The One Friend Rule and Social Deficits: Understanding the Impact of Race on Social Capital in an Interracial Congregation

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Abstract

Social capital scholars suggest that race influences an individual’s ability to access and mobilize resources. Since social capital is embedded in social relationships and not individuals, understanding the context of relationships is imperative for understanding social capital development. Organizations facilitating access to racially and socioeconomically diverse network ties are rare; however, interracial religious congregations may illuminate the mechanisms that influence interracial social development. Using data from in-depth interviews of 37 interracial congregation attendees in Columbus, OH, I investigate the influence of race on social capital development. Results reveal racial mechanisms impact how people characterize their close friendships and interracial resource exchanges. Using qualitative analyses, two major themes emerge: 1) people of color perceive comparatively greater relational intimacy with whites and, consequently, invest more frequently and with greater magnitude in resource exchanges and 2) whites include weak, institutionally tied friendships in their close network for cultural legitimation. Both themes, respectively named social deficits and the one friend rule, comprise the nuanced view of the impact of race on social capital development in interracial churches.
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Introduction

Increased social capital is associated with better health outcomes (Haynie, South and Bose 2006), educational achievements (Bolívar and Chrispeels 2011; Coleman 1988), access to information about jobs (Lin 2000), greater access to resource-rich networks (Small 2009) and increases in levels of civic participation (Putnam 2000). Thus, understanding social capital development is imperative. Scholars argue that access and mobilization of resources derived from individuals with high human capital and occupation prestige influences social status (Lin 2001). Occupational attainment data reveal whites have disproportionately higher access than non-whites to these relationships (Alba 2011). Explanations for social capital inequality include residential segregation (Gowan 2011; Sampson and Graif 2009), structural position in a network (Burt 2000), human capital differences (Coleman 1988) and low civic engagement (Putnam 2000). However, within the social capital literature, the influence of race on social capital development in racially diverse, voluntary organizations remains unclear.

Organizations that facilitate access to racially and socioeconomically diverse network ties are rare; however, interracial congregations show potential. One line of research argues that they reduce racist attitudes (Emerson and Woo 2006), promote interracial friendship (Christerson, Edwards and Emerson 2005; Wong 2009), and create ethnic solidarity through religious practices (Marti 2009). Another line of research provides evidence that interracial congregations support white hegemony (Edwards 2008) and misuse power (Emerson and Woo 2006). Drawing upon data from in-depth interviews with 37 attendees of a large interracial congregation in Columbus, OH, I examine the extent that race impacts how social capital develops among members of an interracial congregation. More specially, I investigate the characteristics of the participant’s social networks—both within and outside the congregation—and the resources that are
exchanged between participants and people considered closest friends in their social networks. I focus on the social capital participants accrue among their congregational network.

Within this article, two themes provide nuance about the impact of race on individual social capital within an interracial religious congregation. First, people of color report embedding their resources disproportionately more into interracial exchanges than whites. I argue people of color receive lower returns from investments in interracial exchanges and, thus, experience increased disadvantage from participation in the interracial congregation. Second, a pattern emerged where social majority members name at least one, non-intimate interracial relationship in their close friends network. When applied to congregational networks, I argue that whites mobilize their friends’ race to legitimate participation in a racially diverse network and, thus, provide only limited access for people of color to their social resources. These two themes, respectively named social deficits and the one friend rule, comprise the nuanced view of the impact of race on social capital development in interracial churches.
Theoretical Framework

Social capital is the “resources embedded in a social structure accessed or mobilized for purposive actions (Lin 2001)”. This definition describes social capital as it exists between individuals in a network and presupposes that individuals invest personal resources in social networks to achieve social or economic returns (Lin 2001). Within interracial congregation scholarship, this theoretical lens is rarely applied. Sociologists of religion, however, apply several theories about the impact of interracial congregations on attitudes about race, racial identity, and racial structure of interpersonal networks. Utilizing the social capital approach, I add to theory an analysis of interracial relationships and resource exchanges among interracial congregation attendees.

Two Components of Social Capital

In general, two emphases exist in the social capital literature. Some scholars emphasize communal components – cumulative solidarity and civic engagement – to define social capital (Coleman 1988; Lim and Putnam 2010; Portes and Landolt 2000; Putnam 2000). In their conception, high levels of generalized trust and socioeconomic success demarcates communities with high social capital. Others scholars emphasize the interactional components of social capital, that cumulative exchange and interactions between individuals within a network comprises social capital (Bourdieu 1983/1986; Burt 2000; Lin 2000). To accurately measure the impact of race on social capital development, patterns of exchange and interactions between individuals should be observed. Therefore, I employ the second, interactional conception that defines social capital as the “resources embedded in a social structure accessed or mobilized for purposive actions (Lin 2001)”.
Two scholars set the foundation for Lin’s conception. Bourdieu theorized about forms of capital that were non-economic including human, symbolic, cultural and linguistic (Bourdieu 1983/1986). He argued that economic elites limited access to resource-rich social networks (i.e. social closure) for non-elites (Bourdieu 1977; Swartz 1997). For Bourdieu, social capital is developed and utilized by individuals within networks and not descriptive of the network itself. Additionally, Burt argued that social capital is attained through purposeful positioning in a network structure. Individuals attain social capital as they fill structural holes between individuals (Burt 2004).

Broadening these conceptions, Lin argues that individuals invest in social relations with expected marketplace returns (Lin 2000). He sees resource exchange among nodes in a network clearly measures social capital development. Lin defines two major components of social capital: 1) resources are embedded in social relations and not individuals, 2) access and mobility of resources resides with actors (Lin 2001). First, because social capital is embedded in relationships, one’s investment in a dyad or network determines their access to social capital. For example, if an individual knows about a job opportunity, that information becomes social capital when shared with network members. Otherwise, the information is human capital or, simply, information. Second, social capital is accessed or mobilized for purposive actions. Employment information becomes social capital when an actor mobilizes it for the purposes of achieving a new job.

**Social Capital, Race, and Status**

Homophily partially explains why networks form along the lines of race, class, and other social categories (McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook 2001). Typical Americans trust between 10 and 20 people, approximately one-thirtieth of their total acquaintances. With the time constraints of modern American life, people minimize opportunity to develop politically, religiously, and racially diverse friendships and networks (DiPrete et al. 2011). Similarly, social capital is often
developed within these groupings and benefit from bounded solidarity (Portes and Landolt 2000; Putnam 2000). For example, Portes (2000) cites examples from Latin America where individuals rely upon trust and reciprocity to manage business development in low income environments. In these cases, race/ethnicity increases social capital. He suggests that in racially homogenous, low-income social networks, social capital is a more readily used social currency (Portes and Landolt 2000). The same is true for low-income black neighborhoods where social capital is used in place of economic capital for resource exchange (Gowan 2011). Martin found that elites use social capital—legacy ties with universities and access to campus network—to assist their children with college admission at highly selective institutions (Martin 2013). Reciprocity and social capital becomes important when human and economic capital cannot achieve desirable results.

Few documented racial differences of social capital exist when socioeconomic status and life stage are taken in consideration (Jennifer L. Moren Cross 2008). Hero (2007) argues that within racially homogenous social settings, regardless of race or immigration status, bonding social capital—sharing social resources within networks—is higher than racially diverse environments. He argues that Putnam’s argument about the decline of social capital is better explained by increases in diversity. That is, within each racial/ethnic groups, people of lower socioeconomic status or age access and mobilizes the resources of their family and friends. For example, students use their families or connections with educators to increase their chances of college acceptance (Hunter et al. 2012; Martin 2013; Morgan and Sorensen 1999). Similarly, occupational opportunities are generally mobilized within race, a pattern supported by studies of social closure (Smith 2010; Stainback 2008).

