ETHNIC RESIDENTIAL CONCENTRATIONS WITH ABOVE-AVERAGE INCOMES¹

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Abstract: Are residents of ethnic concentrations necessarily poor? We tested this notion with Census 2000 data for Asian and Latino households in the New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco CMSAs. Ethnic concentrations included all census tracts in which the group comprised over 40% of the population. While many residential concentrations had low incomes, 11% of concentrated Latinos and 57% of concentrated Asians had incomes above their metropolitan medians for all households. Moreover, 18% of concentrated Asians lived in tracts with incomes at least 50% higher than the metropolitan medians. Higher-income residents within concentrations were more likely to be U.S.-born and proficient in English. Thus scholars need to revise the widespread view that people living in ethnic concentrations are poor. Many Asians and Latinos who can afford homes in mostly White neighborhoods prefer to live where both Whites and their group are well represented. [Key words: ethnic, immigrant, concentration, enclave, income, acculturation.]

Theory, historical evidence, and widely held perceptions suggest that immigrant-based ethnic residential concentrations in the United States should be found only in poor areas of cities. However, because scattered occurrences of residential clustering by higher-income immigrants and their children have been reported, scholars have begun to question the longstanding, widely held view that the economic success and acculturation of an immigrant-based ethnic group necessarily leads to the group's residential dispersal. In this study we investigate this matter directly by measuring the extent to which above-average income levels and substantial acculturation are found within ethnic residential concentrations.

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN RESIDENTIAL CONCENTRATION AND LOW LEVELS OF INCOME AND ACCULTURATION

The view that ethnic concentrations should be found only in low-income areas derives partly from European immigrant settlement patterns a century ago, during the first major period of immigration to the United States. Immigrants, who were typically poor and lacking in English-language and job skills, often clustered residentially with others of their group for mutual support in neighborhoods where rents were low and jobs accessible

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by foot or mass transit. In Chicago, such neighborhoods were closely observed by sociologists Park, Burgess, and McKenzie, who developed approaches for studying urban neighborhoods and their changes that later, together with the work of their students on numerous other cities, became known as the Chicago School of urban ecology (Park et al., 1925). Ethnic neighborhoods and their inhabitants evolved, however, over the course of decades and generations. After substantial acculturation and economic success, some of the immigrants and most of their children and grandchildren left the old ethnic neighborhoods and dispersed into suburbs that were assumed to have no ethnic residential concentrations. These various processes were synthesized and formalized by Massey (1985) into what has been called the Spatial Assimilation Model or Immigrant Spatial Assimilation Theory, which has been usefully applied to many North American cities. Essentially, Immigrant Spatial Assimilation Theory is multigenerational, with spatial assimilation of residence outside the ethnic neighborhood occurring after or at the same time as cultural and economic assimilation.

The years in which poor Europeans dominated immigrant flows to the United States ended in the 1920s. Since the late 1940s, immigration has grown again substantially. In one respect the new immigrants are similar to those of a century ago in that many lack the education or skills to prepare them for the better jobs in this country; they also frequently live in lower-income ethnic concentrations of their group, just as European immigrants once did.

In other ways the characteristics of immigrants have changed greatly. Contemporary immigrants represent a much more diverse set of countries of origin, partly the result of dramatic changes in immigration law instituted first in 1965 in the United States. Economic growth and new technologies have transformed many aspects of North America as older cities expanded into a metropolis marked by myriad suburbs. The net effect has been a much greater diversity of employment opportunities for Americans and immigrants. There have also been major changes within most countries around the globe and increasing trade and contact among them. As urbanizing populations in Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and elsewhere have become more educated and aware of potential opportunities outside their countries, migrations of these better educated and affluent immigrants to North America have increased. Today many immigrants arrive with high levels of education and familiarity with the English language as well as financial support provided by families back home. Immigration law also provides special opportunities for immigrants with advanced technical training and experience in sectors of the economy in high demand. Chinese, Asian Indians, and other Asians have frequently been the immigrant and temporary-visa workers able to take advantage of such opportunities in engineering and other computer-based sectors.

Of direct importance for the research question we pose is the fact that many immigrants during the past few decades arrived with sufficient money or education to move into the U.S. middle class, either initially or within a decade or two after arrival (Clark, 2003). Such immigrants have generally been able to avoid living for any length of time in low-income concentrations of their ethnic group.

Although the residential choices of immigrants who are economically successful immediately or soon after arrival do not fit neatly into Immigrant Spatial Assimilation Theory because they did not arrive in poverty, scholars have generally expected them to be residentially dispersed like others who became successful only after many years of

work. However, most immigrants who have lived in the United States for only a short time are probably nowhere near as acculturated to the United States as they are economically successful. They, as well as some of the other immigrants who moved up the economic ladder in this country, might reasonably prefer the greater levels of cultural comfort found in residential concentrations of their group if these were found outside poor areas. In other words, it may be wrong to assume that cultural and spatial assimilation has followed from apparent economic assimilation. The likely presence of many immigrant families who are not fully comfortable in the average middle-class, mostly White U.S. neighborhood, or who wish to continue strong daily ties with their own people and culture of origin is the impetus behind the research reported here.

Only during the past 20 years have scholars begun to consider the possibility that middle-income and more affluent ethnic concentrations could exist. Indeed, the numbers of immigrants of different cultural origin have become large enough in many metropolitan areas for such concentrations to develop. Accordingly, some scholars have questioned whether any residential concentration is needed for the functioning of a middle-class ethnic community today, considering the improved communication and transportation within metropolitan areas and the fact that many immigrants now arrive with at least some familiarity with the English language and U.S. culture (Zelinsky and Lee, 1998). Nevertheless, because most U.S. metropolitan areas of more than one million people do contain ethnic concentrations as of 2000 (Allen and Turner, 2005), Immigrant Spatial Assimilation Theory may well be applicable to contemporary ethnic groups that have grown through immigration since the 1960s.

In testing aspects of Immigrant Spatial Assimilation Theory, research has generally confirmed the theoretical expectation that residence outside an ethnic concentration is related to increased socioeconomic status, a finding that seems to characterize most Canadian as well as United States places (Allen and Turner, 1996; Alba and Nee, 1999; Alba et al., 2000; Logan et al., 2002; Myles and Hou, 2004; South et al., 2005; Wright et al., 2005; Clark, 2006; Walks and Bourne, 2006). In other words, members of ethnic groups living outside ethnic concentrations tend to have greater educational attainment, better jobs, and/or higher incomes than members of the same groups living within ethnic concentrations. Although most of the large body of research on residential segregation does not distinguish populations in terms of socioeconomic status, in one major study across all U.S. metropolitan areas Asians and Hispanics of higher socioeconomic status were found to be less segregated from Whites than lower-status members of the same ethnic groups (Iceland and Wilkes, 2006). This, too, is consistent with widespread findings that most residents of ethnic concentrations have lower incomes than those living outside concentrations.

Also consistent with these findings is the long-term and widespread public perception that Black, Latino, and Asian residential concentrations are poor areas with interrelated social problems. Until the past few decades, the dominant White society had mostly restricted these groups to such concentrations, often called ghettos for that reason. Thus the historical and theoretical association between immigrant-based ethnic concentrations and poverty as well as most Americans' awareness of the existence of poor Black, Asian, and Latino concentrations makes it hard to imagine that some immigrants and their children who could afford to live elsewhere would be living in these residential concentrations.

