' nativity and language (Table 4). Children living in Asian-white households are more likely than those in all-white households—but less likely than those in all-Asian households—to have a foreign-born parent and to have an Asian language spoken in the household. The same holds for children in Hispanic-white households, although of course the foreign language is Spanish. (Children in black-white households are not compared because the nativity and languages of blacks and whites are quite similar.)

Economic Resources

A similar pattern holds for economic resources when household income, fathers' occupation, and parents' education are used as indicators. In Table 5, minority and mixed-race household incomes are expressed as a percentage of

Table 4
 Cultural Resources of Children in Same-Race and Multiracial Households
 for Households with the Relevant Parent
 (in percent)

	<i>Father foreign- born</i>	<i>Mother foreign- born</i>	<i>Non-English- speaking Father</i>	<i>Non-English- speaking Mother</i>	<i>N =</i>
<i>Same-Race Households</i>					
White children	6	7	9	9	48,058
Asian-Pacific children	85	85	88	87	855
Hispanic children	54	51	94	92	1,505
Black children	4	4	4	4	8,382
<i>Multiracial Households</i>					
Asian children and white siblings, total	24	46	20	36	456
1. Father Asian, Mother not	63	15	20	36	106
2. Mother Asian, Father not	7	73	14	59	223
3. Both Asian	80	80	80	80	10
4. Neither Asian	10	10	5	5	80
5. Single parent	22	37	44	30	36
Hispanic children and white siblings, total	36	33	54	57	433
1. Father Hispanic, Mother not	39	16	59	27	130
2. Mother Hispanic, Father not	16	28	4	28	109
3. Both Hispanic	75	75	89	87	47
4. Neither Hispanic	38	38	70	62	50
5. Single parent	35	40	59	70	97
Black children and white siblings, total	8	8	3	7	271

white two-parent or one-parent income. Median household income for each multiracial group is intermediate between the corresponding levels for its same-race counterparts; the same holds for proportions of mothers who are college educated. For children in Asian-white and Hispanic-white households, probabilities of having a college-educated father, or having one with a professional or managerial occupation are intermediate between those of children in all-white, and all-Asian or all-Hispanic households. Finally, children in Hispanic-white and black-white households fall under the poverty line in greater proportion than children in all-white households, but in lesser proportion than those in all-Hispanic or all-black households. On the whole, then, the level of economic resources available to children in multiracial households seems to be a blend of the average levels available to children in corresponding all-white and all-minority households.

Two exceptions to this general picture both suggest the importance of college as a meeting ground for partners in racial intermarriage (Goode 1982; Kitano, et al. 1984). First, children in Asian-white households are less likely than children either in all-white or all-Asian households to be living in poverty (Table 5),

Table 5
Economic Resources of Children in Same-Race and Multiracial Households

<i>Race of Children and Parents</i>	<i>Persons per Household</i>	<i>Household Median Income^a</i>	<i>Per Capita Median Income^b</i>	<i>Poverty Line or Below (%)</i>	<i>Fathers in Professional/Management Occupations (%)</i>	<i>Fathers with Some College^c (%)</i>	<i>Mothers with Some College^c (%)</i>	<i>N =</i>
<i>Same-Race Households</i>								
<i>White Children, total</i>	4.6	100	100	15	26	42	30	48,058
1. Two parents	4.7	106	105	11				
2. One parent	3.8	51	65	41				
<i>Asian-Pacific Children, total</i>	4.9	106	99	19	33	58	51	855
1. Two parents	5.0	109	103	16				
2. One parent	4.0	47	53	41				
<i>Hispanic Children, total</i>	5.3	55	50	46	6	13	8	1,505
1. Two parents	5.5	67	57	37				
2. One parent	4.5	30	30	74				
<i>Black Children, total</i>	4.9	58	52	45	9	23	20	8,382
1. Two parents	5.6	86	73	26				
2. One parent	4.8	33	32	66				
<i>Multiracial Households</i>								
<i>Asian Children and White</i>								
<i>Siblings, total</i>	4.7	100	101	9	30	55	36	456
1. Two parents	4.8	102	102	9				
Father Asian, Mother not	4.7	107	105	7	40	65	39	106
Mother Asian, Father not	4.3	100	98	9	23	50	30	223
Both Asian	6.7	178	109	10	70	40	40	10
Neither Asian	5.9	111	101	11	34	56	55	80
2. One parent	4.2	51	67	42	NA	44	22	36
<i>Hispanic Children and White</i>								
<i>Siblings, total</i>	4.9	79	67	28	13	25	19	433
1. Two parents	5.5	88	78	20				
Father Hispanic, Mother not	4.8	93	83	15	16	25	22	130
Mother Hispanic, Father not	4.7	91	83	14	14	37	25	109
Both Hispanic	6.3	68	60	34	9	9	13	47
Neither Hispanic	8.3	118	64	36	12	14	22	50
2. One parent	5.4	51	42	53	NA	29	10	97
<i>Black Children and White</i>								
<i>Siblings, total</i>	5.5	75	73	35	31	45	28	271
1. Two parents	5.1	102	90	19				
Father black, Mother not	4.5	100	97	15	20	45	29	80
Mother black, Father not	4.9	117	91	14	50	25	25	28
Both black	5.3	57	43	60	7	9	13	15
Neither black	6.1	135	89	14	48	54	50	44
2. One parent	4.7	37	34	63	NA	57	18	104

