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When Does Race Matter? Race, Sex, and Dating at an Elite University

This paper unites quantitative and qualitative data from the College Social Life Survey (n = 732) to describe and explain patterns of racial homophily in undergraduate sexual/romantic relationships at an elite university, a closed social setting. It expands the literature on interracial romantic unions by comparing homophily in hookups (uncommitted sexual interactions), dates, and long-term relationships. Although this population embodies many characteristics associated with greater racial mixing (youth, education, status equality, geographical proximity, racial diversity, independence from family), racial homophily is still strongly evident. Variation in levels of homophily among relationship types and among racial groups is explained by differences in desired homophily, social network segregation, and participation in formal race-based student organizations. Black students are particularly socially isolated.

This paper expands the literature on interracial romantic unions to include hookups, a form of uncommitted and spontaneous sexual encounter that may include sexual intercourse, by comparing patterns of homophily in hookups to

those in dates and moderately long-term (at least 6 months) romantic relationships. It addresses the following questions: How evident is racial homophily in hookups, dates, and committed, long-term relationships at an elite private university? Are interracial pairings more common in hookups than in dates and long-term relationships? To the extent that levels of homophily vary among hookups, dates, and long-term relationships and among different racial groups, how do students' preferences and social networks explain this variation? Prior studies have established the role of geographic proximity in determining rates of interracial contact (Blau & Schwartz, 1984; Harris & Oni, 2005), but my focus is on social network proximity: Groups that share a physical location but avoid social ties will have low rates of interracial relationships. My interest is in the varying social distance between groups, which is reflected in patterns of interracial relationships and in qualitative accounts of students' attitudes toward other groups as friends and sexual or romantic partners.

Milton Gordon, in his famous 1964 book *Assimilation in American Life*, assumed that highly educated Americans would marry without regard to race or religion, but this has not proved to be the case. Similarly, I find that racial homophily defines most relationships among elite college students, mirroring patterns of racial homophily in marriage in the general population. In line with modernization theory (Blau & Duncan, 1967; Kalmijn, 1991), Gordon assumed that ascriptive identities, including race, were vestigial premodern identities and would be

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increasingly replaced by achieved identities. In particular, Gordon expected that higher education would be universalistic, undermining racial and ethnic identities. But my analysis of qualitative data on Stanford undergraduates shows that student life is very much organized by formal and informal racial and ethnic student groups. Perhaps because he wrote before the ethnic studies revolutions of the 1970s and the popularization of race-based student organizations, Gordon had not anticipated the importance of race in structuring college life.

In this paper, I use data from the College Social Life Survey, a survey of undergraduate students at Stanford University. This paper is one of the first to analyze these data. The College Social Life Survey is well suited to my study because it provides detailed quantitative and qualitative data on the three types of partnerships prevalent among undergraduates: hookups, dates, and long-term relationships. Another advantage of this survey is that it provides data on a partially closed environment: Stanford students are socially and geographically isolated from the surrounding community. The initial sample is nonrandom, but it employs a variant of respondent-driven sampling, which may reduce the initial bias (Goodman, 1961; Heckathorn, 1997). Equivalent randomly sampled data are not available, nor are there other similar surveys that combine quantitative and qualitative data.

A concern in using these data is that Stanford undergraduates are unrepresentative of the larger population (college-aged Americans). This may make findings difficult to generalize, but it is one of the trade-offs inherent to a closed-population research design. In addition, Stanford undergraduates are an interesting population in which to study interracial relationships because they are fairly homogenous (in age and educational aspirations) and they embody many characteristics associated with greater racial mixing (youth and/or membership in a recent cohort, education, status equality, geographical proximity, and independence from family and community). According to contact theory, for interracial contact to improve interracial relationships the contact must occur in a status-equal context (Allport, 1954). Thus, one important reason there might be less racial intermarriage than expected in the United States is that the status gaps between groups keep individuals apart (Blau, 1977; Blau & Schwartz, 1984). But at Stanford, students are all of similar

status (they all expect to graduate from a top university), even if their class backgrounds vary, and individuals' own educational attainment is a better predictor of their spouse's education than is their class background (Kalmijn, 1991). Nearly all (95%) undergraduates live in on-campus housing, eat in student cafeterias, and have limited access to cars on campus (Stanford University, 2009), so students of varying class backgrounds share similar living conditions. The obfuscation of class barriers on campus reduces the confounding effect of status differences between racial groups, isolating racial homophily resulting from preferences for same-race partners (as opposed to preferences for same-status partners).

To my knowledge, this paper is the first to study interracial/interethnic pairings in hookups or to compare hookups to dates and long-term relationships, but interracial marriage has long been of a topic of scholarly research and more recent analyses have also considered cohabitation and dating relationships (Blackwell & Lichter, 2004; Joyner & Kao, 2005). These prior studies indicated that the frequency of interracial intimacy decreases with commitment, although racial homophily is strikingly high at all levels of commitment, even in dating relationships (Blackwell & Lichter; Joyner & Kao, 2005; Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, & Michaels, 1994; Schoen & Weinick, 1993; Yancey, 2002). But the social processes driving increases in homophily at higher levels of commitment are unclear: Individuals may be more likely to select interracial relationships when they are anticipating a casual partnership, or they may be more likely to advance casual relationships to higher levels of commitment when the partnerships are not interracial.

Because dates, much more than hookups, signal interest in forming an exclusive romantic relationship (England, Shafer, & Fogarty, 2007), comparing patterns of racial preference in hookups and dates may provide insight into the forces that cause homophily to increase with relationship commitment. Hookup, dating, and long-term relationship partners are selected from the same pool, so there should be little or no difference in the effects of factors that limit contact (such as social network segregation) between relationship types. But if homophily increases with commitment because individuals hold stronger preferences for same-race partners at higher levels of commitment, there should

be a larger increase in homophily between hookups and dates than between dates and long-term relationships, because dating partners are potential long-term partners. Homophily might also increase with commitment if interracial relationships are more likely to be terminated (cultural differences or third party interference might destabilize interracial relationships). This predicts a larger increase in homophily between dates and long-term relationships than between hookups and dates because not all dates are preceded by hookups and the transition from hookup to date requires less interaction and is less visible to third parties. Alternatively, a high level of homophily that changes little with commitment indicates large social distances between groups: Racially homophilous social networks would limit opportunities for any interracial pairings (even hookups), as might strong preferences for same-race partners.

I also extend prior research by investigating racial and gender differences in the likelihood of having ever had a hookup, dating, and/or long-term partner. This is possible because the College Social Life Survey provides information on students that have never hooked up, never dated, and/or never been in a long-term relationship. Additionally, for those students who have been sexually or romantically active in college, or both, I examine racial and gender differences in the tendency to hook up, date, or have long-term relationships. Existing quantitative studies of interracial relationships often treat the coupled population as given, implicitly ignoring racial and gender differences in selection into relationships, but my analysis shows substantial group differences in sexual and romantic activity.

The College Social Life Survey is also valuable because it allows me to combine quantitative and qualitative analyses. Prior studies of interracial relationships have tended to focus either on patterns of homophily (for examples, see Hwang, 1995; Joyner & Kao, 2005; Qian, 1997; Rosenfeld, 2001; Rosenfeld & Kim, 2005) or on individuals' narratives and feelings about intra- and interracial partners (for examples, see Childs, 2005; Shiao, 2008). I examine observed patterns of racial matching in hookups, dates, and long-term relationships but also take into consideration students' subjective experiences and attitudes. Using both qualitative and quantitative data allows me to exploit the different strengths of each method (Ambert, Adler,

Adler, & Detzner, 1995; Bryman, 1984), providing a fuller understanding of racial differences in the degree of in-group preference/isolation and of the attitudes and processes that result in in-group partner choices. After describing the sample and racial differences in reported levels of sexual and romantic involvement, I use log-linear models to investigate the strength of homophily in hookups, dates, and long-term relationships. I next use mixed qualitative and quantitative data to compare the context and characteristics of intra- and interracial hookups, dates, and long-term relationships, with a focus on the social network segregation and race-based preferences that explain variation in levels of racial homophily.

Background

Hookups, dates, and romantic relationships. Consistent with prior papers (such as England et al., 2007; Hamilton & Armstrong, 2008; Paul, McManus, & Hayes, 2000), I define *hookups* as casual, unplanned sexual encounters that occur outside of an established romantic relationship. Hookups differ from dates in that dates are formally planned and the planned activity is nonsexual (such as dinner), although one or both partners may also be anticipating sexual activity. In contrast, hookups are spontaneous partnerships formed for immediate sexual activity. Researchers have only recently recognized the extent to which adolescent and young adult sexual activity is not limited to interactions between committed partners (Bogle, 2008; England et al.; Hamilton & Armstrong; Manning, Longmore, & Giordano, 2005; Paul et al.; Stepp, 2007), but hookups are normative: Most teens have engaged in some nonrelationship sexual activity (Manning et al., 2005), and over three-quarters of college undergraduates have hooked up (Paul et al.).

The prevalence of hookups is enough to make them of sociological interest, but they are also important in that they are replacing dates, particularly casual dates, as a means of initiating a committed romantic relationship (Bogle, 2008; England et al., 2007; Kasic, 2008), and they are also used as a substitute for committed relationships by allowing the single to be sexually active (Hamilton & Armstrong, 2008; Stepp, 2007). Among contemporary college students, dates are increasingly an indication of existing romantic interest (England et al.).

Perhaps because dates have become more meaningful (as signals of desire for a long-term relationship), senior college students report more hookups than dates and, in the progression to a relationship, hookups often come before dates (England et al.).

There is a wealth of research on the prevalence of hookups and on the social and individual correlates of hooking up, but not much research has addressed the choice of hookup partners. The implicit assumption is that individuals hold the same criteria for hookup partners as for dating or committed romantic partners, but other research has shown that individuals have different preferences for short- and long-term romantic/sexual partners (Regan & Joshi, 2003). For example, men may prefer more promiscuous casual dating (vs. marital) partners (Hallinan & Williams, 1989; Oliver & Sedikides, 1992; Sprecher, McKinney, & Orbuch, 1991; Williams & Jacoby, 1989), and men may hook up with women whom they would not consider dating (England et al., 2007; Manning, Longmore, & Giordano, 2006). These studies do not indicate that women's preferences for partners differ much depending on the time frame of the relationship, but a recent study of adolescents found that both genders emphasize appearance and sexuality/passion more for short-term partners (Regan & Joshi).

