

INAUGURAL REPORT 2010

STATE OF BLACK LEXINGTON





The commitment to create opportunities for our constituents and the community at large has driven the mission of the Urban League for its more than 41 years of presence in Lexington-Fayette County. So is the impetus of this 2010 Inaugural Edition of The State of Black Lexington.

The national Urban League has produced the State of Black America for over 25 years. It has proven to be an invaluable resource for this country in that it brings to 'front page' the socio-economic conditions of the invisible and neglected citizens of this great and prosperous country. Invisibility occurs when the statistical data is diluted in the aggregate numbers of a particular study. The conclusion of the State of Black America has consistently revealed that, when the data is disaggregated, socio-economic disparity is no longer inconspicuous.

The State of Black America has helped grassroots organizations develop workplans for their communities based on the quantitative and qualitative data in the publication. At times, the publication has helped guide state government strategies based on the comprehensive information presented. Throughout the history of the publication, it has even helped influence federal funding guidelines and legislation based on its sound, fair, and candid presentation of the contemporary and prevailing issues that face the African American Community. From the subtle to the profound, from Main Street to the urban back street; the State of Black America has brought fresh insight, indeed light to problems that in the aggregate, seem not to prevail.

It is this model we patterned as we ventured to create our own local iteration. While we by no means claim to have mastered the science of such a document as our National organization, we do feel we have created a strong resource of information for leaders in the Lexington area who seek to build the best and brightest community for all citizens.

As is our standard approach, the Urban League enlisted the voice of the community and the strengths of strategic partnerships to accomplish this work. Experts collected and analyzed data. This data was synthesized along with realistic and contemporary Lexington issues and conditions.

This Inaugural Edition of The State of Black Lexington comes at a time that, as the nation navigates through the most severe economic contraction in more than half a century, Lexington can employ this data to gain insight into its unseen disparities. The mood of the nation, whether socio-economic, political or ecological, presents an opportune time for Lexington to take a microcosm look into the many parts that make up its whole. Let us be reminded, as we examine the data presented in this study, that as opportunity avails itself, it must include equity or is isn't opportunity at all. Our hope for this inaugural effort is that it will create civil conversation around solutions for all, and not perpetuate bitter conversation about the problems of some. This document sets a firm platform on which to build these rich conversations and viable solutions. We hope it develops the alliances that we must have in order to become a community "worthy of our children's future."

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Porter G. Peeples, Sr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Porter G. Peeples, Sr.
President & CEO
Urban League of Lexington-Fayette County

BACKGROUND

In 1976, the National Urban League (NUL) initiated *The State of Black America*, an annual report on socio-economic conditions of African American families and communities across the United States. The report is intended to be a barometer of the conditions, experiences, and opinions of Black America. The annual *The State of Black America* report has grown in prestige and prominence, and has come to be used as a reference by many organizations within both the private and public sectors. Many other cities since have followed suit by initiating similar studies specific to their local cities and communities.

In early 2007, African American leaders and advocates in Lexington, Kentucky identified the benefits and implications of developing such a document for their own community. Conversations around such a project were organized among the University of Kentucky, the Urban League of Lexington-Fayette County, the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government, the Lexington Commission on Race Relations, and the Human Rights Commission. It was realized that all entities represented had an interest in, and even a responsibility toward, producing such a report. Consensus was swiftly reached to form a work group to author a collaborative and comprehensive document that would be useful to public, private, and non-profit sectors. ■

The State of Black Lexington initiative seeks to explore and enlighten community leaders, agency administrators, and the greater Lexington community on issues specific to Blacks in Lexington. Specific goals of this initiative are:

- To better understand issues impacting Blacks in Lexington.
- To inform and empower Blacks about issues impacting Blacks in Lexington.
- To call to action Lexington's community leaders and agency administrators regarding service needs in the Black community.
- To understand services that are needed to promote the health and well-being of Blacks in Lexington.
- To understand interrelated issues impacting Blacks across various subgroups within the Black community.
- To use the information obtained to develop and enhance services needed within the Black community.
- To promote an understanding of the impact of myriad issues on Black children and the family.
- To understand the implications of various socio-political factors impacting Black men.
- To serve as a catalyst for an ongoing, evaluative, and action-oriented (corrective) process regarding the status and needs of Blacks in Lexington.



Public opinion survey methodology

One component of The State of Black Lexington initiative was a public opinion survey conducted by Preston-Osborne, a local marketing communications and research firm, that measured attitudes and perceptions about a variety of aspects related to life in Lexington, including questions concerning equality and racial or ethnic issues.

A 10-minute telephone survey was conducted with 600 Fayette Countians, 200 in each of three segments: Caucasian (comprising around 80 percent of Fayette County's population, according to the U.S. Census), African American (roughly 15 percent of the county's population), and Hispanic (approximately 6 percent of the population). By oversampling the African American and Hispanic groups, it was possible to analyze results within each group and make comparisons among the three with some measure of reliability. The sample of 200 respondents in each group yields a maximum margin of error of ± 6.93 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. Hispanic respondents were interviewed in their language of choice—English or Spanish—with more interviews being conducted in Spanish.

Preston-Osborne compiled population information for the three distinct groups by ZIP code. Using this information, it was ensured that the survey included individuals who were African American and Hispanic throughout the city and proportionate to the relative population on a ZIP-code basis.

Interviewing commenced on October 6, 2008, and concluded on November 11, 2008. Given the historical significance of the 2008 presidential election with Barack Obama being the Democrats' nominee, efforts were made to finish the data collection phase of the project prior to Election Day (November 4, 2008). Despite these efforts, approximately 75 interviews—all with Hispanic respondents—were conducted after that date. Results among the Hispanic population were later segmented as pre- and post-election and analyzed to see if any trends were evident to suggest that the outcome of the election influenced opinions. No such trends were found.

While the majority of interviews for this study were conducted prior to Election Day, there was a palpable sense of optimism within the Black community in the weeks leading up to the election of Barack Obama, with many polls showing him in the lead for the presidency. The extent to which this increased optimism may have influenced the results of this survey is unknown; however, the State of Black Lexington initiative recognizes that the survey was conducted during a time of great hope and optimism among Blacks throughout the United States.

The survey instrument used for this study included a wide array of attitudinal questions and a series of demographic questions, which allowed analysis across various subgroups. For the majority of attitudinal questions, respondents were read a statement and then asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with that statement. A four-category scale was used: strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, and strongly disagree. (Note: Throughout this document, mentions of respondents "agreeing" or "disagreeing" with a particular statement refer to the total percentage of both the "strongly" and "somewhat" categories combined.)

For the purposes of reporting the findings of this study, each of the three ethnic subgroups was examined separately, and the analysis included a review of the data by a wide range of demographic markers. ■



OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH FINDINGS

The public opinion research study yielded many interesting findings. A review of results based on race/ethnicity alone found statistically meaningful differences on every single attitudinal question in the survey. Simply put, Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics look at Lexington through different lenses. And these lenses have been altered by life experiences, cultural dynamics, socio-economic circumstances, and many other factors that, in turn, shape one's opinions about life here.

In order to more fully appreciate the findings reported in this document, it is important to consider a few generalizations about the results, as well as some characteristics about those who were interviewed for the study.

First, generally speaking, the Hispanic population expressed a much more positive view of life in Fayette County than did the other two populations. By and large, opinions among Whites fell in the middle, while Blacks held a more tempered opinion of life in Fayette County.

When looking at the results among the Hispanic population, it's important to bear in mind that nearly 8 out of 10 Hispanics surveyed moved here from another country. It stands to reason that first-generation immigrants would have a *significantly* different set of expectations with regard to things such as housing, education, and health care than would someone who has been a lifelong resident of the United States.

This, coupled with cultural differences in attitudes and a phenomenon seen in market research among Hispanics which suggests that they tend to give more positive responses to survey questions in general, should be considered when reading study findings. Also, while the Black and White groups consisted of a relatively broad mix of respondents in terms of age, education, income, etc., the Hispanic subset was notably more homogeneous—it was comprised largely of young, married, low-income people who work full-time and had not attended college.

While the over arching goal of the study was to determine how people of different races or ethnicities view life in Lexington, comparisons across the three ethnic groups—while extremely significant and worthy of productive discussion and debate—only tell part of the story.

BORN IN FAYETTE COUNTY	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
Yes	51%	6%	15%
No	49%	95%	85%

State of Black Lexington Survey: Fall 2008

Some of the more intriguing findings are illuminated when looking within a particular ethnic group and seeing such things as generational shifts in attitudes or opinions that are being further shaped not just by race, but also by other demographic factors. In short, this was not a single research study; instead, it was essentially three studies looking at three distinctive groups with a rich mosaic of attitudes within each.

