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Contextual Influences on Immigrant Political Incorporation:  
Ethnic Concentration and Identity, Citizenship and Behavior

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Political Science

in the

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of the

University of California, Berkeley

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## Abstract

### Contextual Influences on Immigrant Political Incorporation: Ethnic Concentration and Identity, Citizenship and Behavior

By

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Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California, Berkeley

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How do various ethnic and racial contexts influence the adaptation trajectory of immigrants? Immigration into the United States has grown rapidly since 1965 and large-scale changes in the demographic makeup of the country are expected to continue. This project focuses on how various contexts—ethnic and racial group concentration in space—affect the social and political incorporation of immigrants into American society. In Chapter 1, I lay out a theory of spatialized capitals, advancing both direct and indirect mechanisms of how context might impact immigrant incorporation. I describe how concentrated spaces could lessen transaction costs through the spread of accessible information, better access to venues for participation, and *inter alia* a reduction in cognitive dissonance for immigrants newer to United States’ politics.

For Chapters 2, 3 and 4, I contend that because their “moments” of identity development and attitude crystallization might differ, the empirical analysis should be broken into two groups: adolescents versus adults from immigrant families. Chapter 2 examines how context predicts the trajectory of respondent reports of discrimination, noting that higher minority concentration is negatively associated with reports of discrimination over time. Chapter 3 then looks into the impacts of the cross-level interaction between reports of discrimination and minority context on ethnic identification; findings demonstrate that those who report having experienced discrimination and inhabit an area of higher minority concentration are more likely to adopt a panethnic identity. What are the implications for partisan identification and political behavior? I then consider the relationship between the ethnic identity that respondents adopt at *time 1* with partisanship and behavior variables at *time 3* (when they are eligible to become part of the electorate) and find that panethnicity does not predict that

identifiers will be more likely to be registered to vote than those who identify with their national origin group only, all else equal. These results are consistent with new research on socialization, i.e. attitude crystallization and politicization occurs *later* in life for young adults from immigrant families relative to native born whites.

Shifting to a review of findings for the political incorporation of adults using different sets of data, I find in Chapter 4 that among respondents from the *Survey of Asians in the Bay Area* (2004), living in areas of perceived high Asian neighborhood concentration predicts that respondents are less likely to report that they had “personally experienced” discrimination; moreover, even among those who reported experiencing discrimination, concentration appears protective *vis-à-vis* key measures of political incorporation such as a greater tendency to naturalize among the foreign born. I also observe that for adults, as was the case for adolescents, immigrant experiences with discrimination and minority (here: Asian) concentration are positively associated with panethnic identification. I then expand the analysis to other regions in California and to other Asian and Latino national origin groups using a *most-likely, least-likely* case framework and data from the Current Population Survey (2006). Here, findings underscore that higher coethnic concentration does indeed predict that respondents from various Asian and Latino national origin groups are *more likely* to turn out than native born whites *ceteris paribus*.

The empirical findings support a theory of spatialized capitals, wherein context lowers transaction costs through both direct and indirect mechanisms. To extend the argument, Chapter 5 outlines formally how space might make the acquisition of pertinent information “easier” for unincorporated immigrants and broadly generate the use of group heuristics, contingent on the number of competing group identifications, as shortcuts in decisionmaking for both adolescents and adults. Given recent controversies over immigration policy in Arizona and beyond, this project highlights the instrumental role of ethnic and racial context in shaping the social and political adaptation of immigrants.

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## **CHAPTER 1: “A Theory of Spatialized Capitals”**

How do various ethnic contexts influence the political socialization of immigrants? Do high spatial concentrations of immigrant populations reinforce group differences that can lead to greater conflict and tension between groups? Or do they play pivotal roles in aiding adaptation to a new homeland and assist in diverse interest representation, as well as facilitate increases in immigrant political participation? Perhaps both?

### **I. Introduction to Why Context Matters: Immigrants and Immigration Policy**

According to recent projections from the Pew Research Center, the population of the United States will increase from 296 million in 2005 to 438 million in 2050; and 82% of that increase will be due to immigrants arriving during that period and their U.S.-born descendants. Immigrants to this country frequently endure substantial challenges before arriving in the United States – facing war, political persecution, famine, and repeated displacement – where they may then experience significant cognitive dissonance given a new set of political, financial and cultural institutions, notwithstanding the task of mastering a new language. A seamless process of immigrant integration is by no means a foregone conclusion, eliciting responses from some scholars who call for revisions to U.S. immigration policies such that only highly skilled professionals, who by assumption will more easily assimilate, are welcome (Schuck 2003). Yet these calls for immigration policy revision are in tension with the symbolic imagery of the Statue of Liberty,<sup>1</sup> the classic notion of a melting pot, and stated immigration goals set forth by the federal government.<sup>2</sup>

United States’ government policy in the past has tended toward resettling immigrants into diffuse areas, dispersing them across the country under the belief that they would more easily assimilate (Portes and Mozo 1985).<sup>3</sup> Putnam (2007)

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<sup>1</sup> The Statue’s famous inscription reads: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

<sup>2</sup> Immigration Policy Summary of 2006, Congressional Budget Office.

<sup>3</sup> “Despite persistent efforts by the United States government to resettle Cuban refugees away from Miami, the long-term trend has been toward increasing spatial concentration in this area.

has written extensively about the problems associated with diverse communities, noting that social trust and community group participation is lower in ethnically and racially integrated areas than in their more homogeneous counterparts. In contrast to government policy, many immigrants have, after a period of some years, relocated into neighborhoods of ethnic concentration, where they have gone on to build “institutionally complete” enclaves that provide jobs, community resources and a social safety net for those unable to easily join the American melting pot (Aguilar-San Juan 2005, Ley 1999). How do these various ethnic contexts influence the political socialization of immigrants?

The concentration of immigrants in ethnic enclaves and a politics based on ethnicity are not novel developments. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Italians and the Irish voted in solidarity for their “favorite son” candidates. Glazer and Moynihan (1963) noted that in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Italians and the Irish voted so as to divide offices along ethnic lines. Portes and Rumbaut (1985) have argued that pursuing their own particular ethnic interests enabled immigrants to identify with the interests of the nation as a whole. Scholars argue that these voters were in eventually fully incorporated into the nation’s broader political structure through party machines and were key constituents in the 1930s New Deal coalition.<sup>4</sup> Is the same process of political incorporation occurring among today’s immigrant groups?

Milton Gordon’s (1964) classic studies of assimilation into American life delineated a process of adaptation in stages, wherein identification as an *unhyphenated* American served as a marker that a given immigrant had reached the final stage in her assimilation trajectory. Gordon’s scholarship was based on

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Since the mid-sixties there has been evidence of a significant return drift among resettled exiles toward Miami. In 1970, 40 percent of the Cuban-born population of the U.S. lived in the Miami metropolitan area. By 1980, the figure had increased to 52 percent, more than six times the next largest concentration in the West New York/Union City area in New Jersey” (Portes and Mozo 1985, p.38).

<sup>4</sup> Opponents in today’s immigration debate differ as to whether immigrants are assimilating. In “The Hispanic Challenge,” Samuel P. Huntington (2004) targets Hispanic trends in immigration and assimilation as constitutive of a national threat; he appraises several dimensions of assimilation into the Anglo American mainstream, e.g. education, economic status and intermarriage, each of which are used to illustrate that Hispanics are slower to assimilate than other immigrant groups. In contrast, others point out that Hispanics are indeed acquiring English: “In the 2000 Census, 50 percent of the native-born living in households of Mexican-born immigrants either spoke only English or spoke English very well. This intergenerational rate of linguistic assimilation among the offspring of Mexican immigrants surpassed that of every other immigrant group” (Citrin et al. 2007, p.35).

the experiences of earlier European immigration and described the integration of immigrants from this era into mainstream society as a *linear* pattern of adaptation. In this view, “straight-line theory” describes acculturation and assimilation as “secular trends that culminate in the eventual absorption of the ethnic group into the larger culture and general population” (Gans 1979, p.2). Following the ideal of the melting pot, therefore, with time and over generations, differences between immigrants from all ethnic groups are supposed to dissolve into the host society. As Zhou and Gatewood summarize (2006, p.131), “this particular perspective shares a series of assumptions: outsider groups, however diverse and initially disadvantaged, all absorb a common culture and gain equal access to the opportunity structure; they do so in a more or less natural way, gradually deserting old cultural and behavioral patterns in favor of new ones; and the whole process, once set in motion, moves inevitably and irreversibly toward the dissolution of the original group” (see also Warner and Srole 1945).

An ongoing debate in current scholarship among social scientists has been whether today’s immigrants are following the straight-line assimilation pattern (Gordon 1964) that has characterized Irish and Italian economic and political incorporation.<sup>5</sup> The challenges to classical assimilation theory are numerous and wide ranging but several are of particular note for this project. In its standard interpretations, the application of classical assimilation theory to understanding patterns of modern immigrant incorporation fails to take seriously increased heterogeneity in newer immigrant groups which *neglects* (1) seemingly key intergroup differences in culture and language, skills upon arrival and salient experiences in country of origin; (2) large scale and continuing immigration from Latin America and Asia, with accompanying changes in federal immigration policy<sup>6</sup>; and (3) changes in the national economy such that many immigrants today face a double disadvantage of arriving with few resources reflected in lower socioeconomic backgrounds and an economy that simultaneously values higher

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<sup>5</sup> The use of the term “assimilation” is controversial. Berry and Sam (1997) described four types of immigrant acculturation, varying from an individual’s desire to maintain one’s culture of origin to a desire to become part of the new culture. Integration is a process whereby individuals attempt to maintain their own culture and become part of the new culture. Assimilation focuses not on maintaining one’s original culture but rather replacing it with a new culture. Separation implies a desire to maintain one’s original culture to the exclusion of the new one. Finally, marginalization implies that individuals are neither able to become part of the new culture nor receive support in maintaining the original one.

<sup>6</sup> These include immigration policy based on family reunification criteria that have fundamentally altered the ordering of preferences given to applicants (with priority given to those who already have United States citizen family members among applicants for admission into the United States)

educational attainment.<sup>7</sup> In concert, these challenges to classical assimilation theory reflect the idea that while “the descendants of the 1880-1920 wave have overcome earlier disadvantages, achieving parity with, if not outdistancing...the ‘core cultural group’ [of Americans with English ancestry] (Gordon 1964), success [of immigrants from this era] may be due to the specific circumstances encountered by earlier immigrants and their offspring—the fact that between the 1920s and the 1950s, America experienced a long period of restricted immigration, which almost certainly weakened immigrants’ attachment to their culture and patterns of group affiliation” (Zhou and Gatewood 2006, p.131).

Some scholars also advance that one major difference complicating the story for new immigrants is that political parties are not enfranchising immigrants into the political system as in the past, resulting in diverging, often stymied assimilation outcomes (Ramakrishnan 2005, Wong 2006). Elected leaders have substantial incentives to advocate positions consistent with those of their electorates (MacKuen 2003) but in a pluralist society with conflicting goals and an unequal distribution of resources, whose positions are being advocated (Dahl 1961)? Cho, Gimpel and Dyck (2006) suggest that context provides incentives for party elites to refocus their attention, with smaller concentrations as far more likely to be disregarded. This suggests that party attention to immigrant groups could vary by geographic concentration, and that both the relative size and spatial distribution of an immigrant population are key incentives for mobilization and incorporation efforts by political parties.

Immigrant residential environments and settlement patterns today differ from those previous. “In the early part of this century, segregation took the form of a patchwork of local ethnic neighborhoods made up of European immigrants. In recent years it has taken the form of large, (ethnically and) racially divided communities that some authors refer to as “hypersegregated” (Schlichting, Tuckel, and Maisel 1998, p.218). Huntington advances ethnic enclaves as places where the progress of assimilation is impeded while others note that these niches can in fact provide support systems that accelerate the assimilation of new immigrants. Alba (2006) suggests that Cuban Americans established enclaves that provided subsequent middle- and working-class Cuban immigrants with economic opportunities within a “Spanish-speaking subeconomy” (292).<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, highly economically successful enclaves could very well be the exception rather

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<sup>7</sup> More so than ever given rapid technological changes shifting valorized jobs away from traditional labor and manufacturing jobs, see recent debates between Portes and Perlman

<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, Eckstein (2006) noted that “Cubans have helped transform Miami into a major center of trade, investment, finance, and tourism spanning the Americas, from which we nationally benefit.” (p.298).

than the rule. Only a broader survey of locations with spatially concentrated coethnics can illustrate the range of outcomes.

In terms of social interactions, Alesina and La Ferrara (2004) have found that diversity brings a series of non-cooperative behaviors such as a reduced willingness to redistribute goods to other people in the community; others have found that diversity brings less trust, less cooperation and more conflict (Putnam 2007). While diversity could bring about those outcomes, could homogeneous immigrant enclaves actually lead to greater intergroup conflict than would an integrated, diverse residential area? In terms of the three dimensions of immigrant political incorporation: (1) Do people in enclaves think of themselves in more “us” versus “them” terms? (2) How do we define relevant group communities? As coethnic national origin? As panethnic Asian or Latino? As minority versus non-minority? (3) What are the implications for political behavior and democratic inclusion?

If we can improve our understanding of the distinctiveness of immigrants’ identity, attitudes and behavior across contexts, then we will have a better idea of how political incorporation is proceeding in the American political system. This study may contribute to our comprehension of whether, in the longer term, today’s ethnic enclave politics give individuals the skills to participate and adapt to the American system or alternatively reinforce strong, opposing ethnic identities that cause one to disengage from politics. My overall hypothesis is that while enclaves may reinforce group differences that can lead to greater conflict, they can play pivotal roles in aiding adaptation by providing immigrants with key resources as will be outlined in a *theory of spatialized capitals*.

## **II. Gaps in the Literature**

A review of the scholarly literature illustrates that the meaning of context varies from study to study, with operationalization ranging from economic to partisan to racial considerations. In terms of local environment, there is an emergent body of research on the impacts of neighborhood conditions, with noticeable effects of neighborhood economic composition on educational attainment, marriage, employment and a range of behaviors (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, & Klebanov 1993; Corcoran, Gordon & Laren 1992; Massey & Shibuya 1995, Hagan, MacMillan, & Wheaton 1996; Tucker, Marx & Long 1998). Sampson, Morenoff and Gannon-Rowley (2002) show that the economic conditions of neighborhoods affect micro-level behavior above and beyond the effects of individual-level covariates. Gimpel, Dyck and Shaw (2004) argue that

neighborhoods influence voting by interacting with partisanship: Republicans in majority-Democratic neighborhoods vote less than expected, even after controlling for individual-level characteristics.

The studies that have examined group differences beyond economic and partisan contexts have primarily concentrated on black-white relations. Going back to V.O. Key (1949), much literature has focused on white attitudes and on the activation of threat or prejudice in response to increasing concentrations of minorities in a community (see also Fossett and Kiecolt 1989; Giles and Buckner 1993; Quillian 1996; Taylor 1998). Similarly, studies that incorporate Asian Americans and Latinos primarily focus on white attitudes toward those groups (Hood and Morris 1998; Lee 2000; Stein et al. 1998; Taylor 1998; Welch and Sigelman 2000).<sup>9</sup> Perhaps because the data have not been available up to this point, studies that have investigated contextual effects on immigrant political incorporation are few and far between. One investigation into this question found that for both Chinese and Korean groups outside California, coethnic concentrations significantly diminish the electoral participation of registered voters by at least 30%. The Japanese and Asian-Indian groups showed similar trends (Cho, Gimpel and Dyck 2006, p.162). In California, only Japanese American citizens seem to turnout at higher rates when they are most concentrated. The results of Cho et al. (2006) suggest that it might be racial or ethnic homogeneity in place that is particularly demobilizing for Asian American groups.

Another related study found that proximity to coethnics has weak effects on voting participation for first and second generation immigrants but for third generation Asian Americans, living with coethnics consistently increases an individual's propensity to vote (Ramakrishnan and Espenshade 2001). Theoretically, a partial explanation for differences might be that those living in areas of high coethnic concentration are more likely to have exposure to ethnic media and organizations; but that this exposure is more influential for later generations who might otherwise be more acculturated. Part of the differences in findings also might be attributed to the aerial unit of analysis, as scholars alternately consider the proportion of coethnics in a respondent's state, metropolitan area, or a lower-level unit of residence.

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<sup>9</sup> Oliver and Wong (2003) are an exception but most of their findings apply to panethnic Asian and Latino categories. For an example of a study on African American politics, see Cummings and Lambert (1997). Also see Cohen and Dawson (1983), who found that African Americans living in very poor neighborhoods shared different political attitudes and political behavior, and that social contacts through political and economic networks are inhibited in poor neighborhoods.

What are the varying effects of *ethnic context*<sup>10</sup> on immigrant identity, attitudes and political behavior as we move from areas with substantial concentrations of coethnics to more heterogeneous communities? Overall, this remains an understudied area of scholarship. Although I will control for macro- and micro-level economic and partisan attributes, the focus of my dissertation will pivot on various instantiations of ethnic and minority contexts and their relationships to immigrants political incorporation, an area of investigation which I believe is severely understudied given the massive demographic changes expected from Asian American and Latino populations.

### III. A Theory of Spatialized Capitals

Rival theories highlight the contested role that racial and ethnic contexts may play in immigrant political incorporation. In their treatment of segmented assimilation, Portes and Zhou (1993) wrote that dark-skinned immigrants residing in areas of higher African American concentration could experience “downward assimilation” toward a subversive counterculture, highlighting how discrimination might compound difficulties for immigrants and their children who already face few opportunities and low human capital. More recently, Alba and Nee (2003) argued that immigrants integrate on the basis of their parents’ socioeconomic status (stressing the role of human capital or familial resources such as parental income and education) and that class matters *more* than race). One way to consider these theories is under the framework of individual-level human capital related to an individual’s skills and social capital related to one’s social network. After briefly outlining human capital and social capital, both of which undoubtedly contribute to immigrant integration, I outline my central theoretic claims about the role that a proposed theory of capital in space might play in explaining immigrant political incorporation.

My own theoretical framework introduces “*A Theory of Spatialized Capitals*,” building on the work of James Coleman’s (1988) seminal theory of how social capital can enhance the development of human capital. Taking a step back from Coleman’s analysis, I argue that social capital is affected by space, such that contacts and trust between like-minded people are more likely to increase with the density of residents in a given area. With spatialized capitals, I do not focus on material outcomes (as Marx does) or social disorder (Durkheim)

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<sup>10</sup> For the sake of writing convenience, I use “ethnic context” in this dissertation to refer to a class of ethnic and racial groupings in a geographic area: these include coethnic national origin concentrations, panethnic “Asian” or “Latino” concentrations, and minority concentrations as well. Where needed in the analysis, I specify the particular instantiation under consideration.

and pathological outcomes (Chicago school) so much as cognitive and psychological processes that affect decision-making for immigrants residing across spaces. I propose a meso-level explanation—that concentrated spaces can reduce transaction costs (Williamson 1975) vis-à-vis the spread of available information and the development of cognitive heuristics among residents. Space, by providing a place for the implementation of rational rituals (Chwe 2001), can make it easier to generate coordination and common knowledge among the members of a group. More specifically, I put forward that space may aid in the processing of new information through frequent contact and group cues for an unincorporated immigrant, manifesting in developed schematic structures that could produce ethnospatial cognitive capital and ethnospatial psychological capital. This capital, among others, then interacts with the built environment (distance to key locations, options available for participation) to produce a process that spatializes social and human capital.

#### Central Theoretic Claims about Mechanisms: Human, Social and Spatialized Capitals

Before moving on, I briefly define key capitals for the incorporation of immigrants and their relationships.

*Human capital:* Existing literature points to human capital as that set of resources that the individual carries: labor market experience, education and English-language ability are typically considered as the characteristics of individuals that comprise human capital.

*Social capital*<sup>11</sup>: A social network provides additional resources beyond those of the individual. Granovetter argued that it was the ‘strength of weak ties,’ or the power of indirect influences outside the immediate circle of family and close friends, which influenced an individual’s employment gains. Other scholars argued that “strong ties” like those of family were more likely to influence someone to take action on an individual’s behalf.

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<sup>11</sup> Scholars have noted the fuzzy nature of social capital as a concept. When it is discussed theoretically, the label “social capital” is used whereas empirically, it is usually studied as a function of social networks (although there are prominent exceptions such as Putnam’s interpretation, but these exceptions are accompanied by strident criticism). As social capital is employed in this memo, I mean social networks.