Interracial/interethnic relationships. Researchers have identified three important sources of homophily: preferences for same-race partners, limited opportunities to meet other-race partners, and interference by third parties (Kalmijn, 1998). Preference and opportunity are likely important at Stanford, but undergraduate relationships, particularly casual relationships such as dates and hookups, are sheltered from parental interference (parents are generally geographically distant and easily kept unaware of interracial partners). Students may experience pressure from friends to select same-race partners, and parents likely know about and might interfere in long-term interracial relationships, but in my qualitative data analysis no students mention any form of interference as a reason to avoid or dissolve interracial partnerships. This suggests that homophily among undergraduates is primarily explained by the forces of opportunity (the pool of potential partners) and preference (race-based selection criteria).

There is ample evidence that opportunity matters: The underrepresentation of intergroup liaisons is explained in part by limited contact with potential other-race partners (Blau & Schwartz, 1984; Clark-Ibanez & Felmler, 2004; Harris & Oni, 2005; Joyner & Kao, 2000; but see Moody, 2001). To some extent, contact with other-group partners is determined by group size: Members of smaller race/ethnic groups are relatively more likely to meet members of other groups. For this reason, absolute rates of out-partnership are misleading: Whites have the lowest percentage of out-group marriage, compared to Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians, because most of the United States is White, but when rates have been adjusted for group size, Whites have the highest (adjusted) rate of out-group partnerships (Qian, 1997; Rosenfeld, 2008). In the discussion below, I focus on adjusted rates that take into account group size and interracial contact, but this may not completely account for the frequency of meeting eligible other-race partners because the difficulty of controlling for interracial contact is compounded by racial differences in characteristics such as education: The level of interracial contact between status-equal individuals may be a stronger determinant of interracial romantic involvement than the overall rate of interracial contact (Allport, 1954).

Adjusting rates of interracial unions for opportunity (controlling for group size and interracial contact) does not eliminate racial differences in homophily. Specifically, Hispanics and non-Hispanic Whites display a much weaker tendency toward homophily in marriages and friendships than do Black and Asian Americans, and Black Americans out-partner less than any other racial minority (Joyner & Kao, 2000; Kalmijn, 1993; Qian, 1997; Rosenfeld, 2002, 2008). These patterns are consistent with willingness to date interracially: When stating their preferences in online dating advertisements, Blacks are least willing to date a partner of any race (Yancey, 2009). Asians are most willing to date a partner of any race, but this may be explained by their small group size: Asians may relax their preferences for homophily in response to limited opportunities to meet other Asians. Interestingly, support for others' interracial unions reverses the pattern demonstrated by actual pairings and stated preferences: When asked how they would respond to a hypothetical other-race in-law, Whites are least tolerant

of interracial unions, whereas Blacks are most tolerant (Fang, Sidanius, & Pratto, 1998).

Gender differences in attitudes toward interracial partnerships and in the incidence and prevalence of interracial unions are also evident. With the exception of Asians, men report a greater willingness to date interracially (Gardyn, 2002). This is consistent with the finding that, for all groups except Asians, men are more likely than women to report having ever dated interracially (Levin, Taylor, & Caudle, 2007; Yancey, 2002): The incidence of interracial dating is higher among non-Asian men and among Asian women (but see Fujino, 1997). But much research on interracial romantic partnerships employs samples of current couples, and the prevalence of interracial unions does not perfectly reflect the incidence. Cross-sectional data on current couples indicates that among Blacks, men are more likely to be in interracial marriages than are women (Batson, Qian, & Lichter, 2006; Rosenfeld, 2008; Suro, 1999; Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1990), and this may be particularly true for more educated Black men (Crowder & Tolnay, 2000). Among Asians, women are more likely than men to select other-race spouses (Jacobs & Labov, 2002; Lee & Fernandez, 1998; Suro). As implied by these gender differences in out-marriage tendencies, most Asian-White marriages involve a White man, whereas most Black-White marriages involve a White woman (Heaton & Jacobson, 2000). Findings are mixed regarding gender differences in the prevalence of interracial partnerships among Hispanic and non-Hispanic White women and men (e.g., compare Jacobs & Labov; Qian, 1997; Suro).

Variation in rates of intergroup relationships may result from differences in the social distance between groups, although this does not account for within-group gender gaps. Social distance describes the feelings of similarity and closeness, or dissimilarity and rejection, that members of a group have toward members of some other group (Bogardus, 1947; Simmel, 1909). Massey and Denton (1993) argued that Black Americans have developed and maintained a strong group identity based on a shared experience of discrimination and that Asians and light-skinned Hispanics are not as socially isolated. Similarly, Ogbu (2008) suggested that Black Americans possess an oppositional collective identity that tends to reinforce their separation from Whites. There is some support for this among college students (Sears, Fu, Henry, & Bui, 2003).

Whereas strong group identity for Asians and Hispanics is linked to recent immigration and weakens during college, Black students possess strong group identity motivated by their ongoing sense of discrimination, and this identity becomes stronger during college.

Social distance is likely to influence the formation of friendship networks, reducing interracial contact even in college settings in which nearly all students live in racially integrated dormitories. Studies of friendship choice among high school students indicate that geographic proximity does increase interracial friendship (Joyner & Kao, 2000; Moody, 2001), but (after adjusting for group size and opportunities for interracial contact) the propensity to form interracial friendships differs by race, and Black students demonstrate a particularly strong tendency for racially homophilous friendship choices (Quillian & Campbell, 2003). Given the importance of social networks in partner selection, social distance (or proximity) may be a more important predictor of interracial liaisons than geographical distance (or proximity). Indeed, there is evidence that racially integrated friendship networks are associated with greater incidence of interracial dating (Clark-Ibanez & Felmlee, 2004).

Although the social distance between groups is important, the likelihood of intergroup relationships also depends on the life state of individuals and the social context of their relationships. Interracial relationships are more common in younger cohorts (Joyner & Kao, 2005; Laumann et al., 1994), in geographically mobile and urban populations (Rosenfeld & Kim, 2005; Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1990), and possibly also among the highly educated (Qian, 1997; Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan), although education may not increase all types of interracial unions (Heaton & Jacobson, 2000). It is plausible that the young and educated have more liberal attitudes toward intergroup relationships, and geographically mobile individuals may have greater independence from familial and community disapproval (Rosenfeld & Kim; Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan). They may also be more open to sexual and romantic experimentation or base their sense of identity in traits other than race. But these same groups may also be exposed to a greater number of potential other-race partners: It is difficult to separate the effects of contact and opportunity from the effects of attitudes and social independence.

In particular, there is some dispute over the effect of education on the incidence of interracial relationships: Education does not predict willingness to date interracially (Yancey, 2009), suggesting that if education increases the chances of marrying interracially, it does so by increasing interracial contact. Among couples married in the 1970s, racial endogamy was lower among the college educated, but for Blacks and Whites the difference was not large enough to be statistically significant: Only college educated Asians and Hispanics exhibited significantly lower rates of endogamy, and only for Hispanics was the difference dramatic (Rosenfeld, 2008). Similarly, data from young married couples in the 1980s suggest that education does reduce racial homogamy but that the effect is not large (Qian, 1997).

It is also somewhat difficult to interpret findings that interracial unions are more common in younger cohorts because most studies of interracial partnerships are cross-sectional, and in cross-sectional data it is not possible to separate the effect of youth from the effect of belonging to a recent cohort (Palmore, 1978). The effect of age is also confounded by the greater frequency of cohabitation and marriage among older-age relationships because racial homophily is higher in more committed relationships (Joyner & Kao, 2005). There is some evidence that life stage, rather than cohort membership, is driving higher rates of homophily among youth: Using longitudinal data, Joyner and Kao (2005) demonstrated that the frequency of interracial partnerships decreases as individuals age, especially as they begin to form more permanent unions. There is also some support for a cohort or period effect: The prevalence of interracial marriages among couples in their 20s increased between 1980 and 1990 (Qian, 1997), and there is some evidence that, within a given cohort, relationships formed more recently in time (presumably in a more racially tolerant era) are more likely to be interracial (Joyner & Kao, 2005).

Interracial relationships and type of relationship. Prior studies have indicated that racial homophily tends to increase with increasing romantic commitment (Joyner & Kao, 2005), but it is not known if this finding also applies to hookups, as compared to dates and long-term relationships. Ascertaining whether homophily is lowest in hookups and highest in long-term

relationships is interesting as an extension of existing knowledge, but it is not the only motivation for comparing levels of homophily between the three relationship forms. Because dates are more indicative of relationship intent than are hookups, comparing partner choices in dates and hookups reveals the *processes* that result in increased homophily in more committed relationships. Homophily might increase with commitment because individuals who are looking for a long-term relationship partner make different initial selections than those looking for a one-time sexual partner. In this case, homophily should be higher in dates than in hookups because only dates signal relationship intent. Alternatively, homophily might increase with commitment because interracial relationships are less likely to succeed (because of cultural differences or social pressures such as third-party interference). In this case racial homophily should be higher in long-term relationships, but there should be little difference in levels of homophily between hookups and dates (although they are not indicative of any intention to date, hookups often precede dates, so some potential post-hookup interracial dates might be aborted because of social pressures or cultural differences, causing homophily to be somewhat higher in dates). But if homophily results from very large social distance between groups—strong biases against interracial relations, even hookups, and highly segregated social networks—homophily should not change with commitment.