“Overall, the data gleaned from this study gives the officials in Lexington and surrounding communities a model for understanding its unique and diverse populations. This diversity was shown in the findings. This study is significant in the fact that it offers an excellent baseline of information to put into action and lends itself to implement future actions. I am extremely happy to see that such a study has been conducted in our community.”

Dr. Aaron Thompson, Professor of Sociology, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Eastern Kentucky University



When looking solely at the Black population surveyed, some common themes emerged when examining results by demographic markers. It is evident from the data that the era in which one grew up and the level of education one has attained play critical roles in how attitudes and opinions are shaped, particularly with regard to issues of equality and race relations.

“When one analyzes the data in this report, it has similarities to what one might hear in a local barber shop, beauty parlor, church, grocery store, or wherever you find African Americans congregating in Lexington. Lexington appears to be a ‘Tale of Two Cities’ as opportunities are concerned. Nevertheless, one thing is true: All citizens need to work together in an assertive effort to make opportunities in Lexington available to all people equally.”

Dr. Roger Cleveland, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Eastern Kentucky University & Dr. Sherwood Thompson, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Eastern Kentucky University

In general, while younger Blacks stated they were more optimistic about their future than older Blacks and viewed Lexington as a good place to raise a family, older Blacks were often more likely to give favorable opinions about specific aspects of life in Lexington. This was particularly true when comparing the views of those over 65 years old to middle-age Blacks. For example, middle-age Blacks were less likely to view

race relations as being good in the Lexington community when compared to those both younger and older than them. Members of this group, too, were less certain of their ability to make a difference in the community if they wanted to.

Although Blacks in the lower-education and lower-income categories generally were more critical about various aspects of life in Lexington (access to jobs, quality of law enforcement, recreational opportunities for youth, and race relations, among others), they were less likely to report personal instances of discrimination and were less likely to believe that minorities in Lexington face discrimination than more affluent, better-educated Blacks.

AGE	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
18-34	18%	49%	11%
35-44	15%	30%	12%
45-54	26%	14%	18%
55-64	20%	6%	22%
65-74	12%	1%	23%
75 and older	8%	1%	15%

State of Black Lexington Survey: Fall 2008

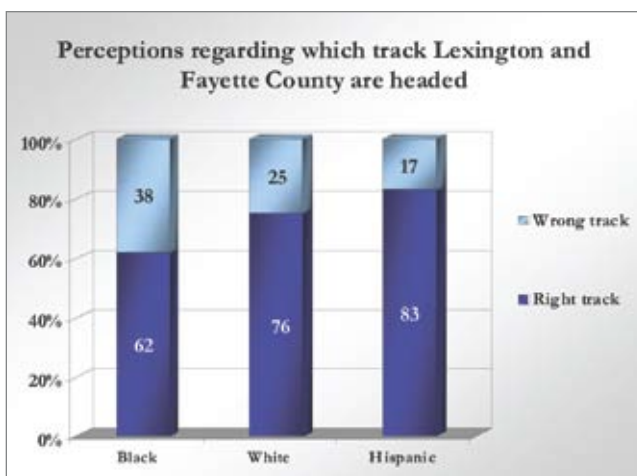
Gender differences also surfaced among Blacks on several questions, particularly as they relate to opportunities available in the community. For example, Black women were more critical of Lexington than Black men when it came to recreational opportunities for children, access to affordable housing, and access to good-paying jobs. ■



QUALITY OF LIFE

One of the first questions that appeared on the survey asked if respondents believed things in Lexington and Fayette County were on the right track or headed in the wrong direction. This question, which is commonly asked on public opinion and political polls, is considered by many to be a good barometer of the overall “mood” of a population.

Overall, while the majority of people surveyed said Lexington was on the right track, Blacks were less likely to agree (62 percent) than were Whites (76 percent) and Hispanics (83 percent).



It’s worth noting that factors related to socio-economic status appear to impact how respondents answered this question. For example, among all three ethnic populations, those with a college degree were more likely to say Lexington is on the right track than were those with a lower level of educational attainment. The same general trend was observed among those working full-time and those in higher income brackets—two segments that were more likely to report things being on the right track.

Respondents also were asked to think ahead five years and to indicate their level of optimism that their family would be better off at that time compared to today. People of color expressed higher levels of optimism on this question than White respondents. Among Blacks, 82 percent said they were optimistic their family would be better off in five years, including 34 percent who were “very optimistic.” Among Whites, 73 percent reported being optimistic, with 24 percent being “very optimistic.”

Hispanics reported the highest level of optimism about their future (87 percent, including 40 percent who were “very optimistic”).

Among Blacks, respondents in the youngest age bracket were among those most optimistic about their future, with 2 out of 3 respondents aged 18-34 saying they were “very optimistic”—twice the average response among all Blacks.

Among the agree/disagree statements included in the survey was, “Lexington is a good place to raise a family,” and the results showed a notable difference of opinion across the three ethnic groups. While less than half of all Black respondents “strongly agreed” with that statement, more than 8 out of 10 Hispanics said the same. Whites’ opinions fell between these two groups, with slightly more than 2 out of 3 respondents agreeing “strongly” with the statement.

Looking only at the Black population, 94 percent of those aged 18-34—64 percent of which have children in their homes—agreed that Lexington is a good place to raise a family, including 53 percent who “strongly” agreed. In contrast, only 80 percent of respondents over the age of 55 said the same; most of these respondents had no children in their homes.

“Families matter in Lexington and each ethnic group has important ideas to offer about raising their family in the city of Lexington as it stands today and their hopes for it in the future.”

Dr. Aaron Thompson, Professor of Sociology, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Eastern Kentucky University

Blacks earning more than \$40,000 in annual household income were more likely to say Lexington is a good place to raise a family when compared to those earning less (94 percent agree versus 84 percent). A similar trend was found among Whites (98 percent agree versus 83 percent). More highly educated Blacks and Whites viewed Lexington as a better place to raise a family than those with lower levels of education. (Blacks: 92 percent agree among those with a college degree versus 76 percent of those with no more than a high school education;

Whites: 97 percent versus 83 percent). It's also noteworthy that Blacks who were native Fayette Countians were more likely to agree that Lexington is a good place to raise a family than were transplants (90 percent compared to 80 percent).

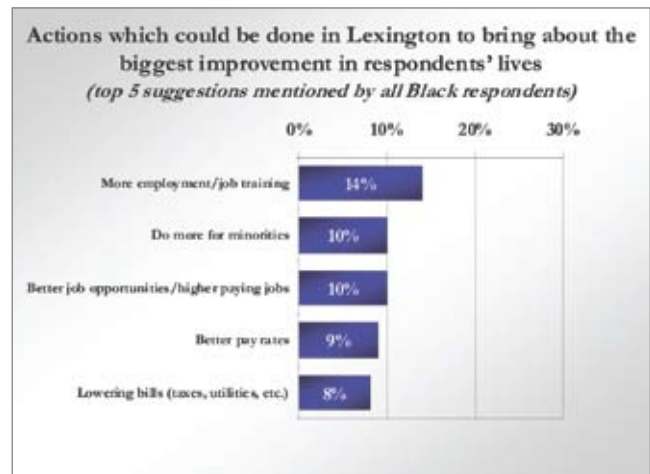
Another agree/disagree statement included on the survey was designed to assess attitudes toward recreational activities for young people, which is a contributing factor to the overall quality of life in one's neighborhood. The statement read: "In my neighborhood, there are a variety of recreational activities in which young people can participate." The survey found significant differences of opinion on the availability of recreational opportunities for area youth when examining results by the three ethnic groups. Four out of 10 Black respondents "strongly" disagreed with this statement, which was more than twice the number of Whites or Hispanics who said the same.

Of note is the fact that Black women were much less likely to agree with this statement than Black men (33 percent compared to 53 percent). In fact, among Black women, 49 percent "strongly" disagreed with the statement.

The results also suggested a strong correlation between socio-economic status and the response to this question. Among those most likely to "strongly disagree" with this statement within the Black population were those earning less than \$15,000 a year in household income (57 percent), those with no more than a high school education (48 percent), those employed part-time (50 percent), and those who rent their homes (50 percent).

To provide additional context to the discussion of the overall quality of life in Lexington, respondents were asked, in general, what could be done that would bring about the biggest

improvement in their own lives. The question was asked in an open-ended fashion, and comments were grouped into broad categories. The following chart shows the top five response categories to this question among Blacks.



