

# HOUSING SUCCESSIONS AMONG BLACKS AND WHITES IN CITIES AND SUBURBS

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CURRENT POPULATION  
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**Special Studies**  
Series P-23, No. 101

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U.S. Department  
of Commerce

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BUREAU  
OF THE CENSUS

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## Preface

This is another in a series of analytical studies undertaken by demographers at the Bureau of the Census. A distinguishing feature of these occasional publications is that they include broad speculative analysis and illustrative hypotheses by the authors as an aid in understanding the statistics and assessing their potential impact on public policy. The usual scope of these studies is probably broader than that of annual census reports on population subjects but less complete than book-length monographs.

Previous publications in the analytical series include: *Some Recent Changes in American Families*, by Paul C. Glick (1975); *The Geographical Mobility of Americans: An International Comparison*, by Larry H. Long and Celia G. Boertlein (1976); *Marrying, Divorcing, and Living Together in the U.S. Today*, by Paul C. Glick and Arthur J. Norton (1977, published by the Population Reference Bureau, Washington, D.C.); *Racial Succession in Individual Housing Units*, by Larry H. Long and Daphne Spain (1978); *Interregional Migration of the Poor: Some Recent Changes*, by Larry H. Long (1978); *The Future of the American Family* by Paul C. Glick (1979); *Prospective Trends in the Size and Structure of the Elderly Population, Impact of Mortality Trends, and Some Implications*, by Jacob S. Siegel, (1979); and *Reasons for Interstate Migration: Jobs, Retirement, Climate, and Other Influences*, by Larry H. Long and Kristin A. Hansen (1979). Additional studies are in preparation.

The authors are currently members of the Center for Demographic Studies. Work on the study was initially undertaken in Population Division and was almost entirely supported by Population Division.

Daphne Spain holds a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Massachusetts. Her related research on population changes in central cities is forthcoming in the *Journal of the American Planning Association* and *Urban Affairs Quarterly*.

John Reid received his doctorate in sociology from the University of Chicago. Before joining the Census Bureau staff as a visiting researcher in 1977, he was at Atlanta University where he served as Ware Professor and Chairman of the Department of Sociology, editor of *Phylon*, and Director of the W. E. B. DuBois Institute for the Study of the American Black. During his tenure at Atlanta University, he conducted conferences on "The Population of the American Black" (1974) and "The Health of the American Black" (1976). Dr. Reid has published articles on Black urbanization, urban growth and redistribution of the Black population, and issues concerning the health status of American Blacks.

Larry Long received the Ph.D. degree in sociology from the University of Texas. Since joining the Census Bureau in 1970 he has written on a number of topics associated with urban and regional population trends.

## **Housing Successions Among Blacks and Whites in Cities and Suburbs**

One of the major urban trends in the United States since World War II has been a rise in the percent Black in large cities and a general deterioration of the income position of cities relative to their suburbs (e.g., Schnore, 1972; Long 1975). But recently there have been indicators that the potential for halting or even reversing these trends exists. Numerous examples have been cited recently concerning the movement of relatively young, middle-class Whites into neighborhoods that are predominantly Black and/or of lower income status than that of the in-movers (Black et al., 1977; Bradley, 1978; National Urban Coalition, 1978). The process has been described by many names, perhaps most commonly as the "back to the city movement" (Peirce, 1977, 1978; Hamer, 1978) and "gentrification" (U.S. News and World Report, 1979; Fleetwood, 1979; Newsweek 1979). The suggestion is that in large cities an increased number of housing units are not only passing from Black to White occupancy, but are also "filtering up," reversing the more traditional pattern for housing units to be passed to households of lower income (Lowry, 1960).

There is considerable irony in that recent accounts of middle-class Whites moving back to (or staying in) cities come shortly after stories of alleged extensive "White flight," whereby Whites were thought to be leaving cities at an increased rate as a result of school desegregation decisions and busing plans introduced in the early 1970's (Washington Post, 1978). Both "White flight" and "back to the city" movements could, of course, be occurring simultaneously, with some White households (presumably those with children) departing cities at an accelerating rate as other White households were showing an increasing tendency to take up residence in cities. What is needed is a better way of assessing the net effect of these movements, and one way—as reported in this study—is to examine annual housing successions and identify the incidence of Black-to-White and White-to-Black housing turnovers in cities and suburbs.

The suburbs have received their share of publicity as a result of reports of growing suburbanization of the Black population. The number of Blacks living in the suburbs increased by 34 percent between 1970 and 1977, and the percent Black in the suburban population was thereby raised from 4.6 percent in 1970 to 5.6 percent in 1977; this growing Black presence in the suburbs in the 1970's represents a change from the 1960's (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1978b; Nelson, 1979). Since Blacks moving from cities to suburbs are of higher socioeconomic status than those remaining in cities (Grier and Grier, 1978; Rose, 1976; Roof and Spain, 1977), increased Black suburbanization could act to increase city-suburb income differences, possibly offsetting to some extent the potential for city-suburb income equalization through increased back-to-the-city movement of middle-class Whites.