Research has also shown that residents of ethnic concentrations are generally less acculturated to English-speaking U.S. culture than members of the same groups living outside concentrations. The effects are not always large but the tendency has been fairly consistent. Sometimes such acculturation is indicated indirectly, based on the assumption that being born in the United States or, for immigrants, more years spent in this country leads toward greater acculturation. Most studies have found higher percentages of foreign-born (immigrants) living in ethnic concentrations than outside such concentrations (Allen and Turner, 1996; Logan et al., 2002; Myles and Hou, 2004; Ellis et al., 2006; Walks and Bourne, 2006). A more direct measure of acculturation is English-language proficiency. Here, too, the above studies have shown that members of ethnic groups who live inside concentrations generally use English less and are not as proficient in it than members of the same groups living outside concentrations.

Based on these findings and on the underlying Immigration Spatial Assimilation Theory, the percentage of a neighborhood's population that is White has sometimes been used to indicate the level of an individual's or an ethnic group's acculturation (also called cultural assimilation) and economic assimilation. Under this assumption, living in a neighborhood with a high percentage of Whites has been viewed as a measure of economic success. There has been some empirical support for this view, especially in studies based on the 1980 or 1990 censuses (Alba and Logan, 1993; Alba et al., 2000). However, Wright and Ellis (2000) and Hou (2007) have cautioned against using percentage White in this way, and this present study also questions the assumption that neighborhoods containing higher White percentages are necessarily superior.

CONTRARY INDICATIONS OF RESIDENTIAL CONCENTRATIONS OUTSIDE POOR AREAS

Despite findings that still associate ethnic concentration with low income and low acculturation, there have been significant exceptions. In Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco there are "notable examples of affluent and multiethnic enclave neighborhoods" (Hum and Zonta, 2000, p. 213), and in San Francisco "affluent Chinese homeowners were often clustered in neighborhoods of their own group" (Pamuk, 2004, p. 305). A concentrated Japanese immigrant population of urban professionals, students, and artists resides in the East Village of New York's Manhattan (Miyares et al., 2000). In Columbus, Ohio, incipient ethnic concentrations have appeared in neighborhoods representing a wide range of socioeconomic status, including higher-status new developments on the urban fringe (Chung and Brown, 2007).

In addition, in large comparative studies the general association between residential concentration and lower levels of income and acculturation was occasionally found to be inconsistent or weak. The median income of residentially concentrated immigrant Mexican and Central American males in the Los Angeles CMSA was very similar to the income of more dispersed males in the same ethnic group, and among Japanese those in a residential concentration had higher incomes than those living outside one (Allen and Turner, 1996). In other research covering the New York and Los Angeles CMSAs, there were a few cases among the 15 immigrant groups studied in which the median income of residents of ethnic concentrations was slightly higher than it was for members of the same group outside a concentration (Logan et al., 2002). A similar study found that the income

of immigrant households of eight different national origins was a very weak and inconsistent predictor of the likelihood of households' location in a residential concentration of their ethnic group (Ellis et al., 2006). In Canada, there are also exceptions, both by place and ethnic group, to the association between low income and high levels of ethnic concentration (Walks and Bourne, 2006). The most notable of these entails Toronto's affluent Chinese whose ethnic concentration is strong, including both recent arrivals and long-term residents (Myles and Hou, 2004).

A factor in the inconsistencies of research results may have been the presence for a single ethnic group of two or more concentrations that differ in status. For example, in Los Angeles the very-low-income Chinese concentration in historic Chinatown and the large Chinese concentration or "ethnoburb" in the moderately priced suburb of Monterey Park are well known (Li, 1999), but there also are more affluent Chinese concentrations in the East San Gabriel Valley and in Cerritos.

Therefore, the association between ethnic concentration and low income is weaker and more variable than theory or general findings would suggest. What can account for these exceptions? In the next section we ask why some members of ethnic groups whose finances appear to provide a high level of residential choice might live within a residential concentration of their group.

EXPLAINING ETHNIC CONCENTRATIONS WITH ABOVE-AVERAGE LEVELS OF INCOME AND ACCULTURATION

If we find ethnic concentrations in which residents have above-average incomes, the explanation for their presence is not immediately obvious. A large body of research indicates the explanation should conceivably involve some combination of the following: (1) prejudice and discrimination in the housing market, including differential ethnic steering by realtors, that tend to keep minorities in already established ethnic neighborhoods regardless of their ability to afford housing outside those areas; (2) minority preference for living near members of the same ethnic group and avoidance of areas in which certain other groups are prominent; (3) minority preference for locating in areas with special non-ethnic amenities, such as newer housing or excellent schools. Individual ethnic households presumably achieve either in-group preferences or amenity preferences through shared ethnic social networks.

Chung and Brown (2007) have recently highlighted the scholarly controversy over whether the explanation for contemporary and recently developed ethnic concentrations should place more emphasis on discrimination or in-group preferences. Although our study was not designed to investigate the explanation for ethnic concentrations with above-average income, other research can shed light on the more likely factors involved. We look first at the role of discrimination.

Discrimination

Given the long history of racial discrimination in various aspects of the housing market, it seems reasonable to think that discrimination would play a role in restricting even Asians and Latinos with above-average incomes to certain neighborhoods. With respect to mortgage lenders, there is evidence of some discrimination against minorities in terms

of higher interest rates charged, often through subprime lending (Williams et al., 2005); and Latinos in Los Angeles who applied for mortgages were more likely to receive the loan if it was for a home in a predominantly Latino area (Reibel, 2000). Nevertheless, the extent to which lending practices resulted in geographically restricting the residences of Asian and Latino applicants with above-average incomes is not known.

Potentially of greater significance in explaining ethnic concentrations with above-average incomes is possible differential treatment of potential Asian and Latino renters and homebuyers compared to Whites by realtors, managers, or other agents. According to the most thorough nationwide study measuring discrimination of this type, discrimination persists but during the 1990s it diminished greatly, except for Latinos in the rental housing market (Ross and Turner, 2005). Intensive study of a medium-sized metropolitan area (Columbus, Ohio) also showed that discrimination occurred occasionally but was the exception rather than the rule (Brown and Chung, 2008).

In the testing procedure of the nationwide study (Ross and Turner, 2005), individual Whites were matched in characteristics with Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians. Each matched pair of testers was then assigned to ask a specific rental or real estate agent for assistance with an advertised rental unit or home. Their findings regarding discrimination were derived from comparing the treatment of White and minority testers on 18 indicators. Although discrimination diminished during the 1990s, as of 2000 the researchers still found adverse treatment of prospective Black, Hispanic, and Asian renters and homebuyers compared to Whites in about 21% of the matched-pair visits (Turner et al., 2002; Turner and Ross, 2003). The percentage of cases in which Whites received less favorable treatment varied according to the minority group and whether the test involved potential rent or sale, but in an average 12% of the cases the Hispanic or Asian tester was treated more favorably by the rental or sales agent. Thus, in about a net 9% of the cases, the White tester was treated more favorably on one or more of the 18 indicators.

