The Role of Social Networks in Making Housing Choices: The Experience of the Gautreaux Two Residential Mobility Program

Melody L. Boyd
Temple University

Abstract

This article explores the experiences of participants in the Gautreaux Two housing mobility program, which was implemented in 2002. The program gave low-income residents of Chicago public housing a special voucher providing them the opportunity to move to more advantaged neighborhoods, designated as neighborhoods in which at least 76.5 percent of households were nonpoor and 70 percent were non-African American. Four waves of indepth, qualitative interviews were conducted by Northwestern University's Institute for Policy Research (IPR) between 2002 and 2005 with a randomly chosen sample of 91 families. Within the 3-year study window, this qualitative analysis of the IPR data compares residents who made secondary moves with those who stayed at their Gautreaux placement addresses. In this article, I apply insight from feminist urbanism and a focus on social networks to a comparison of the reasons some residents moved while others stayed. Secondary movers were motivated by several social network factors, including feelings of social isolation in the placement neighborhood, distance from kin, and transportation difficulties. Conversely, strong social networks were crucial reasons why some families remained in their Gautreaux neighborhoods or moved on to other similarly advantaged neighborhoods. This analysis explores policy implications for the success of mobility programs, including the need for continued program assistance to build and maintain strong social networks beyond the initial placement.

Introduction

During the past three decades, housing mobility programs, such as the Chicago Housing Authority's (CHA's) Gautreaux program and the federal Moving to Opportunity program, provided low-income families with a unique opportunity to relocate from some of the poorest, most segregated, and crime-ridden neighborhoods in the nation—large inner-city housing projects—to safer and more prosperous neighborhoods.[1] Previous research has shown that over time not all families who move through these programs remain in these more advantaged neighborhoods. The benefit of such a move presumably depends on the length of exposure to more advantaged neighborhoods (Clark, 1991).[2]

The results of the original Gautreaux program, which was implemented in 1976, have been largely favorable. Indications are that the program had a long-term effect on the residential locations of participants and has improved employment and health outcomes for participants and their families (Keels, Forthcoming a, b; Keels et al., 2005; Mendenhall, DeLuca, and Duncan, 2006; Rosenbaum and DeLuca, 2000; Rosenbaum, DeLuca, and Tuck, 2005; Rubinowitz and Rosenbaum, 2001). The transition from public housing to more prosperous city neighborhoods or the suburbs is not a smooth and straightforward one; it is rather complicated and nuanced. This article provides an analysis exploring the nuances of this transition in the second Gautreaux program.

As with its predecessor, the Gautreaux Two program gave low-income residents of Chicago public housing, located in areas with very high rates of economic and racial segregation, the opportunity to move to racially diverse and more affluent neighborhoods.

In October 2001, CHA sent letters inviting all tenants to participate in the program. A total of 549 families attended orientation sessions, and those who completed the required followup activities received a voucher from the federal Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) for low-income families. Unlike other vouchers, however, these vouchers had a set of special requirements: they could be used only for units in census tracts with no more than 23.49 percent of residents living in poverty and no more than 30 percent of residents being African American.[3] Such neighborhoods were designated "opportunity areas." After residing in these opportunity areas for 1 year, the families could either remain in their units or use their vouchers to move—without the poverty and race restrictions—to any neighborhood they chose.

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[1] Although most lived in large housing projects, a few families came from scattered-site public housing, which was typically located in neighborhoods with lower poverty and less segregation.

[2] Researchers find various benefits of moving from segregated, high-poverty areas to more diverse and wealthier neighborhoods. Research on the original Gautreaux program found that these benefits included educational, employment, and health benefits (see Rosenbaum and DeLuca, 2000; Rosenbaum, DeLuca, and Tuck, 2005; Rubinowitz and Rosenbaum, 2001).

[3] Gautreaux and Gautreaux Two both were court-ordered remedies for a racial discrimination suit brought by public housing residents (including Dorothy Gautreaux) against the Chicago Housing Authority. Thus, unlike the Moving to Opportunity program, the Gautreaux programs have racial as well as economic restrictions on the neighborhoods where residents can use their vouchers.

The experiences of participants in the Gautreaux Two program relate to the HCVP more generally. The HCVP is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) largest housing subsidy program; it is implemented in every metropolitan area throughout the country. As Devine et al. (2003: vii) explain in their report on HCVP location patterns, the program allows participants to secure housing in the private rental market and "encourages participants to avoid high-poverty neighborhoods." Administrative data on the HCVP show that a low percentage of voucher recipients continue to move to more advantaged neighborhoods (see Devine et al., 2003; Feins and Patterson, 2005). Understanding the experiences of the Gautreaux Two program participants provides insight into these location patterns by exploring how voucher holders make housing choices.

A previous analysis of the Gautreaux Two program by Pashup et al. (2005) examined the process by which families participating in the program moved through the program and the difficulties they faced in trying to relocate to a new neighborhood. The study established that some participants found it difficult to move through the Gautreaux program because of both external and internal obstacles. External obstacles included a tight rental market, landlord discrimination against housing vouchers, and bureaucratic delays. Internal obstacles included a poor understanding of program requirements, large household size, and mental or physical health problems.

Another analysis of Gautreaux Two by Reed, Pashup, and Snell (2005) assessed the ways the program affected participation of female movers in the labor force. The study found several primary obstacles to working, including childcare responsibilities, illness and health issues, transportation difficulties, and layoffs from temporary jobs. This analysis also found that moving had little effect on the employment situation of most study participants.

A third analysis of the Gautreaux Two program (see Boyd et al., 2007) provides an overview of the various influences on respondents' decisions to move. Hassles with landlords and poor-quality units were primary factors, along with social network-related factors.