These concurrent phenomena, alleged White re-citification along with Black suburbanization, have understandably caused researchers to question the future redistribution of the metropolitan population by race and socioeconomic status (Nelson, 1979; Farley et al., 1978). Indeed, the future composition of city and suburban populations is said to be more subject to change and less predictable than at any time since World War II (von Eckardt, 1979). Decennial censuses can provide periodic readings of how individual neighborhoods in cities and suburbs have changed over a 10-year period, but one way of supplementing the data they provide and at the same time monitoring the processes at work (rather than only the result of such processes) is to examine individual housing successions and compare the in-movers directly with the households they replace. Data of this type could provide a dynamic view—a kind of moving picture—of the changes recorded in the decennial snapshots from censuses.

The preceding discussion suggests that with annual data on housing turnovers, one would expect to detect a rise in the incidence of Black-to-White residential successions in cities and a rise in White-to-Black successions in the suburbs. If “gentrification” is occurring, one would, in addition, expect to find a rise in the socioeconomic status of Whites relative to the Black households they are replacing in central cities. Other indicators of central-city revival might include smaller households and younger ages among the Whites who replace Blacks.

### Source of Data

In order to create data on housing turnovers, we matched the Annual Housing Surveys conducted by the Census Bureau for the Department of Housing and Urban Development from 1973 through 1976. Each of these four surveys was nationwide in scope, was taken over a 3-month period in the fall of the year, and interviewed about 60,000 households (see U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1978a). The survey was designed to visit the same housing units each year, with the sample being periodically supplemented to reflect new construction and the loss of housing units through conversions and demolitions. We linked three pairs of years (1973-74, 1974-75, and 1975-76) in order to compare the in-moving household with the out-moving household being replaced. In this way, the data were limited to housing units occupied on each of two interview dates a year apart.

A household was considered to have moved out if no member of the household interviewed in one year was present at the time of the next interview a year later. This concept of what constitutes a “housing succession” is the same as used in an earlier study which employed overlapping panels of the Current Population Survey to study household successions in 1967-68, 1968-69, 1969-70, and 1970-71 (Long and Spain, 1978). In both the earlier study and the present study, household successions were classified according to the race of the household head, who was defined according to traditional practice used by the Census Bureau (1978a, appendix p. 19).

Not every sequence of housing successions is recorded by this procedure, however. When renovation is taking place, a housing unit initially occupied

might not be occupied while repairs are being made and could be classified as "vacant" when the interviewer came for the next interview. With interviews a year apart, a sequence of occupied-vacant-occupied would not appear in the year-by-year matches created for this and the earlier study. One should also take note of the fact that in comparing housing units occupied by different households a year apart, one is not always comparing the inmoving household that directly replaced the earlier residents; clearly, there could be intervening movers who occupied the unit between the two interview dates, but the intervening movers would not be picked up in the data.

The results should thus be regarded as tentative. The matching of successive surveys is a fairly new procedure, and the purpose is to attempt to develop a new statistical resource out of existing surveys. If successful, the results would offer a means of monitoring changes as they occur and anticipating future alterations in the make-up of city and suburban population categories.

### Black-to-White Successions in Central Cities

The basic results of the matching procedure for 1973-1974, 1974-75, and 1975-76 are shown in table 1 for central cities of standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA's) of the United States. Central cities, in this case, reflect their 1970 boundaries and generally have at least 50,000 population. SMSA's are defined as of 1970. We also aggregated the data for the entire 1973-76 period and these data are shown in the appendix along with data for the 1967-71 period used in the earlier study (Long and Spain, 1978).

**Table 1. The Incidence of Racial Successions in Housing Units in Central Cities of SMSA's: Single Years, 1973-76**

Type of racial succession	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
<b>NUMBER OF CASES. . . . .</b>	<b>2,161</b>	<b>2,221</b>	<b>2,354</b>
Whites replacing Whites . . . . .	1,611	1,605	1,727
Blacks replacing Blacks. . . . .	280	295	296
Blacks replacing Whites. . . . .	114	141	104
Whites replacing Blacks. . . . .	43	56	94
Successions involving other races . . . . .	113	124	133
<b>PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION . . . . .</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Whites replacing Whites . . . . .	74.5	72.3	73.4
Blacks replacing Blacks. . . . .	13.0	13.3	12.6
Blacks replacing Whites. . . . .	5.3	6.3	4.4
Whites replacing Blacks. . . . .	2.0	2.5	4.0
Successions involving other races . . . . .	5.2	5.6	5.6

What appears to be year-to-year fluctuations in table 1 may reflect not only the sampling variability associated with the relatively small number of observations, but may also be the product of various exogenous influences like annual changes in the rate of construction of new housing units, the mix of new construction between single-family houses and apartments, the availability of mortgage money, and other factors that affect year-to-year changes in the supply and demand for new and formerly occupied housing units in cities and suburbs. How those forces affect the number and patterns of annual housing successions has not been firmly established.