In the aspect of discrimination that is most directly relevant to urban ethnic residential patterns—geographic steering by real estate agents—these studies found no significant differential steering. “In 2000, the ethnic composition of neighborhoods surrounding homes recommended to non-Hispanic White and Hispanic buyers did not differ systematically” (Turner et al., 2002, pp. 3–16); and “Whites were not significantly more likely than comparable Asians and Pacific Islanders to be recommended or shown homes in predominantly White neighborhoods” (Turner and Ross, 2003, pp. 3–6).

Altogether, it appears to us unlikely that housing market discrimination was an important influence in the development of Asian or Latino ethnic concentrations with above-average incomes.

In-Group and Enclave Preferences

Whereas the evidence is not strong that realtors and apartment managers today treat prospective Asian or Latino clients and renters less well than Whites, other research has shown that the majority of members of ethnic groups preferred neighborhoods in which their group comprised half or more of all residents as opposed to all-White or mostly White neighborhoods. In the major 1993–1994 Los Angeles Study of Urban Inequality (LASUI), White, Black, Asian, and Latino residents of Los Angeles County were interviewed regarding attitudes toward different groups and related matters (Charles, 2000).

Because the LASUI research indicated that Whites were generally preferred as neighbors over members of groups other than one's own, and because areas with above-average incomes have been most likely to contain Whites, we focus here on the findings regarding attitudes toward White neighbors.

The mostly Mexican Latinos and the Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese surveyed could choose to be interviewed either in English or their native language. Latinos expressed discomfort with an all-White neighborhood, and one-third would not be willing to move into such places. Two-thirds preferred (as their first or second choice) a neighborhood that was either 70% Latino and 30% White or half-White and half-Latino. More than two-thirds of Asians preferred a neighborhood in which Asians comprised 50% to 70% of the residents if the rest of the residents were Whites. The above evidence strongly supports the notion of ethnic in-group preferences in desired neighborhood composition, but makes clear that those preferences also include the substantial presence of Whites in the neighborhood.

An additional factor in the attractiveness of many ethnic residential concentrations is the presence of ethnic businesses and cultural, religious, and social service institutions that often provide employment and support for members of the group, especially for those not comfortable with the English language (Li, 1998). When ethnic concentrations contain many businesses and institutions oriented to the group, such areas have sometimes been called enclaves (Portes and Jensen, 1987; Zhou, 1992; Kaplan, 1998).

However, most Whites in Los Angeles did not prefer such highly mixed neighborhoods (Charles, 2000). Whites were most comfortable in neighborhoods that were less than 20% Asian or Latino. Although two-thirds of Whites said they would feel comfortable in neighborhoods that were 50% Asian or Latino, only about half said they were willing to move into such a neighborhood. The differences in neighborhood preferences of Whites compared to Asians and Latinos may not be large but are probably significant in terms of neighborhood change, as we discuss in our conclusion.

Non-Ethnic Amenity Preferences

Residential choice may also be based on specific amenities found in an area, but where the initial attraction was not ostensibly due to the area's ethnic composition or ethnic stores and institutions. Many people prefer neighborhoods with relatively new housing, and proximity to employment could be influential in the location of ethnic concentrations. Moreover, because many middle- and upper-income parents consider quality education for their children to be very important, ethnic residential concentrations may be partly related to the quality of local schools. A preference for cities and school districts with reputations for excellent schools may be particularly strong among middle-class and more affluent Asians (Kelly, 2006; Li and Park, 2006). The uneven distribution of high-quality schools has probably affected the creation and distribution of concentrations of more affluent Asians. Once large numbers of Asians move into areas with excellent schools, it is impossible to tell whether the schools or the presence of the in-group provides the more powerful impetus for spatial concentration.

The combined effects of in-group preference and non-ethnic amenity preferences (employment location, excellent schools, recently built suburban homes and townhouses) are illustrated by the growing Chinese populations in the Southern California high-tech

suburb of Irvine (Kelly, 2006) and around San Jose (Silicon Valley) in the San Francisco Bay Area (Li and Park, 2006).

Furthermore, the Asian preference for neighborhoods with fairly equal proportions of Whites and Asians that was found in the LASUI study reported earlier (Charles, 2000) is confirmed by Taiwanese living in Silicon Valley. There, "the more Asians that moved into suburban neighborhoods for the good schools, the less desirable the neighborhood became for Asians themselves.... A Caucasian neighborhood meant status, and that status would be compromised if it became predominantly Asian" (Chang, 2006, p. 143). Rather, areas with moderate proportions of both Whites and Asians are ideal, offering Chinese the opportunity to "establish roots and participate in neighborhoods, cities, schools, and communities but also keep their cultural heritage" (Wong, 2006, p. 225). Thus scholars and others should no longer assume that a high-percentage White neighborhood defines the most desirable residential area from the perspective of ethnic populations.

The above evidence concerning discrimination and both in-group and amenity preferences indicates to us that middle-income and more affluent ethnic concentrations are more frequently formed from the voluntary choices made by members of ethnic groups than by restrictions resulting from discrimination.

RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHOD

In contrast to the many studies that compared the income levels and acculturation of residents inside and outside concentrations, we measured and mapped the income distribution of ethnic residents only within concentrations. This was because our main research purpose was to determine how common are ethnic concentrations with above-average levels of income. To better understand these nonpoverty concentrations, we also measured variations in acculturation within the concentrations.

Ethnic Groups, Metropolitan Areas, and the Income Variable

We used Census 2000 tract-level data from Summary File 3 to measure income levels of Asians and Latinos living in the residential clusters of their respective groups (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002). Examining Asians and Latinos as aggregations, rather than the specific nationality groups with which most immigrants identify, was not ideal. However, it was appropriate in this case because the numbers of people in the individual Asian and Latino nationality groups would generally have been too small to result in convincing residential concentrations. Moreover, if we had used Summary File 4 with its data on specific nationality groups, the Census Bureau's suppression of data in areal units with fewer than 50 actually sampled individuals prior to inflation from samples would have meant that we would lack data for numerous groups in a large number of tracts. Nevertheless, by 2000, so many different Latino groups had moved into and through various New York neighborhoods that there is now much sharing of residential space among Latino groups (Miyares, 2004a); and, in metropolitan Los Angeles, higher-status groups of Asians of varied nationality often located in the same neighborhoods (Allen and Turner, 2002).

TABLE 1. PREVALENCE OF RESIDENTIAL CONCENTRATIONS AND MEDIAN INCOMES OF CMSAs, 2000^a

CMSA	Total ethnic population		Percent of group in residential concentrations		Median household income
	Asians	Latinos	Asians	Latinos	
New York	1,437,583	3,851,852	14.7	50.9	\$50,795
Los Angeles	1,693,540	6,601,133	22.7	74.2	\$45,903
San Francisco	1,296,562	1,384,506	38.1	36.4	\$62,024

^aResidential concentrations are census tracts in which the group numbered at least 100 persons and comprised at least 40% of the total tract population.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2002).