A review of the data found notable differences across the three ethnic groups. In fact, only two categories (more employment/job training and lowering bills) appeared in the top 5 list for all three groups. It's also interesting to note that, while there is less concurrence among Blacks—the most frequently mentioned comment was cited by only 14 percent of Black respondents—four of the top five responses were directly tied to jobs or economic concerns. In contrast, among Whites and Hispanics, a broader mixture of concerns surfaced, including traffic complaints (the chief concern among Whites, mentioned by 20 percent of those surveyed) and immigration issues (8 percent—a distant second among Hispanics, with employment and job training being the top issue at 40 percent). ■

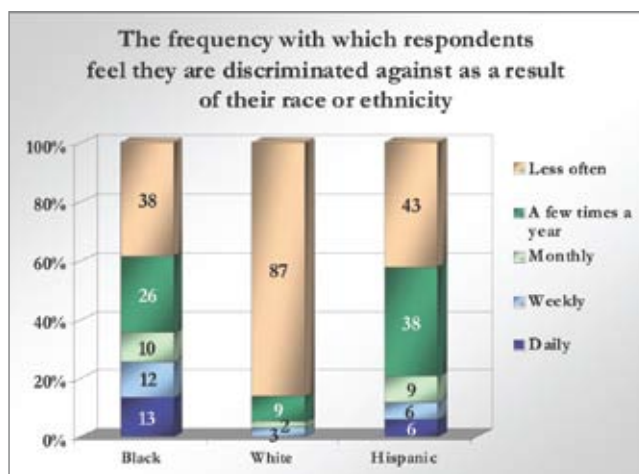
“The results regarding the availability of recreational opportunities are not at all surprising. In 2007, an assessment of community resources was conducted in lower-income areas of the city. The most significant issue was a shortage of non-school hours programming within walking distance of most residents. As a result, Neighborhood Youth Councils were formed under the auspices of Partners for Youth to help shine a spotlight on this situation and work toward making these neighborhoods a better place for young people.”

Larry Johnson, Director of Community Collaboration Initiative, Partners for Youth

EQUALITY AND ISSUES OF RACE

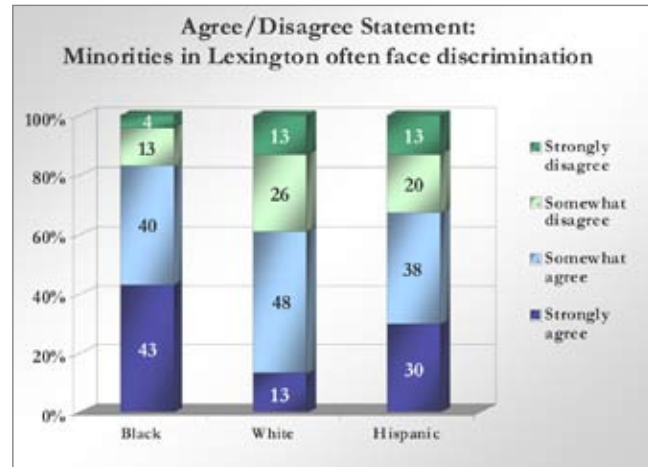
A series of questions included in the latter half of the survey interview centered on issues of race and equality, which are at the very heart of the State of Black Lexington initiative. Understanding the lens through which Fayette Countians view the world as it relates to the concept of equality and racial biases should provide a much more nuanced view of the other attitudinal questions posed in the survey.

One of the more telling findings of the survey is depicted in the chart below. When respondents were asked how often they experience discrimination as a result of their race or ethnicity, more than one third of Blacks said they feel discriminated against on at least a monthly basis, including 13 percent who said they experience discrimination daily. Black males were much more likely to say they feel discriminated against than Black females. One-third of males said they experience discrimination weekly compared to 20 percent of females. In addition, while 45 percent of Black females said they seldom feel like they've been discriminated against, only 28 percent of males said the same. Blacks aged 35 to 44 were more likely than those in other age groups to report frequent discrimination—36 percent reported weekly or daily instances of discrimination. Blacks with no more than a high school diploma were more likely to say that they seldom experience discrimination (48 percent) when compared to their more educated counterparts (32 percent).



Another question also tackled the issue of discrimination and explored whether people believe minorities in Lexington frequently face discrimination. As the chart below demonstrates, opinions differed rather sharply based on one's eth-

nicity. The vast majority of Blacks (83 percent) agreed that minorities in the community often face discrimination, while slightly more than two-thirds of Hispanics said the same.

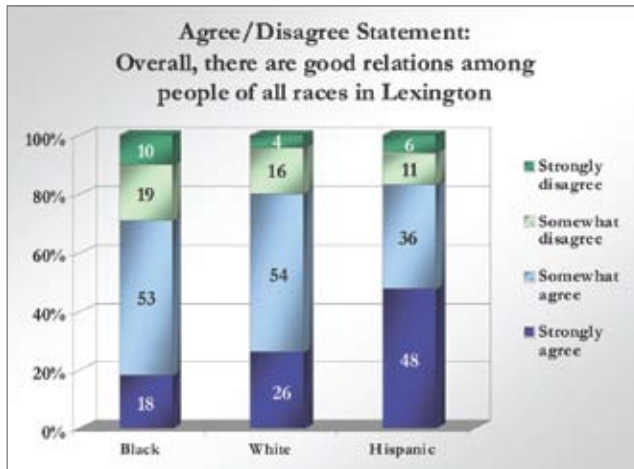


Among Whites, the percentage in agreement was lowest, with 6 out of 10 agreeing with the statement. College-educated Blacks were more likely to agree that frequent discrimination occurs in Lexington when compared to those with only a high school diploma or less (87 percent compared to 78 percent).

Among Whites, when looking at results by age, those aged 45 to 54 were more likely to say that minorities encounter discrimination in Lexington (72 percent) as were those who attended graduate school (71 percent).

When asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that there are good relations among people of all races in Lexington, nearly 3 out of 10 Blacks disagreed. By comparison, 20 percent of Whites and 17 percent of Hispanics disagreed. Of the three ethnic groups, Hispanics were much more likely to view race relations as being positive, with nearly half "strongly" agreeing with the statement.

On the issue of the state of race relations in the community, responses among Blacks varied by age. Those 35 to 44 years old and those 65 and older expressed more positive views concerning race relations than those in other age groups. This was especially true when compared to Blacks in the 45-54 age range, where 17 percent of respondents "strongly" disagreed with the statement.



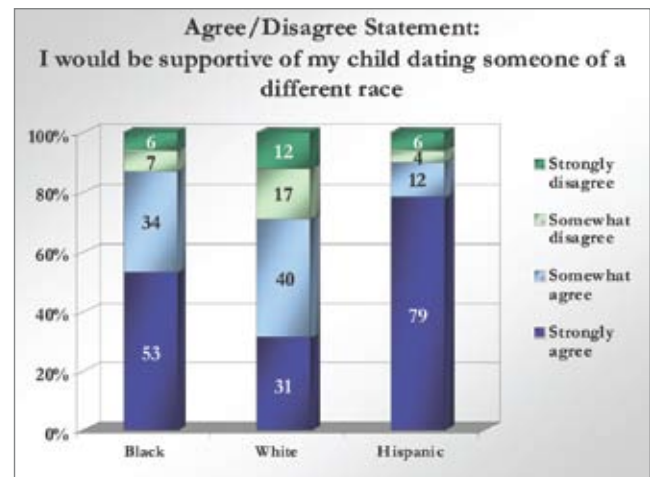
Responses by income among Blacks also varied regarding this statement. Interestingly, while those making under \$15,000 in household income and those earning between \$25,000 and \$40,000 annually responded similarly, those in the income group that fell between those two (\$15,000-\$25,000) were notably different and more inclined to agree with the statement (37 percent agreed “strongly”).

The results also point to a correlation between education and attitudes regarding race relations in the community. As the education level increases, so, too, does the percentage of Blacks agreeing with the statement, ranging from a low of 65 percent among those whose highest level of educational attainment was no more than high school to a high of 80 percent among those who graduated college or went to graduate school.

Also noteworthy is the fact that Blacks who own their own home were more likely to agree with the statement than those who rent (77 percent compared to 65 percent).