Notes: ^a Expressed as a percentage of the median for all white-only families; 100 = \$21,600.

^b Expressed as a percentage of the median for all white-only families; 100 = \$4,850.

^c For households with relevant parent.

consistent with the higher socioeconomic origins of most college students. Second, children in black-white households are more likely than those either in all-white or all-black households to have fathers who are college educated (Table 5), or who hold a job as a professional or manager (Table 5).

Table 6
Social/Family Resources of Children in Same-Race and Multiracial Households

<i>Race of Children and Parents</i>	<i>Mean Child-Adult Ratio</i>	<i>Mean Number of Siblings < 18</i>	<i>First Marriage for Both Parents (%)</i>	<i>Parents in "Blended" Marriage (%)</i>	<i>Mother Works < 35 Hours</i>	<i>Mother Works 35+ Hours</i>	<i>N =</i>
<i>Same-Race Households</i>							
<i>White Children, total</i>	1.2	2.4	68	18	17.6	29.0	48,058
1. Two parents	1.2	2.5					
2. One parent	1.8	2.2					
<i>Asian-Pacific Children, total</i>	1.2	2.5	83	6	13.2	43.6	855
1. Two parents	1.1	2.5					
2. One parent	1.5	2.1					
<i>Hispanic Children, total</i>	1.6	3.0	66	7	6.7	27.4	1,505
1. Two parents	1.4	3.1					
2. One parent	2.1	2.7					
<i>Black Children, total</i>	1.6	3.0	40	13	10.6	39.5	8,382
1. Two parents	1.3	3.0					
2. One parent	2.0	2.9					
<i>Multiracial Households</i>							
<i>Asian Children and White Siblings, total</i>							
1. Two parents	1.2	2.5	64	28	21.7	37.2	456
Father Asian, Mother not	1.2	2.6	76	24	19.8	32.1	106
Mother Asian, Father not	1.0	2.2	65	35	15.7	44.8	223
Both Asian	0.8	2.5	80	20	30.0	50.0	10
Neither Asian	1.4	3.3	71	29	33.8	18.8	80
2. Single parent	2.1	2.5	NA	NA	41.7	44.4	36
<i>Hispanic Children and White Siblings, total</i>							
1. Two parents	1.6	3.0	56	22	12.9	35.8	433
Father Hispanic, Mother not	1.4	3.0	56	22			336
Mother Hispanic, Father not	1.2	2.5	75	26	17.7	38.5	130
Both Hispanic	1.2	2.5	62	39	14.6	27.5	109
Neither Hispanic	1.3	3.2	83	17	4.3	29.8	47
Neither Hispanic	2.5	5.0	76	24	4.0	44.0	50
2. Single parent	2.1	3.1	NA	NA	3.8	41.3	97
<i>Black Children and White Siblings, total</i>							
1. Two parents	1.6	2.7	37	25	13.8	45.0	271
Father black, Mother not	1.2	2.5	37	25			167
Mother black, Father not	1.2	2.2	49	51	16.3	52.5	80
Both black	1.0	2.9	61	39	14.3	42.9	28
Neither black	0.9	2.1	67	48	—	40.0	15
Neither black	1.4	3.1	75	25	34.1	38.6	44
2. Single parent	2.2	3.0	NA	NA	4.2	43.2	104

Family Social Resources

Unlike cultural milieu or economic well-being, the social resources of children in multiracial households do not fall between those of their same-race referents, at least if household configuration, parents' marital histories, and maternal

employment are any indication. Among measures of household configuration, size (number of persons per household) comes closest to the expected intermediate levels. Children in two of three mixed groups, Asian-white and black-white, live in households numbering more than their all-white but less than their all-minority counterparts (Table 5, column 1). Children in the Hispanic-white group have household sizes the same or even higher than the all-Hispanic averages, however. Regarding number of siblings per household, no clear pattern obtains, while the child-adult ratio shows little variation to begin with (Table 6).