We selected three of the country's five largest consolidated metropolitan statistical areas for study. Ranked by total population, these were the New York–Northern New Jersey–Long Island, NY–NJ–CT–PA CMSA (21 million); the Los Angeles–Riverside–Orange County, CA CMSA (16 million); and the San Francisco–Oakland–San Jose, CA CMSA (7 million). To avoid the cumbersome official CMSA titles, these are henceforth identified only by the name of their leading city (Table 1). Each of these urban areas contained more than three times as many Asians as any other CMSA. The New York and Los Angeles CMSAs each had more than twice as many Latinos as any other mainland CMSA, and San Francisco ranked fifth among CMSAs in number of Latinos. Using the areally extensive CMSAs meant that our coverage included not just the largest and best known urban centers but also many distant cities and suburbs where ethnic concentrations might exist but may not be well known. The result was that the three CMSAs selected contained 42% of all Asians and 34% of all Latinos residing in the United States.

We present the nationality group proportions in each of these CMSAs to make clear the specific ethnic groups included under the labels Asian and Latino (Table 2). The three metropolitan areas differ in their nationality group proportions, and groups vary substantially in their income levels, partly the result of differences in educational attainment and English-language proficiency. Thus any metropolitan differences in percentages of concentrated Asians and Latinos with above-average incomes should be partly explainable by their differences in nationality group proportions.

Defining groups by ethnic identity rather than country of birth permitted us to include more than just immigrants (the foreign-born). This is appropriate because Immigrant Spatial Assimilation Theory concerns more than the immigrant generation, because many households include both foreign-born and U.S.-born adults, and because adults in ethnically mixed households usually represent two origins within the broader Asian or Hispanic aggregations (Ellis et al., 2006). In addition, parents' decisions regarding residential location may be affected by the qualities of schools or neighborhoods as their children are likely to experience them. Lastly, it is the apparent ethnic and racial composition of residential areas, not just the numbers in the immigrant generation, that is often

TABLE 2. LARGEST ASIAN AND LATINO NATIONALITY GROUPS IN CMSAs, 2000^a

New York (NY)		Los Angeles (LA)		San Francisco (SF)	
Group	Percent	Group	Percent	Group	Percent
Asians in NY		Asians in LA		Asians in SF	
Chinese	35.6	Chinese	25.0	Chinese	37.0
Asian Indian	28.3	Filipino	22.4	Filipino	25.4
Korean	12.0	Korean	15.6	Vietnamese	11.5
Filipino	11.1	Vietnamese	14.1	Asian Indian	11.3
Japanese	3.5	Japanese	9.4	Japanese	6.0
Pakistani	3.0	Asian Indian	6.3	Korean	4.5
Latinos in NY		Latinos in LA		Latinos in SF	
Puerto Rican	34.4	Mexican	75.2	Mexican	70.9
Dominican	14.3	Salvadoran	3.2	Salvadoran	3.3
Mexican	8.9	Guatemalan	1.8	Puerto Rican	2.5
Ecuadorian	4.5	Puerto Rican	1.0	Nicaraguan	1.5
Cuban	3.5	Cuban	0.8	Guatemalan	1.2
Salvadoran	2.5	Peruvian	0.4	Peruvian	0.9

^aChinese includes Taiwanese.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2001).

assessed informally by potential and actual residents as a factor in residential mobility decisions. We used “Latino” as a synonym for “Hispanic,” and to keep the analysis simple we included only single-race Asians, not those who reported more than one race.

Median household income, as reported by householders identifying themselves as Asian or Latino, was our measure of economic status. This variable was appropriate because employed members of the same household often share earnings, particularly in the rental or purchase of housing, and households generally make residential location decisions. Because the census questionnaire asked respondents to report the total income of members of the household for the calendar year 1999, our income tables indicate that year. Moreover, our use of median Asian and Latino incomes, rather than the income for the neighborhood as a whole, meant that our results were not affected by the possibly higher incomes of Whites in any neighborhood.

Because our focus was on measuring income levels in concentrations, it was important to control for differences between metropolitan areas in average income. We did this by calculating income ratios that compared the median income of either Asians or Latinos in ethnically concentrated tracts with the median income of all households in each CMSA. To illustrate, if the median income of Asian households in one of New York’s concentrated Asian tracts was \$41,215, that tract’s income ratio would be 81 because the tract median represents 81% of the median income of \$50,795 for all households in the New York CMSA.

Defining Residential Concentrations

There is no consensus as to how ethnic residential concentrations should be defined operationally. However, most commonly they have been measured in terms of census tracts with a relatively high ethnic-group percentage, either as a value applied consistently to the various groups or as a variable percentage or location quotient based on the group's percentage in the city or metropolitan area as a whole (Hum and Zonta, 2000; Logan et al., 2002; Poulsen et al., 2002; Pamuk, 2004). Several scholars have defined ethnic concentrations as those census tracts in which the group's proportion was five times that in the metropolitan area as a whole (Logan et al., 2002; Parks, 2004; Allen and Turner, 2005). However, in places where ethnic groups constitute only a very small proportion of the total population, much lower thresholds seemed more appropriate to some scholars—Chung and Brown (2007) considered an ethnic concentration in Columbus, Ohio, to be those tracts in which the group's percentage was at least 1.33 times that in the metropolitan area as a whole.

To avoid a possibly misleading single threshold selection, Poulsen et al. (2002) advocated a series of percentage thresholds to describe most completely the degree to which an ethnic population was residentially concentrated. Similarly, Wright et al. (2005) defined five percentage thresholds of relative concentration. More recently, Johnston et al. (2007) developed a percentage-based typology of neighborhood segregation based on several levels of ethnic group concentration and mixing (Johnston et al., 2007).

However, our purpose was not to measure the degree to which a group was segregated or residentially concentrated. Rather, it was to make an essentially arbitrary decision as to a reasonably appropriate threshold, one that would include as concentrated those census tracts where many neighbors shared an ethnic identity and where the group was large enough that ethnic leaders and entrepreneurs would probably have located some ethnic institutions and stores nearby. A threshold that was variable, such as a location quotient based on a group's percentage in the metropolitan area, is useful to indicate a group's tendency to concentrate residentially, but that was not our purpose. Also, readers might have a difficult time remembering and picturing the different levels of concentrations that result from variable thresholds. For these reasons, we selected a single percentage threshold that could be applied consistently.

In choosing the threshold value, we were mindful that the large number of Asians and Latinos in our three metropolitan areas meant that a very low value would include tracts that probably were not meaningful to members of the groups. But we were also aware that distinctive ethnic neighborhoods have usually been more ethnically mixed than their names implied. For example, in Chicago as of 1910, neighborhoods known as either German or Czech were less than a third German or Czech, and in the eleven "Little Italies" a majority of residents were not Italian (Philpott, 1978). In the Los Angeles area less than half the residents in the well-known suburban Chinatown of the Monterey Park area were Chinese in 1990 (Li, 1999); and in 2000 only about 20% of the residents of the enclave of Koreatown were ethnic Korean, even though the Koreatown concentration was extremely important to Southern California's Koreans (Allen and Turner, 2002). Therefore, recognized and important ethnic concentrations do not necessarily contain extremely high percentages or even majorities of the ethnic group.