Another agree/disagree statement included on the survey was designed to explore attitudes regarding racial tolerance and acceptance by asking people the extent to which they would be supportive of their child dating someone of a different race. Although the majority of people surveyed agreed that they would be supportive, the strength of that support varied rather markedly when looking at results across the three ethnic groups. Nearly 8 out of 10 Hispanics “strongly” agreed that they would support their child dating someone of a different race, while 53 percent of Blacks said the same. The least amount of support for biracial dating was found among Whites, with less than one-third “strongly”

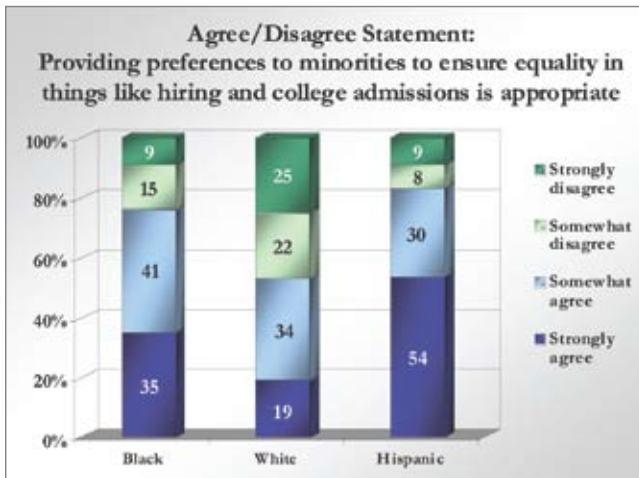
agreeing with the statement and a significant percentage—29 percent—saying they would not support their child dating someone of a different race.



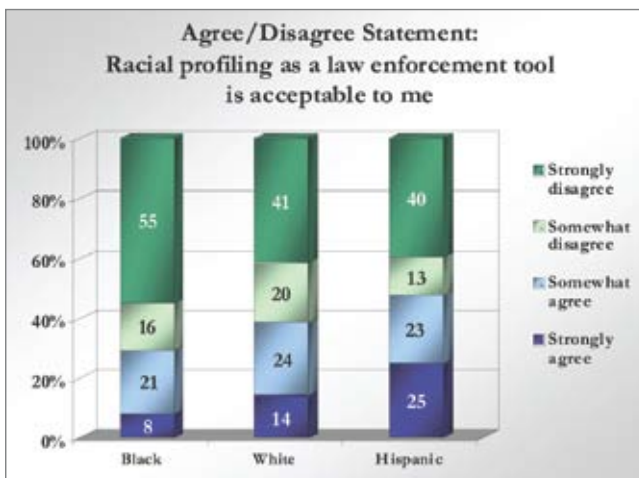
Among Blacks, attitudes regarding biracial dating were relatively consistent across the various demographic markers. One notable standout was that Blacks 65 years old and older were less likely to be supportive of biracial dating than those in other age groups.

Among Whites, age was a significant factor in how people view biracial dating. Those under 45 were notably more likely to agree that they would support their child dating someone of a different race when compared to older Whites (91 percent compared to 63 percent). Well-educated Whites tended to be more supportive of biracial dating than those with no college experience.

Attitudes concerning minority preferences as a way to help ensure equality in matters such as hiring and college admissions were also explored in the survey, and opinions varied widely across ethnic groups. Hispanics favored preferences to minorities more strongly than others—more than half of Hispanics agreed “strongly” that such preferences are appropriate. Although 3 out of 4 Blacks supported preferences, only about one-third “strongly” agreed with the statement. Opinions among Whites were closely divided; a slight majority (53 percent) agreed with the statement, only 19 percent of which agreed “strongly.”



Another question in this series examined attitudes regarding racial profiling as a law enforcement tool. While the majority of all people surveyed were opposed to racial profiling, Whites and Hispanics were more likely to be accepting of it than were Blacks.



Opinions among Blacks varied sharply by age group when it came to this issue. Least likely to agree with the statement concerning racial profiling were those aged 34 to 44 (10 percent), followed by 18 to 34 year olds (22 percent). Most likely to favor racial profiling as a law enforcement tool were Blacks 65 and older, with nearly half (46 percent) agreeing with the statement.

A similar trend was found when examining results by education level, with roughly half as many well-educated Blacks expressing support for racial profiling when compared to those who didn't graduate from college. In like manner, Blacks with household incomes above \$25,000 were less likely to agree with the statement than those with lower incomes.

Also of note is that Blacks who were native Fayette Countians were nearly twice as likely to agree with the statement when compared to those who moved here from elsewhere (37 percent versus 19 percent). Interesting, too, is that Black females were nearly twice as likely to agree that racial profiling is acceptable when compared to Black males (35 percent versus 18 percent).

Among Whites, the older one gets, the more likely he or she is to agree that racial profiling is acceptable. The level of agreement ranged from 14 percent among White respondents under 35 to 51 percent among those 65 years old and older. That same general trend was found among Blacks and Hispanics as well.

In fact, many similar demographic trends were found with regard to racial profiling within each ethnic group. Generally speaking, regardless of race, older, less educated, lower income respondents were more likely to favor racial profiling as a law enforcement tool.

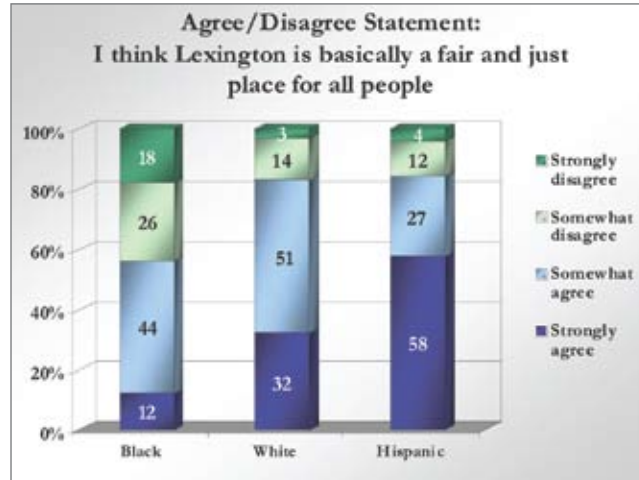
How do people of different races believe they are portrayed by the news media? Only a slim majority of Blacks (56 percent) agreed with the statement, "The local news media does a good job of accurately and fairly portraying people of my race." In contrast, roughly 8 out of 10 Whites said the same. Further, the number of Blacks who "strongly" disagreed with the statement was double the number of Whites (20 percent compared to 10 percent).

The survey found that older Blacks (that is people 65 years old and older), were significantly more likely to agree that the local media does a good job of portraying people of their race (82 percent) than those younger than them.

Looking at results by income, low-income Blacks were more likely to believe the media portrays their race fairly than middle- and upper-income Blacks. Opinions on this statement also varied considerably among Blacks when looking at education levels. Those least likely to agree that Blacks are fairly portrayed in the local media were those who attended, but did not graduate from college, with the majority of those (55 percent) disagreeing with the statement.

When asked if Lexington is basically a fair and just place for all people, opinions varied significantly among the three ethnic groups. Hispanics held the most favorable

view of the community by a notable margin, with 85 percent agreeing with the statement, including nearly 6 out of 10 who “strongly” agreed.



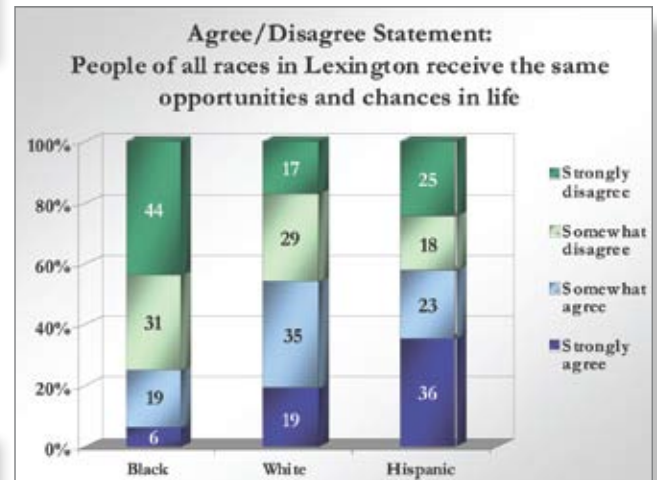
While a similar percentage of Whites agreed with the statement (83 percent), the extent of that agreement waned when compared to Hispanics, with only one-third “strongly” agreeing. However, among Blacks, nearly as many disagreed with the statement (44 percent) as agreed (56 percent). Most notably, nearly 1 in 5 Blacks “strongly” disagreed that Lexington is a fair and just place.



“Based on the data in this document, a significant number of African Americans, relatively speaking, believe they continually experience marginalized lifestyles in Lexington.”