This article uses indepth qualitative interviews with program participants to assess the ways that social networks influence families' decisions about remaining in their Gautreaux neighborhoods or moving on to other neighborhoods. The analysis focuses on family experiences in the first months and years of adjusting to a new neighborhood, because those experiences may prove vital to understanding the factors underlying the frequency of secondary moves and the variation in subsequent neighborhood quality, focusing primarily on factors related to social networks. This analysis addresses the following questions: What social network factors prompt families to make secondary moves within 3 years after placement? What social network factors determine the kind of neighborhoods secondary movers choose?

Literature Review

To understand the context of the experiences of the Gautreaux Two participants, it is important to consider the ways in which residential segregation influences neighborhoods and to understand how social networks intersect with neighborhood life.

Racial Residential Segregation and Neighborhood Effects

The original Gautreaux program was implemented in 1976 after a lawsuit argued that HUD and the CHA were discriminating on the basis of race by engaging in "systematic and illegal segregation" (Keels et al., 2005: 53). Racial segregation is the primary residential pattern in cities in the United States, and this pattern is not simply the result of historical processes. Racial segregation continues because of ongoing individual and institutional discrimination (Bobo and Zubrinsky, 1996; Massey and Denton, 1993). African Americans are less likely than Whites to be able to move out of low-income areas, more likely than Whites to move into low-income areas, and less capable of relocating to suburbs, even when socioeconomic status is taken into account (Crowder, 2001; Logan, Alba, and Leung, 1996; South and Crowder, 1997). Thus, African Americans' decisions about residential location are determined largely by external forces rather than simply by personal preferences (Crowder, 2001; Massey, Condran, and Denton, 1987).

Researchers point to the negative effect that living in areas of concentrated poverty and high crime rates may have on individual outcomes, including health, education, employment opportunities, safety, and mortality (Allard and Danzinger, 2003; Brooks-Gunn et al., 1997; Crane, 1991; Mayer and Jencks, 1989; Peterson and Krivo, 1993). Neighborhoods are so-called "opportunity structures" consisting of systems, networks, and institutions (Galster and Killen, 1995: 15) that vary in their ability to provide opportunity for upward mobility. Segregated ghettos have attenuated opportunity structures, particularly for employment (Wilson, 1996, 1987).

Positive effects are presumed to follow movement to more affluent neighborhoods with greater racial diversity. Although previous research does not consistently find benefits of living in affluent neighborhoods, some recent evidence indicates that neighborhoods can confer both advantages and disadvantages to residents, particularly children (Newman and Schnare, 1997). Children's neighborhoods are related to their cognitive development, and children living in affluent areas are surrounded by greater resources and more enrichment opportunities (Brooks-Gunn et al., 1997). The outcomes for parents and children may be related to the quality and availability of services in their neighborhoods, or of jobs, because living closer to job opportunities is associated with a higher probability of working (Allard and Danzinger, 2003; Ellen and Turner, 1997).

This recognition of the advantages and disadvantages associated with neighborhoods relates to the goals of the HCVP, which assists 1.9 million households throughout the United States. As Devine et al. (2003: vii) state, "Because the [HCVP] program encourages participants to avoid high-poverty neighborhoods, and encourages the recruitment of landlords with rental properties in lower-poverty neighborhoods, it has the potential to affect both the welfare of participants and the welfare of the neighborhoods where they live." The potential to improve the welfare of participants, however, depends largely on continued residence in more advantaged neighborhoods. Using longitudinal data from HUD administrative records, Feins and Patterson (2005: 21) find that after entering the program, "a small but consistent tendency exists for families making later moves to choose slightly better neighborhoods." Thus, it is important to understand why only a small percentage of families make moves to more advantaged neighborhoods through the HCVP. Although the vouchers that the Gautreaux Two participants received had special requirements, housing decisions the participants made provide insight into factors affecting how families use the HCVP in metropolitan areas more generally.

Social Networks

Housing mobility programs and related policies assume that individuals and families who live in segregated urban areas are more disadvantaged than households living in more resource-rich areas and that moving to safer and wealthier neighborhoods will result in a better quality of life and increased life chances. Among the mechanisms that transmit neighborhood-level characteristics to individual outcomes, social networks are primary because they offer access to social capital and opportunities (Briggs, 1997; Ellen and Turner, 1997; Mendenhall, 2005). Portes (1998: 6) defines social capital as the "ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures." The focus on development and maintenance of social networks is significant for housing mobility program research (Briggs, 1997; Clampet-Lundquist, 2004; Mendenhall, 2005).

Briggs (1997) critiques the housing program assumption that moving to more advantaged neighborhoods results in various personal benefits and reminds researchers and policymakers that moving low-income families into affluent neighborhoods does not automatically result in positive effects for these families, because there are challenges with creating connections in the new neighborhoods and with benefiting from the resources of those neighborhoods. Clampet-Lundquist (2004) shows that, although policymakers assume that children and adults who move through mobility programs will create the kind of social ties in their new neighborhoods that will enable them to become more economically independent, this assumption does not always materialize because forming ties is not easy and these ties take time to develop.

Because people in racially segregated areas with high levels of poverty tend to use local social ties and make ties with others who are very similar to themselves (Briggs, 1997; Clampet-Lundquist, 2004; Gilbert, 1998), one goal of mobility programs is to relocate such families to areas where they can form more diverse social ties with people who differ from them in resources and networks. Presumably, these ties should lead to more diverse information sources and access to new opportunities (Granovetter, 1973). Clampet-Lundquist (2004) suggests that families from high-poverty, racially segregated areas may lack the resources to use the newly available ties in a way that improves their situation (see also Kleit, 2001).