At the same time, a consistent percentage threshold for a large ethnic population should not be too low. In his study of segregation in Britain, for example, Peach defined concentrations as those neighborhoods (enumeration districts) in which the ethnic group comprised 30% or more of the total neighborhood population (Peach, 1996). In the New York area, “full Latino neighborhoods” have been defined as those with populations at least 40% Latino (Hanson-Sanchez, 1996).

In line with these findings and studies, but wishing to include only neighborhoods that were at least fairly strong concentrations, we selected 40% as the threshold for defining a residential concentration. Thus census tracts in which an ethnic group (either Asians or Latinos) numbered at least 100 persons and constituted 40% or more of the total population were considered to be residential concentrations (Table 1).

Correlation Analysis and Mapping

After selecting all census tracts in which each group comprised at least 40% of the tract population, we correlated the tract-level median income of Asian and Latino households with the group’s tract-level percentage U.S. born and the percentage of those aged 18 through 64 who spoke only English or spoke English very well (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002). These variables are widely used indicators of ethnic groups’ levels of acculturation, with the language measure representing a very high level of acculturation. In addition, we measured the actual percentages of U.S.-born and English-language proficiency for Asians and Latinos living in tracts with above-average income ratios. Lastly, we mapped Asian and Latino residential concentrations in terms of the median income ratios of the constituent tracts. Mapping in this way made clear the location and status of the concentrations, the degree of clustering of concentrated tracts into larger ethnic areas, and the extent to which larger ethnic concentrations were internally differentiated by income level.

RESULTS

Income Levels in Ethnic Concentrations

The numbers and proportions of residentially concentrated group members in each of the median income ratio categories are shown for each metropolitan area (Tables 3 and 4). Although we did not focus on differences among the three CMSAs, residentially concentrated Asians in New York were clearly more likely to be poor than were concentrated Asians in the other metropolitan areas (Table 3). Concentrated Asians in San Francisco were proportionately the least poor—less than 25% lived in tracts where Asian incomes were below average.

The proportion of residentially concentrated Asian households that had above-average incomes is striking. In Los Angeles, more than half of concentrated Asians lived in tracts with above-average incomes. In the most dramatic case, in the San Francisco CMSA three-quarters of the Asians residing in Asian concentrations were located in tracts with Asian median incomes greater than the metropolitan median. If the proportions in the three CMSAs are averaged and weighted by population (last column, Table 2), 57% of Asians in residentially concentrated tracts had incomes above their metropolitan medians.

TABLE 3. INCOME DISTRIBUTION OF RESIDENTIALLY CONCENTRATED ASIAN HOUSEHOLDS COMPARED TO CMSA MEDIANS, 1999^a

Income ratio categories	New York		Los Angeles		San Francisco		Total percent
	Population	Percent	Population	Percent	Population	Percent	
0–50	62,205	29.4	30,719	8.0	55,931	11.3	13.6
51–75	78,070	36.9	66,152	17.2	18,759	3.8	14.9
76–100	33,787	16.0	80,288	20.9	46,296	9.4	12.7
101–150	26,144	12.3	120,409	31.3	270,387	54.7	38.2
151–200	9,241	4.4	75,051	19.5	82,403	16.7	15.3
>200	2,362	1.1	12,040	3.1	20,494	4.1	3.2

^aIncome ratios compare the median household income of Asians in concentrated tracts to the CMSA medians for all households. CMSA median household income = 100. Population is the number of Asians residing in concentrated tracts in which median Asian incomes lie within each income ratio category. Percent values sum to 100% for each place. Total represents the percent values for the three CMSAs combined.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2002).

TABLE 4. INCOME DISTRIBUTION OF RESIDENTIALLY CONCENTRATED LATINO HOUSEHOLDS COMPARED TO CMSA MEDIANS, 1999^a

Income ratio categories	New York		Los Angeles		San Francisco		Total percent
	Population	Percent	Population	Percent	Population	Percent	
0–50	823,815	42.0	481,076	9.8	18,909	3.8	18.0
51–75	829,794	42.3	2,182,575	44.6	259,040	51.4	44.5
76–100	252,940	12.9	1,501,669	30.7	177,779	35.3	26.3
101–150	53,510	2.7	724,894	14.8	47,801	9.5	11.2
151–200	0	0.0	4,709	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
>200	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0

^aIncome ratios compare the median household income of Latinos in concentrated tracts to the CMSA medians for all households. CMSA median household income = 100. Population is the number of Latinos residing in concentrated tracts in which median Latino incomes lie within each income ratio category. Percent values sum to 100 for each place. Total represents the percent values for the three CMSAs combined.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2002).

Many of these Asians are presumably the engineers and others with advanced computer skills sufficient to enter the United States as a high-tech worker.

Examining still higher income ratios reveals that tract median incomes for over 18% of concentrated Asian households were at least 50% higher than the metropolitan medians. These Asians might well be described as affluent or upper-middle-class. The fact that

they are living in Asian residential concentrations is inconsistent with Immigrant Spatial Assimilation Theory as well as most scholars' expectations. On the other hand, most Latino concentrations were below average in income, most commonly between half and three-quarters of the metropolitan medians (Table 4). Thus the expectation that residentially clustered Latinos residents are poor is true, at least in terms of averages.

More illuminating for our purposes is the fact that some Latino concentrations were above average in income. More than 9% of concentrated Hispanics in the San Francisco area and 15% in the Los Angeles area lived in tracts with Latino median incomes above their metropolitan medians. These Latinos, as well as 3% of concentrated Latinos in the New York CMSA, could clearly be described as middle-class. They had the economic resources to choose their residence from a wide range of neighborhoods, but they chose to live in concentrated settlements of their ethnic group rather than disperse into predominantly White areas that had low percentages of Latinos.

Wright et al. (2005) used a special Census Bureau file not available to most scholars to study eight immigrant nationality groups in Los Angeles. They demonstrated that those group members living in the highest concentrations of their group had lower incomes than those residing in somewhat less concentrated circumstances. Their thresholds for defining concentrations were variable, being based on the group's location quotient in the CMSA, so that the highest concentrations they measured (with a L.Q. at 8 or above) required only about 18% Filipinos or Chinese in the most concentrated tracts. Although comparison between their study and ours is difficult because of key differences in methodology, their results suggest that the percentages of concentrated Asians and Latinos with above-average income that we found (Tables 3 and 4) would be somewhat less if we had used a much higher threshold than 40%.

Income Levels and Acculturation

Our correlations demonstrated that tract income levels within ethnic concentrations do relate to levels of acculturation (Table 5). Income levels of residentially concentrated Asians were positively and significantly correlated with the percentage U.S.-born and the percentage speaking English only or very well. Among Latinos the correlations were also in the expected direction and significant for both Los Angeles and San Francisco. Thus residentially concentrated Latinos in higher-income tracts in California tended to have higher proportions of residents born in the United States and high proficiency English.