The data provide some evidence of a rise in the number and incidence of Black-to-White housing successions in central cities. As can be seen, Black-to-White housing successions appear to have risen in absolute numbers and from 2.0 percent of all housing successions in 1973-74 to 2.5 percent in 1974-75, then to 4.0 percent in 1975-76. The other types of housing successions (especially White-to-White, Black-to-Black, and White-to-Black) give little evidence of systematic change over the 3-year study period.

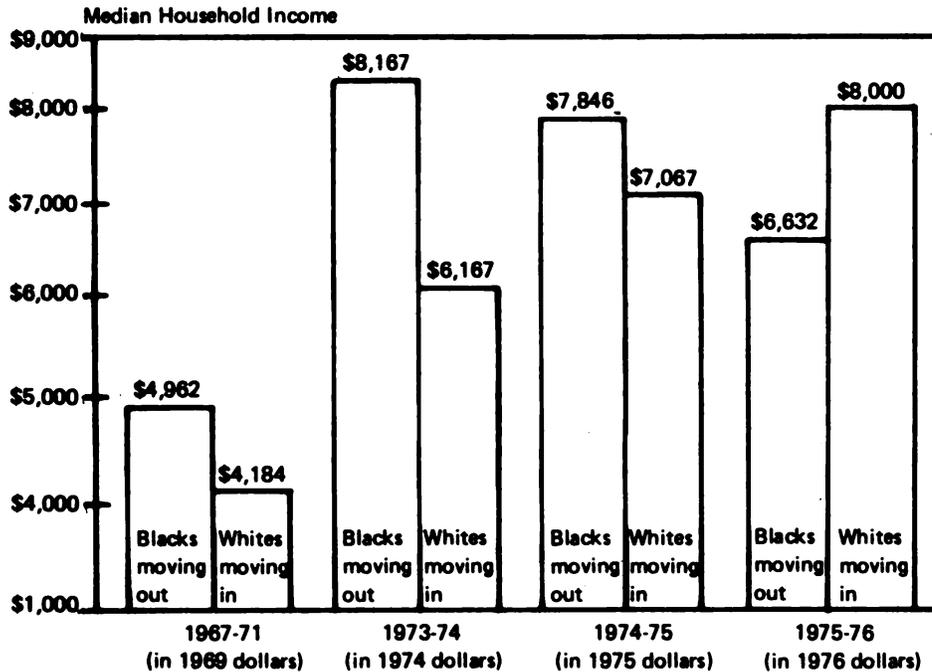
Although there is limited evidence to support the expectation of a rise in Black-to-White housing transfers in central cities, it is important to point out that this type of housing succession is still less common than the more traditional White-to-Black successions that have produced rises in the percent Black in the Nation's large cities (Long, 1975). In other words, in the 1973-76 period there was still a net transfer of housing units in central cities from White to Black occupancy, just as there was in the 1967-71 study period (Long and Spain, 1978). In the more recent period (1973-76), for every 100 Black-to-White successions there were about 186 White-to-Black successions.

Even though there is some support for the expectation of a rise in the incidence of Black-to-White housing successions in central cities, such a trend would not, by itself, constitute validation of the gentrification hypothesis. If gentrification is occurring, one would also expect to find a rise in the relative socioeconomic status of White households replacing Black households in central city housing units. In fact, if "displacement" rather than mere "replacement" is occurring, one expects to find the White households moving in to be of higher socioeconomic status than the Black households they replace.

To make this test, we tabulated various socioeconomic characteristics of the households participating in the racial successions shown in table 1. Figure 1 presents a comparison of the annual incomes of White households with the Black households they replaced in central city housing units between 1967 and 1976. Income is for the 12 months preceding the interview.

The results suggest support for the gentrification hypothesis. In 1967-71, the income of White households seemed to be a little less than the Black households they were replacing. During the years from 1974 to 1976, however, the income of White in-mover households appears to more nearly equal that of the Black households they replaced in central city housing units. And in

**Figure 1.**  
**MEDIAN INCOME OF HOUSEHOLDS INVOLVED IN BLACK-TO-WHITE HOUSING**  
**SUCCESSIONS IN CENTRAL CITIES OF SMSA'S: 1967 TO 1976**



1975-76, the White in-movers appear to have had even greater incomes than the Black households being replaced, as predicted by the gentrification hypothesis. But the number of cases is too small to draw definitive conclusions (the number of cases on which figure 1 is based can be found in table 1 and in Long and Spain [1978, p. 6]).