Barriers of race, class, and gender can inhibit the creation of diverse networks (Kissane and Clampet-Lundquist, 2005; Mendenhall, 2005). For example, in her analysis of the original Gautreaux program, Mendenhall (2005) found that, for the women who participated in the program, the development of networks and social capital was negatively influenced by the social distance created by race, class, and gender differences between the women and their neighbors. These barriers can serve as types of negative (or exclusionary) social capital because the social relations that contribute to a sense of support and cooperation among community members can also lead to the exclusion of outsiders (Portes, 1998; Waldinger, 1995). Allport's contact theory argues that prejudice "may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals" (1954: 281). This concept of equal status contact is important, because families who moved through Gautreaux Two had to move to neighborhoods with different racial and class compositions than their original neighborhoods and because they did not have equal status in race and class with many of their new neighbors. Thus, low-income, African-American families face both race and class barriers when moving to predominantly

wealthy, White neighborhoods (Kissane and Clampet-Lundquist, 2005). These barriers are exacerbated by gender, because low-income, African-American single mothers often face social stigma and gender discrimination (Mendenhall, 2005).

Feminist Urbanism

Although little previous literature on housing mobility programs includes feminist urbanism theory, it is a useful perspective that provides ways of conceptualizing the importance of social networks for the women who participated in the Gautreaux program in ways that much of the literature on neighborhood effects overlooks. The literature on racial residential segregation and neighborhood effects does not always consider gender in its picture of neighborhoods and the differential effects of neighborhoods on family and individual outcomes. On the other hand, a feminist urbanism perspective provides ways to consider the nuances of neighborhoods and social networks by drawing attention to the unique experiences of women in urban spaces (Deutsch, 2000; Domosh, 1998; England, 1996; Hayden, 1981; Jacobs, 1961; McDowell, 1993; Wyly, 1999).

Feminist urbanism is particularly relevant in analyzing housing mobility programs, because most families who are affected by these policies and programs are households headed by females. Single mothers and their children are the poorest demographic group in the United States (Edin and Lein, 1997), and it is crucial to recognize that different inequalities intersect to shape the lives of women (Collins, 1990; Gilbert, 1997). This concept is especially true when seeking to understand the stories of the participants in the Gautreaux program, because all but one are female, all are low income, and nearly all are African American. Specifically, family responsibilities, transportation, and social networks are central issues to consider from a feminist urbanism perspective, because these issues largely shaped the experiences of the women in their placement neighborhoods.

A primary family responsibility is childcare, and childcare is often a salient issue for women, particularly women who are working. Childcare access is place based, and employed mothers of young children often have trouble finding affordable, good-quality childcare in their neighborhoods. This circumstance leads many mothers to develop informal solutions to childcare, pointing out an important way that social networks serve to ameliorate some of the difficulties that single, working mothers face (Dyck, 1996). Another family responsibility is elder care. Women are typically the primary caregivers for elderly parents or ill family members, which results in more time constraints, especially for employed women (Spain, 2002). Complicating these issues is the fact that women often are limited by poor public transportation, adding difficulties in various areas of their lives (England, 1996; Shlay and DiGregorio, 1985).

Women's social networks are typically kin and neighbor oriented, and women with families often want to live near their friends, family, and relatives (Gilbert, 1998; Shlay and DiGregorio, 1985; Stack, 1974). Race intersects with class and gender to shape women's "spatial rootedness"—their social networks and survival strategies (Gilbert, 1998: 595). The personal networks of African-American and White women are different, and African-American women living in low-income, inner-city areas have the most intensive local ties, and they are not spatially diverse (Gilbert, 1998). Church and family networks are especially central in the lives of many African Americans because both of these institutions historically have helped relieve the pressures of living in a racist society (Gilbert, 1998).

Social networks, specifically kin networks, are crucial in low-income, African-American communities, particularly for women and especially for childcare (Edin and Lein, 1997; Stack, 1974). Among women who have low levels of education, those who live in high-poverty areas use informal contacts, such as family, friends, and neighbors, more than women living in low-poverty areas do (Elliott, 1999). In her analysis of the participants in the first Gautreaux program, Mendenhall (2005: 85) found that social networks were one of the primary "culturally influenced adaptive responses" that the women made to the challenges they faced. When the participants in the Gautreaux Two program moved away from their baseline communities, this process of creating new social ties and changing networks became an important part of their story.

Data and Methods

This analysis is based on data collected by a research team headed by Kathryn Edin, Greg Duncan, and James Rosenbaum at Northwestern University's Institute for Policy Research. These researchers observed all of the Gautreaux Two program orientation sessions and conducted qualitative, indepth, semistructured interviews between 2002 and 2005 with 91 of the 549 clients who attended the Gautreaux Two orientation sessions. Researchers initially randomly sampled 20 percent of all clients, 71 of whom agreed to participate in the study; however, because of the unexpectedly low number of participants who moved through the Gautreaux program,[4] a second sample of families who seemed to be likely movers was drawn, adding 20 more families to the study.

Researchers conducted four waves of indepth, focused interviews with respondents in their homes over a 3-year period. The interviews were semistructured, open-ended interviews that lasted between 2 and 4 hours. The initial interviews occurred within 3 months of the participants' orientation session, and the subsequent interviews took place approximately 6 to 9 months after the previous interview. Thus, most respondents were interviewed four times between 2002 and 2005. Some respondents were interviewed less than four times if they were not found at some point during the 3-year period. The indepth interviews covered various topics related to program participation, and topics were adjusted after each wave to reflect the new subjects that emerged throughout the previous interviews.