Burt (2000) suggests that individuals with diverse, non-redundant ties create the best structure for attaining valuable social capital. Within the work context, developing ties across status may be easier given proximity and regularity of interaction (i.e. managers and workers in the same factory). Individuals actively pursue relationships or structural positions to achieve
economic outcomes to the marketplace (Burt 2000). Formal titles, educational requirements, and other social closure mechanisms formalize network boundaries.

Within more informal social settings, such specific status markers are replaced with generalized status markers such as gender, race, or socioeconomic status. Separating the influence of these generalized status markers proves difficult. For example, education scholars admit that racial discrimination in schools is also biased by socioeconomic privilege (Oates 2009). However, it is possible to isolate race effects by analyzing individuals who differentiate only on that factor. The effect of race on social capital is determined by comparing an individual’s resource exchanges or friendship strength with ties similar in relationship length, socioeconomic status, and frequency of proximity. These factors will isolate race from other potential influences. Oates identified that the black-white performance gap was perpetuated by experiences and occurrences “at-school” (i.e. teacher bias, tracking placement) rather than those “brought-to school” (i.e. social capital, human capital) (Oates 2009).

Interracial resource exchange does not appear in prior social capital research because the data is drawn from people participating predominately in racially homogenous networks. Consequently, many scholars conclude that homogenous social networks are key to social capital development (Portes and Vickstrom 2011; Putnam 2000). One example provides evidence for the difficulty of accessing and mobilizing social capital across racial lines. A study of residentially segregated African American males in urban St. Louis revealed that, due to racial stereotypes, men could not access or mobilize social resources embedded in relationships they developed with other men in a neighboring white suburb (Gowan 2011). These findings are not surprising given the overwhelming negative effects of racial segregation on social mobility as noted by neighborhood scholars (Sampson, Morenoff and Gannon-Rowley 2002).

Moreover, homogenous networks, like neighborhoods and civic organizations, are prime social structures for social capital development. For example, the Civil Rights Movement created nationwide networks from which African Americans could draw resources and establish valuable
social ties. Morris suggests this social capital development was a key component of the movement’s success (Morris 1984). Additionally, other scholars provide evidence that African Americans used black churches as a source of emotional support, organize business ties, and extend valuable networks (Brown and Brown 2003; McRoberts 2003; Pattillo-McCoy 1998). For example, Pattillo-McCoy provides a compelling ethnographic data of a Chicago neighborhood where African American men, called the middlemen, brokered ties between low-income black neighborhoods and middle-class black neighborhoods. Similar patterns occur for immigrants who develop resources through homogenous personal networks, non-profit organizations, and congregations in new immigrant destinations (Allen 2010). Homogenous networks appear to be key to social capital development.

Interracial congregations create solidarity through cultural experiences and organizational values that may facilitate social capital exchange among disparate groups (Emerson and Woo 2006; Marti 2010). Consequently, interracial congregations are a strong test case of the impact of race on social capital development.

**Interracial Congregations**

For centuries, religious congregations have been a central feature of communities although secularization weakened their overall impact (Putnam and Campbell 2010). Scholars argues that active religious attendees of both predominately black and white homogenous congregations often develop valuable relationships with social elites (i.e. government officials, lawyers), more so than those who do not attend (Brown and Brown 2003; Wuthnow 2002). Wuthnow found that participants developed human capital through group leadership, religious instruction, and positive relationships with leaders (2002). Similarly, Perry found that individuals use social capital developed at homogenous congregations to raise funds for evangelical outreach ministries (Perry 2013). These examples measure specific examples of social capital. Generally speaking, scholars suggest that racially homogenous congregations are a source of social capital.
in the form of social support, trust, and network development (Ammerman 1994; Ellison et al. 2009; Lim and Putnam 2010).

Although social capital is found in homogenous congregations, social capital in interracial congregations remains unclear. One line of research suggests that interracial congregations are an egalitarian environment (Yancey 2007) where attendees develop interracial friendships, (Edwards 2008; Emerson and Woo 2006; Wong 2009), reduce racist attitudes (Edgell and Tranby 2007; Emerson and Woo 2006; Yancey 2007), transcend ethnic barriers through shared cultural practices (DeYoung 2003; Marti 2010; Marti 2012) and potentially increase social capital among members (Emerson and Woo 2006). Also, scholars find that organizational identity, accommodation of differences, and diverse worship styles create the best environment for black-white racial diversity (Dougherty and Huysy 2008; Marti 2010). These studies suggest that interracial congregations are potentially ideal for studying social capital development because the network structure is conducive to interracial resource exchange and supports interracial network development.

Still, another line of research suggests that interracial churches do not reduce racial inequality. For example, it is argued that interracial churches maintain white cultural hegemony (Edwards 2008), disregard cultural preferences of niche edge members (Christerson and Emerson 2003), misuse power (Christerson, Edwards and Emerson 2005; Emerson and Woo 2006), and restrict minority members from formal leadership (Edwards 2008; Marti 2010). These findings suggest that race may negatively impact social capital development. If race influences social relations inside the congregation as in general society, social capital exchange across racial lines may be limited or even non-existent. Similar to what scholars of neighborhoods find, that increased racial diversity increases aversion between racial groups (Uslaner 2010), interracial churches too may increase aversion between racial groups and, thus diminish the interracial social capital development.
Social deficits in Embedded Resources

Social deficits applies directly to the first social capital component, that individuals embed resources in a social structure. Social deficits occur when an individual embeds their social resources (i.e. resource-rich networks, access to valuable information) disproportionately more in a social structure than another individual. For example, if three people were on a sales team and one individual made more cold calls, communicated more with the other group members, and spent more hours developing the sales presentation, then social deficits occur. The single group member invested more into the project but receives the same commission as the others, or the same return to the marketplace. The individual invested much in the social network but received relatively little in return.

This concept is key to understanding the impact of race on social capital development in racially diverse religious organizations. When social deficits appear along racial lines, highly invested members of a racial group may receive disproportionately lower returns given their amount of time, resources, and energy invested than racial groups who invest less. This pattern increases disadvantage for people of color and can diminish the positive effects of an interracial network developing valuable network ties. Therefore, interracial social capital—resources embedded in interracial networks accessed and mobilized across race for purposive actions—may reduce expected positive outcomes as compared with within-race social capital. In other words, the disadvantages of social deficits are exacerbated when social network members enact my second concept, the one friend rule, for cultural legitimation.

The One Friend Rule

Individuals follow the one friend rule when they name one, non-intimate heterophilous relationship in their close friends network to legitimate participation in a socially diverse network. Participants describe the one friend in utilitarian terms. The one friend is not integrated into daily activities outside of the social network, but reference the relationship, when necessary, to avoid criticism. I create the label based upon the cultural meme commonly used when a social majority
member is accused of being prejudiced, “I can’t be [racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic], one of my best friends is [black, female, gay, an immigrant].”  Applied to racially diverse networks, the *one friend rule* suggests that whites cite a person of color in their close friends network in order to avoid being called racist or being identified as culturally inauthentic within a community. This reaction has implications for social capital development in an interracial congregation.

I argue that whites who attend racially diverse congregations where interracial friendship is expected mobilize their friends’ race as a social resource to legitimate participation in a racially diverse network. That is, they legitimate their commitment to the congregation’s mission of racial diversity and prove that they can be trusted to support the cause of racial equality more generally. Because whites see legitimization as the primary return from the relationship, whites limit their access to their resources by creating utilitarian, organizationally tied friendships. For example, within a congregation, a white man may lead a ministry with a person of color to ensure that the two members are seen interacting within the institutional context. When asked about his commitment to racial justice or diversity, he may even cite this friend to prove he supports the church mission. However, outside of the congregation, interactions with his one other race friends are infrequent and resources in the relationship are only mobilized irregularly for uncommon needs (i.e. borrowing a car or information about health problems). This behavior is not consistent with the interactions majority members share with other same-race friends whom they commonly share resources, interact frequently, and spend holidays/vacations together. Informal contact outside of the congregation provides unstructured opportunities where trust likely develops and information about resources is shared. Restricting access to such interaction potentially limits access to social capital within these interracial relationships.