*Spatialized capital:* A central theoretical claim of spatialized capitals is that nonelectoral influences mobilize immigrant communities. Context potentially has independent effects over and above those of human and social capital. One interpretation is that spatialized capital augments human and social capital in processes affecting of immigrant political incorporation. My theoretical expectation is that ethnic enclaves are likely to be accompanied by different structures that can facilitate participation by maintaining the salience of ethnic identity among residents in a higher steady-state and by buttressing individual self-esteem (fewer reports of discrimination in accordance with a “protective” function with higher areas of minority concentration).


To illustrate, an excerpt from Bloemraad (2006, p.86) highlights some of the network and organizational advantages of residing in an ethnic enclave:

“Tung, who came to the United States in 1989, wanted to apply for citizenship in 1997. With rudimentary English and limited schooling—six years of primary school before working on his parent’s rice farm—he needed help studying for the citizenship exam. His friends, of similar backgrounds, did not feel able to teach him the civics material, and in any case, they worked long hours at various factory and flooring jobs. Instead, ‘I studied from the book and I also took a course in Chinatown. I had to pay. There were a mix of people in the class...My friends who had already took the course told me about it.’ Other Vietnamese Americans also mentioned such businesses. For example, Thien paid someone in Boston’s Chinatown to fill out the application for him. Instead of taking a class, he bought a booklet that listed the standard one hundred citizenship questions asked by the INS in English and Vietnamese.”

Even where a resident lacks an extensive social network, simply living in an enclave can activate his identity through a consistent presentation of symbolic imagery or the framing of messages by ethnic media and community elites. The geography of enclaves also minimizes some of the costs of participation such as travel to a protest site or signing up to vote during a targeted registration drive. Spatialized capital could influence social capital and human capital; however, it does not require either of those to have an effect on immigrant political incorporation (see Table 1). Spatialized capital might also represent an explanation for levels of immigrant political participation where the traditional socioeconomic status model of participation is insufficient (e.g. some wealthy

groups have lower levels of participation in contrast to lower socioeconomic groups who have higher levels).

**Table 1.1: Typology of Immigrant Capitals according to Spatialized Capitals Theory**

<b><i>HUMAN CAPITAL</i></b>	<b><i>SOCIAL CAPITAL</i></b>	<b><i>SPATIALIZED CAPITAL</i></b>
1 – labor market experience 2 – education 3 – English-language ability	1 –social network with “strong ties” and “weak ties,” (family, friends, acquaintances, coworkers)	1 – shorter distance to central areas 2 – symbolic imagery through visible flags, statues, buildings, signs et 3 – ethnic businesses 4 – coethnic candidates 5 – framing by political leaders, ethnic media, community organizations 6 – established incorporation structures such as citizenship offices 7 – space for contact with in-group and out-group members
		
<b><i>Ethnospatial Cognitive Capital</i></b> 1 - Ethnic identity of individual 2 - affected by space		<b><i>Ethnospatial Psychological Capital</i></b> 1 - Self-esteem of individual 2 - affected by space

*Interaction of human capital + social capital + spatialized capital:* Some scholars observe that human capital has its smallest effect on income when social capital is high and that human capital has its largest impact on income when social capital is low. Where individuals come with high human capital, they may

have but not need higher social capital. When individuals have low human capital, geographic density may facilitate the acquisition of enough social capital to increase political incorporation among immigrant residents. Where human and social capitals are low, spatialized capital may provide pivotal pathways to immigrant political incorporation. With this conceptual framework, the difficulty lies in disentangling the independent and interactive effects *vis-a-vis* each of the forms of capital. Below, I provide a brief summary of a theory of spatialized capitals.

Table 1.1 enumerates elements of the argument that higher areas of ethnic concentration might lower transaction costs such that residents have shorter distances to travel to reach central areas, which might provide ease of access to protests and other community events etc. Inhabitants of areas of higher ethnic concentration, such as ethnic enclaves, are also frequently presented with symbolic imagery through visible flags, statues, buildings, signs etc. which might stimulate pride in one's ethnic group (see Figure 1.1). Also, ethnic businesses might reinforce an individual's identity, particularly if one's livelihood as a business owner depends on coethnic clientele.

**Figure 1.1 Vietnamese New Year Parade in San Jose, CA February 8, 2009**



*Caption Notes:* The parade float mixes business, politics and other elements of immigrant life in an ethnic enclave. It lists advertisements for local businesses such as an ethnic supermarket; has signage for the symbolic “Little Saigon” community and advocates for a United States’ foreign policy that focuses on “United We Stand for Democracy” (in Vietnam).

Additionally, coethnic candidates may be more likely to run and therefore provide voters with a different menu of choices. Where the average voter may be drawn to candidates who make ambiguous assertions about their policy platforms (Tomz and Van Houweling 2009), a candidate’s coethnicity can serve as a heuristic and even rouse interest in the election for an otherwise unincorporated immigrant. To illustrate, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that in a 2007 election for a position on the Orange County Board of Supervisors, “two Vietnamese American candidates garnered nearly as many votes as the six other candidates in the race combined, in part by focusing their turnout efforts on voters in Garden Grove and Westminster” (where a large community of Vietnamese Americans reside). “Although the race is officially nonpartisan, the county Democratic and Republican parties threw considerable support behind two major candidates in the race, Tom Umberg on the Democratic side and Carlos Bustamante on the Republican” (LA Times February 7, 2007). Janet Nguyen – one of the two Vietnamese American candidates – would eventually claim the seat. During an election such as this, issue framing by political leaders, ethnic media, and community organizations might further emphasize ethnic community knowledge and ethnic awareness.

In areas of higher concentration, there are also potentially more onsite established incorporation structures such as citizenship offices and attorneys who provide standard avenues for advice about legal and bureaucratic matters. Nonprofit community organizations and churches could also facilitate the acquisition of key civic skills (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). Finally, dense concentration also provides opportunity for more frequent (and pseudo random) contact with for example coethnics, affecting one’s knowledge accumulation and over time, the composition of one’s social network. This social network can then influence the skills one develops vis-à-vis Coleman’s (1988) argument about human capital is formed. In the longer term, the combination of spatialized, social and human capitals can generate two additional individual-level capitals: ethnospatial cognitive capital and ethnospatial psychological capital.

According to spatialized capitals theory, areas of higher ethnic in-group concentration have direct effects as discussed above but I now expand to the generation of ethnospatial capitals. I hypothesize that living in areas of greater in-group concentration might be “protective.” Consistent with social identity theory, members of ingroups might be less likely to discriminate against one another;

hence residing in areas such as ethnic enclaves might decrease the frequency to which a given immigrant experiences direct discrimination. First, I advance that this protective mechanism facilitates higher self-esteem for that individual (ethnospatial psychological capital). Immigrants who thus want to participate in American politics might then somewhat be shielded from discrimination that would otherwise place an immigrant at greater risk for lower self esteem and a general sentiment of “not belonging.” Second, where an individual perceives that he has been discriminated against, some contexts predict that individuals will switch their identifications from their ethnic national origin group to perhaps a panethnic identity (I present evidence arguing this is the case with minority contexts among adolescents from immigrant families in Chapter 3). For immigrants and their children, the influence of ethnic and minority contexts on the adoption and understanding of socially constructed ethnic identity in the United States produces ethnospatial cognitive capital, wherein the individual has better knowledge of and identification with his or her group, as affected by characteristics of space described previously.

Crucially, I argue that these ethnospatial capitals – like those of others – can travel with the individual even when he is divorced from the context that fomented their development. Hence, an immigrant who develops these capitals in one ethnic context will still benefit from them in another. For example, a level of higher self-esteem that was generated in a preexisting space will not immediately evaporate if the individual moves from that location. And beyond a mere expressive function as with symbolic ethnicity (Gans 1979), I suggests that these capitals have material consequences. Specifically, they can manifest as more than itinerant and voluntary expressions of allegiance with one’s heritage. Instead, they can be instrumental to an immigrant’s adaptation trajectory and life chances.

Together, these spatial resources lower transaction costs and decrease cognitive dissonance vis-à-vis immigrant political incorporation. Like other capitals they increase the likelihood of attaining a goal. They do not, however, guarantee for example that an immigrant will turn out on election day. Rather, they can make available ethnic heuristics to simplify understanding the complicated workings of American politics and help individuals to preserve higher senses of self-esteem (and self efficacy with potential ramifications for political incorporation). Delli Carpini & Keeter (1996) noted that even elites employ heuristics such as an ideological continuum in their decisionmaking. McKelvey & Ordeschook (1986) observe that with just three pieces of information—national poll, endorsement, knowledge of own position along ideological position—uninformed voters can make the same quality decisions as informed voters. Hajnal and Lee (2006) show that we should not automatically

assume that immigrants align with mainstream tendencies to think in terms of mainstream party identification. With immigrants who face substantial language limitations and possess lower levels of other human capitals in particular, the challenge of immigrant political incorporation is even greater.

Spatialized capital could make ethnic group heuristics more accessible to a given immigrant but the availability of these heuristics is not enough in and of itself to guarantee immigrant political incorporation. What immigrants may have, particularly in concentrated spaces, for example, is an idea of how they feel about the ethnic group with which they identify, as well as maybe how they feel about another group with which they do or do not identify. As Citrin, Wong and Duff (2001) note, national and ethnic identities may have implications for policy preferences. However, group knowledge is distinct from group consciousness, which scholars have noted renders the individual far more likely to be politically involved (Olsen 1970; Verba and Nie 1972). Here, García Bedolla's (2005, p.6) psychological capital is key to understanding the link between individual and group consciousness as it provides for a "social capital that exists within the individual psyche and gives a person the motivation to act on behalf of the collective"; similarly, García Bedolla's contextual capital or the politicization of the group's setting, could be crucial to important to heightening group awareness of injustice. Put another way, identifying with one's ethnic group and understanding relative group positions might serve as helpful resources for immigrant adaptation (as in ethnospatial cognitive capital) but they do not guarantee a sense of group consciousness – a sense of linked fate and historical injustice against the group – that has been so central to explaining African American participation (Dawson 1994, Shingle 1981). As Lee (2007) notes, scholars cannot assume *a priori* that apparent members of the same group share the same goals nor that they will pursue those interests.

A theory of spatialized capitals that examines in part the relationship between ethnic context and identity and material consequences is not obvious. Scholars (such as Gans 1979, p.6-7) have noted that for later generations, "the secular ethnic cultures which the immigrants brought with them are now only an ancestral memory, or an exotic tradition to be savored once in a while in a museum or at an ethnic festival." His argument underscores the idea that the descendants of immigrants have substantial agency in their identifications; that is, they can choose to preserve their ethnic identity through cultural celebrations, for example, but their ethnic identities are not instrumental to their life chances. "Ethnicity takes on an expressive rather than instrumental function in people's lives, becoming more of a leisure-time activity and losing its relevance, say, to earning a living or regulating family life" (p.7). In contrast, I have presented a

case for how new capitals generated in space can serve as important resources with potentially lasting impacts for the incorporation of immigrants.

## **CHAPTER 2: “Local Variation in Context and Its Impact on Perceived Discrimination for Adolescents from Immigrant Families”**

### **Abstract**

How do various neighborhood and school contexts influence the adaptation of immigrant adolescents? Specifically, are areas of higher minority concentration “protective?” Using the logic of multilevel growth models, I assess whether various minority and poverty contexts condition trends in the responses among second generation respondents along a key dimension in the assimilation literature—experiences with discrimination. To preview the result, I show that for adolescents from immigrant families, residing in a high minority school-neighborhood area predicts that respondents are less likely to report having experienced discrimination over time, all else equal. Vis-à-vis sensitivity analyses, these results hold even after including additional controls in the analysis such as parental reports of discrimination. Furthermore, although there are some dominant trends that are consistent with a hypothesized moderating contextual effect, there are clear differences across ethnic group responses as well. Patternmaking in school-neighborhood contexts vis-à-vis the adaptation of foreign and native-born Asian and Latino adolescents is therefore contingent on the ethnic group under consideration and its interaction with school-neighborhood context, which is largely consistent with the multiple outcomes and pathways associated with segmented assimilation theory.

### **I. Introduction: Theories of Immigrants Incorporation vis-à-vis Discrimination**

How do various ethnic and socioeconomic neighborhood and school contexts influence the adaptation of immigrant adolescents? Older theories of integration fall under the rubric of straight-line theory, in which economic and cultural assimilation are viewed as linear trends. In contrast, modern segmented assimilation theory (Portes and Zhou 1993) provides for the idea that some immigrant groups may be particularly vulnerable to downward assimilation. Portes and Zhou (p.82) identify three distinct forms of immigrant adaptation:



“One of them replicates the time-honored portrayal of growing acculturation and parallel integration into the white middle-class; a second leads straight in the opposite direction to permanent poverty and assimilation into the underclass; still a third associates rapid economic advancement with deliberate preservation of the immigrant community’s values and tight solidarity.”

Particularly with the second form of adaptation—assimilation into the underclass—segmented assimilation immediately raises normative questions about the assimilation process. Portes and Zhou (1993) note rather disapprovingly that “an adversarial stance (with) a common message (that) the devaluation of education as a vehicle for advancement of all black youths, a message that directly contradicts the immigrant parent’s expectations.” A key element in these studies is the role of how immigrants’ social interactions (and experiences with *discrimination*) influence the trajectory of individual identity development. Immigrant adolescents may come to identify with existing, coethnic groups and experience downward assimilation, through a complex interaction of acceptance-seeking behaviors from the potential “in-group” and discriminatory treatment by “others.” Thus, group conflict is at the heart of the downward assimilation trajectory of this model, in which “*an adversarial stance toward the white mainstream is common among inner-city minority youths who, while attacking the newcomers’ ways, instill in them a consciousness of American-style discrimination*” (p.81).

This chapter focuses on the influence of context on reports of experience with discrimination; the next chapter examines the impact of context and discrimination on adolescents’ identity trajectories.

## **II. Adolescents in School and Neighborhood Environments**

Fifteen years ago, research about immigrants and refugees had focused largely on the situation of first-generation adults, with much less known about their children (Rumbaut 1994). In the years since, work based on data from early waves of the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey (CILS) has provided much-needed insights into the adaptation patterns of immigrant adolescents. With three waves now complete, the dataset can provide scholars with opportunities for key insights into patterns of adaptation not simply across generations, nor only between individuals, but also with respect to *within-individual change*.

One important difference between adults and adolescents is that the latter spend a substantial amount of their weekday time in school. For second

generation adolescents,<sup>12</sup> understanding the effects of residential neighborhoods of high or low minority concentration on adaptation is complicated by adolescents' concurrent school environment. More than fifty years after the Supreme Court decided to end legal segregation in public schools in the landmark decision *Brown v. Board of education* (1954), commentators remark that schools have once again become segregated by race, ethnicity and class, with "Hispanic...and many Southeast Asian students of low income placed in very much the same positions in which black kids have been forced to play...in the same old run-down ballparks..." (Kozol 2005, p.185). The Court's decision in *Brown* was based on the idea that segregated schools provided children with very unequal resources. Empirically, does attending a high minority, high poverty school predict negative outcomes or does attending a high minority population school provide students with complex ethnic resources, even opposite low socioeconomic environments?

More broadly, the social context for immigrant adolescents likely includes family, school and neighborhood. Family influences on immigrant children's educations have been well-studied, with parental socioeconomic status, language capability, support and involvement, as well as length of residence in the United States, as key predictors of educational attainment (e.g. Duncan and Brooks-Gunn 1997). (Although family influences are not a focus of the current study, I control for potential family influences by including available parental socioeconomic status and other covariates in the regression model specifications.)

Ethnic concentrations in space can be seen as "threatening" and raise qualms about symbolic concerns touching on the lives of immigrants such as loyalty and national identity. Yet, what do we know about how various ethnic contexts moderate the socialization of immigrants themselves?<sup>13</sup> Setting aside the

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<sup>12</sup> Foreign born children who arrive before 12 years of age are technically considered 1.5 generation, whereas U.S. born children of immigrants are technically called second generation. I use the phrase "second generation" to include all children of immigrants in the sample (which includes both groups) for writing convenience. In the multivariate analysis, I control for the influence of nativity.

<sup>13</sup> With changing demographics and the growth of substantial Asian and Latino immigrant populations, questions of immigrant political incorporation seem to be receiving renewed interest among scholars. "During periods of economic decline or crisis in national security, the political vulnerability of immigrants intensifies, with attempts by the state and various social actors to restrict immigrant rights and erect even greater barriers to citizenship" (Ramakrishnan 8). Even in "normal" periods, as some scholars have noted, organizations such as party machines may enhance or stymie the representation of immigrant interests, with (for example) Irish-dominated machines attempting to limit the entrée of Italian and Russian immigrants into party politics (Ramakrishnan citing Erie 1988, 33). These lines of research are important; and the study of ethnic

normative aspects of the debate, do alarmist patterns as speculated by some scholars (Huntington's 2004 claim that enclaves impede assimilation into the American mainstream) pan out? That is, do areas of high minority spatial concentration shield immigrant residents from discrimination? Alternatively, do immigrants residing in areas of low concentration experience more discrimination, and as a result, are they more likely to embrace a *reactive ethnic identity* (Rumbaut 1994)?

The relevance of experiences in various minority school and work is perhaps most vividly illustrated with testimony from adolescents. At a low minority *school*, a youth recounts how he felt stigmatized by his Latino ethnic background opposite treatment from other students:

“We grew up in a upper-middle-class environment and we were the only minorities, my sister and I, growing up with most of the student population [in] elementary school being Anglo...And growing up I always felt like an outcast. They would say like racial remarks like ‘wetback’ and [another Chicana’s] name was Rosa so they used to call her ‘Rosarita Beans.’”  
-(Pizarro 1999, p.195)

In his *neighborhood* environment, another adolescent makes note of how dissimilarity in racial background seemed to permeate his interaction with the local police:

“But a lot of cops, they treat me bad...Me and my friend, we were in my car and they stopped us. I turned off the car and he told me to turn down the radio, and I turned it down, and for no reason he took out a gun and put it on my head. And both of ‘em [the police] were white. And my friend had a beanie with the Mexican eagle on the front. He took off his beanie, he threw it on the floor and stepped on it. And he [the police officer] pulled me out of the car and then he put my hands on my back, he took out that little black [rubber stick]...And he smacked me in the head with it and he told me that we were in a [white neighborhood] and...what were we doing over there, that we belong in [the barrio].”  
-(Pizarro 1999, p.195)

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and racial context (spaces where people interact) in this is meant to complement rather than compete with previous hypotheses about shocks and party structure.

### III. Methodological Approach

A broad overview of existing quantitative research on contextual effects shows that most studies have focused on *either* the school environment *or* the neighborhood environment. Excellent qualitative studies on immigrant adaptation across a wide range of circumstances exist but a review of neighborhood research by Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn (2000) found no quantitative studies that simultaneously tested for the existence of confounding school factors in neighborhood effects. Even Pong and Hao (2007), who authored one of the few studies that take into account hierarchical clustering at both the neighborhood and school levels, used information from a single survey administration rather than tapping the longitudinal aspects of their data. To the best of my knowledge, there is no existing article with a quantitative model that attempts to explain changes in immigrant adaptation—given competing (or complementary) school and neighborhood effects—with longitudinal data, as is the goal of the present study.

In this chapter, I assess whether various contexts (operationalized as minority concentration in geographic area) condition trends in the responses among second generation respondents along a key dimension in the assimilation literature—experiences with discrimination, which serve as one measure of the quality (positive or negative) of social interactions that adolescents face in their local environments. That is, I build a *multilevel model for change* (Singer and Willett 2003) in order to assess individual and contextual-level variables as systematic predictors of differential responses for adolescent adaptation. This work is an attempt to evaluate the second generation over time (ten years span with three panels in 1992, 1995, 2002) and across space (local minority and socioeconomic concentration). The longitudinal aspect of this data collection is advantageous because it resolves some questions about endogeneity that pivot on causal order.

The analysis in this chapter is based on a dataset built from several sources. The principal resource is the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey (CILS), which has the advantages of low attrition and the ability to track immigrant children through formative schooling years. CILS is a panel survey, with data collection occurring in three waves between 1992 and 2002, resulting in a total of 5262 second-generation students of Asian and Latino heritage interviewed. There are at least two additional groups of advantages to assessing this question with the CILS data: First, I am able to identify the school which each respondent attended. Samples were drawn from forty-two schools, with variation in immigrant concentrations among the student populations, which permits an

analysis of different school environments. However, I augment the dataset with relevant contextual information from the decennial Census to define the neighborhood context of each school in the survey, as well as relevant school-level information from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). By linking CILS to other data sources, I am able to identify key contextual information on the broader class and ethnic or racial environment of each student respondent.