Almost all the respondents were African American. The remaining few were Caribbean or Puerto Rican, and all but one of the respondents were female heads of households. The average age of adult respondents at baseline was 32 years, and the average household size was four members. Respondents lived in their current housing development for an average of 8 1/2 years at the time of the study.

I analyzed the transcripts of the interviews with all of the respondents in the sample who moved through the Gautreaux program. To gain a broad understanding of the reasons why respondents stayed in or moved from their placement neighborhoods, I read several waves of interviews for each of the respondents and coded the interviews for patterns that addressed the research questions.

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[4] See Pashup et al. (2005) for a detailed analysis of the factors that made making an initial move through the Gautreaux Two program difficult.

I then constructed a profile of the experiences of each respondent in the new neighborhood and the reasons for either staying or leaving in relation to social networks. After creating these profiles, I counted the cases for each category that emerged from the coding and created a narrative analysis of reasons for moving and staying. I also used the extensive field notes that the interviewers took after each interview to get a better picture of each respondent, his or her unit, and his or her neighborhood.

I specifically examined those respondents who moved through the Gautreaux program and divide them into two categories—those who stayed in their placement neighborhoods ("stayers") and those who made a subsequent move from their placement neighborhoods ("secondary movers"). I also focused on the types of neighborhoods to which the secondary movers moved and classified them as either opportunity areas or nonopportunity areas based on the original Gautreaux program requirements for what constitutes an opportunity area.

Results

Of the 58 respondents in our sample who moved through the Gautreaux Two program by 2005, 27 (47 percent) were stayers and 31 (53 percent) made secondary moves. Only 19 percent of secondary movers moved on to opportunity areas, while the remaining 81 percent moved to nonopportunity areas, as defined by the Gautreaux Two program's race and poverty requirements. I divide the analysis into two sections: the first assesses the social network factors that influenced why secondary movers made subsequent moves, and the second examines the social network factors that contributed to stayer respondents' decisions to remain in their Gautreaux units.

Secondary Movers

Although most secondary movers moved to nonopportunity areas, the families who moved to another opportunity area provide insight into the importance of social networks as well. Of the six families that made a secondary move to another opportunity area, three of those families moved to other opportunity areas where they had family living, which demonstrates the importance of family networks in respondents' decisions about where to move. The other three respondents who made secondary moves to opportunity areas all moved because they had problems with their Gautreaux units and landlords but otherwise would have stayed in their placement neighborhood. Half of the families who moved to another opportunity area made decisions primarily based on proximity to kin networks, as did many of the movers to nonopportunity areas. The difference for the secondary movers to opportunity areas is that they had kin networks based in more affluent and diverse neighborhoods, while many of the movers who returned to nonopportunity areas did not. It is important to analyze what aspects of social networks affect families' decisions to make a secondary move to more disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Social Isolation

Many respondents who moved through the program initially relocated to areas where they did not have any family or friends and, for many, transportation issues made it difficult to visit these kin networks. This lack of kin and transportation resulted not only in a sense of social isolation

for respondents, but it also removed them from their primary support networks, particularly for childcare. Some respondents also had ill family members for whom they cared. Living far away made it difficult for them to fulfill their care responsibilities. For example, Latisha's[5] placement neighborhood was in the suburbs, and the distance from her family made it difficult for her to fulfill her familial responsibilities. She was the primary caregiver for her diabetic mother, and her main reason for moving back to Chicago was to care for her. When asked why she moved back, Latisha said:

> *"Well for one reason, my mom. She had got sick, and this was one of the reasons why I moved back to Chicago, so I could kinda help my mom out, you know. And I just started lookin,' cause she had got real sick real bad. She's a diabetic and she's partially blind and she had like four mini strokes. And then she had, her hemoglobin was low. You know? It was, it was like she was goin'—you know, she was gettin' down. She, you know, just everything was outta control. So by me runnin' back and forth on the train, back and forth, you know—[it was hard]."*

Latisha was socially isolated in her placement neighborhood; her family did not visit her often because of the distance, and, after making her secondary move, Latisha was better able to care for her mother. The distance made her fulfillment of familial responsibilities untenable, leading her to become a secondary mover back to a nonopportunity area.

To some extent, all the respondents who discussed distance from kin as a problem were socially isolated; however, many respondents were not only far from their family and friend networks, they also did not immediately connect with their neighbors and were not involved in neighborhood activities. Some said they just lived in their unit and went elsewhere to socialize; therefore, they did not fully engage with the neighborhood or develop neighborhood networks. Other respondents did not feel completely accepted in their new neighborhoods, which made it difficult for them to form friendships. Some respondents saw their Gautreaux neighborhoods as transitional and were just biding their time until they could move again. For these respondents, the ultimate goal was getting a voucher that would enable them to move wherever they wanted. The demand for Housing Choice Vouchers has always outstripped their supply, so some families were willing to move for a year to an opportunity area so they could subsequently move on to where they wanted to live.

Talia, for example, considered her placement neighborhood to be too far from her family and saw her Gautreaux move as temporary:

> *"I'm so used to the South Side. I've been there all my life. This is something new to me. I don't want to get to know this place. Nope, because I'm ready to move. So I ain't trying to get to know this place."*

When asked where she wanted to move, Talia responded:

> *"South Side, like Southwest. Like over there where my mama lives."*

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[5] All respondents' names are pseudonyms.

Talia made a secondary move back to a neighborhood near the area where, before their demolition, the Robert Taylor Homes stood. Robert Taylor Homes, a public housing project located in one of the city's poorest and most racially segregated neighborhoods, was where she grew up.