Dr. Roger Cleveland, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Eastern Kentucky University & Dr. Sherwood Thompson, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Eastern Kentucky University Employment

Respondents also were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that people of all races in Lexington receive the same opportunities and chances in life. Blacks did not believe that is the case—3 out of 4 Blacks disagreed with the statement, including nearly half (44 percent) who “strongly” disagreed.



Opinions among both Hispanics and Whites were mixed, although, Hispanics were significantly more likely to “strongly” agree with the statement than other groups.

Black males tended to agree with this statement more than Black females (31 percent compared to 21 percent). In fact, half of all Black females (49 percent) “strongly” disagreed that people of all races in Lexington receive the same opportunities and chances in life. A similar gender trend was found when examining opinions among Whites, with 63 percent of White males agreeing compared to 45 percent of White females. ■

EMPLOYMENT

In order to provide more meaning to the attitudinal questions related to employment, a review of the demographic questions related to the topic is in order.

The table below illustrates the employment status breakouts for each of the three ethnic groups surveyed. It is important to remember that the Hispanic subset skewed heavily toward a younger population. The average age among Hispanic respondents was 37, while the average age for Blacks and Whites was 51 and 58, respectively. This age difference helps explain the vast differences in responses in the “working full-time” and “retired” categories.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
Working full-time	48%	63%	42%
Working part-time	11%	10%	12%
Student	4%	3%	2%
Homemaker	4%	18%	7%
Retired/Disabled	29%	3%	36%
Unemployed and looking for work	5%	4%	2%

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There is also significant disparity when examining household incomes. While one-third of Whites listed incomes in excess of \$75,000, only 10 percent of Blacks and 9 percent of Hispanics said the same. On the other end of the scale, 1 out of 5 Hispanics said their household income was less than \$10,000, which is even more striking given the fact that the average age of the group was 37. In comparison, 1 in 10 Blacks said their household earns less than \$10,000, while only 2 out of 5 Whites said the same.

TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME BEFORE TAXES	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
Less than \$10K	10%	20%	5%
\$10-15K	9%	18%	3%
\$15-25K	15%	29%	6%
\$25-40K	22%	12%	17%
\$40-75K	22%	5%	27%
\$75-100K	8%	4%	17%
More than \$100K	2%	5%	17%
Refused/Don't know	12%	9%	8%

State of Black Lexington Survey: Fall 2008

To explore further the issue of income disparity among respondents in the survey, the table below shows the total household income before taxes among those who said they work full-time.

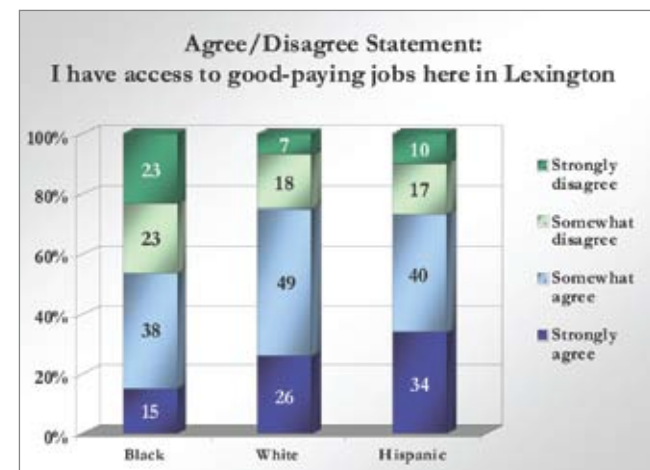
Bear in mind that this is household income and, because the question wasn't posed on the survey, it is not possible to determine if this figure represents one income earner or multiple income earners in the household.

Based on the response to another demographic question on the survey—marital status—one could infer that the Black population consists of fewer dual-income households because the percentages of both “divorced/separated” and “never married” respondents were notably higher among Blacks when compared to the other two ethnic groups. Regardless of the composition of the home and the number of wage earners in it, family income differences are striking.

AMONG RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE A FULL-TIME JOB			
TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME BEFORE TAXES	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
Less than \$10K	6%	13%	2%
\$10-15K	3%	21%	2%
\$15-25K	12%	35%	1%
\$25-40K	28%	10%	18%
\$40-75K	30%	6%	27%
\$75-100K	9%	3%	18%
More than \$100K	4%	6%	28%
Refused/Don't know	7%	6%	4%

State of Black Lexington Survey: Fall 2008

When asked their opinion on whether they have access to good-paying jobs here in Lexington, Hispanics viewed the situation most positively by a slight margin. Blacks, on the other hand, were notably more likely to disagree with the statement, with nearly one-quarter “strongly” disagreeing that they have access to good-paying jobs.



Noteworthy was the fact that Black females were nearly twice as likely to disagree “strongly” with this statement when compared to Black males (29 percent versus 15 percent).

Among Blacks, those more likely to “strongly” disagree bracket (34 percent), people earning less than \$15,000 in household income (43 percent), those without a high school diploma (46 percent), those working only part-time (50 percent), and those who said race relations are not good in Lexington (36 percent). ■

“ The survey results point to a trend that has been observed over the past several years: Blacks continue to lose ground on many key indicators of economic wellbeing, including household income and employment rates. Since the recession began in 2007, Blacks have been especially hard hit when it comes to job losses, with African American males being perhaps the most profoundly affected. ”

P.G. Peoples, President/CEO, Urban League of Lexington-Fayette County

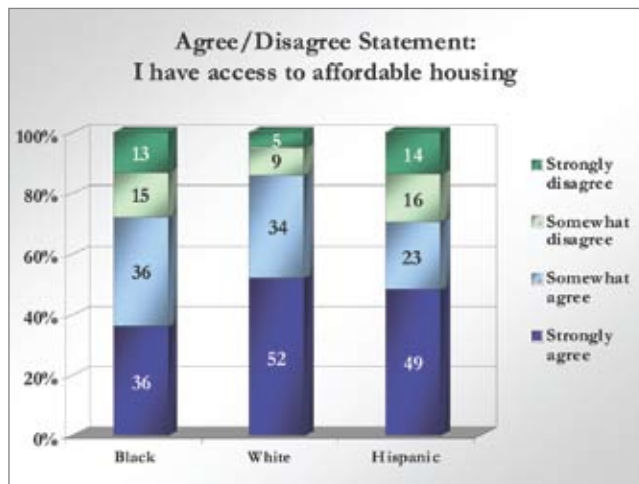
HOUSING

In order to shed more light on the attitudinal question related to housing, the following table shows the percentage of people in each subgroup that owns their home compared to those who rent. Whereas nearly 9 out of 10 Whites own the home they live in, only 6 out of 10 Blacks surveyed said the same. Most striking, however, is the home ownership rate among Hispanics, with only slightly more than one-fourth of respondents reporting that they owned their own home.

OWN OR RENT HOME	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
Own	60%	28%	86%
Rent	39%	72%	14%

State of Black Lexington Survey: Fall 2008

When asked the extent to which they agreed with the statement, “I have access to affordable housing,” Whites were more likely to agree with the statement (including 52 percent that “strongly” agreed) when compared to Blacks and Hispanics.



Important to recognize is that the percentage of Black females who “strongly” disagreed that they have access to affordable housing was nearly triple that found among Black males (17 percent compared to 6 percent).

Blacks aged 45-54 were most likely to agree that they had access to affordable housing (79 percent) when examining results by age breakouts. Least likely to agree were those between the ages of 34 and 44 (68 percent).

When reviewing results by income among Blacks, the percentage that agreed with the statement and had a household income of more than \$40,000 was 86 percent; among those with an income below \$40,000, the percentage that agreed fell sharply to 67 percent. ■

“ According to the Corporation for Enterprise Development, Kentucky ranks 30th in the nation when it comes to homeownership by race, with whites 1.54 times more likely to own their own home than non-whites. Similarly among those polled here in Lexington, 9 out of 10 whites own the home they live in, whereas only 6 of 10 Blacks responded similarly. The data presented in the State of Black Lexington and other sources conclusively points to the need for continued initiatives to redress the lack of affordable housing choices for all citizens of Lexington-Fayette County. ”

Norman P. Franklin, Vice President, Internal Operations—Fayette County Local Development Corporation & Certified Housing Development Finance Professional

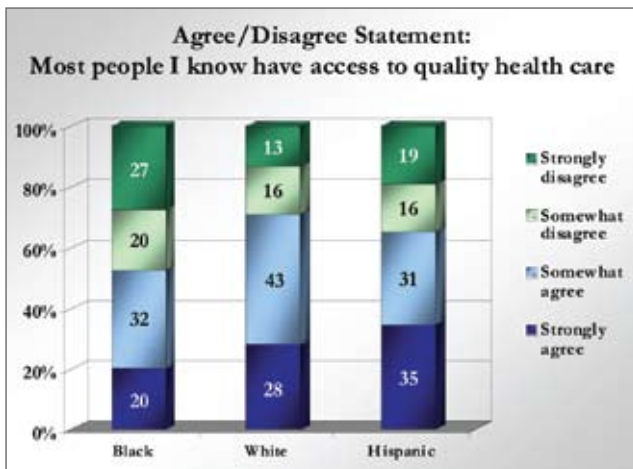
HEALTH CARE

To provide framework for the attitudinal question related to health care, it's important to consider the type of health insurance, if any, respondents in each subgroup had. As the table below shows, 1 out of 10 Blacks has no health insurance at all. By comparison, nearly half of all Hispanics (43 percent) said they have no health insurance, while only 4 percent of Whites reported the same.

