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**INTER-METROPOLITAN MIGRATION AND LOCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FOR
AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES, 1970-1990**

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ABSTRACT

Throughout the 20th Century African Americans have used migration as a strategy for improving their residential environments and increasing their access to social and economic opportunities. This strategy has taken many forms, including: movement from the southern countryside to nearby towns and cities; interregional migration from the South to northern cities; and, more recently, return migration to the South, and middle class “flight” from inner-cities. This paper considers the success of one type of mobility by non-southern African American males – migration between metropolitan areas. Using census data for 1970, 1980, and 1990 we examine changes in four locational characteristics of metropolitan areas (black male unemployment, black family structure, residential segregation, and violent crime) during two

time periods (1975-80 and 1985-90). Three groups of black males are identified: (1) those who remained in the same non-southern metropolitan area during the five-year period, (2) those who moved to a different non-southern metropolitan area, and (3) those who moved to a southern metropolitan area. Our findings show that mobile black males fared significantly better than those who did not move, and that migrants to the South enjoyed greater locational improvements than those who moved within the North.

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