Tara continued to work and take classes on the South Side of Chicago after her Gautreaux move to the North Side, just as she had before the move. Thus, she spent a lot of time commuting and, not surprisingly, found the location of her Gautreaux apartment to be very inconvenient. No neighborhoods near her school or job had qualified as opportunity areas. The familiarity and ease of her routine of working, going to school, and shopping that she had developed on the South Side before her move is why she maintained ties with her baseline neighborhood on the South Side and did not even try to become familiar with her North Side Gautreaux neighborhood:

> *"When I go to the show, even though there's a show right here, I'll go to the show on the South Side. When I go out to eat, I go out to eat on the South Side. So, there's no type of activity or anything going…. I'm not even FAMILIAR with this North Side. All I can do is get to my house, and back out to where I need to go. I'm not familiar; I couldn't tell you how to get to a store around here."*

Not surprisingly, Tara ended up making a secondary move to the South Side of Chicago to a nonopportunity area to be closer to her family and job.

One primary thing respondents missed about their baseline neighborhoods was the regular social interactions they had with their neighbors in the housing projects. Francine said:

> *"Actually, like I said, since I been here, I don't feel I been happy, because this place depresses me, because there's nothin' to do, nothin', you know? [I] can't get out much because the buses stop runnin' early. I don't have a car. I don't know how to drive. So that's another bad thing, you know? So I don't get out."*

When asked what she missed about public housing, Francine said:

> *"Just bein' able to go outside, sit down and talk. Because in the projects you can sit down and talk to everybody. Someone's always walkin' around. Here you sit on your porch and that's it, you know? It's always somethin' goin' on in the project, there's never nothin' goin' on here. So, yeah I do miss that, but the projects itself, no, I don't miss [the projects]. Since I been here [my health] seems to me it's been worser, yeah, because I guess, I don't know. It was like when I was livin', you know, down there in the projects, I got out more and did more, you know? So it helped my strength, whatever. Now here it's just like blah, you know? I don't do nothin', it seem like I depressin' myself, makin' myself sick."*

Tina also explained how difficult it is to be removed from a neighborhood where neighbors know you and are willing to provide support. When asked what she missed about her baseline neighborhood, Tina said:

> *"Well, the people, because I know a lot of people. Like all over the neighborhood. I know a lot people. Where, it's not like here. OK, if I get stuck I can't hit no one [up for help]. You know what I'm saying? Over there everybody knows me. [If] I need [something] or I don't have any money and I need a ride to the emergency [room]; there's always somebody because they all know me."*

Felicia echoed these sentiments of missing her support network in her old neighborhood:

> *"[I miss] being able to just walk out and talk to my friends, because here it's just quiet. That's the only thing I miss, is being able like to walk out. And I know people but I really don't know nobody here. So it's like you have to budget better than you did before, because there you didn't have to worry about it, because you could just walk out the door and say, 'Hey, I need.'"*

Many of the Gautreaux Two respondents who made secondary moves felt disconnected from their primary support networks in their new neighborhoods and were unable to replace these with social ties in their placement neighborhoods. When asked what she thought about the Gautreaux program, Nikki said:

> *"I mean, I understand what they were trying to do. I do understand what they were trying to do and they were hoping to give people better opportunities, but to force people away, to force people away from their family, their support system. You know, just common things that people need to have. It's not beneficial. It's not beneficial and it causes more harm than good."*

For many of the secondary movers, wanting to live closer to their families and to others in their networks—often very much like them—who would offer ready support was a primary reason for their decision to make a secondary move. The desire to live closer to their families and others in their network also influenced the location of the second move. Sophie's Gautreaux unit was in Rogers Park, a neighborhood in Chicago's far North Side, and both she and her children missed the proximity to South Side family and friends. Sophie said:

> *"[I'm planning to] move. I want to go back down south where I come from. I don't too much care for the North Side. You know, now…I find my way around, but still, there ain't nothing like home. Well I don't have family over here. I got to go all the way out to visit them."*

Thus, Sophie still considered the South Side to be her home because of her familial ties and familiarity with the area.

Childcare

One primary way in which removal from social networks was difficult for participants was lack of access to previous forms of childcare. Many participants used informal childcare networks no longer accessible from their new neighborhoods or that required long commutes to drop their children off with family or friends, which created pressure in their daily schedules. Nikki, whose Gautreaux unit was in the suburbs, has three children. She had issues with childcare and had to travel quite a distance to drop the children off at their grandparents' house when she was working and they were not in school. Nikki explained this difficulty:

> *"I don't have anybody to get these kids. I don't have the money to take 'em to the daycare center over here, you know? The transportation. This place won't take 'em until this time. By the time I get them there, and I get back on my route, I'm late for work."*

Moving closer to family to receive childcare assistance was common among those respondents who made secondary moves. When asked about her primary reason for making a secondary move, Francine said:

"Actually, to be closer to my family, actually, and the benefit of somethin', you know? When I get sick, you know, I have someone [to] watch my daughter. So, that's really the number one priority."

Transportation

Gautreaux Two respondents who moved farther away from the city proper had a difficult time with transportation, because public transportation becomes less available and more sporadic in these areas. Owning an automobile was a prohibitive expense for many of these families; therefore, reliance on public transportation was necessary for many. Some complained about more minor issues of parking, while others found the lack of good transportation and distance from relatives to be incredibly difficult, making transportation a primary reason for moving. Yolanda explained how lack of parking was a deterrent to her family's visiting her:

"[My family] don't come too much. Because when they come, [there's] nowhere to park. Yeah, [there's] nowhere to park so they like stoppin' me from havin' visitors. And then when they do come, you know, because from here to Chicago, it don't seem too far to some people, but some of 'em say it's too far to be, too far to drive. And then they come, [and they] have to turn around an' go back home [because there is no parking]. The parking is crazy out here."