HEALTH INSURANCE	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
Private Insurance	56%	41%	59%
Medicare	22%	8%	28%
Medicaid	7%	5%	5%
Veteran's Affairs	3%	1%	5%
None	10%	43%	4%
Refused	2%	3%	1%

State of Black Lexington Survey: Fall 2008

When asked the extent to which they agreed with the statement, "Most people I know have access to quality health care," Whites were the most likely to agree among the three ethnic groups—71 percent compared to 66 percent of Hispanics and 52 percent of Blacks.



Among Black respondents, those between the ages of 18 and 34 were among those most likely to disagree that most people they know have access to quality health care (61 percent disagreed), as were respondents who reported that they work only part-time (77 percent disagreed).

Blacks who are divorced or separated or who have never married were more likely to disagree as well (55 percent and 60 percent, respectively).

When examining results among Blacks by the type of health insurance they have, 64 percent of those on Medicaid and 50 percent of those on Medicare said that most people they know have access to quality health care; 58 percent of Blacks with private insurance said the same. However, among those with no health insurance at all, only 24 percent said people they know have access to quality health care. ■

“Statistics from The Kentucky Behavioral Risk Factors Survey and Surveillance, the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities, and the Centers for Disease Control show that African Americans have more disease, disability and early death than Whites. These results indicate ample reasons to be concerned about the care given to Lexington's African Americans. There remains a significant difference between outcomes to health care regarding African Americans, Latinos, and Whites. Reasons, both local and national, for these differences include; cultural issues, racism, poverty, lack of knowledge about the importance of screening or testing to prevent health problems, inability to get to the doctor, and lack of trust in the medical system.”

Dr. Hazel Forsythe, Associate Professor and Director Dietetic Internship, Department Nutrition and Food Science, University of Kentucky



EDUCATION

The survey points to a sharp educational disparity among the three ethnic subgroups. When comparing educational attainment levels between Blacks and Whites, Blacks were nearly twice as likely not to have attended college (40 percent) when compared to Whites (23 percent). One of the most striking differences, however, occurred among Hispanics—40 percent of respondents did not have a high school (or equivalent) education and a similar percentage (36 percent) made it only as far as high school. Combined, that means that more than 3 out of 4 Hispanics surveyed didn't have any college education.

The percentage of people surveyed who had school-aged children was similar for Blacks (25 percent) and Whites (20 percent). Among Hispanics, the percentage with school-aged children was 54 percent. (Once again, it is important to remember that the Hispanic population skewed much younger than the other two populations, which helps explain the high percentage of Hispanics who reported having children in school.)

Among those with school-aged children, 100 percent of Blacks surveyed said their children attended public schools. In contrast, 20 percent of White families have children who attend private schools.

Although not specifically an education question, the presence of Internet access in the home is a question relevant to the discussion, given the role the Internet plays in one's ability to excel on the educational stage. The survey found that

LAST GRADE COMPLETED IN SCHOOL	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
Less than high school	13%	40%	9%
High school/GED	27%	36%	14%
Some college/Associate's degree	35%	11%	27%
College graduate	19%	10%	25%
Post-graduate study	6%	4%	26%

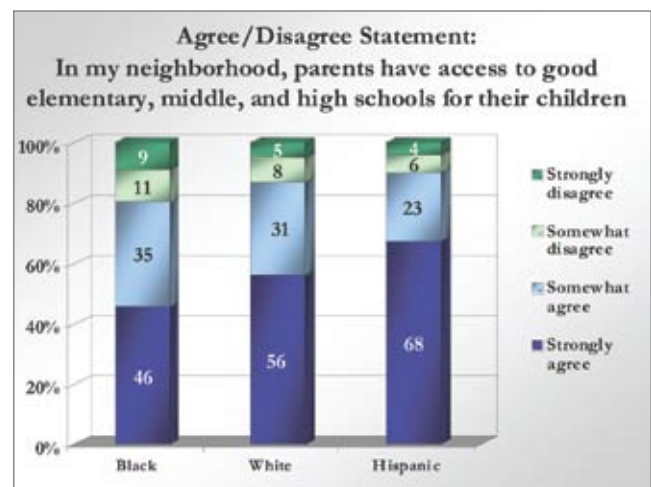
CHILDREN IN K-12TH GRADE	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
Yes	26%	54%	20%
No	74%	46%	14%

INTERNET ACCESS AT HOME	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
Yes	70%	49%	83%
No	30%	51%	17%

Above tables from State of Black Lexington Survey: Fall 2008

nearly one-third of Black households do not have Internet access, while more than half of all Hispanic households don't have it either. By comparison, only 17 percent of White households reported having no access to the Internet.

With regard to education, respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: "In my neighborhood, parents have access to good elementary, middle, and high schools for their children." While most of those surveyed agreed with this statement, the level of agreement varied sharply by ethnic group, as the accompanying chart depicts.



It's worth noting that, while people of color live throughout Fayette County, there is a higher concentration living in particular ZIP codes. Roughly half of all Blacks in the county live in either the 40508 or 40511 ZIP codes, and roughly half of all Hispanics live in either 40504 or 40511. This point raises the question of whether the difference of opinions expressed regarding educational access reflected attitudinal differences when it comes to expectations among the ethnic groups, the quality of education offered within certain schools in Fayette County, or some combination of both since the question included the phrase, "in my neighborhood."

Regardless of race, respondents with school-aged children were less likely to agree with the statement when compared to those without children in school.

Another agree/disagree statement measured attitudes about educational opportunities beyond high school. More than one-quarter of both Blacks (27 percent) and

Hispanics (28 percent) interviewed said that young people they know don't have access to many educational opportunities following high school.

In comparison, only 11 percent of Whites said the same. It is noteworthy, however, that more than 4 out of 10 people interviewed—regardless of race—agreed “strongly” that young people in Lexington do have a range of higher education options available to them.

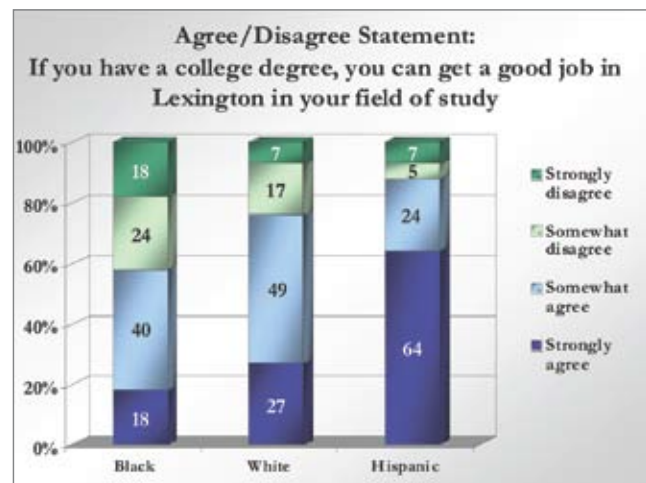
“One interesting observation about the responses in the report is the perceptions of educational opportunities in Lexington. All ethnic groups in Lexington have their sense of how education prepares them and their children for a better life. Some are leery about the school system; many African American parents believe educational attainment may not increase their children's chances of securing promising jobs and futures. Moreover, a number of African Americans believe that their children are not treated fairly in the Fayette County Schools. When juxtaposed with other school districts of similar size, the Fayette County School System compares well as it relates to student achievement among African American students. Nevertheless, many would agree that there is plenty of room for reform.”