Other data also seem to give support to the gentrification hypothesis. Another measure of socioeconomic status is educational level. In 1967-71, White households replacing Black households in central cities appeared to have lower levels of educational attainment than the Black households being replaced; in that period, about 8.9 percent of White in-mover household heads were found to have completed 4 or more years of college, compared with 11.1 percent of Black heads of households they replaced. By 1975-76, the White in-mover households appeared to have slightly higher educational levels than the Black households they replaced (about 14.9 percent of in-moving White household heads had 4 or more years of college, compared with 13.8 percent for the Black household heads moving out). A higher educational level among the White in-movers would be predicted by the gentrification hypothesis. The educational attainment of movers is shown in table 2 along with other summary demographic and socioeconomic characteristics.

Other views of households thought to be participating in the gentrification process are less clearly supported by the data in table 2. There is little evidence

**Table 2. Selected Characteristics of Households Vacating a Housing Unit and the Households That Replace Them in Central Cities of SMSA's: Single Years, 1973-76**

Characteristics and year	White households replacing other White households		Black households replacing other Black households		Black households replacing White households		White households replacing Black households	
	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers
<b>1973-74</b>								
Mean household size . . . . .	2.5	2.5	3.0	2.9	2.6	2.7	2.2	2.5
Median household income (in 1974 dollars) . . . . .	8,528	8,855	5,842	5,530	7,920	9,680	8,167	6,167
Percent of household heads with 4 or more years of college . . . . .	(NA)	22.6	(NA)	5.0	(NA)	13.2	(NA)	16.3
Median age of head . . . . .	31.4	28.9	31.9	29.5	33.8	29.0	28.0	31.6
Husband-wife families as a percent of all mover households . . . . .	52.2	49.2	37.5	35.7	51.8	48.2	27.9	27.9
Percent moving within same county . . . . .	(NA)	71.6	(NA)	85.7	(NA)	86.8	(NA)	67.4
Number of cases . . . . .	1,611	1,611	280	280	114	114	43	43
<b>1974-75</b>								
Mean household size . . . . .	2.5	2.5	2.9	2.9	2.3	2.7	2.6	2.6
Median household income (in 1975 dollars) . . . . .	9,182	8,839	6,029	5,268	7,813	7,150	7,846	7,067
Percent of household heads with 4 or more years of college . . . . .	21.3	22.2	7.1	3.7	17.7	11.3	17.9	16.1
Median age of head . . . . .	30.9	28.7	32.6	31.0	39.3	29.4	29.6	28.8

**Table 2. Selected Characteristics of Households Vacating a Housing Unit and the Households That Replace Them  
in Central Cities of SMSA's: Single Years, 1973-76 — Continued**

Characteristics and year	White households replacing other White households		Black households replacing other Black households		Black households replacing White households		White households replacing Black households	
	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers
<b>1974-75—Continued</b>								
Husband-wife families as a percent of all mover households . . . . .	47.7	49.7	30.5	32.2	35.5	30.5	35.7	42.9
Percent moving within same county . . . . .	(NA)	70.7	(NA)	87.8	(NA)	80.1	(NA)	66.1
Number of cases . . . . .	1,605	1,605	295	295	141	141	56	56
<b>1975-76</b>								
Mean household size . . . . .	2.4	2.4	2.8	2.9	2.3	2.8	2.6	2.8
Median household income (in 1976 dollars) . . . . .	9,046	9,390	5,808	5,600	7,538	8,167	6,632	8,000
Percent of household heads with								
4 or more years of college . . . . .	22.9	24.8	4.7	5.1	14.4	17.3	13.8	14.9
Median age of head . . . . .	29.8	28.9	32.4	31.3	37.3	28.5	28.7	28.3
Husband-wife families as a percent of all mover households . . . . .								
Percent moving within same county . . . . .	47.5	45.5	27.0	29.1	36.5	44.2	33.0	35.1
Number of cases . . . . .	(NA)	71.2	(NA)	85.8	(NA)	82.7	(NA)	75.5
	1,727	1,727	296	296	104	104	94	94

NA means not available.

of systematic differences in age or household size between the inmoving White households and the Black households they replace. Based on case studies and other accounts of housing renovators (e.g., Gale, 1977), one might expect to find a younger age and smaller household size for the inmoving Whites. Instead, over the 3-year period from 1973 to 1976, one finds the White households as well as the Black households they replace averaging close to 2.5 persons, with the head around 29 years of age.