Some respondents had difficulty getting to their jobs, to childcare, and to their children's schools. When she moved to her Gautreaux unit in the suburbs, Lashonda kept the same job at a retail store that she had when she lived in her baseline neighborhood. A few months after making the Gautreaux move, she lost her job because she had a lot of transportation problems and was often late for work. Living closer to jobs was a primary reason for Lashonda's secondary move back to a nonopportunity area in the city.

For those respondents who had cars, the long commute time was very cumbersome. Many respondents also had a hard time with shopping and visiting healthcare providers; thus, navigating the opportunity areas was difficult. Some respondents lacked the support network of people who previously gave them rides, or they previously lived closer to these services. Many respondents still used their baseline area services, including healthcare services, and the distance to these services presented challenges. Tara still used the hospital in her baseline area and never became familiar with her Gautreaux neighborhood resources:

"I don't even know where the nearest hospital is. No. I would have to drive all the way to the South Side if I had [an] emergency. I would have to go to South Side."

Public transportation was a primary reason why Joan left her Gautreaux area in the suburbs to move back to Chicago. She explained:

"What made me want to come back to the city? Well, the transportation. Transportation-wise, I don't have a car. It was like, if I'm in the city, [there are] buses here, buses there. I like that."

Joan's story demonstrates that transportation is a primary issue; the suburbs do not provide adequate public transportation. For respondents who have no vehicle and who are removed from their social networks of people who previously gave them rides, the need for accessible public transportation was a motivating factor in their decision to move back to Chicago from the suburbs.

Children

The experiences of the respondents' children in the new neighborhoods also demonstrate the importance of social networks and the potential barriers to creating new networks. Some children experienced racially motivated incidents in their neighborhoods and schools, which contributed to the inability of some of the children to adapt to their new neighborhoods and schools. Akilah's 10-year-old son was called "nigger" repeatedly by several of the young children in their Gautreaux neighborhood in the North Side of Chicago, and such incidents point to the salience of race in creating possible barriers to the formation of social ties in the respondents' new neighborhoods.

Some respondents explained that their children found the Gautreaux neighborhoods boring and missed their baseline friends and visited them frequently, which illustrates the effect that distance from social networks had, even on the children. Nikki explained that her children thought the Gautreaux neighborhood in the suburbs was boring:

> *"[My children] play with some of the kids on the block, but not too much, not too much. So it's, I mean, it's really boring out here. It's really boring. It's nothing. Hey, you know, when I'm here and I'm out, I'll turn jump rope for one and you know, come out and play. But, it's like, they don't know what to do. I stick them outside, and they don't know what to do."*

Nikki made a secondary move to a nonopportunity area in the city because she wanted to be closer to her family network and her children wanted to be closer to their friends. Her oldest son was experiencing many problems in the school in the suburbs, and she sent him to live in the city with his grandparents, even before the rest of the family moved back to the city, so that he could attend a public school in the city. The experiences of her children and the difficulty they had making the transition to life in the suburbs were crucial factors in Nikki's decision to move back to Chicago from the suburbs.

Some respondents kept their children in their baseline schools even after they moved to their Gautreaux units. Maria made a Gautreaux move to the North Side of Chicago, but she kept her three children in the same school they attended when they lived in Robert Taylor Homes. She explained:

> *"I just want them to stay in one school because it changes them, you know? How schools be different, teaches them different. It would probably knock them off, so since they used to that, I let them go, just stay right there. They been going there, and I was raised like that, getting transferred, transferred, transferred, transferred, and I didn't want that [for my kids]."*

For Maria, keeping her children in the same school provided them with a sense of stability. Other respondents recognized that their children were doing better in the higher quality Gautreaux area schools, but this was not a strong enough factor to keep them from moving. Olivia, whose grandson lives with her, said one of the main reasons she moved to the suburbs was to provide her grandson with a better education. She recognized that he was doing much better in the school in her Gautreaux neighborhood, but she ended up moving to a nonopportunity area anyway because of her health issues and her desire to be in an area with better public transportation. Olivia said:

> *"That's the only part that makes me really hate to move. 'Cause he doing really, really good in school. He doing better in school out here than he ever did in his whole entire life."*

Karen also discussed the importance of education and the quality of schools in opportunity areas, but she also made a secondary move from the suburbs to a nonopportunity area:

> *"Like I said, I'm leaving the door open for an opportunity area. I know if I find an opportunity area, and move there, I know the schools are much better, and they have more programs, you know, available for your children, 'cause education is very important, you know?"*

Even though respondents recognized the quality of the schools in the opportunity areas, other costs, such as transportation and distance from family networks, outweighed this benefit.

Most of the respondents who made secondary moves were geographically distant from their social networks in their baseline neighborhoods, which resulted in issues of childcare, distance to employment, and transportation, particularly for those respondents whose placement neighborhoods were in the suburbs. As Shlay and DiGregorio (1985) discuss, women, particularly low-income single mothers, rely on public transportation provided by cities, and they want to live near their social and kin networks.

Public Housing

Respondents who moved through the Gautreaux program did not automatically adjust to their new neighborhoods and faced other issues, including poor-quality units and problematic landlords, all of which contributed to their desires to make secondary moves, often to nonopportunity areas. Yet, these respondents did not move back to public housing, and, although they missed things about their baseline areas, most were incredibly glad to be away from public housing. Whitney explained how happy she was to move out of Altgeld Gardens, one of Chicago's most isolated South Side public housing developments:

> *"The Gardens…it was depressing. I had to get [my kids] out of there. There's nothing I miss from out there and nothing I wanna go back to. Nothing. The Gardens just pushed me into the real world. That's all it did. And it's real world, real situations. I'm not gonna say I wanna go back. No."*

The Gautreaux program was still incredibly valuable for the respondents who made secondary moves, and it is important to compare the experiences of those who moved to nonopportunity areas with those who made secondary moves to other opportunity areas.