The one friend rule addresses how weak friendships limit access to social resources. Scholars claim that the greatest struggle for the interracial church is getting people to commit to relationship with one another (Christerson, Edwards and Emerson 2005; DeYoung 2003; Emerson and Woo 2006; Ortiz 1996; Yancey 2007). During the days between services, the
group’s solidarity is challenged by the socioeconomic structures that exist in society. In an interracial church in a large, midwestern metropolis, tensions arose as attendees’ children reach adolescence because of perceived complications with interracial friendships/dating. White families left for “better opportunities” when the teenage bible study became more racially diverse. For racial minorities in the congregation, this came as a surprise. They had the same goals (i.e. educational success) for their children but did not feel the need to leave. This indicates potential thresholds of social embeddedness for some in interracial congregations. In this case, whites left the congregation when the perceived consequences of granting intimate access to their family outweighed the value for religious racial diversity (Christerson, Edwards and Emerson 2005).

The one friend rule does not appear in previous literature on interracial congregations because very few studies empirically examine the racial diversity of friendship networks within the congregation. There are exceptions. In one study, Christerson, Edwards, and Emerson (2005) present the racial composition of the members’ networks from six multiracial religious organizations, four congregations and two university programs. Within five of the six organizations, ethnic majority members were more likely than non-majority members to cite their closest friend within the network. Also, in a section on white dominance, the authors concluded that whites preferred maintaining legitimacy with the dominant group above member’s cultural preferences (Christerson, Edwards and Emerson 2005). Other findings about racially diverse religious congregations suggest that non-majority members bear the costs of racial diversity. Similarly, in a Filipino-majority interracial church, data reveal that non-majority members cited more close interracial friendships inside the church than did the majority members. However, they expressed concern about breaking into the core Filipino social groups in the church. In this case, Filipino members developed friendships with non-Filipinos that created social distance between the two groups rather establishing intimacy (Christerson and Emerson 2003).

In sum, using social capital theory, I describe the processes behind how individuals develop social capital in an interracial church. Unlike previous literature on interracial
congregations which at best addresses the racial compositions of the friendship networks of interracial church attendees, this study addresses the essential components of social capital, focusing on (1) the resources embedded in social relations (and not individuals) within a racially diverse congregation; and (2) how resources, which reside with actors, are accessed and mobilized (Lin 2001). This study ultimately addresses gaps in both the social capital and interracial church literature about the impact of race on social capital development elucidating how social deficits and the one friend rule characterizes the development, access and movement of social capital in intentionally racially diverse congregations.
Methods

The research site is a large evangelical, protestant congregation located in middle class suburb\(^1\) of Columbus, Ohio. The regular attendance is approximately 1,500 adults and exceeds the diversity standards proposed by several multiracial congregation scholars of at least twenty percent representing populations of color (Emerson and Kim 2003). According to estimates from clergy and data from two on-site observations, approximately sixty percent of the congregation is white and forty percent are African American or small quantities of other racial groups including international immigrants.

Drawing from Emerson and Kim’s multiracial church typology (2003), Faith Church is labeled a *niche embracing* congregation, one that purposely transformed from a predominantly white, middle class church to a racially and socioeconomically diverse congregation (Emerson and Kim 2003). Faith Church members described the transition to an interracial church as intentional but challenging. Beginning in the early 2000s, the lead pastor, a white male in his late forties, used sermons to condemn their presence as a predominately white middle-class congregation. The congregation proselytized racially segregated urban neighborhoods and eventually hired an African American worship pastor. He institutionalized diverse practices in the worship service including a racially diverse music team that incorporates instruments not commonly used in predominantly white congregations (i.e. saxophone, bongo, drums) and regularly play songs from diverse genres (i.e. vineyard, southern gospel, black gospel)(Marti 2010). Additionally, members of color were recruited to participate in lay leadership positions of the congregation (i.e. deacons, elders, bible study teachers) and wall hangings were changed to racially inclusive art/photographs.

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\(^1\) Median family income: $42,264; Mean family income: $51,023 of zip code according to 2010 American Community Survey
These efforts resulted in a diverse congregation and also a ten-fold growth in attendance over about ten years. In that time, the surrounding neighborhood transitioned from a middle-upper class suburb to a greater variety of income levels. Directly north of the site is currently primarily middle class and low and working class families comprise the area south. This data suggests that the Faith Church model may also represent both survival embracing and neighborhood embracing types. Each suggests that the congregation changed recruitment strategies to match proximal opportunities. Participant descriptions focus on the mission orientation for the change but, given the post-diversity growth and neighborhood characteristics, location and survival may have played a significant role. Moreover, participants traveled from a few blocks to over twenty-five miles to attend the congregation.

Utilizing stratified snowball sampling techniques, I recruited 37 individuals, 22 white and 15 people of color, from a various socioeconomic and involvement levels. Recruitment required two strategies. First, I asked congregation staff and members to identify potential participants. Second, using recommendations from participants, I stratified respondents to achieve a representative sample of race, gender, and socioeconomic status. The participants in my sample approximate the congregational demographics and are shown in Appendix A. About sixty percent of the sample was white and forty percent were people of color. Combining education level, employment status, and marital status, participants are separated into three socioeconomic status levels: 1) high: bachelors degree, employed, and/or business owner; 2) middle: some college and employed; and 3) low: high school and part-time employment, unemployed or disabled. Of the twenty-two white participants, eight were low, seven were middle, and seven were high. Of the fifteen black or biracial participants, six were low, four were middle, and five were high. Finally, highly involved members represent approximately two-thirds of the sample and provide insight into the effects of embeddedness.

Three participants identified as partial-black biracial, having one black parent. Throughout the data, I chose to combine their responses with African American participants for a
few reasons. Prior literature suggests that most partial-black biracial individuals select friends who are black, more often identify as black in survey data, and feel affinity toward environments with more black members (Cheng and Klugman 2010; Qian 2005). Within the congregation, as boundaries blur, biracial members feel accepted but still also different from “mainstream members (Alba 2005)” Thus, the category used during data analysis is people of color with whites as the reference group.

Data was taken from semi-structured interviews that lasted between one and two hours. Participants were asked about their involvement at Faith Church, social demographics, then prompted to generate names of their closest friends, friends within the congregation, and family. Thus, each participant listed up to 15 members of their social network and provided general (i.e. age, race, SES), relational (i.e. length, first met) and church (i.e. participation, frequency, embeddedness) network data. Next, using the names mentioned, participants were asked to describe the relationships in terms of shared social interactions and resource exchanges. Resource exchange includes two categories: material and social. Material resources include cash, food, furniture, and other physical goods given. Social resources include counseling, babysitting, labor and other services provided to another. Finally, participants were asked to list and provide detail about their involvement in their most recent resource exchanges within and outside of the congregation. In sum, participants discussed 347 network partners and 559 resource exchanges. The interviews were transcribed and coded for themes related to social capital development within and outside of the congregation, paying attention to interracial exchanges (Strauss 1987).

Two comparison groups were used to test the influence of race on the each component of social capital. First, I test the racial differences in resource exchanges by comparing within-race exchanges to interracial exchanges. Each group of exchanges was analyzed for frequency, magnitude, and qualitative context. Second, I test the racial differences in close friendships by comparing five closest friends of those with regularly involved participants to those who attend services weekly but are not involved in additional activities over the past six months. Both groups
experience interracial contact (or at least spatial proximity) yet those involved more frequently interact with members outside their race. Grouped by race, I investigate the overall racial, socioeconomic, interactional regularity, and intimacy diversity of the ties. As patterns emerge in the data, each exchange or relationship is contextualized within the participant’s data and between participants to detect factors extraneous to race that influence observed differences.

