

The many faces of success, marriage

Mixed-race couples are on the rise, topping same-race counterparts in earnings, education

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They embody the elements of modern-day success — young, urban, educated and loaded.

Mixed-race couples have been on the rise in Canada since the early 1990s and according to a new Statistics Canada study released Tuesday, they are doing better socio-economically than those who marry within their own race.

Based on 2006 Census data, mixed couples, with a median family income of \$74,670 a year, made \$5,000 more than non-mixed couples, who earned \$69,830.

While those who marry within the same visible minority group earned just \$53,710, the lowest of all groups, the highest earners, making \$76,150, were couples in which a visible minority was married to a Caucasian.

Mixed-race couples are also more highly educated. Among Canadian couples with a university degree, 6.4 per cent were in mixed unions. Of those with a high school degree or less, 1.8 per cent were mixed cou-



Elisa Marcucci, with husband Headley Hamilton, believes "as years and generations go by, we will all be so mixed and diluted that racism will not be so prevalent and strong."

ples.

"Given that many visible minority group members are recent immigrants — who are generally more highly educated than the Canadian-born population — this could also be related to the tendency for per-

sons in mixed unions to have higher levels of education," said the report, titled *A Portrait of Couples in Mixed Unions*.

Oakville lawyer Carina DelFrate, a Canadian-born Filipina who is married to Rob DelFrate, an Italian

from Sudbury, said mixed couples are very accepted in urban Canada.

"It's a benefit for my kids to grow up with this diversity and open-mindedness to different cultures, views and opinions," said the 35-year-old mother of two.

Overall, 3.9 per cent, or 289,400 of Canada's 7.5 million couples, were mixed unions, representing a 33 per cent jump from 2001.

Some 247,600 of mixed unions were between those who belonged to a visible minority group paired with a Caucasian. An additional 41,800 couples were made up of people of two different visible minority groups, up almost 50 per cent from 2001.

Although visible minority men and women were equally likely to be in a mixed union, gender differences were found within ethnic groups. For instance, Arab, West Asian, black or South Asian men had higher proportions of mixed unions compared with women from those communities.

Similarly, three in 10 black men were in mixed unions versus two out of 10 black women.

Toronto real estate agent Elisa Marcucci, a Canadian-born Italian, is married to her engineer husband, Headley Hamilton, a Jamaican French-Canadian. The couple is proud to raise their daughter, Simona, 1, and son, Luca, 4, in a multicultural household.

"I always believe at some point, as years and generations go by, we will all be so mixed and diluted that racism will not be so prevalent and strong," said Marcucci, 39.

3.9%
Percentage of couples in mixed unions

6.4%
Percentage of couples with a university education in mixed unions

1.8%
Percentage of mixed couples with high school degree or less

2006 Census, Statistics Canada