Nor is there much evidence to support the idea that Black-to-White housing successions are largely the product of a back-to-the-city movement. In at least two-thirds of the Black-to-White housing successions in central cities between 1973 and 1976, the Whites were moving from elsewhere in the same county. With these data, there is no way to trace where the vacating Black households moved. In general, the data tell us that in most housing successions in central cities—whether Whites replace Whites, Blacks replace Blacks, Blacks replace Whites, or Whites replace Blacks—the in-movers are covering short distances, usually moving from one part of the city to another. This was true in the 1967-71 period as well (Long and Spain, 1978, p. 11).

There is at least one other aspect of Black-to-White housing successions that does not conform to the conventional image of gentrification. Black households being replaced by White households do not have appreciably lower incomes than other Black movers in central cities. In fact, Black households being replaced by White households appear to have higher incomes than Blacks who are replacing or being replaced by other Black households. Clearly, Black households being replaced by White households are not, on the average, more disadvantaged than other urban Black movers.

As mentioned earlier, the most common form of racial succession in urban housing in the 1973-76 period involved Black households replacing White households. As in the 1967-71 period (Long and Spain, 1978, pp. 10-13), Whites who were replaced by Blacks tended to be older and had lower incomes than other White movers. Blacks who replaced Whites in urban housing tended to have higher incomes and more often were husband-wife families than were Black movers replacing or being replaced by other Blacks.

The overall picture has aspects of both continuity and change. On the side of continuity, there was still a net transfer of central city housing units in the 1973-76 period from White to Black occupancy, but on the side of change, the size of the net transfer seems to be falling as a result of an apparent rise in the number and proportion of housing turnovers consisting of White households replacing Black households. The latter trend, if indeed it is real, could be a manifestation of gentrification, or it could simply reflect a change in attitudes and a decline in the effect of race in the buying, selling, and renting of homes and apartments in cities. Also on the side of change is the apparent tendency for White households replacing Blacks to be a relatively more affluent group than in the past—relative, that is, to the Blacks they replace; the Whites may even have come to have higher incomes, on the average, than the Black households being replaced, as would be expected if gentrification is occurring.

**Table 3. The Incidence of Racial Successions in Housing Units in the Balance of SMSA's: Single Years, 1973-76**

Type of racial succession	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
<b>NUMBER OF CASES. . . . .</b>	<b>2,145</b>	<b>2,534</b>	<b>2,603</b>
Whites replacing Whites . . . . .	1,932	2,254	2,318
Blacks replacing Blacks. . . . .	62	81	72
Blacks replacing Whites. . . . .	48	80	73
Whites replacing Blacks. . . . .	38	36	39
Successions involving other races . . . . .	65	83	101
<b>PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION . . . . .</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>100.1</b>
Whites replacing Whites . . . . .	90.1	89.0	89.1
Blacks replacing Blacks. . . . .	2.9	3.2	2.8
Blacks replacing Whites. . . . .	2.2	3.2	2.8
Whites replacing Blacks. . . . .	1.8	1.4	1.5
Successions involving other races . . . . .	3.0	3.3	3.9

Contrary to the notion that gentrification results from a strong back-to-the-city movement, most of the White households replacing Black households were moving from elsewhere in the city.

#### **White-to-Black Successions in the Suburbs**

In the suburbs, the attention has been on White-to-Black successions because the percent Black in the suburbs rose from 4.6 percent in 1970 to 5.6 percent in 1977 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1978b). This trend is confirmed by table 3, which shows the incidence of racial succession in suburban housing units, just as was done for central cities in table 1.

No steady increase in the incidence of racial succession in housing is apparent in the annual data for 1973-76, but the amount of racial succession in suburban housing seems to be at a higher level than in the earlier study for 1967-71. The percent of housing successions in the suburbs (as defined in 1970) characterized by Blacks replacing Whites is shown to be 2.2 percent in 1973-74, 3.2 percent in 1974-75, and 2.8 percent in 1975-76. In 1967-71 Blacks replacing Whites in suburban housing units constituted only 2.1 percent of all housing successions in the suburbs (as defined in 1960).

The 1973-76 figures mean that out of each 1,000 housing turnovers in the suburbs, 82 units changed from White to Black occupancy, and 47 changed in the opposite direction—from Black to White occupancy. Hence, out of every 1,000 housing successions, there was a net shift of 35 housing units from White to Black occupancy. This figure represents an apparent increase over the 1967-71 period, when every 1,000 housing successions in the suburbs resulted in a net shift of only 15 housing units from White to Black occupancy.