Varying levels of racial homophily in hookups, dates, and long-term relationships might also result from differences in the types of students that date, hook up, and have long-term relationships. In an era of changing and increasingly flexible romantic and sexual norms, hookups and dates compete as means of beginning a romantic relationship, and they also compete with committed relationships as the preferred venue for sexual expression. Although many students may both hook up and date, to some extent the choice to hook up or date may represent a division in attitudes toward partner formation. Socially conservative students may be more likely to choose dating over hooking up and may be more opposed to interracial relationships. For this reason, I investigate whether there are in fact two types of students—those who date and those who hook up—and I examine likely correlates of dating and

hooking up, such as religiosity and immigrant status.

Gender and race differences in sexual behavior. Within-race gender differences in the propensity to form any relationship (intra- or interracial) are relevant to the study of interracial relationships because they can generate gender differences in the propensity to form interracial liaisons. For example, if men of a given race group have a greater desire to hook up (or marry, etc.) than women of that same race group, the men will be forced to find other-race partners even if they prefer partners of their own race. Prior research has found that adolescent and young adult sexual activity does vary by race and gender in ways that may affect the racial distribution of women and men in hookups, dates, and long-term relationships.

Several studies of teenagers have found that Black youths, particularly Black men, are more sexually active than White youths (Feldman, Turner, & Araujo, 1999; Lauritsen, 1994; Schuster, Bell, Nakajima, & Kanouse, 1998; Upchurch, Levy-Storms, Sucoff, & Aneshensel, 1998). Black women may initiate sexual intercourse at a younger age (East, 1998), but age at first intercourse and the chance of having had intercourse are fairly similar for women of different race groups. There is more variation among men: Black men report a lower median age at first sex and a higher chance of having had intercourse, whereas Asian men report a higher median age at first sex and a lower chance of having had intercourse compared to White men (Upchurch et al.). Sexual and romantic behavior may be slightly lower for Asian women as well, although it is Asian men who differ most from non-Asians of their same gender (Feldman et al.; Meston, Trapnell, & Gorzalka, 1996, 1998). If these patterns hold at Stanford, Black men may have a greater propensity for sexual or romantic involvement, or both, compared to other men, and Asian men may have a lower propensity for sexual or romantic involvement compared to other men.

Actual racial differences in sexual behavior are complicated by the prevalence of racial sexual stereotypes. In popular culture and within academia, Blacks have been hypothesized to be innately more sexual, compared to Whites (S. V. Brown, 1985; Howard, 1988). In their analysis of racial preferences stated in personal advertisements, Phua and Kaufman (2003) concluded:

“Preferences for minorities often are tinted with stereotypical images: Asians as exotic, docile, loyal partners; Hispanics as passionate, fiery lovers; and Blacks as ‘well-endowed,’ forbidden partners” (p. 992). Such stereotypes, if they exist at Stanford, might influence partner choice, particularly in hookups.

Implications for Racial Homophily Among Undergraduates

Stanford University is a highly selective private university located in a suburban West Coast setting (Grove, 2008; Stanford University Office of Undergraduate Admission, 2008). According to prior literature, several characteristics of Stanford undergraduates—youth, racial diversity, independence of direct parental supervision, and possibly education—should be associated with greater frequency of interracial relationships. Additionally, racial homophily resulting from factors such as average differences in educational attainment or geographic distance are minimized at Stanford. The vast majority (99% in the year these data were collected; currently 95%) of Stanford undergraduates live in Stanford housing (Stanford University, 2009; Stanford University Office of Undergraduate Admission, 2008; U. A. O. Stanford University, 2005). Social class origins vary—over 10% are first generation college students (C. Brown, 2008)—but students’ expectations for their own careers after college are likely very similar. All of these factors suggest that racial homophily among Stanford undergraduates will be weaker than in the larger population.

Nevertheless, the ubiquity of racial sorting in America indicates that Stanford students will tend to choose same-race partners, so I expect the following: *Homophily will be evident in hookups, dates, and relationships for all race groups* (Hypothesis 1). Still, homophily should be particularly low in hookups because they require no commitment, they involve little culturally selective interaction, and they are removed from the scrutiny of family members, so I expect the following: *Racial/ethnic homophily will be greater in dates and relationships than in hookups* (Hypothesis 2). Preferences for homophily may also vary by race: Existing literature on interracial relationships indicates that Asians and Blacks are less likely to form intergroup relationships than are Whites and Hispanics, and this is likely true at Stanford.

Racial/ethnic homophily will be particularly high for Blacks and Asians, after controlling for group size (Hypothesis 3). Also, prior studies have found gender differences in the propensity to form intergroup relationships, and I expect this to be true in undergraduate relationships. For Asians, intergroup couplings will be more common among women than among men. For Blacks, intergroup couplings will be more common among men (Hypothesis 4).

METHOD

Data and Measures

Data. The data for this study come from the College Social Life Survey, a survey of undergraduate Stanford students enrolled in two introductory sociology courses in the 2005 academic year ($n = 732$). All 420 students in these classes were required to complete an online survey about their romantic and sexual activities at Stanford and 290 of them were also required to recruit one student (outside the class) to complete the online survey and a qualitative interview. Students had the option of completing an alternate assignment if they preferred not to participate in the study. The total sample size was 732 students, over 10% of the undergraduate student body, and 724 students provided full information on race and gender. The sample included mostly sophomores, juniors, and seniors because few freshmen enrolled in the classes and the students were not permitted to recruit freshmen.

Both classes enrolled a majority of non-sociology majors (less than 6% majored in sociology), but the distribution of majors among the students in the data does differ significantly from that of the entire student body (Table 1). As in the overall Stanford undergraduate population, the numbers of men and women in each racial category are approximately equal (Black Women Students, 2006), although some race and gender groups are significantly over- or underrepresented among the respondents or their partners (Table 2). This study analyzes the respondents' *most recent* hookup, *most recent* date, and *most recent or current* long-term (6 months or more) relationship, so there is, at most, information on one hookup, one date, and one relationship for each respondent.

By choosing to enroll in one of the two sociology courses, the students are a self-selected group and may differ from the average

Table 1. Distribution of Undergraduate Majors at Stanford University and in the College Social Life Survey

| Majors | Stanford University ^a | Sexually/ All Survey Respondents ^b / Romantically Active Rs ^c | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---------------|
| | | ($N = 724$) | ($N = 634$) |
| Social Studies | .23 | .36** | .36** |
| Interdisciplinary Studies | .13 | .05** | .06** |
| Engineering | .12 | .11 | .11 |
| Biology | .08 | .05** | .05** |
| Psychology | .06 | .07 | .07 |
| English | .05 | .03* | .03** |
| Physical Sciences | .05 | .04* | .04 |
| Other/undecided | .28 | .29 | .28 |

Sources: College Social Life Survey (2005), College-Board (2008).

^aActual distribution of majors among all Stanford undergraduates.

^bDistribution of majors for the 724 students surveyed.

^cDistribution of majors for the 634 surveyed students that reported at least one partner (90 of the 724 students did not report a hookup, date, or a romantic relationship).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Two-sided p values from t test comparing the sample mean to the Stanford mean (the actual population mean).

Stanford undergraduate on dimensions other than race, major, and gender. Students that enroll in sociology courses might be more socially liberal than the average student, as might students that hookup. Similarly, the recruited students might have been selected because they would give interesting interviews and would be comfortable sharing the intimate details of their sex lives. Even a random sample of Stanford students would not be representative of the larger population of U.S. undergraduates—they attend a very selective university and are likely to be more socially liberal. Still, the direction of bias is predictable: The results should *underestimate* homophily. If the students are indeed among the more liberal students at Stanford, and Stanford students are more liberal than most young adults, the students in this sample are likely less opposed to interracial pairings. Thus, any racial biases that I found are likely larger among the entire Stanford undergraduate population and larger yet among the general population of undergraduates in the United States.

Table 2. Racial Composition of Stanford University and College Social Life Survey and Gender Differences in Racial Composition

| Stanford University ^a | College Social Life Survey | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|-------|-------------|------------------------------|-------|-------------|-------|----------------------------|-------------|-------|-------|--|-----|-------|--|
| | Respondents ^{b,c} | | | | Hookup Partners ^d | | | | Date Partners ^d | | | | Long-Term Relationship Partners ^d | | | |
| | Women & Men | Men | Women | Women & Men | Men | Women | Women & Men | Men | Women | Women & Men | Men | Women | Women & Men | Men | Women | |
| White | .40 | .55** | .62◇◇ | .50 | .58** | .56 | .60 | .56** | .57 | .55 | .55** | .57 | .54 | .55 | .55** | |
| Black | .10 | .12 | .10 | .13 | .09 | .14◇◇ | .03 | .09 | .11 | .08 | .07** | .07 | .06 | .08 | .07** | |
| Hispanic | .12 | .11 | .09 | .13 | .13 | .13 | .13 | .12 | .14 | .11 | .13 | .15 | .11 | .11 | .13 | |
| Asian | .23 | .16** | .15 | .17 | .16** | .12◇◇ | .21 | .20* | .15◇◇ | .25 | .20 | .17 | .24 | .25 | .20 | |
| Other | .15 | .06** | .04 | .07 | .03** | .04 | .02 | .03** | .03 | .02 | .05** | .04 | .06 | .02 | .05** | |
| N | 634 | 270 | 364 | 497 | 282 | 215 | 534 | 297 | 237 | 337 | 214 | 123 | | | | |

Source: College Social Life Survey (2005) and Stanford University: <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/humsci/external/under/demographics.html> (2005).

^aThis is the actual racial composition of all students at Stanford University.

^bRespondent's race is shown for the 634 respondents reporting at least one partner, but the racial distribution for all 732 respondents is the same.

^cRespondent's race by her or his gender. For example, 10% of male respondents are Black and 17% of female respondents are Asian.

^dThis is the partner's race by her or his gender, as reported by the respondent. For example, 14% of female respondents report that their hookup partner was Black (and male) so 14% of male hookup partners are Black. Similarly, 11% of men reported that their long-term relationship partner was Hispanic (and female) so 11% of female relationship partners are Hispanic.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Two-sided p values from t test comparing sample mean to Stanford mean (actual population mean).

◇ $p < .05$. ◇◇ $p < .01$. Two-sided p values from t test comparing male sample mean to female sample mean.