The purpose of this research is not to map a complete network of exchanges within this congregation. Rather, I intend to determine the impact of race on an individual’s motivation to develop relationships and exchange resources. Therefore, the data provided about participant’s networks and resource exchanges create the context to understand the mechanisms that impact how and why social capital develops across race within a racially diverse religious context.
The Impact of Race on Social Capital Development

Two major themes explain the impact of race on social capital development among members of an interracial congregation. First, interview data reveal that social deficits occur because people of color perceive that resource exchanges create intimacy in relationships and, thus, are more willing to embed their resources in interracial exchanges. Also, people of color are more likely to integrate their time and outside interracial friendships into the congregation. In Table 1, in-congregation exchanges are presented and social deficits in interracial exchanges are apparent. People of color report higher participation in interracial exchanges and lower in same-race exchanges as compared to whites in the sample.

**Table 1: Percent of In-Congregation Exchanges by Direction for Interracial and Within-race Exchanges**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-Congregation Resource Exchanges</th>
<th>Received</th>
<th>Given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People of Color</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interracial</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within-race</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>37.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>207</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Sample approximates the congregational racial makeup of 60% white, 40% people of color where 15 participants were Black or Biracial and 22 were white.

2Resource Exchanges are determined by participant examples of giving or receiving resources with any another congregation member. Thus, the exchanges should not be considered a reciprocal exchange between study participants only.

Of the total 70 interracial in-church exchanges, blacks were recipients in 34 of the 46 total resources received and gave 14 of the 24 resources given. Among the 20 material interracial exchanges, whites gave 2 of 9 resources given and received 1 of 10. Similarly, of the non-material exchanges received, whites received 11 of the 35 resources received and gave 8 of the 15
resources given. When focused specifically on interracial exchanges, black or biracial respondents received and gave the majority of interracial exchanges. Within-race exchanges revealed a different pattern. Of 207, people of color gave 43 and received 42, where whites gave 71 and received 51. The data suggests that both racial groups invested in within-race exchanges as they represent almost three times the amount of interracial exchange. However, whites clearly invest more in within-race exchange as compared to interracial exchanges.

Before discussing how people characterized their interracial exchanges, I first want to discuss their views of their same-race exchanges to provide contexts. The same-race exchanges of both African Americans and whites are near identical. People of color and whites discuss same-race exchanges as a natural part of friendship. For example, whites cite receiving “blessings” from their white friends and describe their relationships with other whites as close or like family. People of color mirror these sentiments saying that they rely on their same-race friends like a close-knit community. Each racial group cited within-race friendships where material or emotional resources were regularly accessed and mobilized. Additionally, within-race exchanges were rarely described using anonymity or as strictly utilitarian. The participants used phrases like “that’s what family does for each other” or “we got to support each other as believers.” Similarities hold up after considering potential class differences. For instance, low-income members of both racial groups had similar fears about social capital exchanges. They expressed worry about being considered “needy” by those whom they do not know well. These qualitative data suggest no real difference in the descriptions of same-race exchanges from each group. As will be seen, however, is that while people of color characterize their same and other racial friendships similarly, whites do not. This has important implications for social capital development and exchanges in an intentionally racially diverse congregation.

However, the patterns in Table 1 elicit questions about the influence of race on social capital. First, how can people of color receive and give more in the congregation? Drawing upon ego networks, the data come from reported incidences of exchanges within the congregation.
Critically, a large majority of the cross-racial resources people of color report receiving come from either white paid ministers of the congregation or from white friends that people of color embedded in the congregation. For ministers, I am hesitant to label these exchanges as social capital as the resources given are not personal and the relationships are not reciprocal. Additionally, people of color brought in many other race friends who they knew prior from other contexts. Thus, the interracial social capital exchanges are not occurring with whites that they came to befriend as a result of attending the church. This pattern did not exist for whites. They designated “church friends” as a separate group from those in outside networks. In sum, people of color are more active in incorporating prior relationships and exchanging with ministers. Consequently, they infrequently gained access to new social capital that was not strictly bound to the congregation. Whites, on the other hand, benefitted from incorporated relationships without necessarily embedding their own relationships.

Second, does involvement directly link to embeddedness? Involved respondents participated in at least one church activity outside of regular church services for at least six months. Attending respondents only attended services weekly. Of 22 white participants, 13 were involved and 9 were attending. Of 15 participants of color, 10 were involved and 5 were attending. Although these rates are not represent congregation ratios, involvement level provides insight about difference of embeddedness. Both racial groups were involved at similar rates but people of color were much more willing to embed their time, money, information, and relationships within the interracial networks within the congregation. Some participants of color reported over thirty hours a week in service to the congregation with almost no economic reward. Although they did not begrudge their service, several cited feelings of burnout due to over embeddedness. This has implications for the health and financial well-being of these respondents who replace potential time spent in the external marketplace with time spent in the congregation.

Third, how does SES influence social capital development? The congregation appeared to have a leveling effect for a portion of participants close friendships. Compared with close friends
outside of the congregation, members chose church friends that varied slightly more in socioeconomic status. That is, high SES members may cite congregational relationships with low income and vice versa. One fairly consistent finding is that whites generally chose to cite interracial relationships within their SES where people of color often cited those in similar social classes. These data suggest that SES did not play a major role in friendships developed from the congregation.

**Imbalanced Perceptions Lead to Social Deficits**

Since the pattern is established in the descriptive data, consider the qualitative differences in perception of exchange. Throughout the data, whites discussed interracial resource exchange created unnecessary obligations that are potentially burdensome to a relationship. One white couple, after speaking about two material exchanges with African Americas, expressed their desire to be an “angel in disguise” to avoid obligating others to reciprocate. However, people of color framed resource exchanges differently. In their view, obligations created by exchanging resources strengthened a relationship. Ellen (black, low SES) had recently had several surgeries and needed medication that were difficult to afford:

> Someone came by that's a friend of mine and she asked me, she wanted to take me to lunch... She asked me to go to Wal-Mart with her... We got there she asked me what do I need. I didn't say anything about what I needed but she got everything I needed. I know God used her to be a blessing to me.

Rather than describing the exchange as an obligation, Ellen called it a “blessing.” Both racial groups used “blessing” through the data to represent positive exchanges within the congregation. However, whites rarely labeled material exchanges in this way. On one hand, they saw exchanges as a duty for participating in the multiracial community, but, on the other, felt it created social tension. Thus, framing plays an important role in the social deficits that occur between whites and people of color in interracial exchanges.
Another example comes from Arthur (black, high SES), a choir member and patient advocate at a local hospital. He describes a recent event where he and the choir helped a Paul, a white, unemployed member.

*There's so many opportunities at Faith Church and actually one just recently through the choir music ministry. It's all about the family when you have one member who had been out of work for, oh my goodness, maybe... eight months or so. So, we were able to get a substantial amount of money to give to him to bless him and to keep them going. He had lost his car. Various things like that. I'm trying to help them, uh, trying to set him up with resumes whatever he needs to get a job or whatever he needs.*

Arthur and the choir ministry helped Paul in time of need. Relaxing back in his desk chair and with a slight, relaxed grin, he said that “its all about the family,” and added that he was helping Paul prepare job applications. Rather than seeing the man as a duty, he saw him as family. Arthur gave not only his income but also his professional experience to help the man regain work. Later in the interview, he also discussed helping Dana, a white colleague at work and Faith Church member, to get a promoted. He helped her apply and endorse her to potential managers at the hospital.