In the remaining areas of social resources, children in mixed households clearly depart from the averages for those in homogeneous ones (Table 6). First, compared to children in same-race households, children in multiracial households are more likely to have at least one parent who is remarried. This agrees with earlier studies on intermarriage (Day 1977; Heer 1974; Aldridge 1978). Second, children in multiracial households are more likely than usual to have a working mother, and one who works full-time. This is consistent with Kitano, et al.'s (1984: 184) observation that intermarriage increases in situations that provide ample "opportunity for equal status interaction." Work (and by extension, school) provides such opportunity more than any other situation, therefore especially high proportions of these mothers are likely to have met their future husbands while on the job.

III. Within-Household Location of Racial Diversity

A household's economic and cultural characteristics are linked to its overall racial composition. Are they also linked to its internal race configuration? To address this question we compare parental couples with Asian, black, or Hispanic fathers and white mothers—against those with white fathers and Asian, black, or Hispanic mothers. We look specifically at household income, parents' education and nativity, and whether non-English is spoken at home.

Income and Education

Household income and parents' education in white-Asian households varies considerably depending on whether mothers or fathers are Asian. There is a difference too for black versus white fathers in black-white households, and an education differential (although not an income one) for Hispanic versus white fathers in Hispanic-white households.

In households with Asian fathers and white mothers, household income and parents' education considerably exceeds the averages for both all-white and two-parent all-Asian households (Table 5). In contrast, children with Asian mothers and white fathers not only lack any income advantage vis-à-vis children in Asian, Asian-white, or white households, but their parents' educational advantage is also less pronounced. The lower economic standing of Asian-bridal households may well reflect the significant proportion of G.I.-war bride marriages.

In black-white households with black fathers and white mothers, total household income is lower than for households with white fathers and black mothers, but per capita income is somewhat higher, as is the proportion of college-educated parents. For Hispanic-white couples, no household income differential is evident,

but white fathers married to Hispanic mothers are more likely to be college educated than Hispanic fathers married to white mothers.

Finally, the circumstances of children in Asian- and black-white families headed by all-white couples appear to reflect a significant rate of minority-child adoption. Asian, black, and white children in white-couple households benefit from higher parental income more than children in any other kind of household. They are also more likely to be reared by parents who are well educated. Because the adoption process favors families with greater-than-average resources, a large proportion of adoptive families would raise the economic averages for all white-couple-headed households.

Nativity and Language

Do the cultural resources of children with minority fathers and white mothers differ significantly from those with white fathers and minority mothers? Asian and Hispanic parents are much more likely to be immigrants than white ones, but differences in the likelihood of speaking non-English are less clearcut, especially among mothers. Whereas Hispanic fathers in Hispanic-white families are much more likely than white fathers to speak Spanish, Hispanic mothers are no more likely to speak Spanish than white ones, even though they are twice as likely to be immigrants (Table 4). The language situation in Asian-white families is even more interesting. Even though Asian fathers are nine times as likely to be foreign-born as white fathers, they are only half again as likely to speak an Asian language. And white mothers, even though less likely to speak an Asian language than Asian mothers, are still more likely to do so (36%) than Asian fathers (20%). In both Asian-white and Hispanic-white households then, white mothers speak the minority ethnic language to a larger extent than either their immigrant status or the behavior of white fathers would imply. This supports the observation cited before that the task of teaching minority cultural traditions is disproportionately assumed by mothers, regardless of race (Wilson 1981). Thus the race of children's mothers and fathers appears less important to their language socialization than to their economic well-being.

SUMMARY

In this baseline demographic description of American children in multiracial households, we introduce three dimensions of household racial diversity: mix, location of racial diversity at the household level, and location of racial diversity from each child's perspective. Each has important implications for children's socialization and well-being, though data permit us to explore just the first two.

We use child and household records from the 1980 1-in-1,000 census sample to examine the characteristics of multiracial households and evaluate two propositions about links between racial "location" and other nonracial attributes of children's household environments. Some notable univariate findings are that:

- More than half of the roughly 2 million children living in multiracial households live in California, Texas, New York, Illinois, Washington, and Hawaii.

- The largest proportion live in Asian-white households, followed closely by Hispanic-white households.
- About 60% live in households headed by mixed-race couples.
- Most children differ in race from one parent; a minority differ from both or from neither.