Because the data are not representative, it is hard to generalize from this analysis, but this is a trade-off inherent to the closed social setting research design. Clearly, Stanford students do have some contact with nonstudents, and it is not possible to directly evaluate the extent to which Stanford undergraduates are truly a closed population, but the assumption is plausible. The undergraduate housing is geographically isolated, on the far side of the sprawling campus from the town of Palo Alto. Even if it were closer, Palo Alto lacks a youthful nightlife that might attract undergraduates. The large majority of hookups, dates, and long-term relationships are between two Stanford students: 76% of the hookups, 78% of dates, and 71% of the relationships used in this analysis are between two Stanford students (in 3% of hookups, respondents did not know whether their partner was a Stanford student). This is not a *perfectly* closed population, and a nontrivial proportion of partners are not Stanford students, but it is reasonable to assume that on a day-to-day basis all students are generally exposed to the same demographic mix (other students). Some students may choose to seek non-Stanford partners, but they are still surrounded by Stanford students in their classes and dormitories. This is important because without using a (mostly) closed social setting it is not possible to identify the population of potential partners.

The nonrandom sample selection is also problematic. The data were collected using respondent-driven sampling, a type of snowball sampling in which an initial group of respondents recruits a second wave of respondents and these respondents in turn recruit others, ideally generating a random sample with enough waves of recruitment (Heckathorn, 1997). Unfortunately, in this sample there was only one wave of recruitment—not nearly enough to approximate random sampling, especially given that the initial sample is self-selected and, as mentioned earlier, the recruited sample may be biased toward socially outgoing personality types. Certain race groups and majors are overrepresented, as are fraternity and sorority members—22% of students in these data are in Greek organizations compared to 13% of all students (Stanford University Office of Student Activities, n.d.). Still, over 10% of Stanford undergraduates responded to the survey.

Sexual and romantic measures. Students were asked how many times they have “hooked up,” how many “dates” they have been on, and whether they have been in a “romantic relationship” that has lasted 6 months or more. These questions may be problematic if students attach varying meanings to “hooked up,” “dates,” and “romantic relationship.” The survey did not provide definitions but instead asked students to “Use whatever definition you and your friends use.” Discussions with undergraduate focus groups, however, indicated a fairly consensual understanding of these terms. Of the 732 students in the sample, only 162 students had never hooked up. If the students indicated at least one hookup, they were asked for details about their most recent hookup. This provided an incidence measure of interracial hookups. Similarly, if respondents had been on at least one date since coming to Stanford, they were asked for details about their most recent date, providing an incidence measure of interracial dates. Most students (662) had been on at least one date and about half (370) reported a 6-month relationship. If they had been in at least one such relationship, they were asked for details about the most recent (or current or ongoing) relationship. This is an incidence measure of interracial relationships, but if there is a difference in the longevity of inter- and intraracial relationships (after reaching the required 6 months), then it may be partially a prevalence measure.

The sample size for this study was 1,368 pairings, of which 337 were long-term relationships, 534 were dates, and 497 were hookups. This smaller sample size was necessary because a few observations were missing demographic data on the students or their partners and because I excluded same-sex couples. These 1,368 pairings were reported by 634 students. Of these 634 students, 233 reported a hookup, a date, and a long-term relationship. These students each contributed three pairings to the data. Another 198 students reported a hookup and a date but had not had a relationship that lasted at least 6 months. These students contributed two pairings. Over 20% (137) of the students had never hooked up, but 103 of these students had been on a date, 72 of them had had a long-term relationship, and 38 had both been on a date and had a long-term relationship. Of the remaining students, 34 reported only a hookup, and 32 students reported a long-term relationship and

a hookup (but no date). Thus, approximately 37% of the students represented in my analysis (233 students) contributed three observations (one of each type of pairing), 42% (268 students) contributed two observations, and 21% (133 students) contributed only one observation. Equivalently, 51% of the pairings were reported by students that contributed three observations, 39% were reported by students who contributed two observations, and the remaining 10% were reported by students who reported only one type of relationship (contributing one observation).

Students who reported one type of pairing were more likely to also report the other types of pairings. For example, about 70% of students had hooked up, but the probability of reporting a hookup increased to 81% if the student reported a date, to 79% if the student reported a long-term relationship, and to 86% if the student reported a date *and* a long-term relationship. Similarly, students who had hooked up or had a long-term relationship or had both were more likely to also report a date, and students who had hooked up or been on a date or both were more likely to also report a long-term relationship. Rather than there being one group of students who only hooked up and another group who only participated in more traditional relationships (dates and long-term relationships), there were degrees of sexual and romantic activity. Some students were more sexually and romantically active or popular and were therefore more likely to experience all types of pairings.

Among Stanford students in general, it seems that the same students reported hookups and dates, but there may still be differences in the propensity to hook up or date among certain subgroups. For this analysis, such differences only mattered if these students were also more or less likely to report interracial partners. If a certain group of student favored dating over hooking up but reported the same rate of interracial partners as nongroup members, this would not bias the results. Some possible subgroups that might have displayed different partnering behavior are immigrants, religious students, athletes, and fraternity and sorority members. Indeed, members of these groups did have different propensities to hook up or to date or both, compared to nonmembers, but none of these groups was more or less likely to report

interracial partners in any of these relationship forms (results available upon request).

Respondents' and partners' gender and race. In this analysis, data are organized by gender and race. There are five race categories (White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Other). The respondent reported all gender and race data about herself or himself and about her or his partner(s). Confusion over the partners' gender is unlikely, but respondents may not have known their partners' race accurately, especially for Hispanic partners and for mixed-race partners. Students may also have been less accurate when reporting the race of hookup partners because they may not have known their partner well.

When describing their own race, respondents were first asked to select all racial/ethnic groups that described them from a list of 14 options, selecting as many as apply. If they identified with an unlisted group, they were asked to write in their unlisted racial/ethnic group(s). They were then asked which racial/ethnic group best described them, picking only one group. The measure of race for respondents in this paper is derived primarily from the second question; if this was missing, the first question was used, if possible. For the partners, only the first question ("pick all that apply") was asked; therefore I had to drop some students if the primary race was not obvious. For all groups, I collapsed the 14-category measure into 5 categories.

Although there is substantial nation-of-origin diversity within the groupings of Asian and Hispanic, there are also substantive reasons to group all Asians together and to group all Hispanics together (Rosenfeld, 2001; Sears et al., 2003). For one thing, only 30% of Asian students and 11% of Hispanic students are first-generation immigrants, and it is likely that second-generation immigrants identify more with the groups of "Asian" and "Hispanic" than do first-generation students. About 44% of hookups, 43% of dates, and 68% of relationships between two Asians occurred between students with different national origins. Thus, although grouping all Asian students together may exaggerate the homophily within "Asian," there is a real force toward pan-national Asian homophily. Hispanic students are less diverse: 79% were of Mexican origin, so most pairings between two Hispanics were necessarily homophilous at the national level.

RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis

In couple-level data the number of same-race couples was (by definition) the same for men and women. Differences in the propensity to enter interracial liaisons are reflected by the total numbers of men and women of a given race in the data. Most analyses of interracial unions treat the row and column totals as given and consider only the distribution of people into cells (e.g., Joyner & Kao, 2005; Kalmijn, 1993; Qian, 1997; Rosenfeld, 2008), but some important social processes determine selection into partnerships, and in these data there appear to be differences in selection probabilities by race and gender. This might result from selective reporting, but reporting bias is minimized by the structure of the data. For example, Black women may be less likely than other groups to acknowledge their hookups, but hookups involving a Black woman may still be reported by the male partners as much as hookups involving other women. Differences in the numbers of women and men of each race group that participated in the different relationship types can be seen in Table 4. For example, Asian women and Black men are overrepresented in hookups, compared to Asian men and Black women (96 Asian women to 54 Asian men and 61 Black men to 39 Black women).

To investigate these within-race gender differences, Table 3 displays the proportion of hookups, dates, and long-term relationships that are interracial by race and sex, the homophily

bias for each race and sex group, and also the two-tailed p values from t tests of the gender difference in these proportions. The homophily bias (H) measures a group's tendency to select same-race (or other-race) partners beyond that which would be expected by chance, given the group's size. More precisely, it equals the actual proportion of relationships that are intraracial (p_a) minus the proportion of relationships expected to be intraracial (p_e), divided by the proportion of relationships expected to be interracial ($1 - p_e$). Equivalently, $H = (p_a - p_e)/(1 - p_e)$. It is often described as being independent of relative group size (e.g., Laumann et al., 1994), but this is not entirely accurate: A minority group cannot attain -1 , the strongest possible outgroup preference (all groups can attain 1, the strongest possible in-group preference). In these data, all groups prefer their own group, so negative values do not occur, and therefore using this measure is not problematic. Thus, although the proportions shown in Table 3 are not adjusted for group size, the homophily biases are adjusted for group size.

Table 3 reveals several interesting within-race gender differences in in-group preference. White and Black men and Asian women participate in significantly more interracial hookups than their same-race other-gender peers, and White men and Asian women also participate in significantly more interracial dates. Although the differences in rates of interracial partnering are not always significant, White women display a higher homophily bias than White men in all relationship forms, and

Table 3. *Proportion of Pairings That Are Interracial and Homophily Bias by Race and Gender (n = 1,368 Couples)*

| Race | Hookups | | | | Dates | | | | Long-Term Relationships | | | |
|----------|------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|
| | Proportion Interracial | | Homophily Bias ^a | | Proportion Interracial | | Homophily Bias ^a | | Proportion Interracial | | Homophily Bias ^a | |
| | Men | Women | Men | Women | Men | Women | Men | Women | Men | Women | Men | Women |
| White | .30* | .21 | .34 | .45 | .32** | .19 | .33 | .49 | .29 | .21 | .39 | .77 |
| Black | .61* | .38 | .34 | .66 | .40 | .41 | .55 | .54 | .30 | .43 | .67 | .54 |
| Hispanic | .65 | .71 | .26 | .21 | .57 | .58 | .36 | .35 | .62 | .62 | .29 | .29 |
| Asian | .54* | .74 | .33 | .17 | .36** | .59 | .54 | .32 | .40 | .47 | .50 | .43 |

Source: College Social Life Survey (2005).