Dr. Roger Cleveland, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Eastern Kentucky University & Dr. Sherwood Thompson, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Eastern Kentucky University

Among both Blacks and Hispanics, there was some variance of opinion by age group, with older respondents being more likely to agree with the statement than younger respondents. Most notably, a majority (52 percent) of Black respondents aged 35-44 disagreed with this statement.

When looking at Black respondents by their level of educational attainment, those least likely to agree with the statement were college graduates, with 18 percent “strongly” disagreeing that young people have access to an array of educational opportunities beyond high school.

When asked whether they believed a college degree meant you could get a good job in Lexington in your field of study, Hispanics were far and away more optimistic about one's chances of landing a job with a college diploma, with nearly two-thirds agreeing “strongly” with the statement. By comparison, only 27 percent of Whites and 18 percent of Blacks said the same. As the figure below also shows, a significant number of Blacks (42 percent) disagreed with the statement, including 18 percent who “strongly” disagreed.



Some striking demographic trends were noted. Among Blacks, younger respondents were much more optimistic about a college degree leading to a good job in Lexington when compared to older respondents. One-third of Blacks aged 18-34 “strongly” agreed with the statement, which was double the percentage of Blacks 55 and older who said the same (16 percent).

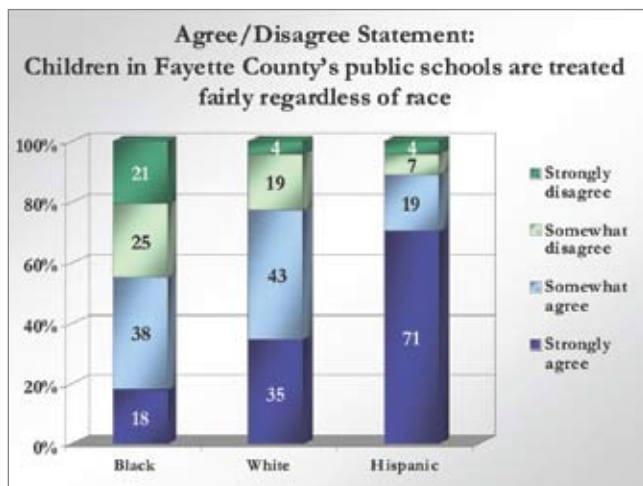
“All citizens are aware that the educational success of children has a profound impact on the economic, political, and health status and other lifestyle factors of African Americans. Social barriers to educational opportunities can fragment the fragile relationships between African Americans and the larger White community in Lexington.”

Dr. Roger Cleveland, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Eastern Kentucky University & Dr. Sherwood Thompson, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Eastern Kentucky University

When examining results by income among Blacks, findings were relatively consistent across the categories, except for those earning \$25,000 to \$40,000. In that group, only 44 percent agreed with the statement, which is about 20 points lower than other Blacks.

Also of note is the fact that Blacks who have a college degree were more likely to disagree with the notion that such a degree will lead to a good job in Lexington. Among Blacks, those who did not finish high school were also somewhat more inclined to believe a college degree wouldn't necessarily lead to a good job.

Another statement regarding education sought to assess attitudes regarding racial disparity in the public school system. When respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that “children in Fayette County’s public schools are treated fairly regardless of race,” the results were dramatically different across the three ethnic groups. Whereas 9 out of 10 Hispanics agreed with the statement—including a significant 71 percent who “strongly” agreed—and 3 out of 4 Whites agreed with the statement, only slightly more than half (56 percent) of Blacks said the same. Further, when looking at the other end of the agreement scale, it is found that the percentage of Blacks who “strongly” disagreed with the statement was five times greater than the percentage of Whites and Hispanics.



Among Blacks, while some variance is seen, perhaps the most notable trend was the fact that attitudes were relatively consistent across all demographic subgroups. The one noteworthy exception was seen when looking

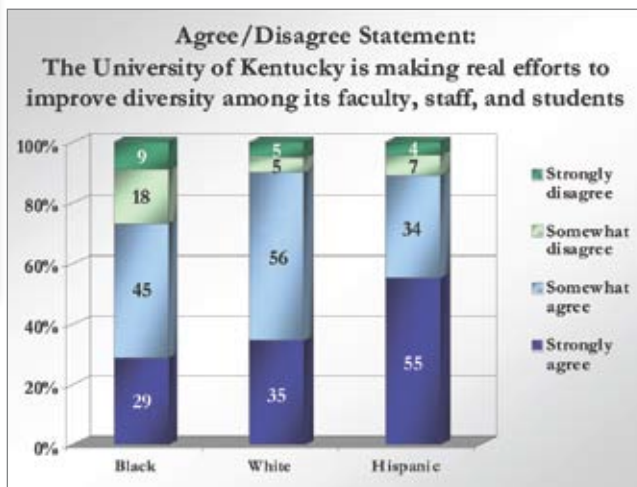
at results across the various educational levels. Blacks who graduated college were twice as likely to disagree “strongly” with the statement (34 percent) when compared to everyone else.

Not surprising is the fact that 65 percent of Blacks who see race relations as good in the community agreed that children in school are treated fairly regardless of their race, and that the pendulum swings in the opposite direction for those who believe race relations are not good in Lexington, with 71 percent disagreeing with the statement.

Like Blacks, Whites who view race relations in Lexington as being good were more likely to believe there is little disparity in the school system based on race (80 percent agreed that children are treated fairly regardless of race), while only 59 percent of those who consider race relations poor said the same.

Two questions concerning the University of Kentucky and its efforts to improve both diversity within its ranks and race relations in the community were included in the study.

When asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement, “The University of Kentucky is making real efforts to improve diversity among its faculty, staff, and students,” overall, the majority of those surveyed agreed. However, it is notable that more than 1 out of 4 Blacks (27 percent) disagreed with the statement, compared to only about 1 out of 10 Whites and Hispanics. Also, when looking at the strength of agreement among those who viewed the University positively on this measure, it is found that Hispanics were much more likely to agree “strongly” with the statement than were either Blacks or Whites.





Blacks under the age of 45 were less likely to agree that UK is making real efforts to improve diversity than those over 45 (66 percent compared to 77 percent).

The opposite was true among Whites—96 percent of Whites under 45 agreed with the statement, while 86 percent of those over 45 said the same. Also of note is the fact that Blacks who attended college were less likely to agree with the statement than those who have no higher education experience (70 percent compared

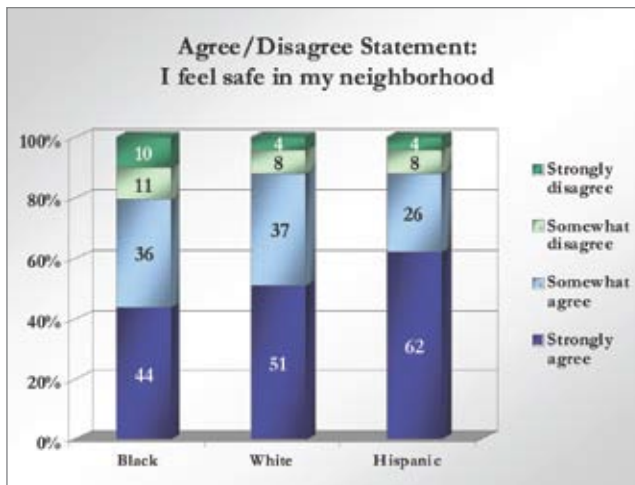
to 79 percent). The other question concerning UK assessed whether Fayette Countians view the institution as a leader in improving race relations in the community. Among Blacks, opinions were closely split on this issue, with 56 percent agreeing that the University is a leader in that regard. Opinions among Whites and Hispanics were much more one-sided—roughly 9 out of 10 Whites and Hispanics saw UK as a leader in improving race relations in the community. ■

“Unmistakably, this study insinuates that there needs to be a serious, ongoing discussion among the African American community and the larger Lexington community when it comes to educating our young people in a fair and equitable manner.”