In general, these figures on suburban housing successions show few surprises. They tend to confirm the earlier results and other recent data that show an increase in the suburban Black population in the 1970's. The characteristics of Black suburban movers, as shown in table 4, also tend to confirm past patterns. Blacks in suburbs, regardless of the type of household they replace, have higher incomes and educational levels than Blacks in central cities (table 2). Suburban Black households are more likely than central city Black households to consist of husband-wife couples. Combined with a slightly larger mean household size and slightly lower median age of household head among suburban Blacks, it appears that young Black families with children are still a large part of the Black suburban movement (Long and Spain, 1978).

Housing occupied by Blacks is generally of poorer quality than that occupied by Whites (Spain et al., 1978; Sternlieb and Lake, 1975). Lake's (1979) study of racial transition in suburban housing found that housing units experiencing Black-to-Black transition are older and of lower average value than White-to-White units. He found that units occupied by Blacks who replaced Whites were newer, indicating an upgrading of the Black suburban housing stock. Oddly, however, these newer units had the lowest median value of any type of transition. We have a possible methodological explanation for that, as proposed below.

Although we do not have comparable housing data, the socioeconomic data lend support to Lake's findings. Blacks who replaced Whites in 1975-76 had slightly higher incomes and more education than the previous White occupants, suggesting gradual upgrading of the housing stock. But it seems doubtful that Blacks replacing Whites in the suburbs have incomes much higher than the Whites they replace, because the matching procedure tends to understate somewhat the income of outmovers relative to that of inmovers. The reason is that the income of outmovers (households initially residing in the housing unit) is measured 1 year earlier than that of inmovers (households living in the unit 1 year later). In view of high annual rates of inflation and the 1-year lag between outmovers' income and inmovers' income, perhaps the income of outmovers should be adjusted upward. If this adjustment is made (it is not made in the table), Blacks replacing Whites in suburban housing might have had lower incomes than the Whites being replaced in 1973-74 and 1974-75, and approximately equal incomes in 1975-76. This might explain how Blacks who replace Whites can upgrade their housing relative to other Blacks, while still having less purchasing power than Whites.

Blacks replacing Whites in the suburbs have higher incomes and more education than Blacks replacing Blacks. The higher socioeconomic status of Blacks replacing Whites further suggests that Blacks are replacing Blacks in older, inner suburbs, while Blacks who replace Whites are on the fringes in newer housing.

For other demographic characteristics, Black inmovers and White outmovers demonstrated similar traits. Households participating in White-to-Black housing successions in the suburbs tend to be roughly similar in age and household size. Because of the small number of observations, few other meaningful comparisons are possible.

**Table 4. Selected Characteristics of Households Vacating a Housing Unit and the Households That Replace Them  
in the Balance of SMSA's: Single Years, 1973-76**

Characteristics and year	White households replacing other White households		Black households replacing other Black households		Black households replacing White households		White households replacing Black households	
	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers
<b>1973-74</b>								
Mean household size . . . . .	2.8	2.7	2.9	3.3	2.6	2.5	2.9	3.2
Median household income (in 1974 dollars) . . . . .	10,777	11,199	6,667	7,538	9,667	9,200	10,000	9,200
Percent of household heads with 4 or more years of college . . . . .	(NA)	21.6	(NA)	8.1	(NA)	18.8	(NA)	15.8
Median age of head . . . . .	32.4	29.4	30.9	28.6	31.3	30.0	29.2	29.4
Husband-wife families as a percent of all mover households . . . . .	62.0	64.3	51.6	40.3	64.6	39.6	57.9	52.6
Percent moving within same county . . . . .	(NA)	63.0	(NA)	80.6	(NA)	68.8	(NA)	55.3
Number of cases . . . . .	1,932	1,932	62	62	48	48	38	38
<b>1974-75</b>								
Mean household size . . . . .	2.7	2.7	2.9	3.1	2.9	3.2	2.1	2.7
Median household income (in 1975 dollars) . . . . .	11,046	11,493	7,900	5,661	10,333	8,909	10,000	10,000
Percent of household heads with 4 or more years of college . . . . .	20.3	22.4	6.2	9.9	21.3	12.5	8.3	22.2

**Table 4. Selected Characteristics of Households Vacating a Housing Unit and the Households That Replace Them in the Balance of SMSA's: Single Years, 1973-76 — Continued**