However, in the New York CMSA higher income was surprisingly associated with lower percentages of U.S.-born and inferior English proficiency. To try to understand this anomaly, we ran similar correlations with the larger Latino nationality groups using data on those groups from Summary File 4 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). In contrast to the results for Latinos as a whole, residentially concentrated Puerto Ricans (the largest group, comprising more than one-third of all Latinos in the New York CMSA) showed positive correlations between income and percentage born on the U.S. mainland ($r = .292$, significant at the .05 level) and percent proficient in English ($r = .339$, significant at the .01 level). In other words, among Puerto Ricans the correlations appeared in the direction we had expected but did not find for Latinos as a whole. Correlations for smaller Latino groups under various residential concentration definitions were inconsistent and not statistically significant. This led us to think that the unexpected direction of our New York

TABLE 5. PEARSON COEFFICIENTS FOR CORRELATIONS BETWEEN INCOME AND ASSIMILATION VARIABLES IN CENSUS TRACTS WITH RESIDENTIALLY CONCENTRATED ASIANS AND LATINOS: NEW YORK (NY), LOS ANGELES (LA), AND SAN FRANCISCO (SF), 2000^a

	Concentrated Asians			Concentrated Latinos		
	NY	LA	SF	NY	LA	SF
Percent U.S.-born	.300	.344	.294	-.284	.523	.427
Percent speaking English only or very well	.676	.458	.498	-.170	.566	.415

^aAll correlations are statistically significant at the .01 level. For Asians $N = 92, 152$, and 173 tracts for the three CMSAs in the order listed in the table. For Latinos, $N = 721, 1411$, and 160 . Puerto Rico is U.S. territory and a birth in Puerto Rico is a U.S. birth. However, for our purpose of measuring acculturation we treated Latinos born outside the U.S. mainland as foreign-born, using additional SF3 data on birthplace to do this.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2002).

Latino correlations might have resulted from Latino group differences in acculturation levels and high levels of residential mixing among groups so that residents of any one tract might vary much more in acculturation levels than in income.

Nonetheless, correlation analysis demonstrated that Asians and Latinos in Los Angeles and San Francisco, as well as Asians and Puerto Ricans in New York, who were living in higher-income residential concentrations were more likely to be U.S.-born and mainland-born as well as more likely to be highly proficient in English than members of those groups living in lower-income residential concentrations. Of people living in concentrated tracts with above-average incomes, Asians were less likely to be U.S.-born than were Latinos (Table 6). More significant, however, is the fact that between 50% and 75% of the more affluent Asians and Latinos (>150 income ratio) in ethnic concentrations possessed excellent English-language skills. This suggests that perhaps a majority of higher-income Asians and Latinos had the language skills to get along well in neighborhoods outside ethnic concentrations but preferred to live in a concentration, many of which are enclaves containing ethnic stores and institutions. On the other hand, the presence in the concentrations of many Asians and Latinos who had above-average incomes but lacked advanced English-language skills is what would be expected from the acculturation dimension of Immigration Spatial Assimilation Theory. Those people chose to remain in their group's concentration because they were more culturally comfortable there.

Effect of Increasing Asian and Latino Populations

As the numbers of Asians and Latinos continue to grow, and as many individuals and families improve their socioeconomic status, the middle- and upper-income members of these groups will probably increase. Neighborhoods of moderate and high status will become proportionately more Asian or more Latino, and many members of both groups

TABLE 6. PERCENT U.S.-BORN AND HIGHLY PROFICIENT IN ENGLISH FOR ASIANS AND LATINOS IN RESIDENTIAL CONCENTRATIONS WITH ABOVE-AVERAGE INCOMES, 2000^a

Income ratio categories	Percent U.S.-born			Percent highly proficient in English		
	NY	LA	SF	NY	LA	SF
Asians						
101–150	20.7	31.0	28.2	49.2	45.0	51.7
151–200	19.2	32.1	31.4	74.6	53.6	58.2
>200	34.3	34.2	35.7	69.7	55.0	66.4
Latinos						
101–150	55.1	58.7	52.7	37.0	55.5	46.6
151–200	–	71.1	–	–	73.2	–

^aIncome ratios compare the median household income of Latinos in concentrated tracts to the CMSA medians for all households, where the CMSA median household income = 100. There were no concentrated Latino tracts in the >200 income ratio category; in the 151–200 category an absence of such tracts is indicated by a dash (–). Percentage values were calculated as the average for all tracts in the category weighted by their population. The percent U.S.-born includes all ages. English proficiency for the population ages 18–64 is the percentage speaking English only or speaking English very well.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2002).

will be able to find desirable neighborhoods that contain moderate proportions of both Whites and members of their own group. Although some Asians and Latinos will continue to move into mostly White neighborhoods to achieve certain non-ethnic amenities, others will increasingly find attractive neighborhoods in which their group as well as Whites are well represented.

GEOGRAPHY OF ETHNIC CONCENTRATIONS WITH ABOVE-AVERAGE INCOMES

The following elaboration by means of mapping and brief comments is designed to link the statistical findings to specific locations. Maps show all ethnic concentrations, including those of below-average income with which many scholars may already be familiar, but the text interpretation of the maps focuses on concentrations with above-average incomes. Where maps show tracts that are not adjacent or even some distance apart, these may be part of larger ethnic concentrations that do not appear because intervening tracts are less than 40% Asian or Latino.

Maps cover only the portions of CMSAs with major ethnic concentrations. A medium gray tone was used for all areas outside ethnic concentrations, in which the group constituted less than 40% of tract populations. Ethnically concentrated tracts with median income below the CMSA average are shown in tones lighter than this background; all tracts with tones darker than the background had above-average incomes. The greater range of median income for Asians required a different set of income ratio categories than those used for Latinos. Because most ethnic concentration in the San Francisco CMSA

Fig. 1. Asian income in residential concentrations: New York area, 1999. The income ratio compares the median Asian income in census tracts to the median income of all households in the CMSA, which is set at 100. County and borough names are indicated in white type.

was observed in the two widely separated areas of San Francisco–Oakland and San Jose, we created separate maps for these areas.

Asian Concentrations

Although Manhattan's Chinatown is the best known and the oldest Asian concentration in New York City, the income of its residents was less than half that of the CMSA median (Fig. 1). Chinatown exemplifies the stereotype that residents of ethnic concentrations are poor. The newer Chinese concentrations of Sunset Park in Brooklyn and Flushing in Queens are sometimes called satellite Chinatowns (Chen, 1992; Hum, 2002). Flushing and the other Queens neighborhoods of Jackson Heights and Elmhurst have become very ethnically diverse as many middle-class Taiwanese, Asian Indians, Koreans, and Latinos have preferred these neighborhoods' affordable apartments close to public transportation (Miyares, 2004b; Smith and Logan, 2006). The immigrant newcomers have upgraded residences and begun new businesses, revitalizing these and other areas that had been declining due to the exodus of Whites.

In central New Jersey, Microsoft, AT&T, and other high-tech employers attracted Asian Indian and Chinese engineers to the Edison area (Fig. 1). Word spread among friends and relatives about the area's good schools, low crime rate, and easy access by train and expressway to jobs and businesses in New York City (Kalita, 2003). Many newly arrived Asian Indians' extended families rented in a single large apartment complex, and a profusion of Asian Indian stores appeared along a major commercial

Fig. 2. Asian income in residential concentrations: Los Angeles CMSA, 1999. The income ratio compares the median Asian income in census tracts to the median income of all households in the CMSA, which is set at 100. County names are indicated in white type.

artery. Over time, numerous Asian families became homeowners and moved into Edison's better residential areas, as is suggested by the tract differences in median income.