^aHomophily Bias = $(p_a - p_e)/(1 - p_e)$ where p_a = actual (observed) proportion intraracial partnerships and p_e = expected proportion intraracial partnerships. It measures the tendency to select in-group partners beyond that predicted under random mixing. It adjusts for group size.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Two-tailed p value for a t test of the gender difference in the proportion of hookups (or dates or relationships) with outgroup members.

Asian women display a lower homophily bias than Asian men in all relationship forms. The gender difference among Blacks is not consistent: In hookups, the homophily bias is stronger among Black women, in dates there is little gender difference, and in long-term relationships the homophily bias is stronger among Black men. Hispanic students generally have a low homophily bias and display less gender difference in homophily bias compared to the other groups. Table 2 provides some evidence that these gender differences are not attributable to selective reporting. For example, significantly more male than female respondents report Asian hookup or dating partners, and Asian women are also overrepresented in self-reports compared to Asian men.

But within-race gender differences in the desire for homophily are not the only explanation for these differences in partnering patterns. For example, the gender difference in reported interracial hookups among Asian students might exist because (1) Asian women have a weaker preference for racial homophily in hookup partners than Asian men, (2) Asian women have a greater desire to hookup than Asian men, or (3) non-Asian men desire Asian partners in hookups more than non-Asian women desire Asian hookup partners. Unfortunately, with these data it is not possible to distinguish between supply and demand effects, and these findings should not be interpreted as supporting stereotypical racial differences in sexuality. Later in the paper, I turn to the qualitative data to investigate the causes of homophily.

Taking the partnered population as given, a brief examination of the data reveals a strong tendency toward homophily for all races. This is evident in Table 4, which displays the actual distribution of couples in the data and compares it to the expected values from the independence model. I generated the independence model by calculating the expected number of people in each cell given row and column probabilities. For example, for the upper left cell representing hookups between White women and White men, I found the chance that a hookup involves a White woman and the chance that a hookup involves a White man, used these numbers to calculate the joint probability (that a hookup involves both a White woman and a White man), and then used the joint probability to calculate the expected cell count. Specifically, the probability that a hookup involves a White

woman is $274/497 = 0.55$, and the probability that a hookup involves a White man is $309/497 = 0.62$, so the probability that a hookup involves two White students is $0.55 \times 0.62 = 0.34$ and the expected number of couples in this cell is $0.34 \times 497 = 170$. Thus, if the chance that a hookup involves a White woman and the chance that it involves a White man are independent, there should be approximately 170 hookups between White women and White men. Actual and expected values for all cells are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 demonstrates large deviations from the expected values (from the cell counts expected under the assumption that the race of one partner is independent from the race of the other). These deviations are particularly large along the diagonals of homophily. To put these differences in perspective, Table 4 also shows the difference between the actual and expected values and Pearson standardized residuals. I calculated these by taking the differences in Table 4, squaring them, and dividing them by the expected value. More formally, the Pearson residual is $(f_a - f_e)^2 / f_e$ where f_a is the actual frequency of couples in a cell and f_e is the expected frequency. Because the difference between actual and expected values is squared, Pearson residuals are always positive. Summing across cells gives the Pearson chi-squared fit statistic, a measure of fit (Agresti, 1996).

The differences between actual and expected values show that there is a tendency toward the overrepresentation of intraracial pairings in hookups, dates, and relationships. This is true for all race categories, excluding "other," which, not unexpectedly, follows no clear pattern. But, a given difference between actual and expected values is more or less significant depending on the number of people in the relevant row and column. For example, there are 47 more White-White hookups than expected and 19 more Black-Black hookups than expected: From these numbers, it might seem like White students have a stronger preference for homophily, but the opposite is true after adjusting for group size. Because the actual-expected differences can be misleading, I also show Pearson residuals, which adjust for group size.

The Pearson residuals show that the diagonals containing the homophilous pairings are responsible for the largest deviations from the expected values, in standardized terms. Residuals are particularly high for Black students,

Table 4. Continued

| Woman's Race | Man's Race | | | | | | | | | | Pearson χ^2 (16), long-term relationships: 242** | |
|-------------------------|---|-------|----------|-------|-------|--|-------|-------|----------|-------|---|--|
| | Actual ^a & Expected ^b | | | | | Actual - Expected ^c & Pearson Residual ^d | | | | | | |
| | White | Black | Hispanic | Asian | Other | Total | White | Black | Hispanic | Asian | Other | |
| Long-term relationships | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| White | 142 | 2 | 14 | 18 | 4 | 180 | 36 | -10 | -8 | -14 | -3 | |
| | 106 | 12 | 22 | 32 | 7 | | 12 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 1 | |
| Black | 5 | 16 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 28 | -12 | 14 | 1 | -4 | 1 | |
| | 17 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 1 | | 8 | 104 | 0 | 3 | 1 | |
| Hispanic | 15 | 3 | 16 | 3 | 5 | 42 | -10 | 0 | 11 | -4 | 3 | |
| | 25 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 2 | | 4 | 0 | 22 | 3 | 7 | |
| Asian | 25 | 1 | 5 | 36 | 1 | 68 | -15 | -4 | -3 | 24 | -2 | |
| | 40 | 5 | 8 | 12 | 3 | | 6 | 3 | 1 | 47 | 1 | |
| Other | 12 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 19 | 1 | 0 | 1 | -1 | 0 | |
| | 11 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | |
| Total | 199 | 23 | 42 | 60 | 13 | 337 | | | | | | |

Source: College Social Life Survey (2005).

^aActual values are the values observed in the data.

^bExpected values are values predicted by the independence model, using row and column totals.

^cActual - expected values = values observed in data - values predicted by independence model.

^dPearson residuals measure over- or underrepresentation. Summing across Pearson residuals gives the Pearson χ^2 Statistic, a measure of fit. In this model, one partner's race is assumed to be independent from the other partner's race, but the number of each race and gender in each partnership type equals the observed number. Pearson χ^2 statistics for each relationship type are displayed above. For all relationship types combined, the Pearson χ^2 statistic is 78.1. This indicates poor model fit (degrees of freedom = 48, p value = .000).

** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$.

indicating that they have the strongest tendency toward homophily. In dates and long-term relationships, residuals are also unusually high for Asian students. Black students' strong tendency for intraracial partnerships is also evident in Table 3: Black students are generally the group with the largest homophily biases. Regardless of whether Black students strongly prefer Black partners or other students avoid Black partners (or both), this high level of homophily suggests that Black students are the most socially isolated group. Because they are standardized, Pearson residuals allow for comparisons between relationships, dates, and hookups, and they indicate that hookups are more independent of race than dates or relationships. Similarly, for most groups, the homophily bias is also larger in dates and long-term relationships than in hookups, so both measures indicate that in-group preference is weaker in the context of less commitment.

This descriptive analysis has provided evidence in support of several of my hypotheses. It has demonstrated the existence of same-race preference (Hypothesis 1), shown that this preference is weakest in hookups (Hypothesis 2), that it is particularly strong for Black and Asian students (Hypothesis 3), and that there appear to be gender differences in interracial mixing (at least in some relationship forms) among Black and Asian students (Hypothesis 4), but the methods used thus far cannot evaluate whether all of these tendencies are strong enough to be statistically significant. In the next part of the paper I continue this analysis using log-linear models. Log-linear models allowed me to compare the strength of homophily across race groups and between relationship forms and to evaluate statistical significance. These models also enabled me to identify patterns of preference (or avoidance) for specific intergroup pairings that become evident after controlling for homophily.

Log-Linear Analysis

There are five racial/ethnic categories (White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and All Others), two genders, and three relationship types for a total of 75 cells ($5 \times 5 \times 3$). I apply the following log-linear models to the data:

$$\text{Log}(P) = \text{Constant} + W_{\text{race}} + M_{\text{race}} + R \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Log}(P) = \text{Constant} + W_{\text{race}} + M_{\text{race}} + R + H \quad (2)$$

$$\text{Log}(P) = \text{Constant} + W_{\text{race}} + M_{\text{race}} + R + H \times C_{\text{race}} \quad (3a)$$

$$\text{Log}(P) = \text{Constant} + W_{\text{race}} + M_{\text{race}} + R + H \times C_{\text{race}} \times R \quad (3b)$$

$$\text{Log}(P) = \text{Constant} + W_{\text{race}} + M_{\text{race}} + R + H \times C_{\text{Race}} + H \times C_{\text{Asian}} \times R \quad (3c)$$

$$\text{Log}(P) = \text{Constant} + W_{\text{race}} + M_{\text{race}} + R + H \times C_{\text{Race}} + H \times C_{\text{Asian}} \times R + C_{\text{BlackWhite}} + C_{\text{AsianWhite}} \quad (4a)$$

$$\text{Log}(P) = \text{Constant} + W_{\text{race}} + M_{\text{race}} + R + H \times C_{\text{Race}} + H \times C_{\text{Asian}} \times R + C_{\text{AsianWhite}} \quad (4b)$$

$$\text{Log}(P) = \text{Constant} + W_{\text{race}} + M_{\text{race}} + R + H \times C_{\text{Race}} + H \times C_{\text{Asian}} \times R + C_{\text{AsianWhite}} + C_{\text{BlackMaleRelp}} \quad (5)$$

In all of these models, P is the predicted number of couples, W_{race} is the woman's race, M_{race} is the man's race, R indicates whether the coupling is a hookup, a date, or a long-term relationship, H (homophily) indicates same-race pairings, C_{race} is the race of the couple (for same-race couples, including "Other"), C_{Asian} indicates same-race Asian couples, $C_{\text{BlackWhite}}$ indicates Black-White mixed-race couples, $C_{\text{AsianWhite}}$ indicates Asian-White mixed-race couples, and $C_{\text{BlackMaleRelp}}$ is an interaction of Black males and long-term relationship (vs. hookup and date). All models also include a constant term (not shown in equations). Results are shown in Table 5.