The relationship between Clinton (black, mid SES) and Jake (white, mid SES) illuminates the social deficits theme. Clinton calls Jake first for any favor (i.e. moving). Their relationship goes beyond simply the exchange as Clinton hangs out with him frequently outside of church, and he was Clinton’s best man in his wedding. In response to questions about emotional support, about Jake he says, “I can go to him for anything” and later comments “We are like family.” Clinton was instrumental in Jake’s integration in the church and into leadership with the young adult ministry. This is an example where a person of color not only embeds their resources into the congregation but also embeds previous interracial relationships into the congregations. Whites in the congregation rarely did this. Within the data, whites bring zero friends of color and a few same race relationships into the network.

These examples clarify how social capital develops across race. According to social capital scholars, access to relationships that are valuable and diverse lead to social mobility (Burt
When whites do not embed their social connections into the network, social capital exchange severely suffers, especially for people of color.

Finally, social deficits are perpetuated by exchange magnitude and frequency from people of color to whites. An example of high exchange frequency comes from Marvin (black, mid SES), a Faith Church member for over twenty years, and a local garbage truck driver. When I asked about helping others, he offered several consecutive examples of interracial exchanges. First, he discussed a time when he gave a Latin American woman at the congregation over 900 dollars to attend a mission trip to Haiti. Second, he added that he was having and all-terrain vehicle or a “quad” repaired to send to his close white friend, James, a missionary in Haiti. Next, Marvin discusses a time when he raised over 500 dollars for white, low SES congregation member:

*I went to Sam, I went to Ron and I went to a bunch of guys and I said I need some money. I need money today. I need to check from you today. I’m raising money to help this girl and her sons to get a place. I helped get some beds and enough food to get through the week. I think I raised about $500, man, in 20 minutes! I gave it to her mother and said give this to her and make sure she gets what she needs. I knew a guy with the place with furniture. I went and got her some beds; a bunch of beds…got here three beds. I got her a little bed and those two little twin beds for them (her sons). I ran that over there to them…

*...I got that, all those guys I just named if I needed something I’ll call them… We’re like brothers. We do stuff like brothers, like a family.*

Marvin used his social capital to provide for a white woman that was involuntarily removed from her home. He raised over 500 dollars to help the woman get a house, furniture, and other necessities. The support did not stop there. A few months later, Marvin solicited another 200 dollars to buy Christmas gifts for the family. Finally, Marvin mentioned mentoring two young men in the congregation for the past five years. He taught them to cook, gave them part-time employment, and acted as a “father-figure” to them. Each resource exchange was interracial. Marvin clearly invests into the congregational network with both incredible frequency and magnitude. He expressed that he did all of these things because they are “close like brothers, like
a family.” Whites in the congregation, did not come close to matching these levels of investment again creating social deficits in the network wide interracial resource exchanges.

Another example provides insight into resource magnitude but also how whites respond to interracial exchanges. During his twenties, Jack (white, mid SES) cultivated and sold marijuana in the informal market. After escaping imprisonment with a probationary period, he was given the option to expunge his felony for $6000. He currently works for his in-laws’ lawn company and has a side irrigation business. I asked if anyone had helped him in the last 12 months and he looked somberly at me, leaned in with a softly spoken voice, and then responded with a story about a man in the congregation:

On Monday, a friend of mine, uh, who wants to remain anonymous, uh, a brother at this church. It was not a wealthy man at all, uh, he drives an old car, uh, told me that the Lord laid on his heart to give me the money. Not too many people even really know about my situation here at the church and my testimony. He’s one of the handful of people at the church that knew about it. He said that the Lord laid on his heart maybe five or six months ago to start saving money to get me out of a situation. And on Monday he said “let's go up there and let's go up there and give him the money to get you out of this situation...”

An African American Faith Church member expunged Jack’s felony for $6000. Jack mentions SES status, but does not indicate that race influenced the exchange; however, the magnitude of resource exceeded other material exchanges he or other whites had given. Jack protected his anonymity by giving very little information about the relationship. Placing one of his hands at eye level and the other below his chest, he described the “second tier” of friends who ranked significantly lower in intimacy. Though the sacrifice made by the non-wealthy, African American man was large, Jack did not express gratitude or feelings of obligation. He did not frame this as a friend helping in a time of need but rather, a man being obedient to God. Jack never mentions the person again in the data. This data indicates social deficits are sustained because whites do not feel obligated to embed their resources in interracial exchange at the same magnitude.

The data in this section provides support for social deficits in resources embeddedness that exist across race in the congregation. Within the interracial exchanges, people of color
framed them as a *blessing* and expressed an intimate connection with those whom they exchanged. For whites, interracial exchanges are more rare because exchanges do not create the same intimacy levels. Therefore, whites were less willing to embed their resources in the interracial network at higher rates. These findings are amplified and clarified by white’s adherence to the *one friend rule* in the congregation.

**The One Friend Rule: Legitimation rather than Reciprocation**

The descriptive ego network data indicates that interracial friendships are more common within the congregation than outside. For most participants, the congregation was their sole diverse network because they predominantly socialized in racially homogenous neighborhoods and schools. There were some exceptions to this rule. On a few occasions, low SES whites and high SES people of color reported interracial relationships developed at work or school. Additionally, attending members reported fewer close interracial friendships and participated infrequently in congregational resource exchange. These members provide an intriguing contrast within racial groups.

**Table 2: Percent of Interracial Friends Named in Top 5 Closest Friends by Race**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racial Group</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People of Color</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For whites, and to a lesser extent people of color, just *attending* the congregation does not necessarily diversify the participants’ networks. A majority of the participants citing zero interracial friends are those who regularly attend but have not been involved in a ministry activity for the past six months. Percentage differences across racial groups appear predominantly among those who reported one interracial friendship or above. In Table 2, within-race friendships are the comparison group, meaning that zero interracial close friends corresponds to five close within-
race friends reported as top closest. Typically, for top closest friends regardless of race, participants reported intimate relationships where individuals frequently interact, emotionally support one another, and/or express high levels of trust. There is an exception to these patterns. Whites reported one top friend of color who was distinctly less intimate.

I argue that the one friend rule theme further explains social deficits in interracial networks. Because social capital is embedded in social relationship and not individuals, understanding the relationship contexts is imperative for understanding social capital development. In effect, networks may become more diverse but relationship strength between members may change very little. Table 2 shows the percentage of people in each racial group who list zero, one, or two or more interracial friends in their top five closest friends. Consistent with previous literature, members of interracial congregations frequently list close diverse friendships in their person networks (Christerson, Edwards et al. 2005). Table 2 presents differences between racial groups in naming non-white friend in their top five closest friends. Accordingly, 13.5 percent of white participants (3 of 22) have more than one interracial friendship in their close friends network. In contrast, 53.3 percent of the people of color (8 of 15) have more than one interracial friend in their most intimate network. Of the 3 white members who report more than one, the first is a minister whose interracial friends are primarily tied to the Senior’s ministry, the second is a choir leader whose interracial friends are the choir director and his wife, and the third is a ministry leader whose interracial friendships are his brother-in-law and a fellow ministry leader at the congregation. These exceptions, although important to understanding social capital, do not compensate for the other patterns seen in the data.

The qualitative data clarifies the impact of race on interracial social capital development. Since social capital is defined in interactional terms, the strength of the each friendship is determined through ranking, frequency of interactions, and types of interactions. Regardless of SES status, whites reported that interracial friendships developed inside the congregation ranked lower, were infrequently mentioned as a source of social or material support, and were cited less
in casual activities outside of the congregation. Generally, whites report one close friend of color in the congregation although the relationships are qualitatively different than their same race friends. Whites reduce the relationship to acquaintanceship by excluding their relationships to primarily religious activities.