In greater Los Angeles, the traditional enclaves of Chinatown and Koreatown are much better known than the newer, higher-income concentrations (Fig. 2). The large Asian concentrations of Little Saigon in Orange County and the West San Gabriel Valley show a wide range of income across different tracts. The latter area includes the city of Monterey Park, the first and best-known focus of this strongly Chinese concentration (Li, 1999). The West San Gabriel Valley has grown rapidly in its range of Chinese-oriented services, businesses, shopping centers, and employment to become a very large enclave, sometimes referred to as a Chinese "ethnoburb." The residential concentration has also expanded from older modest housing where Asian incomes are well below average into affluent neighborhoods to the east and north, in cities such as San Marino and Arcadia.

Many Asian concentrations are more consistent in having above-average incomes. More affluent Chinese may shun Monterey Park with its many working-class Chinese and congestion, preferring instead the newer suburbs farther east such as Rowland Heights and Walnut (Zhou and Kim, 2003; Li, 2006). Located in those and other cities of the East San Gabriel Valley are the more affluent members of several groups—Chinese,

Fig. 3. Asian income in residential concentrations: San Francisco–Oakland area of the San Francisco CMSA, 1999. The income ratio compares the median Asian income in census tracts to the median income of all households in the CMSA, which is set at 100. County names are indicated in white type.

Filipinos, and Koreans as well as Whites and Latinos. There and in Cerritos are numerous Asian businesses and institutions, making them fully developed pan-Asian or multiethnic Asian enclaves. In the hills on the northern fringe of Los Angeles City are the newest houses in the upscale Porter Ranch development with roughly equal numbers of Whites and Asians. Except for one large Korean church in Porter Ranch, most other Asian businesses and institutions are located on the floor of the San Fernando Valley a mile or more away (Covarrubias, 2008).

In San Francisco, low incomes in most of Chinatown and adjacent North Beach stand out (Fig. 3). In the poorest of the Chinatown tracts the median income of the Asian households is only 16% of the median for all households in the CMSA. However, Chinatown contrasts sharply with the higher-income concentrations to the west in Parkside and to the south in Portola and Daly City, where many Asians find somewhat newer, more suburban neighborhoods.

The San Jose area, commonly known as Silicon Valley, is exceptional in that all but three tracts in Asian concentrations had incomes above average for the CMSA (Fig. 4). Moreover, the median income of Asians in many tracts was at least 50% above the CMSA median. Such affluence has been achieved by highly educated Asians, particularly Chinese and Indian engineers, employed by large companies like Apple Computer, Sun Microsystems, and Hewlett-Packard (Li and Park, 2006; Wong, 2006). Although some

Fig. 4. Asian income in residential concentrations: San Jose area of the San Francisco CMSA, 1999. The income ratio compares the median Asian income in census tracts to the median income of all households in the CMSA, which is set at 100. County names are indicated in white type.

people are production workers, others have started their own businesses. It was not the presence of an earlier Asian enclave that attracted so many Asians. Rather, they came for the economic opportunities offered by mainstream American high-tech businesses. As housing prices grew during the 1990s in cities like Cupertino, many Asians found homes in nearby cities such as Fremont, also known for its good schools. Most cities with Asian concentrations are multiethnic, with Chinese and Asian Indians most strongly represented in areas of above-average income and Vietnamese most numerous in the poorest sections (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). Because Taiwanese particularly value easy access to malls with their Ranch 99 markets and other Chinese stores in addition to living in new single-family homes, most live in those sections of suburbs closest to shopping areas (Chang, 2006).

Latino Concentrations

In greater New York, the largest Puerto Rican settlements are in Spanish Harlem and in the Bronx; Latinos in Manhattan's Washington Heights are predominantly Dominican (Miyares, 2004a; Fig. 5). There is much diversity of nationality origins within most of the

Fig. 5. Latino income in residential concentrations: New York CMA, 1999. The income ratio compares the median Latino income in census tracts to the median income of all households in the CMA, which is set at 100. County and borough names are indicated in white type.

other Latino concentrations although Puerto Ricans, the oldest and largest Latino group in New York, are usually most numerous. Most Latino concentrations are located in older central city and industrial neighborhoods in which European immigrants lived many decades ago but which were abandoned by those immigrants and their children when they moved to the suburbs (Sullivan, 1993; Beveridge and Weber, 2003; Smith and Logan, 2006). One example is Elmhurst, an ethnic residential concentration in Queens adjacent to the important Latino and Asian commercial center in Jackson Heights, where small neighborhoods often vary in their ethnic culture depending on the national origins of the entrepreneurs (Miyares, 2004b).

Latino concentrations farther east in the suburban counties of Long Island had still higher incomes, a likely reflection of upward mobility among New York's Latinos. Specific concentrations differed somewhat in their leading nationalities. For example, New Cassel was predominantly Salvadoran and Mexican, but Dominicans were the largest Latino nationality in Copiague (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). The Brentwood area stands out as an exceptional Latino suburb. Multiethnic, but with Puerto Ricans and Salvadorans especially well represented, the area was more than 50% Latino and contained over 35,000 Latinos in 2000. More significant, the median household income was 16% above the median for the New York CMSA and was higher in that area for Latinos than for non-Hispanic Whites (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002).

In the Los Angeles CMSA, the poorest Latino concentrations—with incomes less than half that of the CMSA median—are found in the older central parts of the city of Los Angeles and near its port facilities in Wilmington (Fig. 6). Only slightly better off are Latinos in East Los Angeles and in the newer Mexican settlements south of Downtown, including South Central. Similarly, the Central American families in the Van Nuys area of the San Fernando Valley are not the poorest of Latinos although their incomes are still less than 75% of the CMSA median.

Latino concentrations with above-average incomes are not located far from poorer concentrations. In the last half-century most suburb-bound Mexican Americans moved from areas near Downtown to East Los Angeles and from there farther eastward and toward the southeast. As a result, the largest concentration of Latinos with above-average income stretches from Downey and Whittier into such San Gabriel Valley cities as Hacienda Heights. This extensive area, and especially the higher-income neighborhoods within it, is home to a large second- and third-generation Latino population (Ochoa, 2004). The more educated and strongly bicultural residents of this area have been a leading source of Latino leadership in Southern California. Similar situations occur to the north, where Sylmar represents a higher income area than nearby San Fernando, and to the south in Orange County, where Anaheim Hills and sections of Santa Ana contain concentrations of more prosperous Latinos. These also illustrate the pattern of large Latino concentrations containing neighborhoods that differ greatly in their income levels, although we suspect that outsiders automatically stereotype these ethnic concentrations as exhibiting low income levels.

San Francisco's largest and best-known Latino concentration is the low-income Mission District, home to Mexicans and Central Americans (Godfrey, 2004; Pamuk, 2004; Fig. 7). Nevertheless, some other concentrations display above-average incomes. To the south of the Mission District lie Outer Mission and adjacent neighborhoods, destinations for many upwardly mobile and especially U.S.-born Latinos (Godfrey, 2004).