To preview the result, combining new longitudinal data and advances in growth modeling, I show that, *ceteris paribus*, context (in particular minority concentration) is a relatively consistent predictor of *within-subject change* and *interindividual differences in change* for second generation adolescents. *In the multivariate analysis, I show that for adolescents from immigrant families, residing in a high minority school-neighborhood area (controlling for school and neighborhood poverty concentration) predicts that respondents will be less likely to report having experienced discrimination, all else equal.* Furthermore, although there are some dominant trends that are consistent with a hypothesized moderating contextual effect, there are clear differences across ethnic group responses as well. Hence, patternmaking in school-neighborhood contexts vis-à-vis the adaptation of foreign and native-born Asian and Latino adolescents is contingent on the ethnic group under consideration and its interaction with school or neighborhood context.

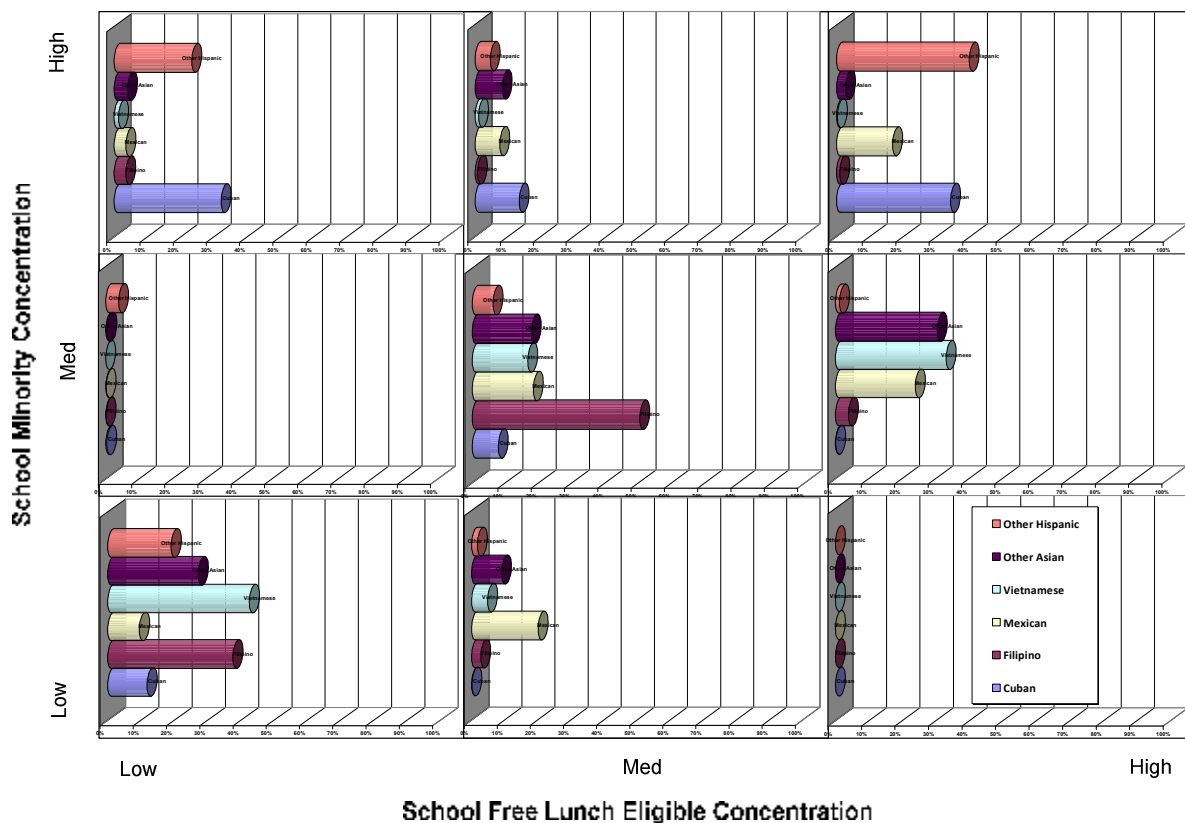
## IV. Empirical and Conceptual Considerations of Group Differences

### A. School-Neighborhood Context

My primary variable of interest is minority concentration and I attempt to parse out its effects from that of concentrated poverty in the multivariate analysis. However, it is helpful for now to note that minority concentration increases with the spatial concentration of poverty for the respondents in our sample. Figure 2.1 represents a three-by-three matrix of minority and poverty concentration in schools for our sample. Cuban national origin students are primarily represented in two quadrants: low poverty-high minority concentration schools and high poverty-high minority concentration schools. Filipino national origin students are distributed in two categories, principally in low poverty-low minority

concentration schools and in medium poverty-medium minority concentration schools. Mexican national origin students in the sample are distributed across four categories: medium poverty for both low and medium minority concentrations, and high poverty for both medium and high minority concentrations. Vietnamese national origin students are distributed in three contexts: low poverty-low minority concentration schools, medium poverty-medium minority concentration schools, and high poverty-medium minority concentration schools. *Overall this delineation of school environments shows that among Mexican and Other Hispanic national origin students, a substantial proportion attend schools in the high poverty-high minority concentration schools.*

**Figure 2.1. Three-by-Three Matrix of School Minority Concentration and School Poverty Concentration: % of Ethnic Group Falling into Category**



Notes: 1 - Total n = 4917; 2 - School Minority Concentration = Total Asian + Total Hispanic + Total Black Students / Total School Population. Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey; 3 - School Free Lunch Eligible Concentration = 1991/92 School Year Free Lunch Eligible Students / Total School Population. Source: National Center for Educational Statistics; 4 - Where school –based measures are employed, I rely on percent minority concentration since schools are not required to record ethnic national origin data for their student populations.

### ***B. Group Differences in Exit and Contexts of Reception***

When discussing immigrant adaptation, it is important to examine group differences, as well as individual-level attributes, because “origins shape destinies” (Rumbaut 2003). Since the 1960s, for example, skilled worker inflows have frequently included Indians, Koreans, Filipinos, and Chinese national origin immigrants; their proportions nearly tripled the number of employment-based visas after the passage of the Immigration Act of 1990. In sharp contrast, the legal immigration from Mexico, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, as well as refugees from Laos and Cambodia and recent waves of Vietnamese, Cubans and Haitians, is comprised mostly of manual and low-wage service workers (insert cite). Additionally, Cuban and Vietnamese refugees received substantial government aid during the resettlement process.

For Mexican national origin immigrants in contrast, some scholars (e.g., Perlman 2005) find a double handicap, where Mexican Americans are hampered by lower educational achievement (relative to whites) and a labor market that provides more returns to education than at other times. Hence, the “Mexican [second generation] brings their great handicap in educational profile into the labor market in the worst possible context, when the returns to educational advantage are higher than at any point in the period from 1940 to 2000” (p.95). Portes (2006) notes additionally that the double handicap faced by Mexican origin immigrants is even more extreme due to the stigma and insecurity of undocumented status.

### ***C. Group Differences in Perceptions of Discrimination***

Some scholars argue that personal experiences with discrimination seem much less salient for some immigrant groups than for others. For example, in their study of second generation youth in New York, Mollenkopf et al. (2008) found that Chinese and Russian descendants are less likely to experience discrimination

than other groups; and because seemingly they are able to pursue material gains with fewer barriers, the authors argue that these groups have less reason to be interested in politics.

To assess this characterization of between group variability with the CILS data, Table 2.1 shows that perceptions of discrimination remain high for the ethnic groups in our sample across the panel study. Almost all ethnic groups showed a rise in the proportion reporting that they “had ever felt discriminated against” between Waves 1 and 2, before decreasing again in Wave 3. In contrast, the proportion of Mexican origin respondents who reported experiencing discrimination remained steady between Waves 1 and 2. The percentage of most groups reporting that they had ever felt discriminated against was high over the decade’s span, at levels of over fifty percent for each wave (except for Cubans). In contrast to Mollenkopf et al. (2008), significant numbers of children from immigrant families of *all* groups reported experiences with discrimination.

**Table 2.1. Respondent Self-Reported Experience with Discrimination**

<b>Respondent Self-Reported Discrimination (% of Total, by Survey Wave and Ethnic Group)</b>						
	<b>Felt Discrimination</b>			<b>Sample size (n)</b>		
	1992	1995	2001-03	1992	1995	2001-03
<b>Cuban</b>	38	50	40	1248	986	825
<b>Filipino</b>	63	69	63	819	729	586
<b>Mexican</b>	65	66	54	755	600	407
<b>Vietnamese</b>	67	73	68	367	310	191
<b>Other Asian</b>	63	71	56	520	479	320
<b>Other Hispanic</b>	53	59	51	1592	1245	986

*Source:* Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

*Question wording:* “Have you ever felt discriminated against?”

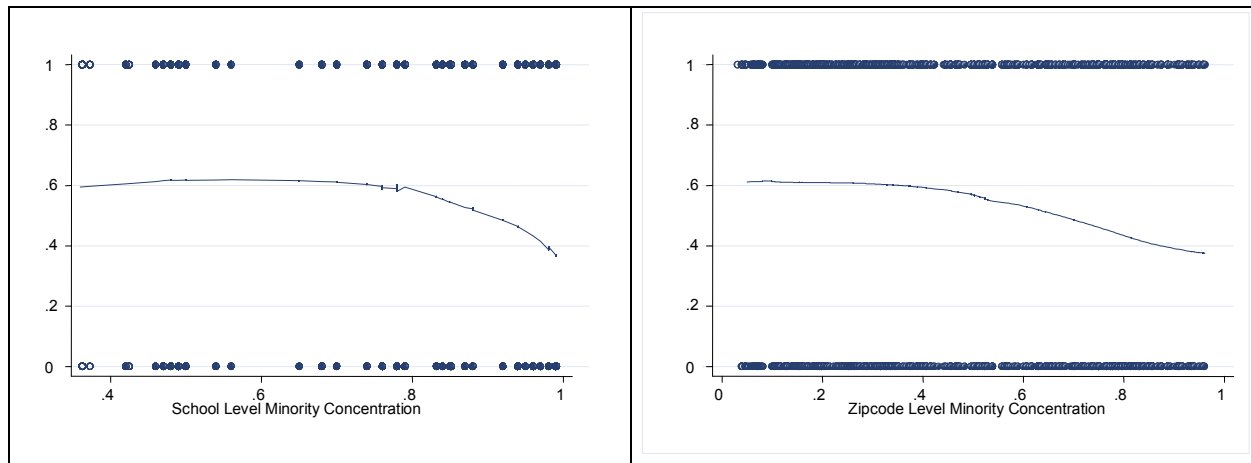
## **V. Shifting from the Individual to Contextual Predictors of Experiences with Discrimination**

How might minority concentration condition whether a respondent reports that he has been discriminated against? The first row of panels for Figures 2.2A-B shows that for both minority school percent and zipcode minority area percent measures, mean respondent reports of discrimination begin declining at



approximately the midpoint of the minority concentration range in the survey sample.

**Figures 2.2A-B. Lowess Curves for Perceptions of Discrimination by School and Neighborhood Minority Concentrations**

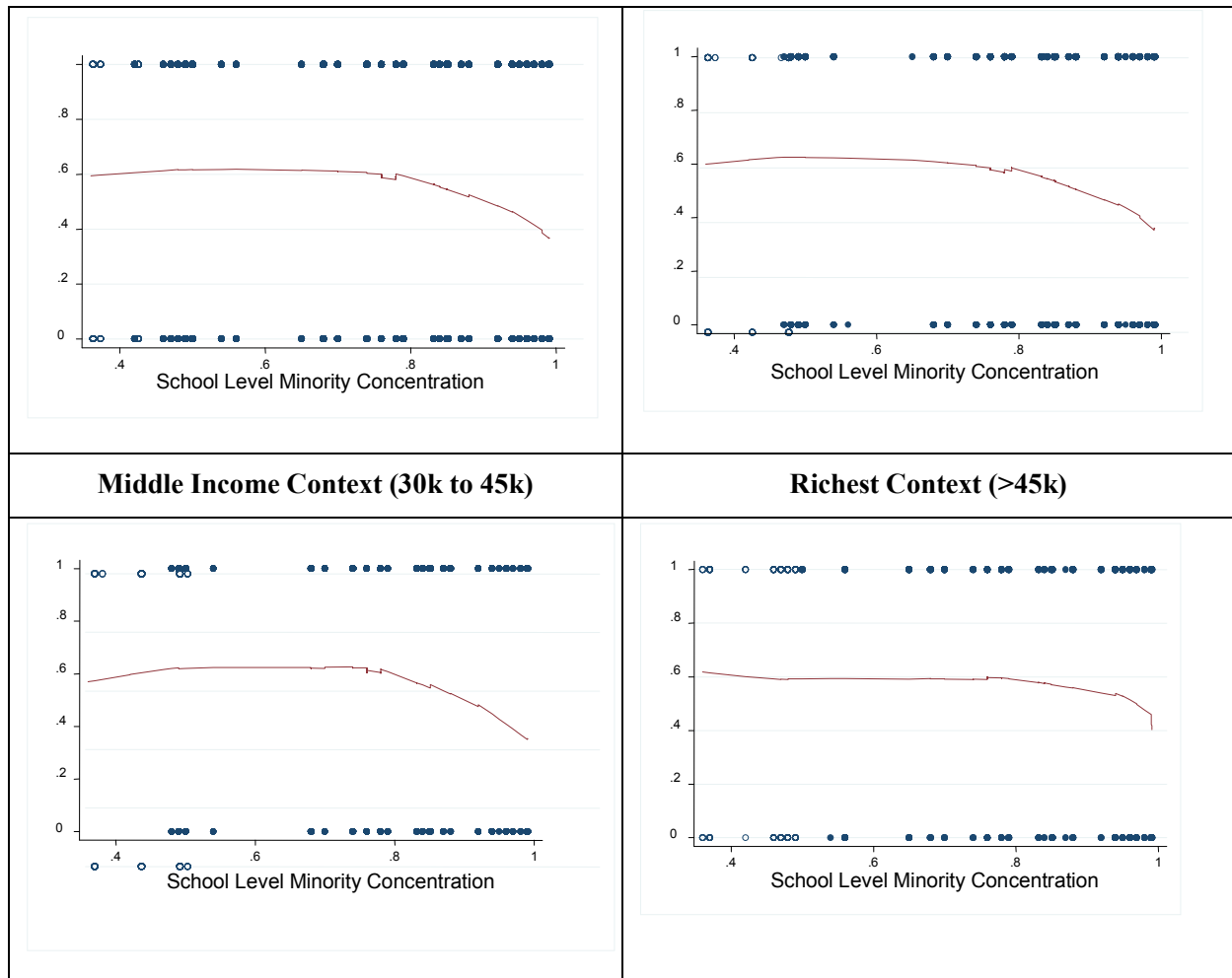


*Source:* Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

But what about when we consider the impacts of concentration on perceptions of discrimination, conditional on the average income of the area: rich versus middle versus poor? Portes and Rumbaut (1996, p. 135) state that it is highly visible ethnic and working class, manual labor concentrations that are most likely to engender “concerted attitudes of prejudice on the part of the surrounding population.” Does this mean those living in working class, lower income context experience more discrimination with increasing concentration due to visibility; or alternatively, are respondents living in high areas of concentration shielded from intergroup discrimination, regardless of area income context? Figures 2.3A-D show that in general for all races, perceptions of discrimination actually decrease as the percent minority concentration increases, particularly for the poor and middle income contexts (where income is a proxy for class).

**Figures 2.3A-D Lowess Curves for Perceptions of Discrimination by Minority Concentration, Conditional on Area Income**

Overall Context	Poorest Context (<30k)
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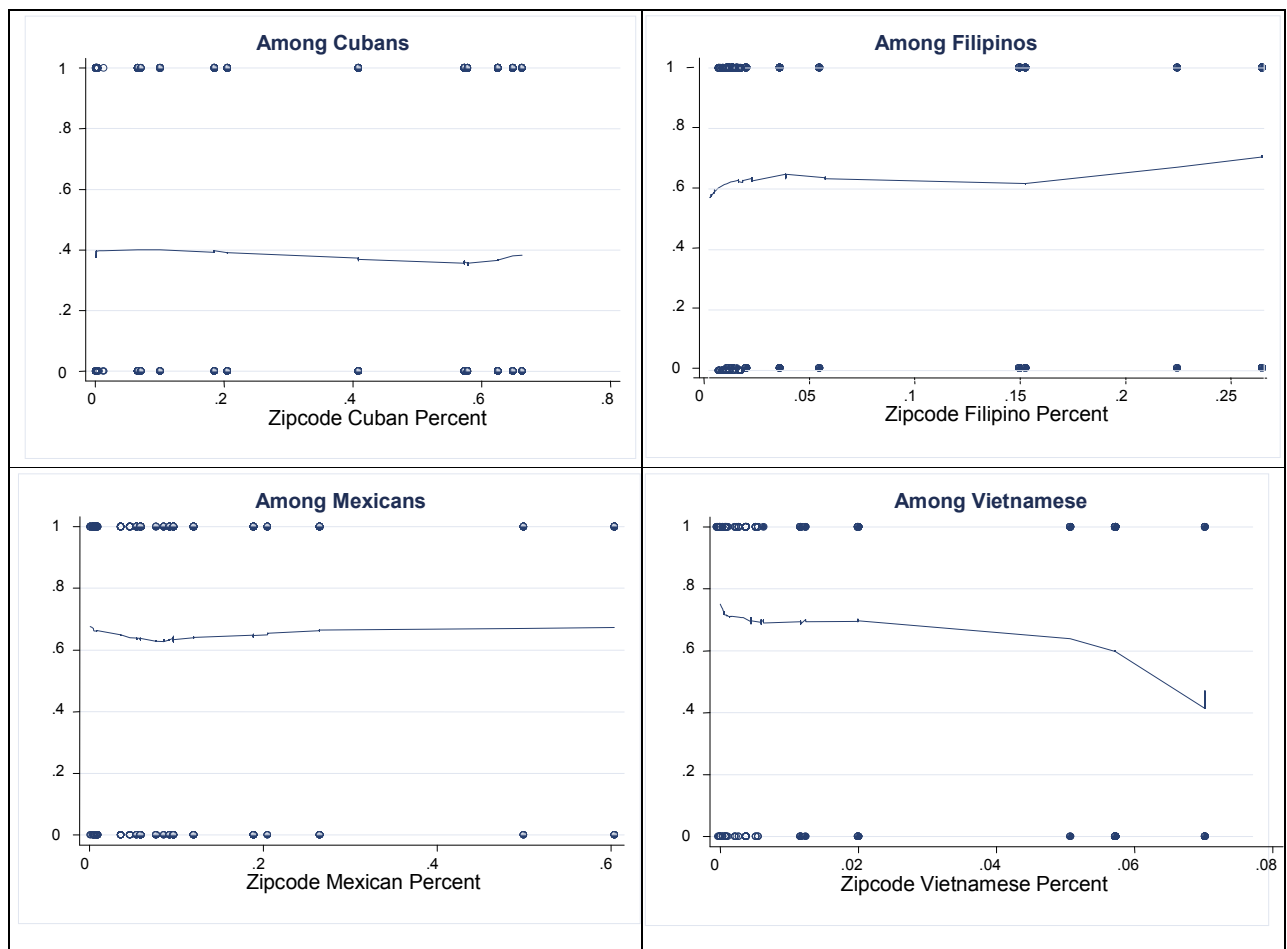


Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

However, when conditioned by each ethnic group's coethnic zipcode (rather than broader minority) concentration, the trend is different (see Figures 2.3E-F). Most striking is that higher coethnic concentration among Vietnamese Americans produces a decline in reports of discrimination whereas for Filipino Americans, the data point to an increase in reports of discrimination at the high(er) end of the Filipino coethnic concentration spectrum (noting as before the caveats about using a zipcode level measure). Hence, it is important to observe that there are averages which characterize patterns of development for the children of immigrants; but there is substantial between group variability as well.

Unfortunately, schools are not required to maintain statistical records about country specific national origins of their student populations, so *coethnic concentration* is not an additional control in the model specifications that follow. Nonetheless, the dominant picture that emerges from the minority versus coethnic context comparison is that minority concentration seems to exhibit the same bivariate relationship with perceptions of discrimination, whether we are considering school, neighborhood or various income contexts.