These log-linear models generate predicted cell counts, with the constraints that the total number of women and men in each race group equals the observed number and that the total number of couples in dates, hookups, and long-term relationships also equals the observed number (log-linear models adjust for the size of each race-gender group). For example, there are 731 couples that included a White woman in the actual data and in the cell counts predicted by any of the log-linear models and there are 534 dates in the actual data and in the predicted cell counts. But the women and men need not be distributed between hookups, dates, and relationships as they are in the actual data. For example, in the actual data 274 of the 731 couples that include a White woman are hookups, but the predicted

Table 5. Log-Linear Models of Racial/Ethnic Homophily in Hookups, Dates, and Relationships (5 × 5 × 3 Table; n = 1,368 Couples)

| | Model Number | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3a | 3b | 3c | 4a | 4b | 5 | 4b | 5 |
| Model summary statistics | | | | | | | | | | |
| Degrees of freedom | 64 | 63 | 59 | 49 | 57 | 55 | 56 | 55 | 56 | 55 |
| Model GOF (G^2) ^a | 588 | 134 | 94 | 80 | 84 | 60 | 61 | 56 | 61 | 56 |
| P value (for G^2) | .00 | .00 | .00 | .00 | .01 | .31 | .29 | .42 | .29 | .42 |
| BIC | 126 | -321 | -332 | -274 | -328 | -337 | -343 | -341 | -343 | -341 |
| Model parameters | | | | | | | | | | |
| Coefficients | | | | | | | | | | |
| Odds Ratios | | | | | | | | | | |
| One homophily parameter | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.38** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Homophily for each race | | | | | | | | | | |
| (woman's race × man's race) | | | | | | | | | | |
| White | | | 1.05** | 1.00** | 1.05** | 1.49** | 1.68** | 1.68** | 5.34** | 5.34** |
| Black | | | 2.70** | 2.53** | 2.70** | 2.07** | 2.32** | 2.32** | 10.12** | 10.12** |
| Hispanic | | | 1.26** | 0.99** | 1.26** | 0.90** | 0.77** | 0.77** | 2.15** | 2.15** |
| Asian | | | 1.41** | 0.89** | 0.93** | 1.94** | 1.96** | 1.97** | 7.09** | 7.17** |
| Other | | | 0.85* | 0.99 | 0.85* | 0.57 | 0.48 | 0.48 | 1.62 | 1.62 |
| Additional homophily in dates | | | | | | | | | | |
| (woman's race × man's race × date) | | | | | | | | | | |
| White | | | | 0.07 | | | | | | |
| Black | | | | 0.36 | | | | | | |
| Hispanic | | | | 0.41 | | | | | | |
| Asian | | | | 0.67* | 0.60* | 0.60* | 0.60* | 0.60* | 1.82* | 1.82* |
| Other | | | | 0.04 | | | | | | |
| Additional homophily in relationships | | | | | | | | | | |
| (woman's race × man's race × long-term relationship) | | | | | | | | | | |
| White | | | | 0.08 | | | | | | |
| Black | | | | 0.10 | | | | | | |
| Hispanic | | | | 0.39 | | | | | | |
| Asian | | | | 0.87** | 0.82** | 0.82** | 0.82** | 0.77** | 2.26** | 2.15** |
| Other | | | | -0.88 | | | | | | |

Table 5. Continued

| | Model Number | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|---|----|----|----|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3a | 3b | 3c | 4a | 4b | 5 | 4b | 5 |
| Interracial interactions (one partner's race × other partner's race) | | | | | | | | | | |
| White × Asian | | | | | | 0.87** | 0.97** | 0.97** | 2.64** | 2.64** |
| White × Black | | | | | | -0.31 | | | | |
| Gender-Specific Race × Long-Term Relationship Interactions | | | | | | | | | | |
| Black Male × Long-Term Relationship | | | | | | | | -0.51* | | 0.60* |

Source: College Social Life Survey (2005).

^aI show G^2 , the likelihood-ratio statistic comparing the current model to the saturated model (also called the deviance), instead of the Pearson χ^2 statistic because G^2 is used to calculate the BIC statistic. P values calculated using the Pearson χ^2 are equivalent.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

cell counts may locate more or less of the 731 women in hookups. In the log-linear models, I added parameters to improve the accuracy of the predicted cell counts (to make them closer to the actual cell counts).

The first model, Model 1, assumes no racially selective sorting. The second model, Model 2, adds a single parameter for homophily for all race groups and relationship forms. This greatly improved the fit compared to Model 1 so I rejected the null hypothesis that homophily is unimportant. Actually, Model 2 fits well by the parsimonious Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) statistic, but subsequent models are preferable.

Model 2 indicates that homophily is related to partner selection, but it does not test for differences in the strength of homophily between race groups and between relationships, dates, and hookups. Accordingly, the next models, Models 3a and 3b, allow homophily to differ for each race (Model 3a) and between relationships and hookups (Model 3b). The strength of homophily does vary significantly between race groups, but the strength of homophily varies between hookups, dates, and relationships only for Asian students. Therefore, in subsequent models, homophily varies across races but the parameter allowing homophily to be different in hookups, dates, and relationships is only included for Asians (Model 3c).

In the next model, Model 4a, I included interaction terms for specific interracial combinations—Black with White and Asian with White. These combinations were tested because prior work has found Asian-White marriages to be relatively more likely and Black-White marriages to be less likely, given the overall out-marriage tendencies of these race groups. Also, these cells have high residuals and standardized residuals, indicating that they are over- or under-populated compared to predicted cell counts that assume no between-group attraction or avoidance. Adding these terms provided evidence of affinity between Asian and White students, but there is not evidence that Black-White pairings were particularly avoided (second-order interaction terms are insignificant). Therefore, subsequent models retained the Asian-White interaction but not the Black-White interaction (Model 4b).

Model 4b, which includes a homophily parameter for each race, an interaction between Asian homophily and relationship type, and an

Asian-White interaction, fits the data well by the Model Goodness of Fit Chi-square (G^2), the Pearson Chi-square (χ^2), and the BIC statistics, but an examination of the residuals suggests that the model fits Black males poorly. The race marginals for women and men are not constrained to equal the actual marginals at the type-of-partnership level, only at the total population level. This is a problem only for Black men because the ratios of the number of Black men in hookups and in dates to the number of Black men in relationships are unusually high, offset by slightly lower ratios for Asian and Hispanic men. Black women are somewhat overrepresented in dates, compared to their representation in hookups and relationships, but otherwise the ratios between the numbers of different partnership types reported are approximately the same for women of all races.

Therefore, in the final model, Model 5, I added a parameter interacting Black male with long-term relationship. This coefficient is significant and negative, indicating that Black men are significantly more concentrated in hookups and dates than in long-term relationships relative to other men. A parameter adjusting for the slight overconcentration of Black women in dates is not significant (not shown). Model 5 is the best model by G^2 and χ^2 , but Model 4b is preferred by the BIC statistic (which more strongly rewards parsimony). Because the BIC statistic differs only very slightly between Models 4b and 5 and because the additional term in Model 5 is statistically significant and substantively meaningful, I prefer Model 5. To test the robustness of the final model, Model 5, I also performed negative binomial regression and Poisson regression with robust standard errors; neither method changed the results in any way. The coefficients in Table 5 indicate the direction and statistical significance of relationships, but the size of these effects is not easily interpretable. Transforming the coefficients into odds ratios makes it easier to understand their magnitude; therefore Table 5 also includes the odds ratios for my preferred model (Model 5) and for the model preferred by the BIC statistic (Model 4b).

As predicted in Hypothesis 1, homophily is a strong force for all race groups, but the level of in-group preference varies greatly across groups, and, as predicted in Hypothesis 3, it is particularly high for Asians and even higher for Blacks. In the final model, Model 5, Black

students are over 10 times more likely to be in an intraracial pairing for a hookup, date, or long-term relationship than to be in an interracial pairing. Homophily is also very high for Asian students, especially Asian students in dates and relationships. In the final model, intraracial hookups for Asians are over 7 times more likely than interracial hookups. Asian students' preference for homophily increases by a factor of 1.8 for dates and 2.2 for relationships, compared to hookups (i.e., for Asians, dates are about 13 times more likely to be intraracial than to be interracial and long-term relationships are over 15 times more likely to be intraracial than to be interracial). Whites are about 6 times as likely to be in a racially homophilous hookup, date, or relationship, and Hispanics are only about twice as likely to be in an ethnically homophilous hookup, date, or relationship.

With a few exceptions, the proportion of dates and long-term relationships that are interracial is lower than the proportion of hookups that are interracial, and nearly all groups demonstrate higher homophily biases in dates and long-term relationships (see Table 3), but the log-linear models indicate that this difference is only large enough to be statistically significant for Asian students. Thus, Hypothesis 2, which states that homophily is higher in dates and relationships, is clearly supported for Asian students, but for other students support for Hypothesis 2 is mixed.

Hypothesis 4, which predicts certain gender differences by race, is not easily tested in the log-linear models because these models treat the row and column totals as exogenous. Asian women and Black men were predicted to have more other-race partners compared to their other-gender same-race counterparts. As discussed in the descriptive analysis, this is not consistently supported (Table 3). Asian women report significantly more other-race partners than men only in hookups and dates, and Black men report significantly more other-race partners than Black women only in hookups (although a difference was not predicted for White students, White men were found to report more other-race partners than White women in hookups and dates). In no group is there a gender difference in the tendency to report an interracial long-term relationship.

But one race-gender group does display different partnering patterns in the log-linear models. The interaction term added in Model 5 adjusts for the overrepresentation of Black men

in hookups and dates (indirectly, it also corrects the slight underrepresentation of Asian and Hispanic men). It is interesting that ratio of the number of hookups to the number of long-term relationships and the ratio of the number of dates to the number of long-term relationships vary by race for men but not for women. This may reflect differences in the desire to participate in hookups and dates in general or in interracial hookups and dates in particular. Perhaps Black men are unusually open to (interracial) hookups and dates, whereas Asian and Hispanic men are more conservative. Or women may desire hookups and dates with Black men but prefer long-term relationships with non-Black men.