Fig. 6. Latino income in residential concentrations: Los Angeles CMSA, 1999. The income ratio compares the median Latino income in census tracts to the median income of all households in the CMSA, which is set at 100. County names are indicated in white type.

Much farther to the south is the large Latino concentration in the San Jose area, where Mexicans have a long history of settlement, which began with farm and packing-shed workers a half-century ago and later included workers assembling semiconductors and computers (Fig. 8). The most recent Mexican arrivals to this area constitute the main low-wage, service-industry labor force of Silicon Valley (Zolniski, 2006). Not far from poor neighborhoods, however, are some tracts with above-average median incomes, especially noteworthy because of the high median income for the CMSA (Table 1). The presence of such tracts suggests that over decades some Mexican families have been able to improve their status substantially while continuing to live in strongly Latino neighborhoods.

General Patterns

As one would expect from the general spatial evolution of metropolitan areas, concentrations with the lowest incomes were typically found in older, low-rent sections of central cities. Older suburbs typically contained concentrations with moderate levels of income, while concentrated tracts with the highest incomes were typically located in more distant suburbs with their newer homes. However, apart from these income extremes, most clusters of contiguous, concentrated tracts ranged substantially in median income. Thus most ethnic concentrations included above-average income tracts adjacent to lower-income tracts. We suspect that many such concentrations have been stereotyped

Fig. 7. Latino income in residential concentrations: San Francisco–Oakland area of the San Francisco CMSA, 1999. The income ratio compares the median Latino income in census tracts to the median income of all households in the CMSA, which is set at 100. County names are indicated in white type.

as lower-income areas, based partly on the earlier history of these poorer areas, with outsiders not realizing that the concentration contains pockets of above-average incomes.

CONCLUSION

This research has shown a wide range of income levels among Asians and Latinos in residential concentrations. Incomes of Asian households in a few older Asian concentrations were very low, and the majority of concentrated Latino households lived in tracts where the median household income was less than 75% of the metropolitan medians. These associations between ethnic concentration and lower income are well known and were expected.

Of greater importance, however, is our demonstration that the residents of many ethnic concentrations were not poor. Eleven percent of concentrated Latino households and 57% of concentrated Asian households lived in tracts with median incomes above those for their respective metropolitan areas. Moreover, 18% of concentrated Asian households had incomes at least 50% above their metropolitan medians. All these households had sufficient income to provide substantial residential choice. Because previous research has shown that Asians and Latinos preferred neighborhoods where their group represents 50% to 70% of the population with Whites comprising the remainder (Charles, 2000), our findings suggest that Latinos and Asians with above-average incomes have often found their preferred neighborhoods within the concentrations we discovered. With a diminished role for housing market discrimination against Latinos and Asians during the 1990s

Fig. 8. Latino income in residential concentrations: San Jose area of the San Francisco CMSA, 1999. The income ratio compares the median Latino income in census tracts to the median income of all households in the CMSA, which is set at 100. County names are indicated in white type.

and a lack of significant ethnic geographical steering in 2000, it seems clear that contemporary ethnic clustering in areas with above-average income arises primarily from choices made by members of each group.

Among both Asians and Latinos, choosing to live in an ethnic concentration was also consistent with interview-based findings that showed Asian and Latino preferences for neighborhoods in which Whites constitute roughly half the population. In some places the cumulative effect of preferences for non-ethnic amenities like high-quality public schools resulted in Asian residential concentrations, which then became more attractive for ethnic reasons as Asian businesses and institutions emerged and grew.

Within ethnic concentrations, Asians and Latinos in higher-income tracts are clearly more acculturated than those in lower-income tracts. Moreover, over half of the Asians and Latinos in ethnic concentrations with above-average incomes were highly proficient in English. This shows that many ethnic concentrations are attractive for even more acculturated members of ethnic groups, a finding not anticipated by most scholars, who assumed that more acculturated individuals would leave or avoid ethnic concentrations.

Although most Americans strongly associate urban ethnic concentrations with poverty, this research has demonstrated that such a stereotype is no longer correct, at least in the case of Asians and Latinos. Our findings of above-average income levels and high levels of acculturation in many ethnic concentrations are also not consistent with Immigrant Spatial Assimilation Theory. According to that theory, economically successful and acculturated members of immigrant groups should choose to live in non-ethnic

and predominantly White suburbs. In contrast, our research suggests that the cultural advantages of living in an ethnic neighborhood remain important for many affluent and acculturated immigrants and their children. Immigrant Spatial Assimilation Theory should be reshaped to acknowledge that many of the more affluent and acculturated members of ethnic groups choose to live in residential concentrations of their groups. In addition, our findings demonstrate the inappropriateness of assuming that the most desirable neighborhoods are those containing the highest percentage White.

As the numbers of Asians and Latinos with above-average income increase in metropolitan areas, there is every reason to think that attractive neighborhoods and cities with specific amenities will increase their proportions of Asian and Latino residents. As these neighborhoods change in ethnic composition, the degree to which preexisting non-ethnic amenities will be retained is not known. Similarly, whether or not neighborhoods with above-average incomes that are at least 40% Asian or 40% Latino will retain a high proportion of Whites or slowly resegregate into predominantly Asian or Latino is not known. But, as we reported earlier, research from the early 1990s indicated Whites preferred neighborhoods with somewhat higher percentages of Whites than do Asians or Latinos (Charles, 2000).

When ethnic groups differ even mildly in the strength of their own residential preferences, mathematical simulations of trends in neighborhood ethnic composition demonstrate that neighborhoods with roughly equal numbers of Whites and Asians or Whites and Latinos—like the neighborhoods we identified in this study—are inherently unstable in composition (Clark and Fossett, 2008). Moreover, there are indications from specific localities in metropolitan Los Angeles that affluent mixed White-Asian neighborhoods in Cerritos and the East San Gabriel Valley (Fig. 2) became increasingly Asian during the 1990s (Allen and Turner, 2002). Other research from Los Angeles on actual residential shifts suggests that if White proportions in a neighborhood fall below 40%, the majority of Whites with above-average incomes who move locally from such neighborhoods will relocate to neighborhoods that are at least 40% White (Clark and Ledwith, 2007). On the other hand, if Whites tend to leave the more affluent, ethnically mixed neighborhoods and move to newer, more distant, or more expensive suburbs, we expect some Asians and Latinos will follow, thereby shifting the location of such mixed upper-income neighborhoods toward such places.

As ethnic populations grow, middle-income and more affluent members of ethnic groups should increasingly be able to find the neighborhood qualities they desire within a residential concentration of their group, as has been demonstrated in Canada (Hou, 2007). We expect that many Asians and Latinos living in metropolitan areas where their group numbers are too small to make possible an ethnic concentration would prefer to reside in neighborhoods where Whites and their group were mixed somewhat evenly, if that option was available. What appears simply as non-ethnic and market-led pluralism in the very low ethnic percentages in mixed neighborhoods with above-average incomes may be more the result of the small ethnic-group numbers in a metropolitan area (Brown and Chung, 2008). In the long run, if American society evolves toward a reduced salience of race and ethnicity, then market-led pluralism may be the only appropriate interpretation of low-percentage ethnic concentrations; but right now, we question whether that is the case.

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