Dr. Roger Cleveland, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Eastern Kentucky University & Dr. Sherwood Thompson, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Eastern Kentucky University

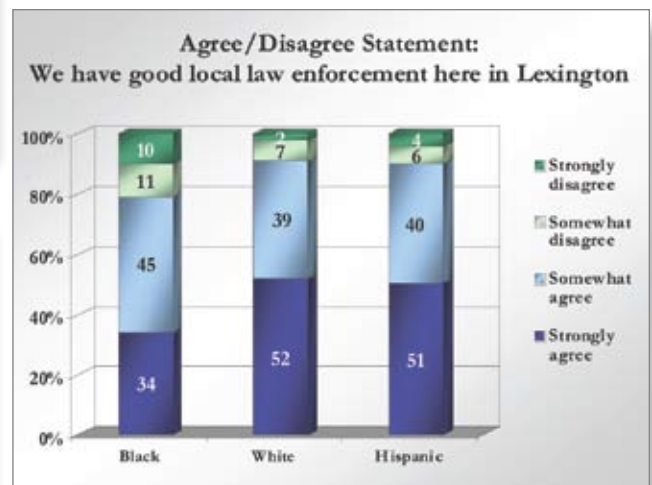
SAFETY

When asked if they felt safe in their neighborhoods, the vast majority of all respondents agreed that they did, although, there was variance among the ethnic groups. Those most likely to “strongly” agree with the statement were Hispanics at 62 percent, followed by Whites at 51 percent and then Blacks at 44 percent. It’s also important to note that, while only 12 percent of both Whites and Hispanics disagreed with the statement, more than 1 out of 5 Blacks said the same.



Results point to a correlation between socio-economic status and the extent of one’s agreement with this statement. For example, respondents in higher income categories—regardless of race—were more likely to agree with the statement than those in lower income categories. Among both Blacks and Whites, similar trends also were evident when looking at results by education level, employment status, and home ownership.

Another agree/disagree statement related to safety measured the extent to which people in Lexington believe they have good local law enforcement. Results were somewhat similar to the statement regarding neighborhood safety, especially when looking at the White population. Among both Blacks and Hispanics, the percentage in “strong” agreement was about 10 points lower on this statement than the one which asked how safe people feel in their neighborhoods.

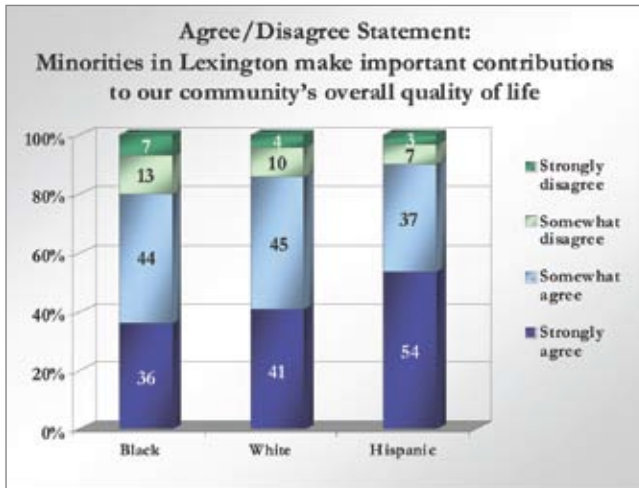


Noteworthy is the fact that Black males were more likely to agree than were Black females that Lexington has good local law enforcement (83 percent compared to 76 percent).

Within the Black population, those less likely to agree with the statement included those under the age of 35 (67 percent agree), people earning \$25,000 to \$40,000 a year in household income (69 percent agree), respondents who didn’t graduate from high school (69 percent), and those who believe race relations in the community are poor (69 percent). ■

MINORITIES AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

Another statement included on the survey explored whether Lexingtonians believe that minorities in the community make important contributions to the overall quality of life. The vast majority of people surveyed agreed that minorities do make important contributions in Lexington. The level of agreement ranged from 80 percent among Blacks to 91 percent among Hispanics; Whites were in the middle at 86 percent.



Of interest is the fact that Blacks 65 and older agreed more with this statement (90 percent) than those in other age groups. Least likely to agree, by age, were Blacks 45 to 54 years old, 70 percent of which agreed with the statement.

Also, Blacks in the lower education categories didn't agree with the statement as much as those with college experience did.

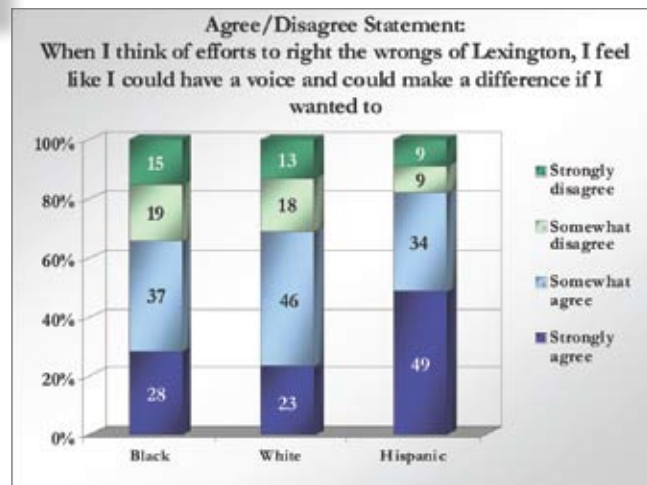
Blacks who are married were notably more likely to agree that minorities make important contributions to the community than those who are divorced, separated, or never married.

When looking at results by age group among Whites, those 65 and older were least likely to agree with the statement (81 percent), while those under the age of 35 were most likely to agree (96 percent).

Another statement in the survey sought to assess whether people felt empowered to be a part of the solution to fix what ails Lexington. As the figure below suggests, Whites and Blacks shared similar attitudes on this measure, while



Hispanics were significantly more likely to agree (particularly when looking at the percentage who "strongly" agreed) that they feel like they have a voice and could make a difference if they so desired.



Among Blacks, respondents aged 35 to 54 said they weren't as confident about their ability to make a difference in the community when compared to those both younger and older than them. Among Blacks, those whose highest level of education is a high school diploma were more likely to agree (78 percent) they can make a difference than those who went farther in school. ■

Parting thoughts

I want to commend the State of Black Lexington initiative for seeking to ascertain the thoughts and experiences of African Americans in the city of Lexington. For too long, blacks in this city have lived on the margins of this society. Socially, politically, and economically, African Americans have, either by circumstance or by choice, had to create a world of their own to protect their interests and promote their causes. This report will hopefully facilitate the need for more discussion and action surrounding issues of race, class, gender, and ethnicity with the intent to make all aspects of the city more inclusive and equitable.

The research methodology is commendable and clearly sought to include opinions of distinct segments of the community. While the findings indicate Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics view Lexington “through different lenses,” it also reveals intra-racial differences of opinion as reflected in the different views of black men and women and their different age groups. I believe the most important voice registered in this report is that of black women. Their concern for more recreational opportunities for children and having access to good-paying jobs and affordable housing indicates there is a growing concern within and among black families that must be addressed.

The report also indicates that living in Lexington offers a strange paradox for African Americans. For example, a significant percentage of African Americans believe Lexington is a “good place to raise a family,” but 1 in 5 “strongly” disagreed that “Lexington is a fair and just place.” Why is this so? Perhaps the answer lies deep within the history of this community. Unlike cities of the deeper South, there has always been a level of civility between black and white Lexingtonians. At times, racial tensions have risen to the surface but most often the two groups have lived in their respective spaces without incident.

Generally speaking, the report serves as a reminder of the lingering effects of de jure and de facto segregation on the Lexington community. The second half of the 20th century was a challenging and frustrating period for all African Americans but it injected an unparalleled optimism for succeeding generations. While the continued frustrations and concerns of blacks in Lexington cannot be easily measured in statistics and graphs, the report ends on a note of optimism: African Americans believe in this community and that they possess the talent and skills to make it an even better one. ■

Gerald L. Smith, Ph.D.
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General Co-Editor,
Kentucky African American Encyclopedia Project
University of Kentucky



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LFUCG- OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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PARTNERS FOR YOUTH

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UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY:
AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES & RESEARCH PROGRAM,
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST, AND
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

URBAN LEAGUE OF LEXINGTON-FAYETTE COUNTY



RESOURCES

For additional information regarding various topics discussed in this report,
The State of Black Lexington recommends the following resources:

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) www.naacp.org

National Urban League www.nul.org

Urban League of Lexington-Fayette County www.ullexfay.org

Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission www.lfuchrc.org

African American Studies & Research Program, University of Kentucky www.uky.edu/AS/AASRP/

Fayette County School Equity Report <http://www.fcps.net/administration/departments/equity-council>

2009 Disproportionate Minority Confinement Report www.lexingtonky.gov/partnersforyouth

Race, Community and Child Welfare Data Profile for Fayette County http://www.lfuchrc.org/Diversity_Directory/Diversity_Directory.htm#RCCW

Undoing Racism Workshops, conducted by The People Institute www.pisab.org

RACE — The Power of an Illusion film series http://www.pbs.org/race/000_General/000_00-Home.htm

Unnatural Causes documentary www.unnaturalcauses.org

For a PDF of this report, please visit www.ullexfay.org



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