The descriptive analysis and the log-linear models have revealed a strong tendency toward homophily in all relationship forms and all race groups. In fact, it is striking how strong homophily is, given that this population was expected to be unusually liberal with respect to sexual and social practices. Consistent with prior findings that African Americans are uniquely socially isolated, Black homophily is remarkably strong. Asian homophily is also very high, and, as measured by odds ratios, in relationships Asian homophily is stronger than Black homophily. But there are many more Asian students than Black students, which may make the odds ratios misleading—compared to the level of interracial mixing expected under the independence model, Black students demonstrate a stronger preference for homophily (see Homophily Biases in Table 3).

That Asian students, but not Black students, compromise homophily in hookups may result from differences in the forces that drive Asian and Black homophily. Two plausible causes of homophily are preferences for same-race partners and segregated social networks. If homophily is primarily caused by preferences, students may desire homophily more in relationships than in hookups because racially homogenous partners are more culturally compatible or more acceptable to parents, or both, and this matters more in long-term relationships. In this case homophily in dates should be more similar to homophily in relationships because dates, much more than hookups, signal interest in forming a committed romantic relationship. This is the pattern demonstrated by Asian students. Alternatively, homophily might be caused by racially segregated social networks that prevent even interracial hookups. In this

case, homophily would be constant across partnership types, as it is for Black students. To investigate the importance of preferences and social networks, I considered differences in the context and quality of interracial relationships and I analyzed students' stories about their romantic and sexual experiences at Stanford.

The Context and Quality of Intra- and Interracial Relationships

The quantitative data in the College Social Life Survey contain information on how the students met their partners, how much they enjoyed the interaction, and their desire for forming or continuing a romantic relationship, allowing me to investigate the social context and relationship quality of intra- and interracial partnerships. The quantitative data are complemented by semi-structured qualitative interviews, and, although interracial relationships were not a topic that interviewers were instructed to cover, several respondents mentioned racial preferences for partners or discussed their involvement in specific racial or ethnic communities. Common themes include the role of formal and informal racial/ethnic social networks, hesitation to form serious interracial relationships, and, within the Black community, tension between the sexual and romantic desires of male and female students.

Between 25% and 30% of hookup and dating partners were initially introduced by a close friend of one or both partners, and most students knew their hookup partner at least "moderately well" before the hookup (Table 6), but less socially connected partners were also common. Over half of students introduced themselves to their hookup or dating partner, and other-race dating partners were more likely than same-race partners to have introduced themselves (there was no significant difference in introductions for other-race hookup partners). Other-race hookup partners were more likely to meet in their dormitory and same-race partners were more likely to meet at parties or other nightlife venues. This suggests that friendship networks (which are likely to be segregated) may promote intraracial relationships whereas integrated social settings (dormitories) may encourage racial mixing.

Interestingly, many minority respondents mentioned meeting partners through formal or informal activities organized by Black, Asian,

Table 6. Social Context and Relational Intent of Intra- and Interracial Hookups, Dates, and Long-Term Relationships (n = 1,368 Couples)

| | Hookups | | | Dates | | | Long-Term Relationships | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| | Intraracial | Interracial | Pearson χ^2 | Intraracial | Interracial | Pearson χ^2 | Intraracial | Interracial | Pearson χ^2 |
| How well respondent knew hookup partner | | | 4.40 | | | | | | |
| Not at all | .03 | .02 | | | | | | | |
| A little bit | .22 | .15 | | | | | | | |
| Somewhat | .15 | .20 | | | | | | | |
| Moderately well | .25 | .28 | | | | | | | |
| Very well | .35 | .35 | | | | | | | |
| How respondent met partner | | | 13.72* | | | 2.87 | | | 13.72* |
| Class | .15 | .13 | | .15 | .15 | | .18 | .16 | |
| Student club | .08 | .06 | | .09 | .07 | | .07 | .05 | |
| Dorm | .24 | .38 | | .23 | .26 | | .29 | .38 | |
| Work | .03 | .03 | | .02 | .03 | | .03 | .02 | |
| At a party/bar/nightclub | .24 | .15 | | .22 | .19 | | .15 | .16 | |
| Other | .25 | .26 | | .29 | .31 | | .27 | .23 | |
| Who introduced respondent to partner | | | 3.68 | | | 11.29* | | | |
| A close friend of one or both of us | .30 | .27 | | .24 | .27 | | | | |
| A friend (not close) | .06 | .10 | | .16 | .07 | | | | |
| A mutual acquaintance | .06 | .04 | | .07 | .06 | | | | |
| Someone neither of us knew before | .02 | .03 | | .01 | .02 | | | | |
| We introduced ourselves | .56 | .55 | | .52 | .60 | | | | |
| How long respondent knew partner before becoming an exclusive couple | | | | | | | | | 1.87 |
| < 1 month | | | | | | | .22 | .27 | |
| 1 to 6 months | | | | | | | .37 | .39 | |
| 6 to 12 months | | | | | | | .13 | .12 | |
| A year or longer | | | | | | | .27 | .22 | |

Source: College Social Life Survey (2005).

* $p < .05$. P values for the Pearson χ^2 statistic.

or Latino (Hispanic) groups. For example, several Asian students mentioned a big sibling-little sibling program organized by the Asian-American New Student Orientation Committee. As well as creating an Asian friendship network, this program also included a dance in which big siblings (returning students) arranged dates for their little siblings (first-year students), often leading to sexual/romantic relationships. In addition, one Asian student told his interviewer that sibling relationships so often became sexual that “there is, like, a term called Sibcest with this, its like, cause this Sib Program isn’t really supposed to be, like, like a meat market hooking up.” Non-Asian minority students had similar sibling programs and also formed connections at race-specific events. A Latina student said her partner noticed her at “things within the Latino community, events,” and a Black student explained that he met friends and partners at “various Black events.” Race-specific events may generate same-race social networks, reducing contact with potential other-race partners and increasing social pressure to choose same-race partners. Thus, one reason racial identities have not faded, as predicted by Gordon (1964), might be that formal race-based student organizations strengthen group identities and foster in-group social networks.

Indeed, although the interviews focus on sexual and romantic partners, some students also discussed racially segregated social networks. A Black woman complained that going to fraternity parties “gets a little annoying, cuz, I mean, when you go to frat parties it’s mostly, like . . . just White people. . . . A lot of Black people don’t go out to these frat parties and they only attend like all Black parties.” This student had non-Black friends, but she implied that this is not true for all Black students. Indeed, another Black woman told her interviewer: “I don’t really have any friends in the White community.” If Black students have highly segregated social networks, this may explain why Black homophily is as high in hookups as in dates and relationships: They did not interact much with other-race students. In contrast, Asian students may have more diverse social networks: One Asian woman told her interviewer: “I have, like, multiple groups of friends. I have some friends who were just in my dorm and we would hang out. And I also have friends, like primarily Asian friends, who I met through, like, Asian American orientation events.” Greater social

network diversity (more contact) would result in more cross-race hookups, all else equal.

Students’ preferences for same-race partners may have also decreased the incidence of interracial liaisons. If this were the case, students should have been less interested in forming a romantic relationship with other-race hookup partners and should have reported less enjoyment from interactions with other-race partners, but this is *not* evident in the quantitative data (results not shown). Students did not report significant differences in sexual or overall enjoyment between intra- and interracial hookups or long-term relationships, and they did not reveal differences in their willingness to commit to a relationship with intra- versus interracial partners.

In contrast, in the qualitative data several respondents mentioned concern over interracial relationships. An Indian (Asian) woman explained: “Like, I’m Indian and he’s, like, American, and, like, I just felt, like, you know, I really like this guy. . . . but I just didn’t see myself like in a long-term relationship with him. . . . I mean, we just had, like, cultural, basic cultural differences.” Similarly, a White male told his interviewer that his current girlfriend did not initially consider him a potential partner because of race and class differences: “The only people she dated were, you know, Asian and rich.” In this instance the White respondent was open to an interracial relationship, but his Asian partner was reluctant to let their casual hookup relationship become more serious. But the preference for intraracial relationships does not come entirely from the minority partners. A White woman explained that her relationship with an Indian (Asian) immigrant did not work out in part because of “BIG cultural difference.” Although not all students may have shared these concerns, interracial dating is far from being a nonissue on campus.

Importantly, in the accounts of these Asian-White relationships, the interracial aspect of the relationship only became relevant when the relationships (initially hookups) became more committed—neither the White nor Asian partners expressed concern about cross-racial *hookups*. In contrast, Black students, particularly Black women, expressed hesitation to engage in *any* interracial sexual or romantic partnership (including hookups). When asked whether it was important that potential hookup partners be of her own race, a Black woman seemed

uncomfortable, but acknowledged “Ummm . . . yeah . . . it’s kind of . . . it’s . . . it’s . . . yeah . . . I am a product of my environment. Like, growing up in [*city omitted*], like, the Black people are pretty much with Black people, like White people are with White people.” Another Black woman specifically mentioned being uncomfortable with interracial hookups, telling her interviewer: “[W]e’ve hooked up twice. . . . I was kind of reluctant at the time, because [he is White]. And the whole interracial dating thing has been an issue for me in the past, but he’s a really, really sweet guy.” Black women’s greater opposition to interracial hookups may explain their lower incidence of hooking up: By restricting their partner pool to Black men, they limit their opportunities to hookup.

But not all students were opposed to cross-race hookups—some students actively sought other-race partners. A Black male who described himself as having grown up in a poor minority neighborhood felt that he was an object of sexual novelty for White women. He said that the women he hooks up with “tend to be White . . . and upper-class. And they’re, they’re ‘slumming’ . . . they’re ‘slumming’! . . . There’s a class divide here that no one talks about, but it really comes out in dating, because, like, girls who will really hook up with me would never date me.” This sense of novelty in having an interracial partner was also expressed by a White male, who commented: “Least I’ve gotten some different ethnicity. I haven’t gone out with a Black girl yet. I feel like that’s something I ought to do.” Black students were not the only target of cross-race sexual interest. One Asian woman mentioned that her current (White) boyfriend is the type of man who “likes Asians.” Given this interest in interracial sexual relationships, contrasted with evidence that more committed interracial relationships are often problematic, it is surprising that there is not a greater difference between levels of homophily in hookups compared to dates and relationships.