Characteristics and year	White households replacing other White households		Black households replacing other Black households		Black households replacing White households		White households replacing Black households	
	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers
<b>1974-75—Continued</b>								
Median age of head . . . . .	31.8	29.5	29.9	29.9	31.6	27.6	31.7	33.8
Husband-wife families as a percent of all mover households . . . . .	62.9 (NA)	61.6 (NA)	39.5 (NA)	32.1 (NA)	60.0 (NA)	53.8 (NA)	30.6 (NA)	50.0 (NA)
Percent moving within same county . . . . .	2,254	2,254	81	81	80	80	36	36
Number of cases . . . . .	2,254	2,254	81	81	80	80	36	36
<b>1975-76</b>								
Mean household size . . . . .	2.8	2.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	3.1	2.6	3.0
Median household income (in 1976 dollars) . . . . .	11,896	12,465	8,118	7,263	12,206	14,028	11,071	11,136
Percent of household heads with 4 or more years of college . . . . .	21.4	22.5	8.3	8.3	20.5	23.3	17.9	20.5
Median age of head . . . . .	31.1	29.2	29.5	28.1	30.8	30.8	27.5	29.5
Husband-wife families as a percent of all mover households . . . . .	62.9 (NA)	62.5 (NA)	38.9 (NA)	36.1 (NA)	65.8 (NA)	64.4 (NA)	51.3 (NA)	64.1 (NA)
Percent moving within same county . . . . .	2,318	61.0	73.6	73.6	73	63.0	39	43.6
Number of cases . . . . .	2,318	2,318	72	72	73	73	39	39

NA means not available.

## Conclusion

The most important results of this report concern White households replacing Black households in central city housing units. As expected, the incidence of housing successions of this type has increased, and, more importantly, there seems to be a rise in the socioeconomic status of Whites relative to the Blacks they replace. There is even a suggestion in the data that by 1976, the income and educational levels of White in-movers exceeded levels of the Black households they replaced. In general, the apparent rise between the 1967-71 and 1973-76 observation periods in the income and educational levels of White in-mover households relative to the Black households they replaced in central cities would tend to support numerous case studies and other accounts of gentrification and back-to-the-city/stay-in-the-city trends.

If such a trend were to accelerate, it certainly would carry the potential for revitalizing cities, though perhaps at the expense of displacing low-income households. It could alter in important ways the composition and character of city populations, and by keeping more middle-income households in cities or inducing more to return to city living, a gentrifying trend could bring about a reduction in the city-suburb income gap, which has been widening at least since the 1950's.

But this last effect of gentrification is not now evident, at least not when we consider all central cities taken together. In 1960, the median income of central city families was 89 percent as large as the median income of suburban families, and by 1970, city families had incomes only 84 percent as large as those of suburban families. Since then, the percentage fell further, so that by 1978, central city families had incomes only 79 percent as large as those of suburban families— a continued and somewhat faster widening of the gap. To the degree that gentrification is occurring, it is not yet large enough to halt the decline, let alone to close this income gap. Of course, if data were available for individual cities and suburbs, the cities where gentrification trends are most prevalent might show a narrowing of the city-suburb income difference.

Other city and suburban population trends are continuing at the present time.

- The percent Black in central cities has increased, having risen from 20.5 percent in 1970 to 22.4 percent in 1977 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1978b). A contribution of this paper is the demonstration that this pattern results in part from a continued net transfer of central city housing units from White to Black occupancy.
- The percent Black in the suburbs has increased, from 4.6 percent in 1970 to 5.6 percent in 1977. As in central cities, this increase in the percent Black resulted in part from a net transfer of housing units from White to Black occupancy.

This study reported on an effort to monitor, more closely than previously possible, the dynamic demographic processes that are at work before they are manifested in the aggregate statistics available from cross-sectional measurements. There is evidence from the study that there is a potential for slowing the rising percent Black in central cities and the widening city-suburb income gap, but for the time being, these two trends are continuing.

**Appendix Table 1. Distribution of Annual Housing Successions in Central Cities and the Balance of SMSA's: 1967-71 and 1973-76**

Location of housing unit	All household successions	Whites replacing Whites	Blacks replacing Blacks	Blacks replacing Whites	Whites replacing Blacks	Successions involving other races
<b>1967-71</b>						
<b>Number of Cases</b>						
Central cities of SMSA's <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	3,481	2,661	475	204	45	96
Balance of SMSA's <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	3,095	2,890	86	65	18	36
<b>Percentage Distribution</b>						
Central cities of SMSA's <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	100.0	76.4	13.6	5.9	1.3	2.8
Balance of SMSA's <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	100.1	93.4	2.8	2.1	0.6	1.2
<b>1973-76</b>						
<b>Number of Cases</b>						
Central cities of SMSA's <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	6,736	4,943	871	359	193	370
Balance of SMSA's <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	7,282	6,504	215	201	113	249
<b>Percentage Distribution</b>						
Central cities of SMSA's <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	100.0	73.4	12.9	5.3	2.9	5.5
Balance of SMSA's <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	100.1	89.3	3.0	2.8	1.6	3.4

<sup>1</sup> Reflects SMSA's as defined in 1960.  
<sup>2</sup> Reflects SMSA's as defined in 1970.