**Figures 2.3E-H. Lowess Curves for Perceptions of Discrimination by Zipcode Coethnic Concentration**



Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study and Census 2000

## VI. Multilevel Growth Model Results: Contextual Predictors of Reports of Discrimination

The sections of the chapter up to this point have explored how context is related to immigrant adaptation vis-à-vis ethnic identity and perceptions of discrimination over time descriptively. Having examined these trends in adaptation descriptively, what can we say about predictors of *within* and *between-individual* change in identity? To confirm these trends, I specify a multilevel logistic regression model: all else equal, does living in a high minority concentration area predict that the average respondent is less likely to perceive that he or she has been discriminated against?

As some scholars note, cross sectional data are not optimal for adjudicating change. More specifically, any observed differences in outcomes could be due to samples based on separate and different cohorts rather than to systematic individual change. And it has been very easy for scholars to confound age and cohort effects (Singer and Willett 2003). Multilevel growth models can address two major areas of interest: (1) *within individual change* or each person's adjustment over time and (2) *between individual differences in change*.<sup>14</sup>

A principal goal of this study is to investigate the link between early adolescent experiences with school and neighborhood environments based on a combined measure of minority (and coethnic where data are available) and poverty concentration (time-invariant predictor, additive index based on Wave I) and the behavioral trajectories that emerge in subsequent panels. Multilevel growth curve models are justified when there are at three measurement occasions, when the indicators used at each occasion are consistent, when the sample size is large, and when there is substantial within individual change to be explained. Below, I show the results of a *multilevel model for change* (Singer and Willett 2003) that assesses individual and contextual-level variables as systematic predictors of differential responses for adolescent adaptation.

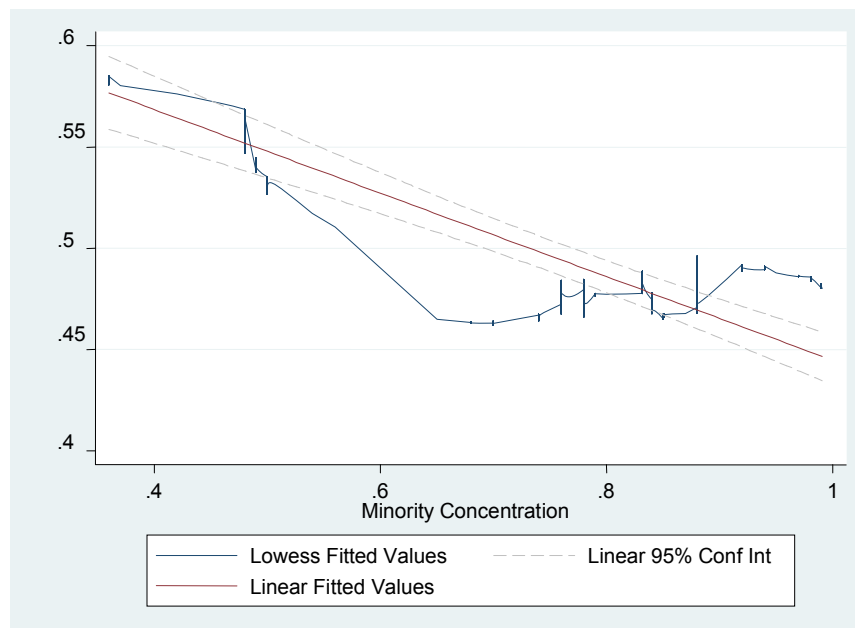
Initial results indicate that indeed, where a student attends a school with a higher *minority* concentration, that adolescent is clearly less likely to state that he

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<sup>14</sup> Additionally, because it takes into account the clustered nature of data, multilevel modeling provides researchers with a better estimate of standard errors than we would find in analyses such as ANOVA and ordinary least squares regression.

or she has been discriminated against in the ten year span between 1992 and 2002 (See Figure 2.4 with predicted probabilities below). Ceteris paribus, living in areas of higher *poverty* concentration does not seem to predict whether a given respondent is more likely to perceive that he or she has been discriminated against (See Table 2.2). To understand the impact of minority concentration further, a separate series of multivariate regression analyses confirm the result descriptive result that: higher contextual percent Hispanic concentrations predict that a given individual is less likely to perceive that they had been discriminated against (not shown here). The protective contextual effect finding for percent *Hispanic concentration* in school holds for the entire sample, as well as for analyses that filter by Hispanic and Asian respondents (not shown here), exhibiting the same negative association noted before between *minority concentration* and discrimination.

**Figure 2.4. Predicted Probabilities: Reports of Discrimination by Minority Concentration**



Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

To assess this result – that higher minority concentrations are “protective” – sensitivity analyses should consider that some adolescents may be socialized by their families or peers to perceive a given action as discriminatory while others may not. Hence, reports of discrimination might be endogenous to context or individual worldview at *time 1*. To address this possibility, I added a control for whether a parent reported that he or she had been discriminated against in the base model equation. I reason that parents who perceive discrimination might be more likely to socialize their children to perceive discrimination; and parents who do not perceive that they have been discriminated against might be less likely to transmit this understanding to their children. Table 5 shows that although parental reports of discrimination are positively associated with adolescent reports of discrimination, inhabiting an area of higher minority concentration still predicts that an adolescent from an immigrant family will be less likely to report having been discriminated against. Furthermore, an additional sensitivity check was conducted, wherein a child’s stated ethnic identity at *time 1* was added to our conservative (adolescent and parent dyad) model specification predicting the trajectory of individual-level reports of discrimination. Results are robust to the addition of this supplemental covariate.

**Table 2.2: Contextual Predictors of Longitudinal Reports of Discrimination:  
Base Model and Models with Additional Controls**

	Base Model	+ Control for Parent Discrim		+Control for Student Eth ID at t <sub>1</sub>	
Age	-0.027 ***		-0.030 **		-0.030 ***
Female	0.054		0.184 #		0.109
Foreign born	0.028		0.114		-0.000
Years in U.S.	0.290 #		0.596 *		0.615 **
Father empl full time	-0.074		-0.107		-0.110
Educ level (dad)	-0.171		-0.381 *		-0.315 #
Educ level (mom)	0.102		0.079		0.075
Single-mom hhold	0.103		0.150		0.186
Vietnamese	0.472 **		0.606 **		0.508 *
Filipino	0.162		0.391 **		0.224
Other Asian	0.181		0.198		0.088
Cuban	-0.591 ***		-1.033 ***		-1.029 ***
Parent Rpt Discrim		--	0.599 ***		0.558 ***
National Origin ID		--		--	0.853 ***
Panethnic ID		--		--	0.581 **
Hyph American ID		--		--	0.742 ***
American ID		--		--	--
School-Neighborhood Minority Conc. Index	-1.024 ***		-0.700 *		-0.585 #
School-Neighborhood Poverty Conc. Index	0.598		0.601		0.509
<b>Random-Effects</b>					
Parameters		SE		SE	SE
Context (estimate, n)	0.226, 39	0.059	0.000, 39	0.347	0.000, 39
Individual (estimate, n)	1.109, 3477	0.053	1.396, 1533	0.085	1.180, 1513

Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

Question wording: "Has (parent) been discriminated against?"

Notes: Significance: # < .10, \* < .05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001

Model 1: Base Model of contextual predictors

Model 2: Base Model plus control for parental report of discrimination

Model 3: Based Model plus controls for parental report of discrimination and student's ethnic identity at time 1

I provide further nuance to the analysis by considering how minority concentration impacts reports of discrimination, conditional on low, medium and high poverty concentration school-neighborhood contexts. Scholars have noted that poverty and minority concentration are too entangled to consider separately; that it is the intersection of poverty and minority concentration which produces truly disadvantaged environments; or that the influences of either environment (poverty or minority concentration) dominates the other. In order to understand the impact of minority concentration across economic environments, I created a poverty concentration index and then partitioned the index contexts into three categories for subsequent analysis. The poverty concentration index is an average of two measures summarizing neighborhood and school economic contexts (see Table 2.3 notes).

**Table 2.3 Conditional Analyses of Contextual Influences on Reports of Discrimination, by Three Levels of Poverty Concentration**

	High Poverty Concentration	Medium Poverty Concentration	Low Poverty Concentration
Age	-0.051 ***	-0.012	-0.023
Female	0.107	-0.035	0.174
Foreign born	-0.109	-0.046	0.578 *
Years in U.S.	-0.023	0.195	1.471 ***
Father Empl Full Time	-0.079	-0.073	0.070
Educ level (dad)	0.236	-0.316 #	-0.849 **
Educ level (mom)	0.231	-0.050	0.026
Single-Mom Hhold	0.048	0.078	0.211
Vietnamese	0.161	1.16 ***	0.113
Filipino	-0.628 *	0.644 ***	0.211
Other Asian	0.063	0.162	0.436
Cuban	-0.341 *	-0.799 ***	-0.485 *
School Neighborhood			
Minority Conc. Index	-1.179 *	-0.920 ***	0.060
Random-Effects Paramters	SE		SE
Context (estimate, n)	0.313, 18	0.085	0.000, 17
Individual (estimate, n)	0.927, 1182	0.089	1.190, 1653
		0.051	0.077
		0.000, 4	1.200, 642
			0.066
			0.125

Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

Notes: Significance: # < .10, \* < .05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001. The poverty concentration index is an average of two measures summarizing neighborhood and school economic contexts. For the



neighborhood, the percentage in poverty is defined as the percentage with an annual household income of \$30,000 annually for each zipcode; and school level poverty is defined as the percentage of students receiving free lunches at each school. These are combined in an additive index and averaged to produce an overall poverty concentration index.

Table 2.3 shows the results of three separate analyses for varying economically disadvantaged environments – high, medium and low poverty concentration environments. Higher minority concentration is negatively associated with increased reports of discrimination; and this holds for both high (50<sup>th</sup> percentile and above of contexts in the poverty concentration index) and medium (25-50% of these contexts) poverty concentration school-neighborhood environments. No statistically significant effect for low poverty (0-25% of contexts in the poverty concentration index) concentration environments. Hence, rather than producing a double disadvantage, higher minority concentration environments seem to buffer some of the potential negative effects of inhabiting a higher poverty context vis-à-vis negative social interactions and reports of discrimination.

I have argued that context can protect adolescents from lower self-esteem via less frequent exposure to discrimination (generation of *ethnospatial cognitive* capital). To support that link, research from Fisher, Wallace and Fenton (2000) note that self-esteem scores were negatively and significantly correlated with distress caused by peer discrimination in school environments. They administered an index (Adolescent Discrimination Distress Index) to 177 adolescents drawn from 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders who self identified as African American, East Asian, South Asian, Hispanic and non-Hispanic white. They found that adolescents from all groups reported distress when they encountered perceived racial prejudice in educational settings (Fisher et al. 2000).

## Conclusion

This chapter asked, how do minority neighborhood and school contexts influence the adaptation of immigrant adolescents? I assessed whether various *minority concentration* (operationalized as percent of minority in geographic area, see details in subsequent section) contexts condition trends in the responses among second generation respondents along a key dimensions in the assimilation literature—experiences with discrimination. The empirical evidence seems to support the idea that high minority contexts are protective, i.e. adolescents from

immigrant families are less likely to report that they have been discriminated against in these environments.

Models of contextual effects, no matter how carefully considered, should be followed up with an investigation for extra-model support; and results are more believable with corroborating evidence. Qualitative data reflected in the testimony of adolescents in their school and neighborhood environments were included at the start of this chapter; these data pointed to the source of discrimination in schools – primarily negative treatment from other students. If students are indeed a major source of discriminatory behavior, then this should be reflected in respondent reports. I examine sources of discrimination for students below.

**Table 2.4: Respondent Self-Reported Experience with Discrimination, by Actor and Ethnic Group Discriminating**

Respondent Self-Reported Discrimination (% of Total, by Actor Discriminating and Ethnic Group)							Sample Size (n)
	Teachers	Students	Counselors	Whites	Cubans	Blacks	
Cuban	31	53	4	34	3	29	470
Filipino	27	61	6	43	14	34	491
Mexican	30	53	7	42	5	34	467
Vietnamese	27	59	10	39	13	41	219
Other Asian	19	6	6	31	16	32	303
Other Hispanic	29	58	4	37	16	24	838

*Source:* Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

*Question wording:*

“And by whom did you feel discriminated against - Teachers?”

“And by whom did you feel discriminated against - Students?”

“And by whom did you feel discriminated against - Counselors?”

“And by whom did you feel discriminated against - White Americans?”

“And by whom did you feel discriminated against - Cubans?”

“And by whom did you feel discriminated against - Black Americans?”

In terms of who is seen as the individual doing the discriminating, Table 2.4 shows that all groups feel discriminated against by students *more* than teachers and counselors in the school environment. The “Other Asians” group is notable with 72% believing that other students discriminated against them. Filipinos reported feeling that whites discriminated against them more than blacks (by 10%); the same pattern emerges for Mexicans (12%) and Other Hispanics (13%); whereas Vietnamese and Other Asians feel discriminated against equally by Whites and Blacks. Hence, a check for corroborating evidence regarding the

actor discriminating supports the interview data depicting the relationship for race, context and discrimination for two adolescents in their school and neighborhood contexts.

Returning to the general picture, immigrants are settling into increasingly diverse racial and ethnic contexts. But scholars like Putnam (2007) seem to have argued that residing in an area of high diversity leads to increased conflict between groups and results in a “hunkering down” effect at the individual level. It is worth noting the minority concentration index is composed of Asian, Latino and African American populations – and residing in an area of higher minority concentration predicts that a given respondent will be less likely to report having experienced discrimination. Hence, what is meant by diversity and the particular aggregation of ethnic populations in our measures seems pivotal in studies of contextual effects. I do not find that “diversity” leads to perverse outcomes. Rather, diverse school and neighborhood contexts (with higher concentrations of minority populations) can be protective.

A key element in studies of segmented assimilation theory (Portes and Zhou 1993) is the role of how immigrants’ social interactions influence the trajectory of individual identity. Immigrant adolescents may come to identify with existing, coethnic groups and experience downward assimilation, through a complex interaction of acceptance-seeking behaviors from the potential “in-group” and discriminatory treatment by “others.” Findings from this chapter provide nuance to our understandings of how likely and under what conditions adolescents from immigrant families are likely to report having experienced discrimination over time. In contrast to classic (straight-line) assimilation theory, a key dimension of immigrant adaptation (quality of social interaction) pivots not only on ethnic group and time in the United States but also on the particular formation of ethnic group contexts that adolescents from immigrant families are faced with today.

The next chapter examines the impact of context and reported experiences with discrimination on the development of ethnic identity and on other key political incorporation variables. Social identity theories and the formation of ethnic identity are centrally concerned about an individual’s comparisons of himself to others (Rosenberg 1979, Tajfel 1981). Rumbaut (1994) provides two mechanisms for the influence of context on the salience of youth ethnic identity: (1) contextual dissonance could increase the salience of an individual’s national origin ethnicity; and (2) contextual dissonance could foment assimilation into the relevant social context in an effort to protect an individual’s self-esteem. Ethnic identity and self-esteem are two key components in a theory of spatialized capitals, wherein *ethnospatial cognitive capital* and *ethnospatial psychological*

*capital* are resources produced in space that could facilitate adolescent immigrant incorporation.

### **CHAPTER 3: “Contextual Influences on the Political Incorporation of Adolescents from Immigrant Families: Identities, Voter Turnout and Partisan Identification”**

#### **Abstract:**

For two key dimensions in the assimilation literature—ethnic identity and experiences with discrimination—I assess overall trends over a ten year period, conditioning the analysis by minority and poverty contexts. I then build a series of multilevel growth models in order to assess individual and contextual-level variables as systematic predictors of differential responses for respondent patterns in ethnic identification and political incorporation. Existing in a high minority concentration environment does NOT predict that respondents are less likely to adopt “American” identities. Early experiences with discrimination predict (1) that respondents are less likely to adopt an “American” only identity; and 2) reports of experiences with discrimination, interacted with context, are positively associated with panethnic identification. These findings contradict Huntington’s claims that areas of high immigrant concentration impede adopting a mainstream American identity. Without making a normative claim about the desired direction of identity, empirical findings from this study highlight that it is negative social interactions vis-à-vis reports of experience with discrimination that impact the adoption of an “American” identity. Finally, moving from identity to voter registration and party identification, those who identify as “hyphenated American” are more likely to be registered to vote as compared to those who identify as “national origin only.” Overall, group characteristics are important but it is the interaction between group members in context that explains adolescent immigrant incorporation.

#### **I. Introduction: Theories of Immigrant Incorporation Vis-à-vis Ethnic Identity**

More than fifty years after the Supreme Court decided to end legal segregation in public schools in the landmark decision *Brown v. Board of education* (1954), commentators claim that schools have once again become segregated by race, ethnicity and class. Segregated schools, particularly those in

low income areas, are said to have substantial negative impacts on children. This is a fundamental public policy concern, as reflected in the expensive *Moving to Opportunity* experiments funded by the federal government, the goal of which was to move families (and students) from low-income, disadvantaged neighborhoods to higher socioeconomic status neighborhoods where they might have “better” peer influences, among other things (see Sampson 2003). How do school-neighborhood environments condition the adaptation of adolescents from immigrant families?

Without addressing the normative aspects of assimilation (whether assimilation into the mainstream is to be desired), I assess whether various contexts condition trends in the responses among second generation respondents along two key dimensions in the assimilation literature—experiences with discrimination and subsequent ethnic identity choices. In summary while *discrimination* is a key variable in segmented assimilation theory, Portes and Zhou argue that a major part of *downward assimilation* means becoming conscious of discrimination in a broader socialization process wherein the children of immigrants replace an affiliation with their parental national origin ethnic identities for other American identities such as an urban underclass identity. For example, they note that second-generation Haitian children in Miami find themselves “torn between conflicting ideas and values: to remain Haitian they would have to face social ostracism and continuing attacks in school; to become American—black American in this case—they would have to forgo their parents’ dreams of making it in America on the basis of ethnic solidarity and the preservation of traditional values” (p.81).

When adolescents identify with the underclass subculture according to segmented assimilation theory, which conceptualizations of ethnic identification become relevant? By an “underclass” affiliation, I suspect Portes and Zhou intended only the more “negative” aspects of segments of some identity groups. Put another way, Portes and Zhou seem to focus on negatively viewed characteristics of a segment of inner-city residents, as opposed to a broader framework of ethnic identity choices and development. Nevertheless, all identities may have both desired and undesired aspects; and scholarly analyses of ethnic identities should acknowledge this variation *a priori*, perhaps by taking a neutral stance and developing a more rigorous framework for understanding and conceptualizing ethnic identity.

A *theory of spatialized capitals* does not take a normative stance on desirable ethnic identities. Rather, it poses that ethnic identities are at once more *and* less malleable than has been proposed in much of scholarship. That is, it

predicts that ethnic and racial special contexts affect one's identity trajectory, illustrating that broad depictions of ethnic identity based on apparent demographic categories belie that identity is not fixed. But it also provides that there is less agency to ethnic identification than some scholars pose; It is not that, for example, Mexican Americans have substantial agency or *choose* not to identify as part of the mainstream but rather the quality of social interactions – with negative ones reflected in experiences of discrimination – that shape their identity trajectories. For an unincorporated immigrant, an understanding of ethnic identity, as influenced by context, underpins the notion of *ethnospatial cognitive capital*.

Perhaps because it involves leaving behind prior ethnic solidarity for a supra-ethnic group identity, black American in the example above is one possible instantiation of the concept of a *panethnic* identity (this echoes the work of some other scholars). *Panethnic* identity is notably a U.S. American, social construct; it is a politicized identity that suggests an empathy and openness toward cooperation between members of ethnic minority groups. Equally relevant in the example above is the notion of ethnic solidarity through an affiliation with a *parental national origin identity*. Finally, what would a reasonable representation of a mainstream identity look like? One prominent example is in the work of Milton Gordon's *Assimilation in American Life*, which detailed the end stages of assimilation as an embrace of an identity as unhyphenated "American." I expand on the operationalization of identity later in the chapter.

Moreover, many studies in this tradition are based on understanding assimilation as a binary between inner city values and norms and those of mainstream culture. With new patterns of immigrant settlement into diverse geographic locales, analyses based on the inner-city dichotomy seem lacking. This chapter instead focuses on concentration as the key indicator of geography, which takes into account potential variation in the frequency of inter-individual contact without assigning negative valence to the norms and values of residents of the inner city.

A central idea underpinning the underclass argument in segmented assimilation theory, furthermore, is that other ethnic and minority groups in the surrounding area may impact the identification trajectory of a given immigrant child. Studies usually consider a given ethnic community at a time. What happens when we shift the concentration measure away from *coethnic concentration* to an index of *minority concentration*? This chapter asks whether residing in contexts with varying concentrations of other *minority* groups gives rise to the same patterns of inter-group conflict. That is, does residing in a school or neighborhood context of high *minority* concentration influence one's perception of

discrimination? What's more, does one's perception of discrimination influence one's ethnic identity?