Stayer Comparison

Of the Gautreaux movers in the sample, 47 percent were still in their Gautreaux units by 2005. Comparing the stories of the secondary movers with the stories of the stayers once again highlights the importance of social networks, childcare, and transportation in shaping the experiences of respondents in their Gautreaux neighborhoods. The secondary movers appreciated many of the same things about their Gautreaux neighborhoods as the stayers did. Likewise, the respondents who stayed in their placement neighborhoods faced many of the same challenges that the movers did, but they were better able to finds ways to adapt. The stayer respondents either had family or friends in their placement neighborhoods or were still able to see their family and friends despite the distance, and they still received network support from them (for example, childcare). Some

respondents specifically chose their placement neighborhoods because they already had family or friends living in those areas.

Melissa moved to the suburbs from LeClaire Courts on Chicago's Southwest Side, and some of her friends from this area also moved through Gautreaux Two to the suburbs. These friends really helped Melissa with her transition to the suburbs:

> *"Yeah, [I have] friends that came from my old neighborhood. [They live] about five minutes [away], and I go visit them, go to the store and stuff like that. It helps me adjust more, you know, because I know somebody from my old neighborhood here."*

Beatrice chose her Gautreaux unit in the suburbs specifically for its proximity to her family:

> *"The reason why, we just looked [in] this area, [was] because I live[d] in this area. And it wasn't too far from my aunt, or you know, her sisters and stuff like that. So we wanted to stay in the same area with our family right down the street."*

For these stayers, having family and friends in the area to which they moved was a significant factor in their ability to adjust to their new areas and to continue to receive crucial network support.

Neighborhood Networks

The stayer respondents were more likely to create social ties in their new neighborhoods by getting involved in neighborhood activities and making friends with their neighbors than the secondary movers were. Vanessa moved to the far North Side of Chicago and made friends with some of her neighbors. She even provided daycare for one neighbor's children. In contrast to the stories of several respondents who made secondary moves, Vanessa said she got outside more after moving to her Gautreaux neighborhood:

> *"I mean, I do more things than I used to. The only thing I used to do, was either go to the show or go to my mom's house or something like that. But here, I take more walks. I'm an inside person, but I find myself now going outside more. I'll walk down the bike path. Or I may decide to walk further up Sheridan into Evanston. I find myself outside doing a lot more walking than [before]. Everywhere I went there, I would take the bus. It's just, I learn the neighborhood by walking around and learning the different little things, the activities and stuff they have in the neighborhood. So I find myself getting outside more here, around here, than I did [before]."*

Evelyn moved to an opportunity area on the Southwest Side of Chicago, and she quickly developed a strong neighborhood network. On the day that she moved into her unit, her neighbors introduced themselves and showed her around the neighborhood:

> *"I had a couple of people in the neighborhood to show me around, different little places, little social groups, where to vote, play bingo, stuff like that."*

This outreach helped Evelyn feel connected to both her neighbors and the resources in the area and made the transition to her new neighborhood smoother. She took advantage of the opportunities around her, and having her neighbors connect her to the area resources was crucial to her adjustment.

Transportation

The respondents who stayed in their placement neighborhoods also found ways to make transportation work—they either had cars or lived in areas with good public transportation. Other respondents received rides from family or friends who lived nearby. Many respondents appreciated the convenience of the areas where they lived. Another reason that Evelyn loved her Gautreaux neighborhood so much is the convenience of it:

> *"I love it, 'cause everything's right here. The store's on the corner, restaurant's right up the street. Either way you go, restaurants around, little places. Bus stop right outside. Don't have a car, drop you off, so, nope…love everything. Love everything."*

Some respondents found opportunity areas close to their jobs, and this helped make the transition easier. Lauren felt like she got her job at a department store because her Gautreaux unit is close to the store:

> *"If I would have never moved out here, I wouldn't have never had this job. You know, 'cause I would have never looked down here."*

Adele also found a Gautreaux unit closer to her job in the suburbs:

> *"So, that's the advantage of me moving, because when they gave it to me and I could move, I said, 'Well, let me see if I can find something closer to work.'"*

Respondents who did not need to travel long distances for work or childcare and who either had cars or the network support of people who gave them rides were much more capable of adjusting to their new neighborhoods than those who had difficulties with transportation. Adequate access to transportation was a crucial factor that kept respondents in their Gautreaux neighborhoods.

Children

Many of the respondents wanted their children to be in areas with diversity, as Vanessa said when she discussed how her Gautreaux neighborhood on the North Side of Chicago has been for her two children:

> *"It's been really good for them. Deanna has a lot of different friends as far as races, and that's something that I wanted them to experience—the different nationalities of people and how it can be an advantage or disadvantage to you."*

Many of the stayer children became involved in their neighborhoods in different activities and made friends in their schools and the neighborhood in general. Evelyn's two children were involved in an after-school program at the Boys and Girls Club, which is an income-based program, making it affordable for her to send them there:

> *"I wanted a change, new environment. Like I was explaining at first over there, Altgeld Gardens, which is a projects, it was bad: drug dealers, shootings and the kids really couldn't come out and play. At a certain [time you would be told], hey, you can't have your kids out, 'cause such and such is going to shoot, or whatever. A whole bunch of stuff. But now, they go out. [There are] parks around. Basketball court, lunch, social activities and stuff, after school events for them. A whole bunch of little stuff, so it's nice."*

Having an income-based program was an important resource that the community provided that enabled Evelyn's children to take advantage of neighborhood activities.