Although most of this paper has focused on patterns of racial homophily, I have also found evidence of within-race gender differences, particularly among Black students. Black males are overrepresented in hookups and dates compared to their involvement in relationships, and Black women are underrepresented in all types of relationships compared to Black men and to other women. This may result from

the preferences of non-Black students (if non-Black women and men differ in their desire for Black partners), but it might also be caused by a gender divide in sexual attitudes among Black students. In fact, several Black women lamented Black men’s reluctance to commit to exclusive relationships or even to acknowledge casual sexual relationships. One Black woman said, “A lot of people complain, especially in the Black community, oh there’s no dating or what not, but I think what it is, is the guys, they’re not looking for relationships and the girls are, so there’s a disconnect.” She added, “There are some people dating within the Black community, it’s just that guys aren’t willing to do it more than once . . . with one female.” Another Black woman described dissatisfaction with her partner’s behavior after a recent hookup, objecting “there’s no way I’m going to have a guy be like ‘no one should know about us.’ . . . It’s stupid. And it’s creeping. And it’s very common in the Black community.” When her interviewer probed for details, she explained, “I think for the guys, it’s a way of, like, still being able to [pursue] other girls. . . . I think rarely do I think it go the other way, like ‘oh I don’t want other guys to know,’ because there’s always more girls than there are guys.” This perceived shortage of Black men may reflect Black men’s preference for hookups and dates and their (self-chosen) unavailability as exclusive partners (there are about the same number of Black women and men at Stanford).

The quantitative data provide additional evidence of a gender divide in sexual attitudes within the Black community. Whereas all groups demonstrated some degree of gender difference, Black students were the only racial group in which women expressed significantly greater agreement with the statement “I wish there were more opportunities for going on dates” and men expressed significantly greater agreement with the statement “Any kind of sexual activity is okay as long as both persons freely agree to it” (results not shown). The conflicting attitudes of Black women and men may be reflective of a larger crisis within Black American gender relations (Hooks et al., 1995; Lawrence-Webb, Littlefield, & Okundaye, 2004; Patterson, 1993). In addition, prior research has indicated that Black women oppose interracial dating in part because they perceive Black men to have more opportunities for interracial dating: Interracial dating is seen as reducing the availability of

partners for Black women (Childs, 2005), and quantitative data indicate that Black men's greater propensity for interracial marriage does in fact reduce the availability of (same-race) partners for Black women, especially among the highly educated (Crowder & Tolnay, 2000). Thus, although the purpose of this paper was not to examine within-race gender differences, it does support prior research findings that, compared to Black women, Black men are less relationally oriented (Patterson) and more open to (or desired by) other-race partners (Childs; Crowder & Tolnay).

This analysis suggests that racially segregated friendship groups and preferences for intraracial partners may be important mechanisms in maintaining racial homophily. Black, Asian, and Hispanic students meet at race-specific events and form in-group friendship networks that bring together potential same-race partners. Although there is some evidence that the interracial geographical proximity imposed on students in college dormitories increases interracial hookups, it is countered by the lack of social network proximity, which decreases interracial liaisons. Interestingly, there is some evidence that Black students limit their social circle to the Black community, whereas Asian students form multiple social networks, including some that are not primarily Asian. If Asian students have less segregated social networks than Black students, this might explain why Asian students, but not Black students, demonstrate less homophily in hookups, compared to dates and long-term relationships. Black students' relatively higher homophily in hookups might also be explained by different preferences for same-race partners. Both Asian and Black students mentioned that they prefer intraracial partners, but the Asian students seemed comfortable with interracial *hookups*. In contrast, the Black students who mentioned preferring same-race partners extended this preference to hookup partners. Both explanations suggest a larger social distance between Black and non-Black students than between Asian and non-Asian students.

DISCUSSION

Although these findings are suggestive, they may only apply to Stanford. Using the College Social Life Survey limits the analysis to a case study of a single population. But this limitation also has

benefits: It allowed me to examine patterns of interracial relationships while largely controlling for structural factors that may affect rates of out-group pairings. By focusing on Stanford, I was able to control for the diversity of the pool of potential partners. Using Stanford students also reduced the risk of spurious findings by minimizing variation in nonracial factors that affect racial homophily, such as racial differences in average education. Controlling for the diversity of intergroup contacts without also considering the frequency of *status-equal* intergroup contacts can inflate the estimated effects of race. By using data on students who all attend a single elite university, this bias was avoided.

Using data on students at an elite university is also interesting because it can help explain the failure of higher education to foster greater rates of interracial unions. Gordon (1964) optimistically predicted that in modern society achieved identities would increasingly replace ascribed identities such as race, but this has not occurred (Rosenfeld, 2008). Whereas existing studies of racial and status homophily—and of the effect of education on racial homophily—only examine outcomes (rates of interracial partnerships), the College Social Life Survey contains qualitative data that provide insight into the social processes driving patterns of homophily. My analysis offers a possible explanation for the failure of education to eliminate the relevance of race in the partner-selection process: Race-specific student organizations and social networks help to maintain the strength of racial identities and encourage the formation of intraracial friendships and sexual/romantic relationships.

But the degree of racial homophily in social networks varies by race, and this has implications for homophily in hookups, dates, and long-term romantic relationships. Although both Asian and Black students are heavily involved in formal race-specific organizations, Asian students also maintain ties to racially integrated friendship networks. As a result, Asian students participate more frequently in interracial hookups, with homophily increasing in dates, and again in long-term relationships. In contrast, as measured by their opposition to any interracial partnerships (including hookups) and their lack of interracial social ties, Black students (perhaps especially Black women) are more socially isolated than Asian students. Thus, this

analysis is consistent with prior studies in finding that Black Americans are a uniquely isolated minority group (Massey & Denton, 1993).

This analysis also has implications for the meaning of proximity and the difficulty of fostering meaningful interracial contact. By living in racially integrated dormitories, Black students are physically proximate to non-Black students, but their highly segregated social networks indicate that they are not socially proximate to non-Black students. Thus, although geographic proximity is no doubt important in determining opportunities for interracial partnerships, this study indicates that social network proximity is at least as important. Contact theory argues that interracial contact in a status-equal context will give rise to improved interracial relationships, but the strength of social network segregation demonstrates that this has not occurred among Stanford students. It is possible that racial differences in status persist, even among integrated, elite college students, but students did not mention overt interracial hostility or discrimination. Instead, it seems that the level of contact necessitated by integrated dormitory and classroom settings is not enough to generate social connections between Black and non-Black students. It is also possible that, as a response to their history of social subordination, Black Americans have developed an oppositional collective identity, deliberately separating themselves from Whites (Ogbu, 2008).

Prior studies have found increasingly large biases toward same-race partners in more committed relationships (Joyner & Kao, 2005). In these data, the homophily bias (a measure of the strength of in-group preference) generally increases with relationship commitment: Most race-gender groups display a stronger tendency toward homophily in dates than in hookups and this increases again in long-term relationships. But the log-linear models indicate that the increase with relationship commitment is only large enough to be statistically significant for Asian students. Prior analyses have compared noncohabitating romantic relationships with cohabitations and marriages: It is plausible that the largest increases in homophily occur in the transitions to cohabitation and marriage. But it is interesting that, at least for Asian students, this “winnowing process” begins in the transition to dates and long-term relationships. Asians may be unique in that they are socially integrated

enough to participate in the White hookup scene but still maintain such a strong group identity that they avoid more committed liaisons with non-Asians.

I find that Asian women and Black men have a greater tendency to hook up interracially, and Asian women also have a greater tendency to date interracially compared to Asian men and Black women, respectively. This might be explained by the preferences of other students: Asian women and Black men report being eroticized by White students, and this might make them more desired in hookups. But previous studies have found that Asian women and Black men are more likely to *marry* interracially than their same-race other-gender counterparts, and I found no gender differences in rates of homophily in long-term relationships (which are presumably more similar to marriage than are hookups and dates). Eroticization by other students cannot explain why Asian women and Black men have a greater propensity to hook up interracially and to marry interracially, but do not have a greater propensity to have interracial long-term relationships.

One explanation is that there are gender differences among Asian and Black students in the willingness to partner interracially and also in the desire to participate in the various types of partnerships: Black women and Asian men might have more conservative preferences on both dimensions. If Black men and Asian women have more favorable attitudes toward hooking up, whereas Black women and Asian men prefer dates and long-term relationships, Black men and Asian women must hook up interracially (or hook up less than they desire), and Black women and Asian men will have to accept other-race long-term relationship partners (or be less romantically involved than they desire). Assuming that Black men and Asian women have less conservative preferences (they are less opposed to interracial partners and more inclined to hook up), this will result in more interracial hookups involving Black men and Asian women. But if Black women and Asian men have strong preferences for homophily, the unavailability of same-race partners would reduce their chance of forming a long-term relationship. Still, if enough Black women and Asian men are willing to compromise on race in selecting long-term romantic partners, their rates of participation in long-term relationships might

be approximately equal to those of their same-race, other-gender peers (who are less eager for committed relationships). But individuals are plausibly less willing to compromise in picking marriage partners, resulting in fewer marriages among Black women and Asian men (and a relatively greater propensity for Black men and Asian women to marry interracially). Further research is needed to determine whether this explanation is correct.

This study expands the literature on interracial partnering to include hookups, and it is also unique in that it unites quantitative and qualitative data in order to both quantify and explain patterns of racial homophily. By examining partner choices in the early stages of relationship formation, it provides insight into the causes of racial homophily and the social distance between racial groups. It also helps explain why racial homophily remains high, even among the highly educated, by demonstrating the importance of racial segregation in formal and informal social networks. Although geographic distance and status differences between groups are minimized at Stanford, the social distance between groups (particularly between Black and non-Black students) remains large: Physical proximity and status equality are not enough to establish social network proximity, and integrated social networks are an important prerequisite for interracial sexual or romantic liaisons.

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