Clearly, it is important to take into account an adolescent's school and neighborhood context in assessing her development trajectory. For example, social interaction with peers is arguably one of the key mechanisms of idea diffusion in geographic contexts. And yet, using a measure of political discussion frequency (survey asked about the number of times students engaged in political discussion with family members or friends in the previous week), Gimpel, Lay and Schuknecht (2003) found that "many youth refused to engage in discussions of politics because they failed to see its relevance to their lives." CILS data do not tap frequency of political discussion with peers; however, the two vignettes below illustrate how some elements of political socialization—in particular with regard to *socioeconomic resources* and *experiences with discrimination*—might differ across school and neighborhood environments.

*Vignette 1: Low Concentration, Low Poverty School:*

"In Potomac, students are politically socialized both inside and outside of school. They hear about politics from their white-collar professional parents, and they bring news articles to school that are relevant to the subjects being studied. .. Candidates ply their neighborhoods during fund-raisers, knowing that the residents have deep pockets. .. Churchill students express their opinions on virtually any topic, but *their views usually are not deeply seated in a hurtful personal experience of threat or injustice...Most Potomac teens will become regular voters when they settle down after college and postgraduate school*"

—Gimpel et al. (2003, p.3, but note my italics)

*Vignette 2: High Concentration, High Poverty School:*

"From the school's front steps, students can look down on marinas crowded with sailboats, but inside the school, built in the early 1970s to serve a predominantly black and impoverished population, the halls are dark...Their views were most intense on issues relating to diversity and to local law enforcement and the court system. *They shared many personal stories about ways in which they had been badly treated in stores owned by Asian immigrants.* Asian immigrants, regardless of nationality, were broadly characterized by the youth as 'Chinese' or 'whatever'...*These teens pay almost no attention to what is going on in the world apart from issues that directly touch their lives or the lives of their family members*"

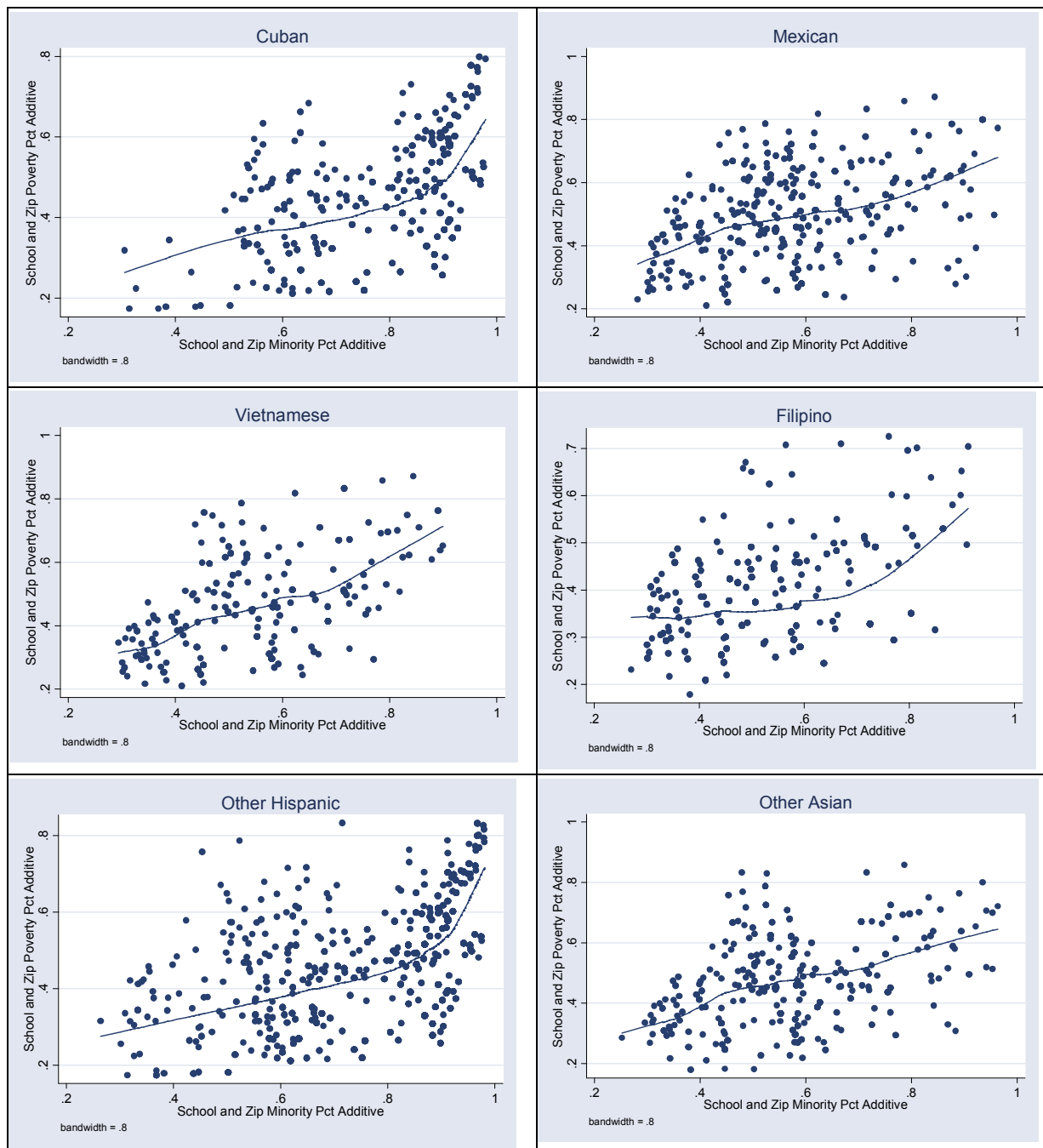


–Gimpel et al. (2003, p.5, but note my italics)

Students in the low minority concentration, low poverty school environment of *Vignette 1* were (1) advantaged in terms of socioeconomic status and (2) less likely to be exposed to intergroup conflict and discrimination. In stark contrast, students in the high minority, high poverty concentration environment of *Vignette 2* revealed that exposure to discrimination in schools had shaped their “intense views” about race and immigration. I argue in this chapter that minority concentrations in school and neighborhood environments shape respondents’ perceptions of experiences with discrimination and subsequent identity choices. I then examine the implications for political activity for these adolescents given their very different contexts. As Gimpel et al. (2003, p.3-5) note, the first set of teens in an “advantaged” environment “will become regular voters when they settle down after college and postgraduate school” whereas those in the “disadvantaged environment” may be less likely to do so. Using the CILS data, this chapter examines contextual predictors of identity, self esteem and political behavior to gain a better understanding of the political adaptation of adolescents from immigrant families.

My primary variable of interest is minority concentration and I attempt to parse out its effects from that of concentrated poverty in the multivariate analysis. However, it is helpful for now to note that minority concentration increases with the spatial concentration of poverty for the respondents in our sample. Figures 3.1A-F (see Appendix) display a series of locally weighted regressions (conditioned by ethnic group in the sample) correlating *school-neighborhood poverty percent concentration* and *school-neighborhood minority concentration*. A common theme in the series is that as the percent minority rises, so does the percent poverty concentration. Clearly, there are no data points where high poverty and low minority concentration intersect in the sample, so one caveat is that we make no empirical observations about trends in that region.

**Figure 3.1A-F Lowess Curves: School-Neighborhood Minority Concentration by School-Neighborhood Poverty Concentration, Conditional on National Origin Group**



Notes:

1 - School and Zipcode Minority Concentration ("School-Neighborhood Minority Concentration") = (1990 Census %minority in zipcode + School % minority)/2; 2- School and Zipcode Poverty Concentration ("School-Neighborhood Poverty Concentration") = (1990 Census % 30k and under in zipcode + School % free lunch)/2; 3 – Although I would have preferred a finer-grained measure of neighborhood, the zipcode of the school was the only location data available to me. Nevertheless, since adolescents can be reasonably thought of as having the capacity to travel a bit further (in contrast to young children for example), the zipcode measure does not seem unreasonable; 3 - Where school –based measures are employed, I rely on percent minority concentration (in contrast to coethnic concentration) since schools are not required to record ethnic national origin data for their student populations; 4 - Poverty concentration: Often, the designation of inner-city (versus suburban) schools is used as an indicator for high-concentration, high poverty schools. Since contextual coethnic concentration and poverty are two principal predictors of interest, I rely on these finer-grained measures instead of the inner city proxy; 5 - "Other Asian" includes Chinese, Japanese, Indian and Korean origin Immigrants. Other "Hispanic" includes immigrants from Central and South America, primarily Dominicans, Hondurans, Argentineans, Peruvians, Ecuadorians, Chileans, Salvadorans, and Guatemalans; 6 – *Source*: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey.

To preview the result, findings show that minority context and experiences with discrimination predict changes in ethnic identification—above and beyond the influences of individual-level covariates—but they also show that there are group differences in responses. Hence, it may make less sense to treat "all ethnic groups as essentially similar" vis-à-vis recent immigration trends. While Gans (1979, 1992) notes evidence suggesting that assimilation occurred quite similarly for ethnic and religious groups such as for Jewish and Italian immigrants, post-1965 migration has included large waves of immigrant groups from Asia and Latin America. The differences in immigration flow mean, for example, that in large numbers an immigrant group may be less likely to blend and more likely to influence local culture through ethnic organizations and businesses. Therefore, groups that immigrate to the United States may experience divergent assimilation trajectories.<sup>15</sup> I would also put forward that the admission of political refugee groups and a rise in transnationalism have limited some of the applicability of traditional theories to the structure of assimilation today.

Furthermore, to the extent that context influences whether an adolescent from an immigrant family will be more likely to experience discrimination -- with higher minority concentrations apparently providing some protection from discrimination -- worries by some scholars about alarming immigrant ethnic and minority spatial concentrations seem misplaced. If the desire is to have immigrants become politically incorporated and have a voice in the political

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<sup>15</sup> Gans (1992) later notes that the future of the children of post-1965 immigrants is likely to be affected by prejudices against dark skin and an economy with limited job opportunities.

system, these findings suggest that living in areas of high minority concentration could in fact facilitate democratic inclusion for adolescents from immigrant families.

## II. Methodological Approach

A broad overview of existing quantitative research on contextual effects shows that most studies have focused on *either* the school environment *or* the neighborhood environment.

I assess whether various contexts (operationalized as minority concentration in geographic area) condition trends in the responses among second generation respondents along two key dimensions in the assimilation literature—experiences with discrimination and subsequent ethnic identity choices. I attempt to explain changes the relationship between early experiences with discrimination and subsequent respondent ethnic identity choices, e.g. such as the decision to identify as (1) “American” only or (2) “ethnic origin country” only (e.g., Cuban), (3) “hyphenated American” (e.g., Cuban American) or (4) “panethnic” (e.g., “Asian” or “Latino” instead of a subgroup). That is, I build a *multilevel model for change* (Singer and Willett 2003) in order to assess individual and contextual-level variables as systematic predictors of differential responses for adolescent adaptation. This work is an attempt to evaluate the second generation over time (ten years span with three panels in 1992, 1995, 2002) and across space (local minority and socioeconomic concentration).

As in the previous chapter, the analysis in this chapter is based on a dataset built from several sources. The principal resource is the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey (CILS), which has the advantages of low attrition and the ability to track immigrant children through formative schooling years. CILS is a panel survey, with data collection occurring in three waves between 1992 and 2002, resulting in a total of 5262 second-generation students of Asian and Latino heritage interviewed. There are advantages to assessing this question with the CILS data: First, I am able to identify the school which each respondent attended. Samples were drawn from forty-two schools, with variation in immigrant concentrations among the student populations, which permits an analysis of different school environments. However, I augment the dataset with relevant contextual information from the decennial Census to define the neighborhood context of each school in the survey, as well as relevant school-level information from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). By

linking CILS to other data sources, I am able to identify key contextual information on the broader class and ethnic or racial environment of each student respondent. Also, the longitudinal aspect of this data collection is advantageous because it resolves some questions about endogeneity that pivot on causal order.

Most of the chapter will focus on understanding these trends over time *vis-à-vis* ethnic identity development. I also estimate a growth model to attempt to explain changes in a dimension key to the assimilation literature: ethnic identity. I build a *multilevel model for change* (Singer and Willett 2003) in order to assess individual and contextual-level variables as systematic predictors of differential responses for adolescent adaptation.

To preview the result, combining new longitudinal data and advances in growth modeling, I show that, *ceteris paribus*, context (in particular minority concentration) is a relatively consistent predictor of *within-subject change* and *interindividual differences in change* for second generation adolescents. *In the multivariate analysis, I show that for adolescents from immigrant families, residing in a high minority school-neighborhood area, in combination with perceptions of having experienced discrimination during early adolescence, predicts that respondents will be more likely to adopt a “panethnic identity” than a “national origin only,” all else equal.* Furthermore, although there are some dominant trends that are consistent with a hypothesized moderating contextual effect, there are clear differences across ethnic group responses as well. Hence, patternmaking in school-neighborhood contexts *vis-à-vis* the adaptation of foreign and native-born Asian and Latino adolescents is contingent on the ethnic group under consideration and its interaction with school or neighborhood context.

### **III. Group Differences in Trends: Subjective Indicators of Identity**

Adolescence is a good time to study identity formation because it spans a period of identity crisis (Erikson 1968) and it is marked by heightened self-consciousness in the development of an individual's identity (Rosenberg 1979). For the children of immigrants, residing in an area of high versus low coethnic concentration can produce contexts that are more or less culturally dissonant (Rumbaut 1994). Research shows that adolescent experiences predict adult political behavior and opinions (Beck and Jennings 1982; Jennings and Markus 1984; Green and Palmquist 1994).

Discussions of “identity” can be confusing without clarification as to what is meant by the term. Does identity refer to what the interviewer believes the respondent to be (subject and object relationship)? Or to the respondent’s self-report along some dimension (race, ethnicity, gender, religion, etc.)? Or to behavioral indicators such as use of language? Even when restricted to a single dimension such as nationality, discussions of identity are fraught with deep disagreements about meaning.<sup>16</sup>

One area of complexity in studies of identity appears to rest upon an unsubtle distinction between objective and subjective notions of self. Bilgrami (2006) notes that subjective identification requires a sense of accepting one’s own tendencies, which is at hand in two states. At the first-order state, an individual has desires and at the second, there is either a present or an absent endorsement of the first order desire. “We need to have some kind of reflective endorsement of first-order states of mind before we can say we identify with them” (7). Because doing so would capture intensity and in keeping with the graded recommendation for the concept of identity, political scientists would do well to incorporate a second-order intensity measure into their models.

In contrast to the subjective model, the objective model has two versions. The weaker version suggests that an individual’s behavior will clue us in to their identity, while the stronger version implicates the mere fact of an individual’s place in society (e.g. Marxian notion of proletariat determinism) as a sufficient indicator of identity. Using the framework of “harder” and “softer” versions of identity, are some identities more labile than others? For example, are “objective” identities such as language proficiency more stable than “subjective” measures? This chapter will explore both objective and subjective identities. For objective identity, this chapter explores dimensions of language fluency among the children of immigrants.

What is subjective ethnic identity? Perhaps because it involves leaving behind prior ethnic solidarity for a supra-ethnic group identity, black American in

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<sup>16</sup> As Rogers Smith (2004) has articulated, “political identity topics should always have been harder perennials on the political science agenda than they actually have been” (302). Scholarship vis-a-vis *identity* appears to have evolved, from studies where boundaries of in-group and out-group membership are clearly demarcated to examinations that consider identities to be multiple, fragmented, and in flux. Of the primary streams of research on identity, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) argue that there is a tension between a movement toward an understanding of identity as manifested in a sense of solidarity or shared, deep and abiding dispositions (harder version of identity) as opposed to identity as the product of multiple discourses that compete and produce unstable and fluctuating notions of the self (softer version of identity).

the example above is one possible instantiation of the concept of a *panethnic* identity (this echoes the work of some other scholars). *Panethnic* identity is notably a U.S. American, social construct; it is a politicized identity that suggests an empathy and openness toward cooperation between members of ethnic minority group. Leal and Jones Correa (1996) provide that panethnic identification refers to a common Latin American (or Asian) origin, when respondents identify themselves with other individuals on the basis of a larger grouping than nationality alone. Finally, what would a reasonable representation of a mainstream identity look like? One prominent example is in the work of Milton Gordon's *Assimilation in American Life*, which detailed the end stages of assimilation as an embrace of an identity as unhyphenated —American. I expand on operationalization of identity later in the chapter. Equally relevant in the example above is the notion of ethnic solidarity through an affiliation with a *parental national origin identity*.

Table 2 shows respondents' self-reported ethnic identification preferences across four identity dimensions (national origin only, hyphenated American, American only, and panethnic). First, for *national origin only*, the respondent proportion identifying rises and drops across the three survey waves for every group except for "Cubans" and "Other Asians" (pooled for larger *n*). For *American only identities*, all groups show a drop in identification by the third wave, and at Wave 3 no group reaches double digit percentages of identification. The largest drops are among Cuban Americans (17 points between Wave 1 and Wave 3) and Other Hispanics (15 points). There is also a rise in *panethnic identity*, especially among Cubans between the first and second survey administration (23 points), Vietnamese (16 points), Other Asians (27 points), and the Other Hispanics category (18 points).

**Table 3.1 Respondent Self Reported Ethnic Identification, by Survey Wave and Ethnic Group**

	National Origin Only			Panethnic			Sample size (n)		
	1992	1995	2001-2003	1992	1995	2001-2003	1992	1995	2001-2003
<b>Cuban</b>	16	16	18	54	47	52	1239	951	795
<b>Filipino</b>	35	58	35	61	39	60	819	698	544
<b>Mexican</b>	37	42	32	31	30	36	754	580	399
<b>Vietnamese</b>	49	53	32	47	32	52	360	308	182
<b>Other Asian</b>	51	43	40	39	25	44	511	456	285
<b>Other Hispanic</b>	29	31	24	26	21	21	1560	1157	918

	National Origin + American			American Only		
	1992	1995	2001-2003	1992	1995	2001-2003
<b>Cuban</b>	54	47	52	22	6	5
<b>Filipino</b>	61	39	60	4	2	1
<b>Mexican</b>	31	30	36	3	1	2
<b>Vietnamese</b>	47	32	52	4	0	2
<b>Other Asian</b>	39	25	44	8	2	4
<b>Other Hispanic</b>	26	21	21	19	3	4

Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

Overall, it is worthwhile to note that Filipinos are relatively exceptional in their identity preferences. Filipinos fall consistently in two categories (that is, 95-96% of Filipino respondents fall into one of the following categories): Between Wave 1 and Wave 2 many Filipino respondents shifted from hyphenated American identities (61-39%) toward national origin identities (35-58%); and between Wave 2 and Wave 3, the direction of identification shifted again with more Filipino respondents identifying as “hyphenated Americans” (rose from 39-60%; national origin only dropped 58 -35%). Also, Cuban respondents are consistently high in national origin and hyphenated identification, but they showed a sharp decrease in “American only” identity alongside a rise in panethnicity between Wave 1 and Wave 3.

It is worth noting that Mexican-origin respondents did *not* witness the largest rise in a “National Origin Only” identity in the wake of Proposition 187. “Latinos make up the largest racial group among first-generation immigrants in California. Furthermore, they constitute a disproportionate share of the undocumented population living in the state” (Ramakrishnan 127). But, as García Bedolla (2005) notes for Latinos, one salient cleavage is between the undocumented resident population and the documented resident population, as was exemplified by early responses to threatening propositions (with some legal residents appearing ambivalent toward or even approving of propositions). Instead, the Filipino population, which does not constitute a very large share of the undocumented population, showed the greatest increase in a “national origin” ethnic identity.