People of color do not differentiate their friendships in the same way. They generally included relationships in their top closest friends, regardless of race, that were intimate and integrated into their life outside of the congregation. Additionally, people of color often describe their interracial relationships a family or very close, the same terms used for same-race friends. In each of the following cases, people of color describe relationships that extend beyond the congregation into their daily activities. They cite sharing meals, providing emotional support, and celebrating holidays as a few examples of family-like closeness.

First, consider the story of George (black, low SES). George has participated in Faith Church activities several times a week for over a decade. He labeled Jeff (white, mid SES) as one of his closest friends, and cited examples of when emotionally supported each other through their divorces. George shifted from his casual posture, reclining in his chair with arms crossed, to a more serious posture, leaning over the table and looking directly at me, and said:

_Well, emotionally he was there when I went through depression and he was there for me... After my divorce, I went through a severe depression... He was there. I tried to isolate and stay at home and he would come by my house and get me. He wouldn’t let me stay at home and be alone he was there for me...(laughing) ... I couldn't get away from him. He would just call and say let's go and get out the house. So I just went with him..._

He described that Jeff provided emotional support to him during his divorce. He reiterated that Jeff was a close friend and later on in the interview as my family. When I asked if George ever reciprocated this support he said:

_When he went through his divorce he talked to me as well. He and I are close. We confided in each other and pray together went out to dinner and just fellowship and talk to each other. We both got the same amount of clean time, 14 years. We’ve been clean together 14 years._
George and Jeff worked together at the same plant before George was injured on the job. Although they did not initially attend simultaneously, both began substance abuse recovery at the same time and, eventually, served together in a ministry that helped others overcome the shared struggle. When questioned about congregational support, George responded with a subdued chuckle, “that’s my family, man.”

In a separate interview with Jeff, the relationship was described in different terms. Jeff only labels George as one of his “friends in the ministries.” When probed about resource exchanges with George and other close friends, he responded “I just do advice and counseling…we bounce thing off of each other. That’s what friends are for…” However, when discussing his divorce, Jeff did not mention George’s support at all. Speaking about an older white friend, Jim, and the head pastor, he said:

“You know, it's good to bounce things off of people. Sometimes they’ve been through it and, for one, they're always here. You know these men of God stick together. And I know Pastor counseled with me very closely through my divorce process. And helps me... Now that is huge. That was huge...

Jeff was helped by a white friend and the head pastor but did not mention George. In several interviews, as with Jeff’s, whites in the sample rarely mentioned blacks as an intimate part of their life, where blacks did the opposite. People of color specified exchanges to clarify the strength of their close friendships where whites simply gave very little detail. For Jeff, George was just a “friend at church” that he would occasionally “bounce things off of.” These findings consistently appeared throughout the data and clarified whom whites cite as their one friend.

I argue, using the one friend rule, that respondents discuss their friends as non-intimate and utilitarian because their value does not lie in the relationship itself. Rather, whites have one interracial friend in their network to legitimate their participation in the racially diverse network. In the following example, a Faith Church member enacts the one friend rule during a racially tense interaction at the congregation. Susan (white, high SES) is regularly involved, administrates her husband’s company, and was recently awarded “Servant of the Month” for her administrative
service with the choir. She discusses a time when she reconfigured the choir members for television broadcast. She emphasized the extra pressure of making the choir appear diverse and integrated by spreading out diverse members across the choir. Susan was emphatic and expressive during her interview, often using hand motions and facial expressions to communicate her tone.

In this case, she leans over crossed arms on the table and speaks softly:

_It wasn't too long ago that there was a situation and... I don't know how I said it or exactly how I said it... Because it was so simply said that I didn't remember. We had like, a different, I think it was a color day, where we wore greens and blues. Okay, and there was this conglomerate, you want to have them all interspersed. So, I, uh, (short pause) There was a bunch of black folk on one side, and I said okay you people need to kind of spread in and spread out and all that other stuff. And I go along my way, figuring that they would realize that I meant their color shirt. However, what I didn't know is that, “you people”, is kind of a buzzword for blacks. They pick up on that and think that you're disrespecting them...I'm like, I didn't know..._

Susan was confused that a simple pair or words, “you people,” would agitate her choir members.

While she was referring to color of shirt, African American choir members interpreted the phrase as a racial slur. Susan heard about the situation from, Sean, the choir director and only black member of the Faith Church staff, in their weekly meeting. She reminds me twice that he is black and emphatically responds to the accusation with arms spread wide to signal her confusion:

_So I said... I had no idea! And then because they were accusing me of being deliberately racist, I said, ‘have they met my son-in-law? Who’s black?’ (Laughing) ...that is black, uh, that is Robert. I went, you know, Really? uh, but... So that was kind of, uh, we had a big talk about that. I was a little hurt because people would think that and didn't come to me, you know, so that was one situation where I went to talk to Sean and Andrea._

Susan was hurt because she was unable to explain herself. Susan refers to her son-in-law, Robert, as evidence that she is not racist and did not intend to insult the choir members. Although closeness with Robert might be assumed, he was not mentioned again as a source of support or frequent communication. These exchanges happened primarily with her daughter. However, she mobilizes his race to protect against criticism. Such specific admittances are rare in the data; however, through other examples, similar patterns of racial justification emerge.
When race was invoked in the interview, participants commonly discussed the moral imperative given by the preaching pastor about the importance of racial diversity. Following these expositions, they often added details about one of their interracial ties. Participants also attempted to add closest friends to their network. When I probed further with “What kind of things do you do with (friends name or initials)?,” would have very little to say. One participant Jane, a white, retired radio host and pharmaceutical salesperson, looked at me puzzled, and began scribbling names on the newspaper in front of her, as if she were calculating her answer. Rubbing her mouth and squinting her eyes, she listed her friends on the paper then gave them to me in “no particular order.” Her third friend, Jenny, was black, and, when asked about their interactions together, she responded with tears in her eyes and quivering chin, “Nothing, we do nothing together.” She explained that, since her husband had gotten dementia, she had not attended the weekly women’s bible study where she and Jenny spent time together. However, she maintained contact with her white closest friends through the phone or home visits.

White participants often cited infrequent, informal contact with these interracial closest friends. Of the 22 white participants, when race was introduced, 17 elevated the status of a friend of color or mentioned a non-intimate tie in their close friendships. A few excerpts displaying this pattern include:

Kim (white, low SES) cites three friends of Nigerian descent from a previous church who communicated monthly then adds her “close,” black friend whom she recently met at church. Jeremy (white, high SES), after prodding from his wife, cites Marvin and his wife, saying, “oh yeah, the Milton’s, they’re African Americans.” To Jeremy, Marvin was a just friend at church that taught his kids to cook and challenged them at video games. Initially, Cindy (white, low SES) lists a black woman initially as a member of her writing group, and then elevates her to a “close friend who spend a lot of time writing together.” Sam (white, high SES) cites a close black friend whom he “does music stuff with” then later cites two other black close friends at the congregation followed by a monologue about the “how to fix racism.”
The following case extends this form of justification where, when race or racial diversity is discussed in the interview, people first cite their closest interracial friend and then add on several other extremely weak interracial as additional citations. Take the case of Louise (white, mid SES), a Faith Church attendee for 7 years, who recently began attending a small group bible study and works part-time at the age of 72. When I inquired about the race of her friends, she adds a brief statement about her interracial friend Pauly:

Pauly is black. The rest of them are white. Pauly and I worked as a nurse's aide together and I couldn't find a better person to work with...

Later in the interview after asking the race of a white maintenance man who assisted her frequently, she leaned forward in her recliner, pointed her finger at me, and added:

...Now there's Otis, he's a black guy who works there and he's real good about picking up trash and stuff. I'm not prejudiced about color or whatever they call it... If you're a good worker I don't care if you're purple, black, or green but if you're lazy, forget it...