As to links between location and other variables, we ask whether the nonracial attributes of multiracial households fall between those of their same-race counterparts. The results are mixed, largely supporting the proposition with respect to cultural and economic measures, but not with respect to marital history or maternal employment; children in multiracial households are more likely to have remarried parent(s) and working mothers than children in same-race households.

We ask also how the cultural and economic characteristics of children's households are related to whether their mothers or fathers are minority or white. In Asian-white and black-white households, income and parents' education vary considerably with the races of particular spouses but variation in cultural characteristics is less pronounced.

We began by observing that childhood in a multiracial household is more complicated than childhood in a same-race household, all else being equal. Yet even intuitively, the complications involved should vary not only with the specific races commingling, but with the household positions of adults of specific races, and with each child's own race. This idea is formalized in the concept of location, which provides a framework for examining the issue with empirical data. The next tasks include application of the framework using multivariate techniques, possibly on children's issues outside of the context of race.

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NOTES

1. This estimate is derived by multiplying our 1-in-1,000 sample of 2,151 children in 1,015 households by 1,000. Our sample is an extract of the 1980 1-in-1,000 Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), and comprises child-records for all children age 17 or younger who resided in households that included persons from more than one of the census bureau's 13 race categories (Bureau of the Census 1983: 76). The sample is thus an equal probability sample of all U.S. children living in multiracial households. That 3.5%

of children live in multiracial households may appear inordinately high when compared against the annual proportion of racial intermarriages, or the proportion of all married couples who are interracial (both estimated at less than 2% in 1980; Wilson [1984]; Bureau of the Census [1981a: Table 55]). Two factors may explain the difference. First, our sample includes not only children in households headed by interracial couples, but those with single parents and same-race parents. Second, estimates of racial intermarriage are usually derived from vital statistics; but certain populous states (for example, California, New York, Texas) do not indicate race on the marriage record (Wilson 1984; Monahan 1976), probably biasing estimates downward.

2. The bureau's race categories are reproduced below (Bureau of the Census 1983: 76 and K37).

1980 U.S. Census Race Classifications

1. White
2. Black
3. American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut
Asian and Pacific Islander:
4. Japanese
5. Chinese
6. Filipino
7. Korean
8. Asian Indian
9. Vietnamese
10. Hawaiian
11. Other Asian and Pacific Islander,
including Guamanian and
Samoan
Other (not elsewhere classified):
12. Spanish write-in entry
13. Other

These categories are somewhat inconsistent with everyday usage: "Chinese" and "Korean" for instance, are disaggregated even though conventionally they signify ethnicity or national origin, not race. Partly to address this problem (and to achieve larger sample sizes), we combine the eight Asian/Pacific categories into one.

Of special interest is the twelfth category, "Spanish write-in entry." Hispanics in our sample are drawn not from the total Hispanic population as defined by ancestry elsewhere in the census, but rather from the subset (42%) who chose "Spanish," not white or black, in response to the query on race (Bureau of the Census 1981b: Table 39, and 1983: K44). Because there may be significant differences—socioeconomic or cultural—between Hispanics who report their race as "Spanish" and the majority that identifies itself as white, our Hispanic-white analysis should be read with particular caution. Although resolution of this complication is beyond the scope of this article, a useful step in the future might be to compare race with nativity or spoken language. In any case, extensive coverage makes census data probably the best available for the present purposes. Were it feasible or even desirable to construct watertight racial classifications, race

would still be imperfectly correlated with culture.

3. "American Indian, Eskimo and Aleut" and "Other" children comprise 10% and 9% of our sample, respectively (Table 2). "Other" is a residual category comprising self-reported identities not elsewhere classified. Examples cited from the confidential census manuscripts (but all coded together on the public sample) include Eurasian, Cosmopolitan, and Inter-racial (Bureau of the Census 1983: K37). The heterogeneity of this category undoubtedly means that one numerically small but conceptually distinct group of multi-racial families is entirely excluded from our sample: those with members of different racial categories all of which were coded as "Other." Hence, we cannot identify families such as a Eurasian couple living with an Afro-Asian child, because parents and child alike would be coded as "Other," and the family classified as racially homogeneous.

With a larger sample size, further characteristics of "Other" children might be inferred from the cultural or racial characteristics of other household members. A sample 10 times the present size can be extracted by using the 1-in-100 file of the PUMS (Bureau of the Census 1983), rather than the 1-in-1,000 file used here. We were limited to the smaller 1-in-1,000 file because of project resources.

4. Children living in households that include members of more than one non-white group comprise 23% of our sample (see lines 6 through 8 of Table 1). Because of the innumerable race combinations possible, and the improbability of numerical dominance by any single combination, we chose not to analyze the category further.

5. These geographical data are available from the authors by request.

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