**Table 3.2 Respondent Self Reported Importance of Ethnic Identification, by Survey Wave and Ethnic Group**

	Very Important			Somewhat Important		
	1995	2001-2003	Change	1995	2001-2003	Change
<b>Cuban</b>	55	59	4	34	31	-3
<b>Filipino</b>	69	58	-11	24	31	7
<b>Mexican</b>	68	64	-4	23	27	4
<b>Vietnamese</b>	59	46	-13	27	37	10
<b>Other Asian</b>	58	56	-2	29	31	2
<b>Other Hispanic</b>	56	61	5	32	27	-5

	Not Important			Sample Size	
	1995	2001-2003	Change	1995	2001-2003
<b>Cuban</b>	12	10	-2	982	826
<b>Filipino</b>	6	10	4	729	587
<b>Mexican</b>	9	9	0	598	411
<b>Vietnamese</b>	14	17	3	310	195
<b>Other Asian</b>	12	13	1	476	326
<b>Other Hispanic</b>	12	13	0	1241	987

*Source:* Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

Table 3.2 shows the respondents' stated "importance of ethnic identification." For importance of ethnic identification, between Wave 2 to Wave 3, Filipino respondents showed a drop in "very important" ethnic identification and shifted toward "somewhat important." The same pattern emerges for Vietnamese Americans, who exhibited a 13% decline in self reported "very important" ethnic identification and a 10% increase in "somewhat important"; this is consistent with the 21% decrease in those identifying as "national origin only" in the previous analysis. For these two groups, as the intensity of preference for identification declined, so did their national original identification.

Overall, assimilation to an "American only" or hyphenated American identity did not strikingly increase between Waves 1 and 3 of the survey, as would be consistent with classical assimilation theory; perhaps if we had data

over a longer period of time, we would witness Gans' modification of classical assimilation theory to accommodate a "bumpy" trajectory.

#### **IV. Group Differences in Trends: Language as 'Objective Identity'**

"Since one's identity is very much bound up with the language one speaks, the process of acquiring a second language forces re-evaluation of one's self-image and the successful integration of new social and cultural values. --Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991: 181)."

"Language and identity are presumed to be intimately linked. A 'straight-line' hypothesis would predict additional movement over time and generation in the direction of both increasing linguistic assimilation (Anglicization) and increasing identificational assimilation (Milton Gordon's team), i.e. of a primary self-identity as an unhyphenated 'American' --Rumbaut (1997: 938)

Table 3.3 reports respondents' stated English language proficiency. Almost all Cubans and Filipinos speak English either well or very well. According to classical expectations on language assimilation, we should see a rise in English language proficiency and we do on average. The largest increases are among the Mexican, Vietnamese and Other Asian groups over time. Mexican national origin respondents increase 24%, Vietnamese 20%, and Other Asian by 24% for the "very well" category. Most of the rise in this group is due to a shift from those who previously stated that they spoke English "well" moving to the "very well" category.

**Table 3.3 Respondent Self-Reported English Language Proficiency, by Survey Wave and Ethnic Group**

	Very Well			Well			Sample size (n)		
	1992	1995	2001-2003	1992	1995	2001-2003	1992	1995	2001-2003
Cuban	91	94	94	9	6	6	1250	989	820
Filipino	84	89	89	14	10	11	820	731	590
Mexican	59	68	83	32	29	14	755	603	416
Vietnamese	52	55	72	36	38	25	372	312	195
Other Asian	57	61	81	36	34	18	525	481	327
Other Hispanic	84	89	93	15	11	6	1603	1247	904

	Not Well			Not Very Well		
	1992	1995	2001-2003	1992	1995	2001-2003
Cuban	0	0	0	0	0	1
Filipino	2	0	0	0	0	0
Mexican	7	3	1	2	0	1
Vietnamese	9	7	2	2	0	1
Other Asian	6	4	1	1	1	0
Other Hispanic	1	0	0	0	0	1

Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

With respect to respondents' stated proficiency with a language other than English, Cuban national origin respondents showed a sharp increase in speaking another language "very well," rising from 35 to 57% (see Table 3.4). Likewise "Other Hispanic" seemed to show an increase in the "very well" category (37 to 58%). Filipinos have the lowest percentage of individuals who speak a second language either "well" or "very well," and this is consistent over the ten year period. Mexican origin respondents are stable throughout the ten year period; they consistently have the greatest percent speaking another language very well. Vietnamese respondents seemed to shift from "very well" (42 to 32 between t1 and t3) to "well" (38 to 48) over time. We note these distributions with the caveat that two major considerations should condition our understanding of linguistic assimilation. First, immigrants start in different places, with many speaking English before their arrival (Rumbaut 1994); and second, those immigrants who are older will find it difficult to assimilate linguistically to English.

**Table 3.4 Respondent Self-Reported Other (Non-English) Language Proficiency, By Survey Wave and Ethnic Group**

	Very Well			Well			Sample size (n)		
	1992	1995	2001-2003	1992	1995	2001-2003	1992	1995	2001-2003
Cuban	35	38	57	53	50	37	1240	977	818
Filipino	16	14	16	26	26	27	674	599	405
Mexican	57	60	65	34	32	30	741	589	402
Vietnamese	42	34	32	38	45	48	367	306	190
Other Asian	37	35	41	43	44	44	482	446	299
Other Hispanic	37	39	58	41	47	34	3392	1102	867

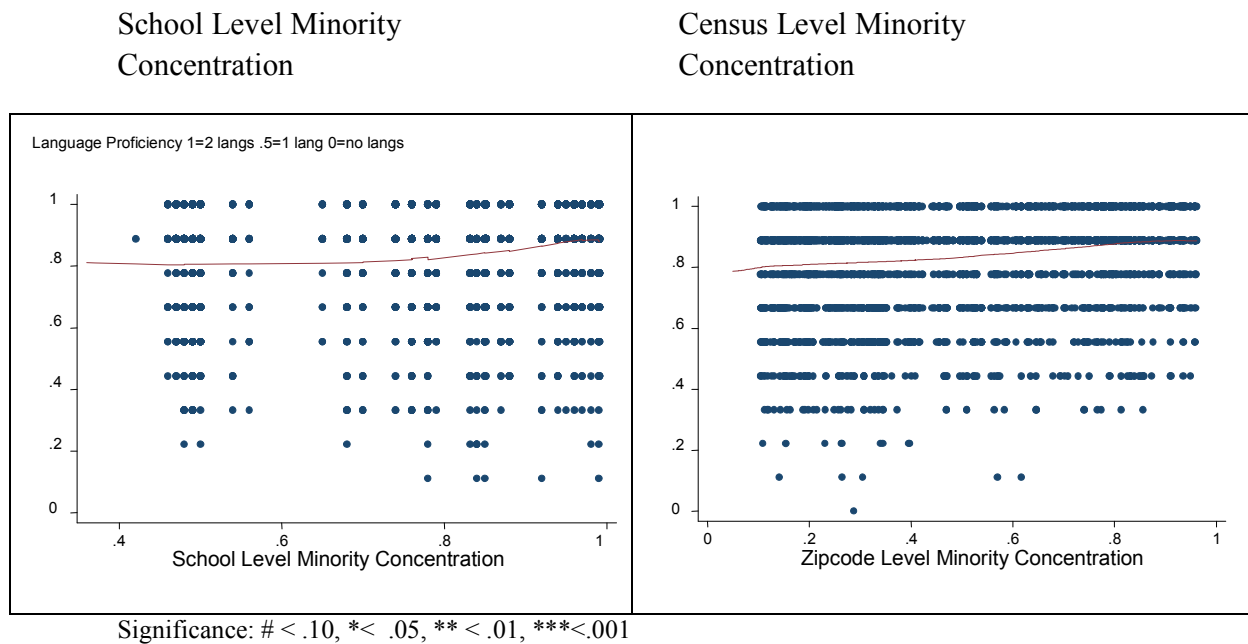
	Not Well			Not Very Well		
	1992	1995	2001-2003	1992	1995	2001-2003
Cuban	9	9	4	3	3	1
Filipino	33	28	23	25	33	34
Mexican	5	5	2	3	4	2
Vietnamese	16	15	15	4	6	5
Other Asian	12	13	9	8	7	5
Other Hispanic	14	10	4	8	4	4

Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

We can examine whether space lowers transaction costs and makes the acquisition and maintenance of a second language easier;<sup>17</sup> if this is true, we should see growth in language proficiency (as measured by self-stated proficiency with one language or more languages) as coethnic concentration increases. Figure 3.2A-B shows that overall across zipcode-level minority concentrations, second language proficiency (moving from monolingualism to bilingualism on the x axis) might increase slightly. When we condition by coethnic concentration rather than minority concentration, there is no apparent increase in second language acquisition. However, zipcode level coethnic concentration is a very rough measure of an ethnic population's settlement patterns since, for example, an ethnic enclave might inhabit only one corner of a zipcode; therefore, its attitudinal and behavioral patterns would be distorted by a measure that dilutes or misrepresents its geographic boundaries (Although this analysis uses zipcode information due to data availability, I hope to engage finer-grained geographic information in other work).

<sup>17</sup> “The ability to maintain a sound level of literacy in a language—particularly in languages with entirely different alphabets and rules of syntax and grammar, such as many of the Asian languages brought by immigrants to California—is nearly impossible to maintain in the absence of schools that teach it, and a community that values it and in which it can be regularly practiced” (Rumbaut 1994, p.13).

**Figure 3.2A-B Lowess Curves: Relationship between School and Neighborhood Minority Concentrations and Reported Proficiency with One or More Languages**



*Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey*

*Notes:* 1 - Dependent variable is an additive index that summarizes language proficiency, by producing a monolingual-bilingual range (increasing from left-to-right) from two variables: “speaks English” and “speaks other (language).” 2 - The minority concentration index is calculated as the sum of black, Asian, and Hispanic respondents, divided by the total population in either the school or the Census area. 3 – I use minority concentration instead of coethnic concentration to render a more reasonable comparison between school and census level concentrations. Schools are not required by the federal government to record the national origin country of their students, and so coethnic data are not available from the NCES and sparse at best from other sources.

## V. Multilevel Growth Models and Hypotheses

Having examined these trends in adaptation descriptively, what can we say about predictors of *within* and *between-individual* change in identity? As some scholars note, cross sectional data are not optimal for adjudicating change.

More specifically, any observed differences in outcomes could be due to samples based on separate and different cohorts rather than to systematic individual change. And it has been very easy for scholars to confound age and cohort effects (Singer and Willett 2003). Multilevel growth models can address two major areas of interest: (1) *within individual change* or each person's adjustment over time and (2) *between individual differences in change*.<sup>18</sup>

A principal goal of this study is to investigate the link between early adolescent experiences with school and neighborhood environments based on a combined measure of minority (and coethnic where data are available) and poverty concentration (time-invariant predictor, additive index based on Wave I) and the identificational trajectories that emerge in subsequent panels. Multilevel growth curve models are justified when there are at three measurement occasions, when the indicators used at each occasion are consistent, when the sample size is large, and when there is substantial within individual change to be explained.

This chapter asks, how do minority neighborhood and school contexts influence the adaptation of immigrant adolescents? The previous chapter showed that for the children of immigrants, residing in areas of low concentration experience was negatively associated with reports of discrimination. This chapter asks, if adolescents do experience discrimination and reside in an area of higher minority context, what happens to their ethnic identities?

I assess whether various *minority concentration* (operationalized as percent of minority in geographic area, see details in subsequent section) contexts condition trends in the responses among second generation respondents with two key variables in the assimilation literature—ethnic identity choices and ethnic identity choices given experiences with discrimination. Using a multilevel growth model, I attempt to explain changes the relationship between early experiences with discrimination and subsequent respondent ethnic identity choices, e.g. such as the decision to identify as (1) “American” only or (2) “ethnic origin country” only (e.g., Cuban), (3) “hyphenated American” (e.g., Cuban American) or (4) “panethnic” (e.g., “Asian” or “Latino” instead of a subgroup).

I hypothesize that:

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<sup>18</sup> Additionally, because it takes into account the clustered nature of data, multilevel modeling provides researchers with a better estimate of standard errors than we would find in analyses such as ANOVA and ordinary least squares regression.

### Independent of context

- (1) Conditional response hypothesis: (discrimination experiences):
- a. Those who report having experienced *discrimination* will exhibit different *trends in ethnic identification* over time, relative to those who did not, all else equal. Put another way, discrimination matters to identity formation.
  - b. Empirically, adolescents who have perceived that they have experienced discrimination at wave 1 will exhibit different trends in ethnic identification over time, relative to those who did not, all else equal.

### Context specific

- (2) Ethnic identification hypothesis: (minority concentration \* discrimination experiences):
- a. Those who experience discrimination and reside in an area of higher minority concentration will be less likely to identify as American because they will feel in some sense that they “do not belong”
  - b. Empirically, a respondent who has reported experiencing discrimination and lives in an area of higher minority concentration will be less likely to adopt an American only or hyphenated American identity.
- (3) Panethnic identification hypothesis: (minority concentration \* discrimination experiences)
- a. Those who experience discrimination and reside in high minority concentration areas are likely to adopt panethnic identification, relative to those who reside in low minority concentration areas, because of exposure to other individuals across ethnicities who might share similar experiences.

## **VI. Results: Moderating Impact of Discrimination and School-Neighborhood Contexts on Ethnic Identity**

Using Raudenbush and Bryk's (2002) notation tradition, I formally define the model below. Responses (at level 1) are nested within individuals (at level 2), who are then nested in school-neighborhood contexts (at level 3). In addition to random intercepts, I specify a random coefficient for foreign born (a key population of interest in immigration research) because I am interested in modeling heterogeneity by subject-specific intercepts and subject-specific coefficients).

- **Level 1 model (occasion)**

$$Y = \pi_0 + \pi_1 AGE + e$$

where  $Y$  is the adolescent's score on the dependent variable at occasion  $i$  in school-neighborhood context  $k$  and  $AGE$  is grand-mean centered. This means that  $\pi_0$ , the intercept, represents the expected value at the first occasion for individuals with an average age in the sample (individual's initial status),  $\pi_1 AGE$  represents the individual's rate of change during the period under study, and  $e$  represents that portion of individual  $i$ 's outcome that is unpredicted on occasion  $j$ .

- **Level 2 model (adolescent)**

$$\pi_0 = \beta_{00} + \beta_{01} FEMALE + \beta_{02} FOREIGNBORN + \beta_{03} YEARSINUS + \beta_{04} EDUCDAD + \beta_{05} EDUCMOM + \beta_{06} SINGLEMOM + \beta_{07} CUBAN + \beta_{08} VIETNAMESE + \beta_{09} FILIPINO + \beta_{010} OTHERASIAN$$

$$\pi_1 = \beta_{10}$$

In growth modeling *time-invariant* covariates can be included at the second level to account for variation in growth parameters across individuals. In the level 2 submodel,  $\pi_0$  and  $\pi_1$  are the level-2 intercepts and represent the population average initial status and rate of change. If  $\pi_1$ , the rate of change intercept is 0, then there is no evidence for change across the outcome variable (at least for the period under study for an adolescent).

- **Level 3 model (school-neighborhood context)**

$$B_{00} = \gamma_{000} + \gamma_{001} MINORITYINDEX + \gamma_{001} POVINDEK$$



$$B_{02} = \gamma_{020} + \gamma_{021} \text{MINORITYINDEX}$$

By substituting the level 2 and level 3 models into level 1, we can obtain the composite reduced model below:

- **Reduced form model**

$$\begin{aligned} Y = & \gamma_{000} + \gamma_{001} \text{MINORITYINDEX} + \gamma_{002} \text{POVERTYINDEX} \\ & + \gamma_{010} \text{FEMALE} + \gamma_{020} \text{DISCRIMINATION} + \\ & \gamma_{021} \text{DISCRIMINATION} * \text{MINORITYINDEX} + \gamma_{030} \text{YEARSINUS} + \\ & \gamma_{040} \text{EDUCDAD} + \gamma_{050} \text{EDUCMOM} + \gamma_{060} \text{SINGLEMOM} + \\ & \gamma_{070} \text{CUBAN} + \gamma_{080} \text{VIETNAMESE} + \gamma_{090} \text{FILIPINO} + \\ & \gamma_{0100} \text{OTHERASIAN} + \gamma_{100} \text{AGE} + e \end{aligned}$$

Results are suggestive that panethnicity for Asian and Latino adolescents is potentially moderated by time and by space; and that immigrant children do not reflect a simple shifting pattern from “national origin only” to “hyphenated American” to “American only,” all else equal, as would be consistent with classical assimilation theory.

For *within-person* change, *ceteris paribus*, one interesting finding is that as a respondent grew (in the ten year span of the study), he was less likely to identify as “national origin only” and more likely to identify as “panethnic.” Model results for the foreign born are quite sensible, with the foreign born as more likely to associate with a national origin only identity than the native born. Similarly, a familiar result is that as one’s stay in the United States grows longer (measure asks adolescents about years in the United States), the respondent is less likely to report a national origin only identity.

There are also other substantial between group differences, with Vietnamese national origin adolescents less likely to identify as “panethnic” and more likely to identify as “hyphenated American,” relative to Hispanics (the reference category excludes Cubans). Similarly, Cubans are more likely to identify as “hyphenated American” and less likely to identify as “national origin only,” “panethnic” or “American only.” By contrast, Filipinos are more likely to identify as both “hyphenated American” and “national origin only,” relative to our reference group; they are also less likely to adopt a panethnic identity.

There are other nuances to the results, but I now shift specifically to the dominant picture that emerges about the role of discrimination in identity formation (see Table 3.5). *First, all else equal, those that experience discrimination are more likely to adopt a hyphenated American identity.* Second, the impact of school minority context on the trajectory of identity adoption by Wave 3 is conditioned by whether a respondent experienced discrimination during Wave 1. That is, those who reported having experienced discrimination were more likely to adopt a hyphenated American identity (nevertheless note from the previous chapter that adolescents who attend higher minority concentration schools are less likely to report that they have been discriminated against). But, *those that report having experienced discrimination **and** inhabit an area with a higher minority concentration are less likely to adopt a hyphenated American identity; instead, they were more likely to adopt a panethnic identity.* In contrast to the results of Portes and MacLeod (1999), who find that context does not equalize (or go against existing individual level patterns) and instead helps to reinforce existing patterns, these findings suggests that minority context here does appear to change the nature of identificational patterns.

**Table 3.5 Multilevel Growth Model Results: Contextual Predictors of Ethnic Identification**

	"National Origin"		"Panethnic" ID		"Hyphenated		"American" Only	
	ID				American" ID		ID	
Age	-0.029 ***		0.072 ***		-0.004		-0.164 ***	
Female	-0.085		0.154 *		0.163 **		-0.618 ***	
Foreign born	1.206 ***		-0.048		-0.590 ***		-1.873 ***	
Years in U.S.	-0.441 **		-0.364 *		0.397 **		0.981 **	
Father empl full time	-0.082		0.103		-0.046		0.192	
Educ level (dad)	-0.404 ***		-0.146		0.274 **		0.487 *	
Educ level (mom)	0.073		-0.114		-0.092		0.104	
Single mom hhold	-0.124		-0.053		0.047		0.141	
Vietnamese	0.099		-1.374 ***		1.035 ***		-0.191	
Filipino	0.391 **		-2.821 ***		1.201 ***		-0.849 **	
Other Asian	0.071		-0.802 ***		0.621 ***		0.070	
Cuban	-0.361 ***		-1.036 ***		1.153 ***		-0.442 **	
Discrim at t <sub>1</sub>	0.355 #		-0.921 ***		0.590 **		-1.170 ***	
School neighborhood minority conc. index	-0.648 #		0.323		0.250		0.366	
Discrim*minority	-0.108		1.111 ***		-0.821 **		0.903 #	
School neighborhood poverty conc. index	0.537		-0.257		0.245		-1.89 #	
Random-Effects Parameters		SE		SE		SE		SE
Context (estimate, n)	0.23, 39	0.06	0.44, 39	0.07	0.22, 39	0.06	0.76, 39	0.14
Individual (estimate, n)	0.88, 3452	0.06	0.84, 3452	0.07	0.81, 3452	0.05	1.07, 3452	0.12

Significance: # < .10, \* < .05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001

Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

Notes: 1 - All variables are code 0 to 1. 2 - Blank category (reference group) is a measure that combines Mexican and Other Hispanic, excluding Cuban national origin respondents (who were distinct in exploratory analyses). 3 - **Minority Concentration Index**:  $[(\text{Total Asian} + \text{Black} + \text{Hispanic Students}) / \text{Total Number of Students at School}] + [(\text{Total Asian} + \text{Black} + \text{Hispanic Persons}) / \text{Total Persons at Zip Code Level}] / 2$ . Sources: CILS School Totals and 1990 Census Zip Code Level Data. 4 - **Poverty Concentration Index**:  $[(\text{Total Students Eligible for Free Lunch}) / \text{Total Number of Students at School}] + [(\text{Total Persons with Income} < 30000) / \text{Total Persons at Zip Code Level}] / 2$ . Sources: NCES 1991-92 School Data and 1990 Census Zip Code Level Data.