**Appendix Table 2. Selected Characteristics of Households Vacating a Housing Unit and the Households That Replace Them in Central Cities and the Balance of SMSA's: 1967-71**

Location and household characteristics	White households replacing other White households		Black households replacing other Black households		Black households replacing White households		White households replacing Black households	
	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers
<b>CENTRAL CITIES OF SMSA's*</b>								
Mean household size . . . . .	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.7	3.4	3.5
Median household income (in 1969 dollars) . . . . .	6,721	6,823	4,519	4,538	6,370	6,933	4,962	4,184
Percent of household heads with 4 or more years of college . . . . .	16.6	15.5	4.2	2.5	7.4	6.9	11.1	8.9
Median age of head . . . . .	36.3	32.1	34.6	33.6	45.6	36.8	36.7	33.1
Husband-wife families as a percent of all mover households . . . . .	61.8	58.8	49.7	39.4	63.2	59.3	53.3	48.9
Percent moving within same county . . . . .	(NA)	71.7	(NA)	89.2	(NA)	89.4	(NA)	73.5
Number of cases . . . . .	2,661	2,661	475	475	204	204	45	45

**Appendix Table 2. Selected Characteristics of Households Vacating a Housing Unit and the Households That Replace Them in Central Cities and the Balance of SMSA's: 1967-71 – Continued**

Location and household characteristics	White households replacing other White households		Black households replacing other Black households		Black households replacing White households		White households replacing Black households	
	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers
<b>BALANCE OF SMSA's*</b>								
Mean household size . . . . .	3.2	3.1	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.6		
Median household income (in 1969 dollars) . . . . .	8,542	8,601	4,125	5,192	8,125	8,000		
Percent of household heads with 4 or more years of college . . . . .	21.2	19.9	4.7	2.3	18.5	10.8		
Median age of head . . . . .	34.9	32.2	31.5	32.7	46.5	35.8		
Percent of all mover households . . . . .	74.4	73.5	54.7	50.0	70.8	66.2		
Percent moving within same county . . . . .	(NA)	62.4	(NA)	82.4	(NA)	70.0		
Number of cases . . . . .	2,890	2,890	86	86	65	65		

NA means not available.

\*Based on 1960 definitions of SMSA's.

Too few cases to show characteristics

**Appendix Table 3. Selected Characteristics of Households Vacating a Housing Unit and the Households That Replace Them in Central Cities and the Balance of SMSA's: 1973-76**

Location and household characteristics	White households replacing other White households		Black households replacing other Black households		Black households replacing White households		White households replacing Black households	
	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers
<b>CENTRAL CITIES OF SMSA's<sup>1</sup></b>								
Mean household size . . . . .	2.5	2.5	2.9	2.9	2.4	2.7	2.5	2.6
Median household income (in 1975 dollars) . . . . .	9,767	9,913	6,465	6,011	8,519	9,225.	8,326	7,722
Percent of household heads with 4 or more years of college . . . . .	22.1	23.2	5.9	4.6	16.0	13.9	15.9	15.8
Median age of head . . . . .	30.7	28.8	32.3	30.6	36.8	29.0	28.8	29.6
Percent of all mover households . . . . .	49.1	48.1	31.7	32.3	41.3	41.0	32.2	35.3
Percent moving within same county . . . . .	(NA)	71.2	(NA)	86.4	(NA)	83.2	(NA)	69.7
Number of cases . . . . .	4,943	4,943	871	871	359	359	193	193

**Appendix Table 3. Selected Characteristics of Households Vacating a Housing Unit and the Households That Replace Them in Central Cities and the Balance of SMSA's: 1973-76 -- Continued**

Location and household characteristics	White households replacing other White households		Black households replacing other Black households		Black households replacing White households		White households replacing Black households	
	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers	Out-movers	In-movers
<b>BALANCE OF SMSA's<sup>1</sup></b>								
Mean household size . . . . .	2.8	2.7	2.9	3.2	2.9	2.9	2.5	3.0
Median household income (in 1975 dollars) . . . . .	12,291	12,848	8,251	7,518	11,694	11,624	11,324	11,056
Percent of household heads with 4 or more years of college . . . . .	20.9	22.2	7.3	8.8	20.9	18.2	13.1	19.5
Median age of head . . . . .	31.8	29.4	30.1	28.9	31.2	29.5	29.5	30.9
Husband-wife families as a percent of all mover households . . . . .	62.6	62.8	43.3	36.2	63.5	52.6	46.6	55.6
Percent moving within same county . . . . .	(NA)	62.5	(NA)	75.1	(NA)	63.5	(NA)	48.7
Number of cases . . . . .	6,504	6,504	215	215	201	201	113	113

<sup>1</sup> Based on 1970 definitions of SMSA's.

NA means not available.

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