A lot of children did better in their Gautreaux area schools than in their baseline schools, and respondents recognized the high quality of the opportunity area schools. Veronica discussed wanting to stay in her Gautreaux area in the suburbs for the sake of her niece who is doing well in her new school:

> *"Yeah, because I want to keep Tiffany in [her new school]. You know, that's my whole thing. You know, she's doing so well. Like I said, she's in honors at school, and I don't want to pull her away from that. Wherever I move, she might get discouraged and go down, you know? I want to keep her head up."*

Stayer respondents also reported that their children are doing better in their opportunity areas in general and that they like their neighborhoods. The children of the respondents who stayed in their placement neighborhoods were more likely to become involved in different activities in their neighborhoods and make friends in their schools than the children of the movers.

Vanessa reported that her daughter is doing better in the Gautreaux area than she did in her baseline neighborhood:

> *"There, you have to let people know, I'm not scared of you, and you know, you have to be always on the defensive where you have to have your guard up at all times. But here, she's starting to let her guard down. She's starting to be more relaxed. Her temper has changed. She's now less aggressive than she used to be. She won't let nobody pick on her or walk on her, but she's not as aggressive as she was before. So I think her surroundings [are part of that]; her teachers that she have, the input that they give, her friends, and me. You know, [I'm] still saying the same things that I said before, [but now] she starting to hear it. It's kind of sticking now."*

Mia explained that her son did not like the Gautreaux area at first, but he adjusted and now does not want to move:

> *"It was a culture shock to him. The first year, he didn't like it here. He really hated it. He was the only black kid in his classes. Now he don't want to move from here. He also doesn't like going to the projects anymore."*

The story of Mia's son demonstrates that it takes time for children to adjust to new neighborhoods and develop connections with other youth as well as neighborhood and school resources.

Conclusion

By 2005, 53 percent of the Gautreaux Two participants in the qualitative sample had made a secondary move, and 81 percent of these moves were to nonopportunity areas. This high percentage of secondary moves to less advantaged neighborhoods calls for assessment of the factors influencing families' experiences in their new neighborhoods and decisions about whether to stay in their placement neighborhoods. The results of this analysis show that social networks are a key factor in decisions about moving, because distance from kin and support networks and difficulty

in creating new social ties in placement neighborhoods result in social isolation and transportation difficulties and motivate secondary moves. Family responsibilities such as childcare and caring for other family members exacerbated the effect of moving away from baseline neighborhoods with kin networks. On the other hand, social network factors were also primary reasons why some respondents remained in their placement neighborhood. Stayer respondents were more likely than secondary movers to have moved to a neighborhood where they already knew people, and they were able to maintain ties with kin, develop relationships with new neighbors, and become involved in their placement neighborhoods. Access to good public transportation or the use of a car facilitated the maintenance of social ties.

Briggs (1998) offers an analysis of social capital that provides insight into the different facets of the Gautreaux participants' social networks. He classifies two dimensions of social capital: social support and social leverage. Social support is the type of social capital that helps one to get by and cope with one's circumstances. This type of social capital is particularly important for the poor and involves having locally based, homogenous social ties. Social leverage, on the other hand, is having access to more diverse ties that enhance one's opportunities and help one get ahead (Briggs, 1998). Although the baseline neighborhoods of the Gautreaux participants may not have provided much social leverage, they did provide crucial social support. When the women moved to new neighborhoods, these social support networks were often disrupted because the social ties needed to create these networks take time to develop, and race, class, gender, and spatial barriers can make the creation of these social ties challenging.

It is important to recognize the barriers to creating social ties in new neighborhoods and to consider what other support services need to be implemented to assist movers in their transitions to new neighborhoods. As Reed, Pashup, and Snell (2005) discuss in their analysis of the Gautreaux Two program's influence on labor force participation, many participants who moved did not choose their neighborhoods based on specific occupational or educational opportunities and, therefore, do not have these specific ties to their placement neighborhoods. As this analysis shows, participants who moved to a neighborhood where they already had a social network were more likely to feel connected and remain in the placement neighborhood. Thus, having preexisting ties to a neighborhood assists in the transition process and the lack of those ties makes the process much more difficult.

As Boyd et al. (2007) suggest, several policy recommendations include encouraging families to move to neighborhoods where they have family or friends, or to facilitate the ability for people to move in family groups rather than individually. Another possibility is to require the initial voucher to be used for 2 years in the placement neighborhood rather than just 1, which would provide a longer timeframe for participants to develop new social ties before making decisions about moving elsewhere. These policy recommendations involve possible changes in the way housing mobility programs are designed and emphasize the need for further preplacement location counseling to give voucher recipients a more realistic picture of the challenges they may face and ways to mitigate these challenges. An additional policy implication of this analysis is the importance of continued program assistance for participants beyond the initial placement, because families who move to new neighborhoods need more support connecting with neighborhood networks and services to overcome potential barriers of race, class, and gender differences. Local institutions

such as churches, community groups, and schools can help families make the transition into new neighborhoods and support both adults and youth in connecting to peers and resources in the community to gain necessary social capital that could result in participants' ability to get ahead.

The results of the Gautreaux Two program have implications for the HCVP because families who receive a voucher likely face many of the same obstacles that the Gautreaux Two participants did. The insight from the Gautreaux Two participants' experiences can shed light on the processes and outcomes of the HCVP, because it is important to know the reasons behind families' residential moves. The policy recommendations for the Gautreaux Two program could prove helpful when considering what further support systems would benefit HCVP recipients. Future qualitative research should be done with HCVP recipients in other metropolitan areas to further our understanding of how recipients make housing choices and what additional resources recipients need.

Acknowledgments

Author

Melody L. Boyd is a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at Temple University.

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