## VII. Results: From Ethnic Identity to Political Incorporation: Voter Registration and Political Identification

Table 3.6 reports the results of a series of multivariate logistic regression analyses that examines the consequences for political incorporation across the four identity categories that we have considered in this chapter. For each analysis, the comparison group is composed of those who identify with their *national origin only*. Each of the dependent variables is dichotomous, with 1 indicating a positive response and 0 otherwise. The first dependent variable is whether the respondent was registered to vote. The remaining three dependent variables are comprised of party identification variables: Democratic identification (1=Democrat, 0=Otherwise), Republican, or no party affiliation.

Strikingly, those who reported having a *hyphenated American* identity are more likely to be registered to vote across each wave of the survey administration. Hence, there appear to be electoral consequences (reflected in the composition of the pool of registered voters) for respondents who report adopting this form of identity, relative to those who identify as *national origin only*; and this relationship is consistent across each of the waves (see Table 3.6 for coefficients relating ethnic identity at Waves 1, 2, and 3 to Wave 3 dependent variables). Furthermore, those who reported having a *hyphenated American* or *American only identity* are less likely to state that they have no party affiliation, relative to those who adopt a *national origin* identity. Since being registered to vote and adopting a party identification are two central measures of political incorporation, it appears that differences in ethnic identification could have substantively important implications for immigrant adaptation to the political system.

**Table 3.6. Models of Political Incorporation: From Identity to Voter Registration and Party Identification**

		Registered to Vote and Party Identification (Wave 3)			
		Registered	Democrat	Republican	No Party
<b>Wave 1 Ethnic Identity</b>	Panethnic Identity	-0.008	0.044	0.200	-0.070
	American Only Identity	0.349 #	0.096	0.509 **	-0.434 **
	Hyphenated American Identity	0.308 **	0.094	0.422 **	-0.309 **
<b>Wave 2 Ethnic Identity</b>	Panethnic Identity	0.306 *	0.072	0.190	-0.153
	American Only Identity	0.360	-0.145	0.105	-0.119
	Hyphenated American Identity	0.345 **	0.243 *	0.096	-0.277 *
<b>Wave 3 Ethnic Identity</b>	Panethnic Identity	0.130	-0.052	0.097	-0.003
	American Only Identity	0.241	-0.045	0.279	-0.083
	Hyphenated American Identity	0.328 **	0.117	0.240 #	-0.242 *

Significance: # < .10, \* < .05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001

*Source:* Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey

*Notes:* 1 - Comparison category is National Origin Ethnic Identity; 2- The political incorporation variables are only asked during Wave 3 of the survey administration; 3 - I shift away from estimating multilevel growth models and instead move to models using standard logistic regression analysis; as before, typical individual level controls are included but not presented due to space considerations.

These findings do not demonstrate that discrimination or panethnic identification are not linked to political incorporation in the *long term*; rather, new research on immigrant students advances that attitude crystallization and politicization occurs *later* in life for immigrants than for native born whites. Sidanius, Levin, Van Laar and Sears (2008, p.97) note that, “both political conservatism and symbolic racism seemed markedly less crystallized among Asians and Latinos than among whites, in terms of both their internal consistency and stability...Taken as a whole, the new-immigrant groups had not received as much political socialization to the American sociopolitical system as had white students prior to arrival at college.” Similarly, perhaps the politicization of ethnic identity for adolescents from immigrant families in this sample will take place later on in their lives.

## Conclusion

Lee (2007, p.457) proposes that researchers should pay careful attention to five processes linking “shared demographic categories to common political destinies: definition, identification, consciousness, venue selection, and choice.” Accordingly, this chapter has shown that context may condition identification (as measured by self-reported identification and the “importance” of that identification) but whether these choices translate into political action is another question.

It would be optimal to also assess how well context predicts language proficiency using the same modeling strategy. I do not adjudicate that particular question in this chapter. Even so, I do identify patterns in key variables as a stepping stone to future analysis.

More generally, one difficulty in understanding how context moderates immigrant adaptation is the specificity of the measure of context itself. While I would have liked more fine-grained measures of adolescent contexts, zipcode-level data as a proxy for the respondent neighborhood is a starting point. At the school level, I use minority concentration as a key measure. Schools are not required by the federal government to record the national origin country of their students; hence country-level coethnic data are not available from the NCES and are sparse at best from other sources. Still, minority concentration provides some interesting insights in itself.<sup>19</sup>

An additional difficulty is that of selection bias. Whereas using longitudinal data is helpful in sorting out some issues with Manski's (1987) reflection problem – i.e., which moves first, the person or his reflection in the mirror? – I have some lingering questions about selection into school-neighborhood context that will be addressed in later work, perhaps through methods that combine multilevel modeling and propensity-score matching.

Nevertheless, the multilevel, longitudinal approach adopted here 1) takes into account some key elements of change over time and across space; 2) controls for major variables that have been shown to impact adaptation patterns in previous research; 3) addresses clustering in the data that would otherwise bias our estimated coefficients (more); 4) and combines very different bodies of research into a single model quantitative model that, with some further refinement, could aid in our understanding of how context might moderate immigrant adaptation.

There is some evidence for reactive ethnicity, with those who experience discrimination as more likely to favor a *parental-national-origin-only* ethnic identification. But I show that this relationship is contingent on context. To the extent that context influences whether an adolescent from an immigrant family will be more likely to experience discrimination, with higher minority concentrations apparently providing some protection from discrimination, worries by some scholars about alarming ethnic concentrations seem misplaced.

Adolescents from immigrant families who report early experiences with discrimination appear to adopt a national origin identity, instead of a “hyphenated American” or “American Only” identity. But more generally, existing in a high minority concentration environment does not predict that respondents are less

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<sup>19</sup> An additive index that combines minority concentration at the school-level and at the zipcode level into one measure might produce different results from one based on coethnic concentration alone; but to the best of my knowledge, the data to vet that conjecture are not available with CILS.

likely to adopt “American” identities. Instead, it is perceptions of experiences with discrimination, interacted context, that predict panethnic identification.

This chapter attempts to tackle the effects of both neighborhood and school compositional effects simultaneously. The last chapter assessed possible contextual influences on respondent reports of experiences with discrimination; this chapter examines how reports of discrimination then moderate ethnic identity and subsequently, how identity predicts voter registration and party identification. As Lee, Ramakrishnan and Ramirez (2006, p.266) write, “the future research agenda on immigrant participation and political incorporation therefore needs to include local-level studies in addition to national ones, attention to particular immigrant nationalities in addition to panethnic groups, and a shift in attention away from a narrow set of political outcomes toward an interrelated set of processes.”

## CHAPTER 4: “Contextual Influences on the Political Incorporation of Adult Immigrants: Naturalization, Identity and Voter Turnout”

### Abstract:

This chapter examines context and immigrant political incorporation among Asian immigrants in the Bay Area and among Asian and Latino immigrants in California. I find that perceived Asian neighborhood concentration (ANC) is positively associated with the likelihood of naturalization: for those who report having experienced negative social contact *a propos* discrimination, ANC seems “protective.” More specifically, those who report having experienced discrimination and reside in a neighborhood with higher ANC appear more likely to naturalize than those who live in areas of lower concentration, all else equal. One explanation is that although the psychological costs of naturalizing can be increased when an immigrant senses discrimination (and perhaps a heightened sentiment of “not belonging”), living in contexts of higher ANC might sufficiently lower transaction costs so as to facilitate naturalization among the foreign born. Because the reported ANC measure is potentially endogenous to residential selection, I include covariates for respondent preferences for 1) neighborhoods with quality local schools, 2) “Asian” neighborhoods, and 3) “integrated” neighborhoods in model equations. Results are robust to these sensitivity analyses. To expand the analysis beyond the Bay Area, naturalization and ANC, I then examine political activity among immigrants in California. Findings illustrate that increasing coethnic concentration predicts higher levels of voter turnout among various Asian and Latino subgroups relative to native-born whites, *ceteris paribus*, in a three-county comparison using the *most-likely, least-likely* cases framework. An assessment of empirical evidence, then, reveals patterns consistent with a theory of *spatialized capitals* wherein under the right conditions, space lowers transaction costs and bolsters the political incorporation of immigrants even where one might expect otherwise.

### I. Introduction and Literature Review

The focus of this chapter is on context and intergroup patterns of adaptation among immigrants in the Bay Area and in California more broadly,



giving special consideration to nuanced, multidimensional notions of American citizenship, identity and participation in the political sphere. *What does it mean for an immigrant to “identify” with the United States?* Various social scientists have sometimes emphasized one citizenship dimension to the exclusion of others or otherwise falsely equated, for example, citizenship among those who have naturalized with citizenship as ethnic identity. To disentangle these notions as they might apply to immigrant political incorporation, this chapter employs three key segments of Linda Bosniak’s (2000) conceptualization of citizenship. I focus here on *citizenship as legal status*, *citizenship as identity* and *citizenship as political activity* (the fourth dimension she outlines, *citizenship as rights*, is beyond the scope of this chapter). Put briefly, *citizenship as legal status* signifies who can hold the legal status of a citizen according to the United States Constitution. In contrast, *citizenship as identity* refers to solidarity in affective ties of identification: it reflects a sense of belonging or “the felt aspects of community membership” (Bosniak 2000, p.479). *Citizenship as political activity* reflects one’s political engagement in the community, with for example higher levels of turnout reflecting greater incorporation.

These three dimensions of citizenship arguably should be considered as ontologically separate. Volpp (2006) notes that citizenship as a legal status does not mean incorporation as “citizen-subjects.” Asian Americans are a socially constructed group with a long history in the United States, but many scholars of racial and ethnic politics acknowledge that Asian Americans are regularly deemed as foreigners. First, they have been depicted in popular culture as the model minority, which concurrently valorizes Asian American “success”– thereby reinforcing Asian Americans as the “other” not only relative to the mainstream but also from other minorities – and obscures substantial variation both in the origins and adaptation outcomes of immigrants from various Asian groups (Mayeda 2006). They are also a group that has at times been described as racially triangulated (Claire Kim 1999), as a “buffer zone” (Elaine Kim 1997) or as occupying an uneasy position in the racial hierarchy that is “uniquely luminal [and] ambivalent” (Kim and Lee 2006, p.546). Given elite discourse and mass-based depictions “lumping” Asian Americans together as a group but “splitting” them from the rest of the population, the approach adopted in this chapter is to assess the political incorporation of Asian Americans directly through self-reports.

Asian Americans are an interesting and appropriate group for this empirical analysis because of their complex social positioning and between group heterogeneity. Studying the intersection of 1) variation in resources at arrival and 2) diversity in settlement patterns (into residential neighborhoods that are both

ethnically dispersed and concentrated) might help us to better understand nuances in key mechanisms that shape immigrant adaptation. Literature on ethnic conflict has long posed that the quality of intergroup contact can impact whether members of different ethnic groups residing in a given area develop either understanding or hostility toward each other. These are usually positioned theoretically under one of two theories – the *contact hypothesis* wherein contact facilitates crosscultural understanding and long-term harmony in intergroup relations (Allport 1964) and the *realistic group conflict hypothesis* wherein members of various ethnic groups struggle over scarce resources in an effort to preserve in-group position and advantage (see for example Sherif 1966; Bobo and Hutchings 1996).

One variable that might be central to both theories is the notion of equality between groups in perceived socioeconomic status, wherein starker differences might foment jealousy and competitive, even discriminatory behaviors. Whereas some Asian national origin groups have converged with the general U.S. population in terms of socioeconomic status (e.g. Japanese, Koreans and Asian Indians), scholars note that others “are struggling in the most underprivileged segment of U.S. society” (e.g., political refugee groups): “Those newcomers who are poorly educated and lack marketable skills may find themselves stalled or, even worse, stumbling beneath the ranks of the lower working class...they and their children may become trapped in poverty and isolated from mainstream American society” (Zhou and Gatewood 2006, p.134). Hence, Asians from various national origin groups exhibit substantial differences in socioeconomic status; and with a few exceptions, we know little about how Asian neighborhood concentration might affect conflict, consensus and the incorporation of residents.

Some studies show large-scale, between-group conflict for blacks versus whites, and different national origin group concentrations, but few if any examine the impact for Asian immigrants by national origin group of living *among other Asians*. And yet I have advanced that Asians are not a homogeneous group *a priori*; after settlement in the United States, they also face different neighborhood contextual realities depending on where they live. Thus, Asian Americans are useful to study because of variation in residential settlement and substantial socioeconomic diversity, the intersection of which might generate distinct patterns of immigrant political incorporation.

Given the panoply of omitted variables that may play a role in the adaptation of immigrants from various origin countries, it seems important to take heterogeneity across Asian immigrant groups into account. To that end, I condition the analysis where possible by reported reason for immigration. The advantage of this approach is that I am able to assess patterns among respondents

who report coming to the United States for a similar class of reasons, all the while controlling for differences in education, country of origin and economic resources, in order to better illuminate how diversity in origins among members of a (frequently and falsely depicted monolithic Asian) group might impact outcomes.

The structure of the remainder of this chapter is as follows. Having situated the investigation in existing theories of immigrant adaptation, I now enumerate the dimensions of “citizen” incorporation under study at length: legal status, identity and political activity. Attending to context, I advance and provide support for the idea that limiting much of the analysis to one geographic location provides useful variation in Asian neighborhood concentration while also controlling for regional differences that might otherwise plague cross contextual analyses (this segment of the analysis employs the 2004 *Survey of Asians in the Bay Area*). I later expand the investigation to other national origin ethnic groups and to a broader survey of geographies in California.

I begin with a consideration of *citizenship as legal status* and its implications.

### **Citizenship as legal status**

Bosniak (2000a) states that national citizenship produces a legal divide or an internal boundary between residents of national territory who are *full members* and those who have fewer rights. Although all permanent residents are entitled to due process and equal protection provided under the Bill of Rights,<sup>20</sup> citizenship supplies additional benefits such as the right to vote; the ability to sponsor family members to the United States; the ability to live and work permanently in the United States, the possibility of a passport for international travel; the ability to exit and enter and reside without concerns of deportation; and the potential to run for the highest elected office, among other benefits. Although noncitizens do enjoy more rights in the United States than in other countries,

“It is also important not to overstate the significance of the citizenship rights that aliens enjoy...Under the 1996 welfare reform law, for example, most newly arriving legal permanent residents are now ineligible for most federally-funded public benefits, including food stamps and supplemental security insurance. And aliens now face substantially reduced due process rights in deportation proceedings, including a bar on

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<sup>20</sup> Additionally, “all may hold property and make and enforce contracts, and undocumented aliens as well as resident aliens are covered by various protective labor and employment laws. And courts have prohibited the individual states from denying many public benefits to resident aliens, and public education to the undocumented.” Bosniak (2000, p.383).

most forms of judicial review. Finally, and significantly, many aliens who are formally entitled to rights are often not in a position to enjoy them as a practical matter. Undocumented aliens, for example, may be covered by basic labor and employment protections on the books, but they are usually unwilling to try to enforce them for fear of coming, or being brought by their employers, to the attention of the immigration authorities” (Bosniak 2000, p.388).

Differences in benefits to citizenship as legal status provide incentives to naturalize among the foreign born but there are costs to completing the process. Does context lower transaction costs to citizenship and if so, are these sufficiently reduced to have some observable implications?

### Citizenship as identity

Shifting to identity, I now attempt to make explicit the potential impacts of context on the collectivity with which individuals identify; in particular, I examine whether Asians affiliate with a country of origin ethnic group, as “Asian”, as “Asian American” or as “American.” Bosniak (2000) notes that although scholarship is often linked to “national identity” or “nationality” or even to studies of patriotism, “there is nothing necessary about this nationalist presumption.” Volpp (2006, p.535) notes moreover that “citizenship has served as a proxy for race, so that ‘American’ is equated with being white.” According to these scholars, Asians have therefore often been viewed as foreign and inassimilable (see also Devos and Benaji 2005).

Examples of Asians as a foreign and inassimilable threat repeat in American history and include 1) the internment of Japanese Americans after the bombing of Pearl Harbor during World War II; 2) a focus on Chinese Americans on “prime suspects of treason and espionage” in the late 1940s; 3) the 1980s murder of Chinese American Vincent Chin who was mistaken for someone of Japanese heritage; and 4) more recently, the indictment of scientist Wen Ho Lee on more than fifty counts under the Atomic Energy Act and placement in solitary confinement in federal prison for three quarters of a year (all charges except that for downloading data were dropped) (Volpp 2006). Asian Americans may be perceived as “foreign” when they speak accented English; however unaccented English and apposite dress due not mean that Asians will then necessarily melt into the mainstream without notice. Instead, native born Asian Americans who are otherwise “assimilated” but share similar phenotypes to those of newer immigrants “have been rudely reawakened with renewed images of being ‘foreigners’...The children, U.S.-born and similar to other American children, suffer from persistent disadvantages merely because they look ‘foreign’ (U.S.

Commission on Civil Rights 1988, 1992) (as cited in Gatewood and Zhou 2006, p.132).

These examples make clear that stereotypes of Asian Americans—and at times alarming ramifications when these stereotypes are acted upon—as perpetual foreigners are a repeated theme. One important question worth examining is whether the ethnic identification that Asians in the United States adopt is consistent with this stereotype, i.e. whether immigrants themselves feel “American” *consistent with* or *in contrast* to the foreigner stereotype and whether context makes a difference to ethnic identification.

### **Citizenship as political activity**

Asian American political activity has not proceeded without controversy. Volpp (2006, p.533-534) summarizes:

“the ‘Asian connection’ in the campaign finance scandal of 1996 centered on two men, John Huang and Charlie Yah-lin Trie—both naturalized U.S. citizens—who were donors and fundraisers for President Clinton’s reelection and the Democratic National Committee. In the months before the 1996 election, the media and Clinton’s challengers attacked Clinton for using Huang to raise money from illegal foreign sources, particularly from James Riady, the owner of the Indonesia-based Lippo Group. Soon the idea that there was a foreign Asian plot to buy influence in Washington DC, became major news. The *National Review* created an infamous cover, featuring Clinton, Hillary Rodham Clinton, and Al Gore with buck teeth, and in putative ‘Asian’ dress.” “This concern still rages, as exemplified by the use of repeated shots of Gore fundraising at the Hsi Lai Buddhist Temple in California in an attempt to discredit him.”

Certainly, scholarly literature noting patterns of lower than average electoral participation among Asian Americans is prominent in the social science literature on political participation. Where the standard socioeconomic model of participation is insufficient, does context help to explain variation in turnout among Asian Americans?

## **II. Methodological Approach and Rationale for Case Selection**

From a methodological viewpoint for case selection, I put forward that a consideration of Asian immigrants -- given group differences in socioeconomic status and reasons for immigration -- might be especially revealing. Attending to context, I advance and provide support for the idea that limiting much of the

analysis to one geographic locale provides useful variation in Asian percent concentration in context while also controlling for regional differences that might otherwise plague cross contextual analyses (this segment of the analysis employs the *Survey of Asians in the Bay Area*). I then expand the examination to consider voter turnout among a broader range of Asian and Latino national origin groups within California.

Using the Survey of Asians in the Bay Area, a joint project of the San Jose Mercury News and the Kaiser Family Foundation, I assess the impact of respondents' perceptions of Asian neighborhood makeup on a number of political incorporation variables. Respondents were randomly selected from California's Bay Area (including Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, Santa Clara, San Mateo, Sonoma, and Solano Counties). Interviews were conducted from May through July 2004 for 1,095 self-identified Asian Adults who were 18 years of age and older in the English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Tagalog and Vietnamese languages.

Below, I outline four hypotheses that have been tested in existing scholarship, concluding with how the hypotheses for this chapter differ from those previous. For example, Liang summarizes four main hypotheses that might affect the naturalization process (1994, p.415): First, according to the *assimilation hypothesis*, socioeconomic status, duration of exposure to U.S. society, and English language ability all increase the probability of naturalization. Second, according to the *ethnic enclosure hypothesis*, immigrants are more likely to naturalize with increasing social contact with whites. Third, according to the *ethnic competition hypothesis*, the more social contact immigrants have with whites, the less likely that they will be to naturalize. Finally, according to the *social capital hypothesis*, the amount of social capital that immigrants have increases the probability of naturalization (Liang 1994 operationalizes social capital in her analysis as the number of people in a respondent's household who have naturalized). Although sensible, none of the aforementioned hypotheses assess that of a *spatialized capital hypothesis*, which puts forward that beyond one's social network of relationships, dealings with ingroup member strangers (in addition to contacts with those with whom we share established relationships) increases the probability that one will naturalize. Certainly many pertinent variables from other hypotheses will serve as controls in the model specifications for this chapter where possible.