She followed the statement by reclining back in her chair, laughing loudly, and crossing her arms said, “Now, I ain’t no racist. Don’t get me wrong.” When race was prompted, Louise first added information about one of her top closest friends, Pauly, whom she had previously said little about. She mentioned that she was a great co-worker but nothing else about the nature of their relationship. After I asked her to provide the race of a man who helped her at work, Louise responded with Otis, who is “real good about picking up trash and stuff.” I only requested the races of her listed friends and received extra defense about her racial attitudes. Finally, she added a 50-year-old incidence where she advocated for black co-workers:

I was a head waitress and we had colored girls that bussed our tables. And the girls had trouble from waitresses who wouldn't want to tip them. You know, and now her head waitress was not wanting to pay their money and I always fought for the colored girls...

Louise cites an example from the sixties when she stood up for increased pay for her African American co-workers. In this case, rather than adding information about closeness with her friend Pauly, she includes salient interracial interaction that is decades old. These three relationships, although weak, are valuable to legitimize long time participation at the congregation. Data from
Louise and other participants suggest that they are able to mobilize their friend’s race as social capital to legitimate and maintain their reputation within the congregation.

The following example elucidates the one friend rule because whites define their one close interracial relationship as utilitarian. I argue that this happens because participants have no informal social interactions to cite. This is important because intimacy leads to greater access of their resources. Randy (white, high SES) presents the difference between two friendships, one same race and one interracial, that spanned over a decade at the church. The Stewarts, a white couple, are discussed first:

*Stewarts's, we are close like family. Their families and our families get together on holidays... They come to our house we use a get together about once a week. We'll be together after we leave here today...*

Randy met both friends through the congregational drama. They worked closely together designing, constructing, and moving a large production to several locations throughout the year. That relationship developed differently with the Stewart’s than with the Johnson’s, a black couple, and close friend.

*Johnson is a good friend. Not as close as the Stewart's as far as being close his family but as far as a good friend yeah...*

He describes Johnson (participant gave last names) as a good friend but does not cite any communication outside of the drama project. When asked about the relationship he responded:

*We’ve got a lot of stuff going with the Johnsons. He's helped us get a lot of sound equipment that we've needed. He builds churches. He does sound system for the churches, uh, and, uh, He gets stuff that his cost and sometimes he gives it to us...*

Again, Randy interacts with Johnson much differently than he does with Stewart. This theme was prevalent among whites in the sample. Interracial friendships were commonly tied through a formal part of the organization (i.e. bible study or service activity) and provide a utilitarian benefit (i.e. provide supplies for ministry activity or professional advice). These are compared to their more reciprocal friendships, where people frequently spend more casual time together (i.e. go to dinner or vacation).
At the end of the interview, when I asked the race of his friends, Randy reported that all of his friends are white except for the Johnson’s. He followed by saying that roughly half of his friends were black, but Johnson was the closest. The fact that his wider friendship network is racially diverse clarifies his need to follow the one friend rule. However, it raises the question of why other interracial relations were not named.

Another similar case is Mark (white, high SES), a ministry leader, former missionary, and owner of a successful construction company. All of Mark’s top friends share similar SES characteristics though they differ in intimacy level. First, Mark responds to questions about the kinds of things he does with his closest same race friends.

_We were just together about a week ago. We went to dinner over at Arnolds’s house. A couple weeks ago, with our spouses, sometimes with our family. We were at John's house the other evening with a couple other families just playing badminton..._

These few events, dinner and badminton, represent a more personal, integrated relationship style where interracial friendships tended to be marked by more formal language. Next, Mark’s discusses another top closest friend, Robert (black high SES), a local physician’s assistant.

_I go to a men’s bible study at church and then it developed to where there’s just a few, four at most, that hung together as a kind of accountability. We do get together, about every other week. I put Robert down as soon as I, um, I put Robert down because I do more consulting with him because, um, at 52, I have aches and pains, so I call Robert..._

Mark and Robert’s friendship is bounded by congregational activities and personal utility. Opposed to eating dinner and badminton, they communicated about religious accountability and health care. This difference is apparent in most interracial relationships that whites possessed. At the end of the interview, when asked for further comments, he asked, “Aren’t you going to ask me the race of my friends?” This suggests to me that the race of his friends were significant beyond the friendship quality. For each relationship, rather than integration into personal lives, interracial relationships were used to get health consultation or access to equipment. This disintegration erodes access to resources and obligations created from social capital exchange.
My final example provides data about Jeremiah (black, mid SES) who is involved in young adult ministry, has attended Faith Church for around 2 years recently but went as a child, and works at a daycare. He explains his friendship with Jonathon, a friend he met at the congregation:

*I’m really close with his family. But Jonathan, he is a bouncer. He is definitely fun to be around. He’s easy to talk to. Me and him are like day and night and sometimes if we are around other too long we become like pit bulls... Will go at each other. We love...we show that...he is literally like my brother. I know he’ll go to bat for me and... You know he's been through hard times and I've been to hard times we've always been there for each other and... It's good to be able to have somebody like that. If I called him right now, he would be like, “how are things going?”*

Jeremiah describes his relationship with Jonathan in intimate terms saying that they are so close they fight and are “literally like brothers.” He feels close and emotional supported by him. Jonathan represents the intimate, interracial friendships people of color included in their top closest friends.

Although both racial groups shared the obligation to have *some* interracial friendships, each racial group interpreted the strength of those relationships differently. People of color in the congregation were more likely to perceive and label supportive interracial friendships as *family* (i.e. mother, brother) where whites would describe the relationship in functional terms such as church friend or mentee. For blacks, relationships were intensified by social capital exchange and, for whites, exchanges created barriers to closeness. From these themes in the data, I clarify the *one friend rule*. While people of color frame relationships as intimate, white frame the relationships as non-intimate and utilitarian. From the data, I see clear patterns of how race impacts the development of social capital across race in an interracial congregation.
Conclusions and Implications

I set out to understand the impact that race had on social capital development among the members of Faith Church. Using data from 37 in-depth interviews of regularly attending members, distinct patterns in interracial resource exchanges and reporting close interracial friendships formed across racial groups. The qualitative data revealed that people of color were motivated by their positive perceptions of interracial relationships to invest more in interracial exchanges and white participants were motivated by legitimation to cite non-intimate interracial ties in their close friendships.

First, I argue that the difference in perceptions about interracial friendships and resource exchanges lead to social deficits in interracial exchanges. Moreover, people of color participated with higher frequency and magnitude in interracial social capital development and whites did not reciprocate. Social deficits in resource embeddedness disproportionately diminished the returns on social capital for people of color in the sample. Second, I argue that whites in the congregation follow the one friend rule by reporting one interracial friendship that was used for legitimation, not integrated into daily activities and tied to the institution. Since the primary value of friendships with people of color was legitimation, whites limited access and mobility of their social resources by maintaining social distance outside of the congregation. Also, following the one friend rule may cause whites to misrepresent the intimacy of the relationships and thus, give people of color a false sense of available social capital.

I do not neglect literature that suggests that people in interracial churches exhibit more racially diverse networks and more positive attitudes about race than Americans on average (Christerson, Edwards and Emerson 2005; Emerson and Woo 2006; Yancey 2007). These reveal
the impact of interracial congregations to sustain attitudes that are rare in American society. However, I present the implications of taking the findings at face value. Several studies found that interracial congregation attendees developed close friendships outside of their race although the data from Faith Church suggests that asking about close friends may provide ambiguous results. Because I used ego networks, in most cases, I only have the participant’s view of the relationship. However, in the relationships where I have perceptions of both parties, the one friend rule holds.

One key component of Lin’s conception of social capital is that resources are accessed or mobilized for purposive actions (Lin 2001). In the data from Faith Church, I argue that opportunities for interracial social capital development is seriously threatened by the way individuals perceive their relationships. For people of color, social capital development is threatened by social deficits in interracial exchanges. They embed their resources in interracial networks based upon potentially inaccurate perceptions of friendship. When whites follow the one friend rule, they cite people of color as close friends for legitimation but not really extend access to their resources. These factors suggest that race has a potentially diminishing quality on social capital development within this congregation.

These findings speak to both theory about interracial social capital and the impact of interracial congregations on racial inequality. Social capital could be exchanged in interracial settings but the patterns are much different than in homogenous settings. Rather than use social capital to develop strong friendships or cultivate useful information, whites mobilize interracial friendships for legitimation.

In this paper, actual social capital exchange among members regularly attending an interracial congregation is empirically tested for patterns. I am limited to speak about the generalizability of the data because of the small sample size and single case model. However, the findings provide detail undetectable by current survey research and inform testable hypotheses about social capital development in interracial congregations and, potentially, other racially
diverse settings. Using the interactional definition of social capital required investigation of actual interactions and occurrences opposed to perceptions of community level trust and solidarity used in the communal definition of social capital (Birdi, Wilson and Mansoor 2012; Lin 2001). Lin’s framework gives a clear indication of existence and processes behind social capital (Lin 2001).

Using stratified snowball sampling, I intentionally avoided recruiting from closed networks in the congregation. Consequently, with one perception of most relationships, I lost some contextual detail. The broad reach of the sample, however, provides more information about how weaker relationships remain connected through the congregation structure. For example, one participant provided a resource exchange from a weak tie in the congregation that was captured more fully in another interview. Future studies on interracial congregations and social capital can advance my qualitative investigation of ego networks with closed network analysis to understand perceptions of both parties.

With 277 in church exchanges among 37 participants, the data collected provide evidence of social capital development within this interracial congregation. However, since I aim to understand how interracial congregations reduce racial inequality, I focus on interracial resource exchange. This data suggests that, although interracial congregations increase interracial contact and reduce racialized attitudes, they may not significantly increase opportunities to develop interracial social capital. In fact, the social deficits argument suggests that people of color may experience increased disadvantage by their participation in interracial congregations. If whites are unwilling to reciprocate exchange, people of color may be investing resources with little to no returns to the economic marketplace. They potentially would benefit more by investing those resources within higher status, racially homogenous networks.

The one friend rule also threatens social capital development among members of an interracial congregation. Thus, this may reduce these congregation’s attempts to break down racial barriers to human and economic capital. When whites primarily develop interracial friendships for the purpose of legitimation, it undermines the congregation’s goal to foster
meaningful, reciprocal relationships across race. The one friend rule is a sophisticated form of legitimation but may ultimately lead to increased racial aversion as the quality of the relationships unravels. Collective solidarity, ethnic transcendence, and mutual obligations may dissolve as relationship misconceptions are revealed.

I do not deny that interracial congregations still have the potential to lead to change in this area. However, ministers and leaders must move beyond simply appearing diverse and attempt to foster intimate relationships between whites and people of color. This would be to first challenge whites’ use of the one friend rule and potentially facilitate interracial friendships that are meaningful and reciprocal. Additionally, scholars testing social capital must pay close attention to the actor’s motivations in interracial networks. Future research should build network studies that account for the exchange level mechanisms presented. By understanding the impact of race on exchange in an interracial network, social capital theory can closely approximate the realities of the social world.
Appendix A: Descriptive Statistics of Sample

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Interview Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White (n=22)</th>
<th>Black or Biracial (n=15)</th>
<th>Percentage of Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (19)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (18)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>48.6</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>29.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some College (14)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors or Above (12)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>32.4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Socioeconomic Status (SES)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (14)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle (11)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (12)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>32.4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Involvement Level</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending (14)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involved (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Marital Status</strong></td>
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<td>Divorced, Widowed, Single (17)</td>
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<td><strong>Employment Status</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired (3)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Involvement level are as follows: *Attending*: church services only; *Involved*: church services + 6 months in other church related activity
\(^\)one participant was co-habiting and engaged to partner
Appendix B: Data Collection Instrument

Interview Questions:

Background:
1. What is your race?
2. What is your ethnicity?
3. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?
4. Do you work outside the home? If yes, is your job full or part time? What do you do?
5. How long have you been attending Faith Church regularly?

Personal Networks:
6. In general, who are the people that are closest to you?
7. Who are your closest 5 family members? Please just give initials or first names only.
8. Who are your closest 5 friends? Please just give initials or first names only.
9. Can you describe your relationship with these people?
   a. How long have you know each other? Where did you meet?
   b. What kinds of things do you do together?
   c. What are the races of each of these friends?
   d. What is the highest level of education of each?
   e. Do any of your friends work outside the home? If so, in what kind of job?
10. When you need help with something or need a favor, who do you usually ask?
11. Why do you feel most comfortable asking him/her?
12. Are there other people that you would go to for information, help or favors? Tell me about those people.
13. Can you give me examples of things that your friends or family have helped you with?
   a. Have you gotten help or advice about work? Health? Children?
14. More specifically, over the past twelve months, what help or favors have you received from people you know?
   a. Can you tell me more about what you received?
   b. Who was it that helped you specifically?
15. In the past 12 months have you helped or give favors to anyone you know?
   a. In what ways did you help them?
   b. Who were the people you helped?
16. How did you feel about helping them?
   a. Before you helped?
   b. After you helped?

Congregation Networks
17. Now let’s talk a little about Faith Church and other churches you have attended. What do you enjoy most about Faith Church?
   a. How is it different from other congregations you have attended?
   b. Have you made many friends or acquaintances?
18. Who are your top 5 closest friends that attend Faith Church? Please just provide initials or first names.
19. How did you meet those friends?
20. What kinds of things do you do together?
21. In the past 12 months, have you asked anyone in your church for help or to do you a favor?
   a. If so, can you give me details about those incidences??
   b. Who helped you out? Tell me about the last time this happened
   c. Do you have any mentors at the congregation?
   d. How did that relationship come about?
22. Similarly, in the past 12 months have you done a favor or helped any one out at Faith Church?
   c. Who were they?
   d. What did you do for them?
23. Are you involved in any ministries or small groups at Faith Church or in the community?
   a. If so, how frequently do you attend those meetings?
   b. What are the meetings like? Are people close to each other?
24. Has anyone in the ministry or small group done you any favors in the last 12 months?
25. Is there anyone within the small group or ministry specifically who has been a source of emotional support? Helped you in a time of need?
   a. Please describe the person and situation.
26. Have you learned anything new information about getting jobs, attending college, etc, from your small group or ministry that you didn’t know before?
27. More generally, what kind things do you all talk about in your small group or ministry?
   a. How do the things you learn benefit you?
28. Have you ever faced conflict in the group?
   a. Did it ever resolve? If so, how?

**Institutional Social Capital**
29. Have you made contact with any of the paid ministers of the congregation?
   a. Who have you made contact with?
   b. How frequently?
   c. Under what circumstances?
30. Have you ever received help from the congregation ministers?
   a. How did they help?
   b. Tell me about any of these circumstances.
31. Have you ever given back to the congregation financially or with volunteering your time?
   a. Would you be willing to give me details about your giving?
   b. If so, has anyone ever acknowledged you for giving?
   c. How did you feel about the acknowledgement?
32. Is there anything that stops you from giving to the congregation financially or volunteering your time?
33. How good of a place is the Faith Church for attendees who are in need of spiritual help or support? How about emotional?
34. Have you received any financial support from the congregation?
35. Has your congregation ever helped you out in a time of need? With bills and utilities? Groceries? Moving?
References