Previous analyses have considered concentration among members of the same national origin ethnic group, as well as black-white contact; however, little scholarship to my knowledge has considered the impact of residential "Asian"

concentration on naturalization and United States' ethnic identity. Given that diversity in residential context can take on any number of forms; that Asians in California frequently settle near one another; and current scholarly interest in Asian American panethnicity, questions about the influences of residential aggregation on ethnic identity are timely.

In contrast to scholars who emphasize interracial conflict by considering, for example, the contact probability of a member of a minority group with a non-Hispanic White resident, I focus on the effects of ingroup concentration. I argue that this is an understudied emphasis in scholarship, particularly in quantitative studies and yet, it is theoretically compelling given research findings that although one's ethnic identity may be salient, whether one considers others vis-à-vis their ethnic group as important depends on the nature of competition (Brewer 1979, Kosterman and Feshbach 1989). Hence, sometimes one's own ethnicity (and ethnic group) is relevant to political behaviors; and other groups should only enter the analysis when circumstances that generate intergroup competition are high.

Overall, this study might contribute to understanding Asian immigrant incorporation across three important political incorporation dimensions. To preview the result, I find that Asian neighborhood context is positively associated with the likelihood of naturalization. Furthermore, those who report having experienced negative racial or ethnic discrimination and reside in a neighborhood with greater Asian concentration appear more likely to naturalize than those who reside in areas of lower ANC, all else equal. The empirical evidence provides some support for a theory of *spatialized capitals* wherein under the right conditions, space lowers transaction costs and bolsters political incorporation of immigrants even where one might expect otherwise.

### **III. Citizenship as Legal Status**

#### **A Theory of Spatialized Capitals as Applied to Asian Americans and Hypotheses Regarding Naturalization**

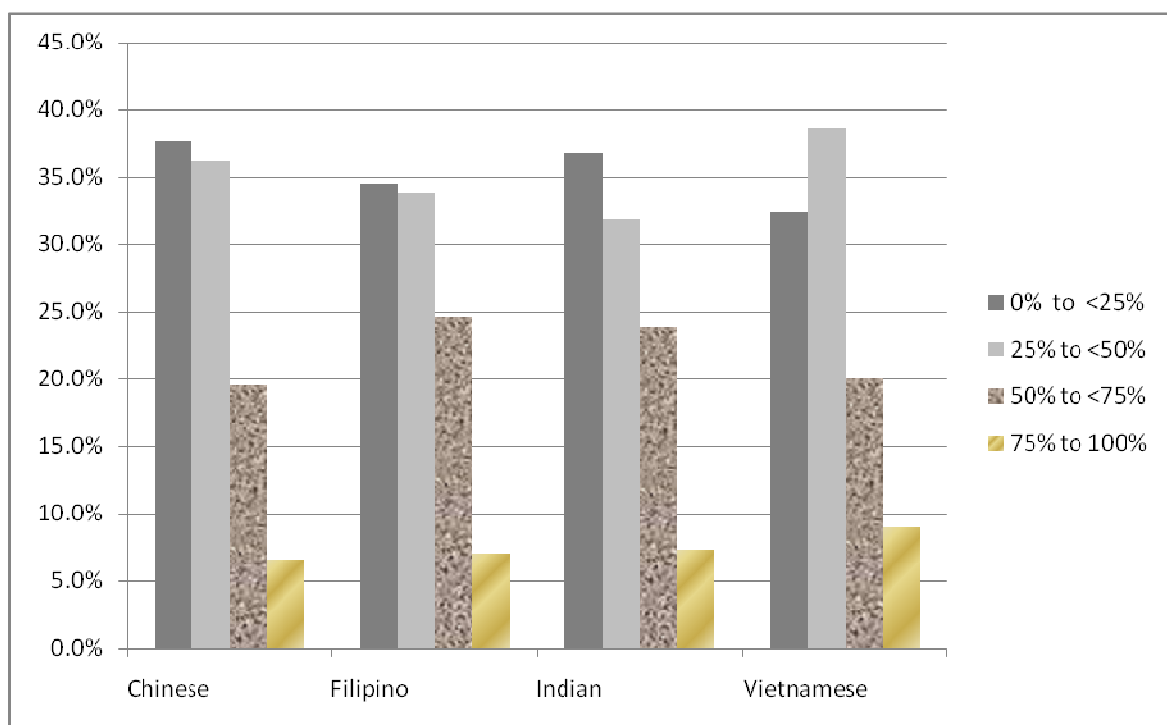
Chapter 2 provided empirical evidence for the impact of ethnic and racial contexts on reports of discrimination over time among the children of immigrants, but one might argue that maintaining an ethnic identity is independent of local spatial boundaries given the relative facility of travel, modern-day technological advances and money available to adults over adolescents. But for Asian Americans, phenotypical differences might mean that while Asian Americans may obtain high levels of educational attainment, in addition to residential and

occupational mobility, being a “nonethnic American” is still not an option (Takezawa 2000, Zhou and Gatewood 2006).

In the theory of spatialized capitals, ethnic spatial concentration affects one’s participation partly through the generation of *ethnospatial cognitive* and *ethnospatial psychological capitals*. For Asian Americans, phenotypical and other differences may result in negative social interactions vis-à-vis perceived experiences with discrimination. More than serving the function of an expressive symbolic ethnicity, as put forth by Gans (1979), these capitals can have material consequences. Put another way, they manifest as more than itinerant and symbolic expressions of allegiance with one’s ancestral culture; rather they can be instrumental to an immigrant’s political incorporation.

### Group Differences in Neighborhood Contexts

**Figure 4.1 Group Differences in Respondent Reports of Percentage of Neighborhood that is Asian**



Source: Survey of Asians in the Bay Area



*Question wording:* What percentage of your neighborhood would you say is Asian—zero to less than 25 percent, 25 to less than 50 percent, 50 percent to less than 75 percent, or 75 to 100 percent?

There seems to be substantial variation in the neighborhoods that Asians choose. Figure 4.1 shows that variation in the pattern of perceptions of the “percentage of your neighborhood” that is “Asian” is fairly consistent across Chinese, Filipino, Indian and Vietnamese national origin respondents. Most respondents report that they reside in neighborhoods of lower Asian concentrations, either in neighborhood type 1 (0 to less than 25%) and in neighborhood type 2 (25% to less than 50%), with the actual percentages ranging from 35% to 39% of a given group in either neighborhood type. Still a significant portion of the sample, 20 to 25% of respondents, report residing in a type 3 neighborhood (50% to less than 75%); and a smaller segment of each ethnic group reports residing in the highest Asian concentration neighborhood (type 4 with 75% to 100% Asian concentration).

Hypothesis 1: Naturalization entails nontrivial costs and spatialized capitals will lower transaction costs, such that those who reside in areas of higher ingroup concentration will be more likely to naturalize than otherwise, all else equal.

In order to obtain citizenship, the foreign born must maintain five years of continuous residence in the United States, complete and file the proper application, take a citizenship test and attend a final hearing. “Applicants are also charged a fee. Some immigrants do not bother to apply for citizenship because they either find the naturalization procedures too complex or are afraid of the preliminary examination. In fact, a significant proportion of applicants (30% in fiscal year 1986) failed to pass the examination (North 1987)” (Yang 1994, p.453 “Explaining Immigrant Naturalization”).

Hence, there are clear costs to naturalization that must be overcome. The spatialized capitals argument advances that transaction costs will be lowered via resource enhancement; however, an individual must apply said resources toward a goal in order for an effect to be observed. Scholars have noted that since returning to the country of origin is usually not an option, refugees are more likely to naturalize than the foreign born who immigrate for different reasons. Hence, one test of spatialized capitals is to observe the relationship between context and naturalization, conditioning the analysis by refugees.

Hypothesis 2: Percent Asian neighborhood concentration should be positively associated within the group of immigrants fleeing persecution.

Given this theory and Portes' argument that political refugees are those who should have the greatest desire to naturalize, lower transaction costs should enable motivated political refugees to naturalize in areas of higher concentration.

Hypothesis 3: Among those who report having experienced discrimination (as opposed to those who do not), residence in a neighborhood with higher Asian concentrations is positively associated with naturalization.

Although the psychological costs of naturalizing might be raised due to a heightened sense of not belonging that frequently accompanies discrimination, ceteris paribus, living in areas of higher ANC lowers the transaction costs sufficiently that foreign born Asians are still able to naturalize than those who reside in lower Asian concentration areas.

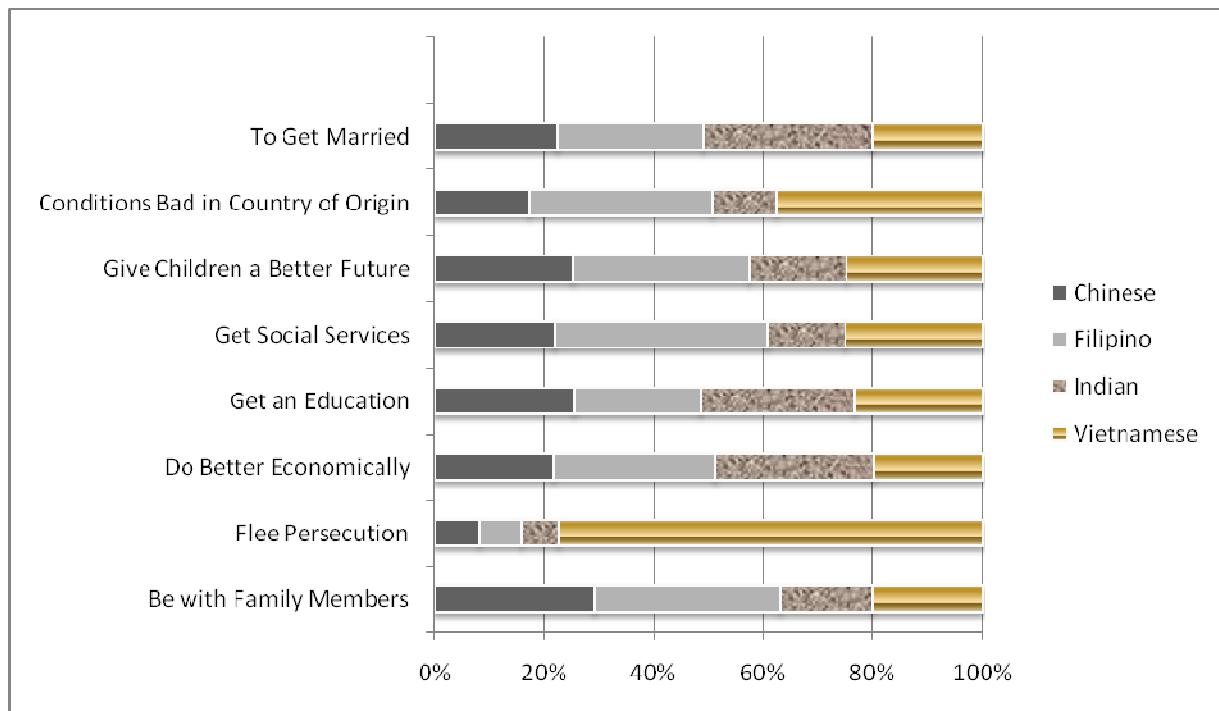
### **Group Differences in Reasons for Immigration**

Immigrants to the United States have diverse backgrounds and in particular, it is important to take their reasons for immigration into account. Where possible, the analysis in this chapter is conditioned by reasons for immigration. Although Liang (1994 p.432) did find that group differences in naturalization diminished with standard controls in a multivariate analysis, Chinese and Cuban immigrants still had the highest probability of naturalization in her analysis (she did not study Vietnamese immigrants although obviously their country of origin roots share in common a communist government). Perhaps by examining reasons for immigration, we can begin to understand patterns of adaptation among Asian immigrants that go beyond different trajectories by national origin group.

Education levels, geographic proximity to country of origin and political origin of migration are three key variables to explaining naturalization rates among immigrant groups. "According to these results, each additional year of education increases a group's rate of naturalization by about 1.5 percent; coming from Mexico or Canada reduces it by 21 percent; and arriving as a political refugee increases naturalizations by about 13 percent, holding other factors constant" (Portes 1990, p.126)." Hence controlling for respondent educational

level, country of origin, and reason for migration are key variables to consider simultaneously with context in an attempt to understand the impact of context on incorporation with respect to naturalization.

**Figure 4.2 Group Differences in “Why You Came to the United States”**



Significance: # < .10, \* < .05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001

*Source:* Survey of Asians in the Bay Area

*Notes:* Mean respondent scores as to reason for immigration; average score (range of 0 = not a reason to 1 = a major reason) by respondent country of origin. Asked of Asians who were not born in the United States: n=863; Indian=132; Chinese=265; Filipino=119; Vietnamese=167.

*Question wording:* “For each of the following, please tell me if this is a major reason, a minor reason or not a reason at all why you came to the United States. First (INSERT FIRST ITEM) is this a major reason, a minor reason or not a reason at all that you came to America?” Items: “a. To be with family members already in the U.S; b. To flee political or religious persecution; c. To do better economically; d. To get an education; e. To get social services and health care in the U.S.; f. To give your children a better future; g. Because conditions are very bad in the country you are from; h. To get married.”

Among Asians in the Bay Area, Figure 4.2 shows that Vietnamese Americans were most likely to state that they “came to the United States” to “flee political or religious persecution,” with a .63 mean score (0 - 1 scale, with “major reason” =1, “minor reason” =.5 and “not a reason” =0) for this respondent group; in contrast, Chinese, Filipino and Indian origin immigrants never scored higher than .07 for the persecution dimension on this scale. Instead, Chinese Americans and Filipino American respondents shared the top three reasons for immigration which included a desire to give their children a better future, .49 to .62 for Chinese and Filipino respondents respectively; to do better economically (.52 and .71); and to be with family members already in the United States (.53 and .61). U.S. immigrants from India also were likely to report a desire to do better economically as important (.68 mean score), as well as a relatively high group mean report of an aspiration to “get an education” (.48).

Scholars have suggested that the reversibility of migration may play a role in how likely they are to naturalize. According to the reversibility hypothesis of Portes and Rumbaut (1990), the favorability of conditions in the country of origin will affect an immigrants’ likelihood of naturalization. They posit that countries of origin with less favorable conditions reduce the reversibility of migration flow. Table 4.1. shows patterns of refugee arrivals to the United States by immigrant country of nationality. Between 1998 and 2007, the total number of refugees has decreased substantially. While the Americas (North and South) never predominated in terms of representation among the refugee category of immigrants, the sharpest decrease in a region contributing refugees comes from Europe, with a drop from roughly fifty-four thousand to less than five thousand during the near decade long span shown in the table. Cubans are an exception to overall refugee immigration patterns from Latin America, although the number of Cuban refugees never exceeds three thousand for any year during this period. The numbers of refugees from Asia and Africa has increased but the country of origin has shifted somewhat; for example, there are fewer refugees from Vietnam but more from Burma (or Myanmar) in recent years. As is often the case, immigration trends are a reflection of twin push and pull across national borders.

**Table 4.1 Refugee Arrivals by Region and Country of Origin: Fiscal Years 1998 to 2007**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>REGION</b>										
Total	76,181	85,076	72,143	68,925	26,773	28,304	52,837	53,738	41,150	48,217
Africa	6,665	13,048	17,624	19,070	2,550	10,719	29,110	20,746	18,185	17,485
Asia	13,669	14,041	13,622	15,356	6,885	5,862	10,896	14,977	9,245	23,195
Europe	54,260	55,877	37,664	31,526	15,406	11,269	9,254	11,316	10,456	4,561
North America	1,587	D	3,233	2,968	1,924	305	2,998	6,368	3,145	2,922
South America	-	D	-	5	8	149	579	331	119	54
<b>COUNTRY</b>										
Total	76,181	85,076	72,143	68,925	26,773	28,304	52,837	53,738	41,150	48,217
Afghanistan	88	365	1,709	2,930	1,683	1,453	959	902	651	441
Belarus	NA	1,008	1,050	971	680	702	659	445	350	219
Bosnia-Herzegovina	30,906	22,699	19,033	14,593	3,461	525	244	61	16	D
Burma	186	295	637	543	128	203	1,056	1,447	1,612	13,896
Burundi	24	223	165	109	62	16	276	214	466	4,545
Croatia	-	1,660	2,995	1,020	109	144	92	39	D	-
Cuba	1,587	2,018	3,184	2,944	1,919	305	2,980	6,360	3,143	2,922
Ethiopia	152	1,873	1,347	1,429	330	1,702	2,689	1,663	1,271	1,028
Iran	1,699	1,750	5,145	6,590	1,540	2,471	1,786	1,856	2,792	5,481
Iraq	1,407	1,955	3,158	2,473	471	298	66	198	202	1,608
Liberia	1,494	2,495	2,620	3,429	559	2,957	7,140	4,289	2,402	1,606
Russia	NA	4,386	3,723	4,454	2,105	1,394	1,446	5,982	6,003	1,773
Serbia and Montenegro <sup>1</sup>	-	14,280	524	153	1,860	1,839	151	40	11	-
Sierra Leone	176	675	1,128	2,004	176	1,378	1,086	829	439	166
Somalia	2,951	4,320	6,026	4,951	237	1,994	13,331	10,405	10,357	6,969
Soviet Union (former)	23,349	194	282	133	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sudan	1,252	2,393	3,833	5,959	897	2,139	3,500	2,205	1,848	704
Ukraine	NA	8,649	7,334	7,172	5,216	5,065	3,482	2,889	2,483	1,605
Uzbekistan	NA	818	693	681	394	166	426	271	527	190
Vietnam	10,288	9,622	2,841	2,730	2,988	1,354	974	2,009	3,039	1,500

*Source:* U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS), Refugee, Asylum, and Parole System (RAPS).

*Notes:* “D” denotes data withheld to limit disclosure. “-” represents zero. “NA” denotes not available. Figures exclude Amerasian immigrants.

Without direct information about how costly naturalization is relative to individual resources, this chapter conditions the analysis for immigrant naturalization by group-level differences in reasons for immigration. An individual fleeing persecution and unable to return to his country of origin might perceive a different incentive structure than an individual who immigrates with the possibility of return. As Yang (1994, p.457) remarks, “it is these mechanisms that allow us to link structural factors and naturalization together without direct information on the perceived costs, benefits and meaning of naturalization.” While controlling for a plethora of standard variables and country or origin potential confounders, conditioning the analysis by group of immigrants fleeing persecution allows me to assess what should be the observable implications for spatialized capitals in a narrower arena. This type of analysis also allows me to gain some leverage on patterns of adaptation among types of immigrants (political

refugees) rather than simply focusing on country-specific predictors (Vietnam versus Burma for example) and outcomes.

### **IIIA. Model Results for Citizenship as Legal Status: Patterns of Naturalization among those Fleeing Persecution**

I have argued that space can function as a *capital* by offering ethnospatial resources: if immigrants want to take advantage of the resource, then they are available to them. The model that follows consists of a multivariate logistic regression analysis with robust clustered standard errors at the county level among the subsample of survey respondents who stated that they immigrated because they were fleeing political or religious persecution. Table 4.2 shows that among political refugees, percent Asian neighborhood concentration does indeed predict that respondents will be more likely to naturalize. These results hold when we add controls for neighborhood selection such as respondent preference for a neighborhood with good schools, preference for residence in an Asian neighborhood, and preference for residence in an integrated neighborhood. Some scholars might argue that immigrants who fled persecution were also motivated by a desire for more economic opportunity. I assessed this possibility by adding a covariate that tapped respondents' potential economic motivations for immigration. The positive relationship between perceived Asian neighborhood concentration and naturalization remains, even when this additional variable is added to the model equation (not shown here).

**Table 4.2 Predictors of Naturalization among Respondents Who Immigrated to “Flee Political or Religious Persecution”**

	Base Model (Refugees)	Base Model (Refugees) + Res. Selection Controls	Base Model (Overall Sample) + Res. Selection Controls
Percent Asian	3.573 **	5.771 **	0.145
Educational attainment	9.126 *	10.572 ***	-0.101
Household income	-4.866 #	-4.910	1.110
Female	-3.181 ***	-6.806	-0.096
Age 18+	9.648 *	9.366 ***	2.489 **
Filipino	-0.004	-2.385	-0.742 ***
Indian	--	--	-2.009 ***
Chinese	-2.204 *	-5.364 #	-0.963 ***
<b>Residential Selection Controls</b>			
Quality Schools	--	-7.714	0.008
Asian Neighborhood	--	-3.362	-0.032
Integrated Neighborhood	--	-1.915	-0.598

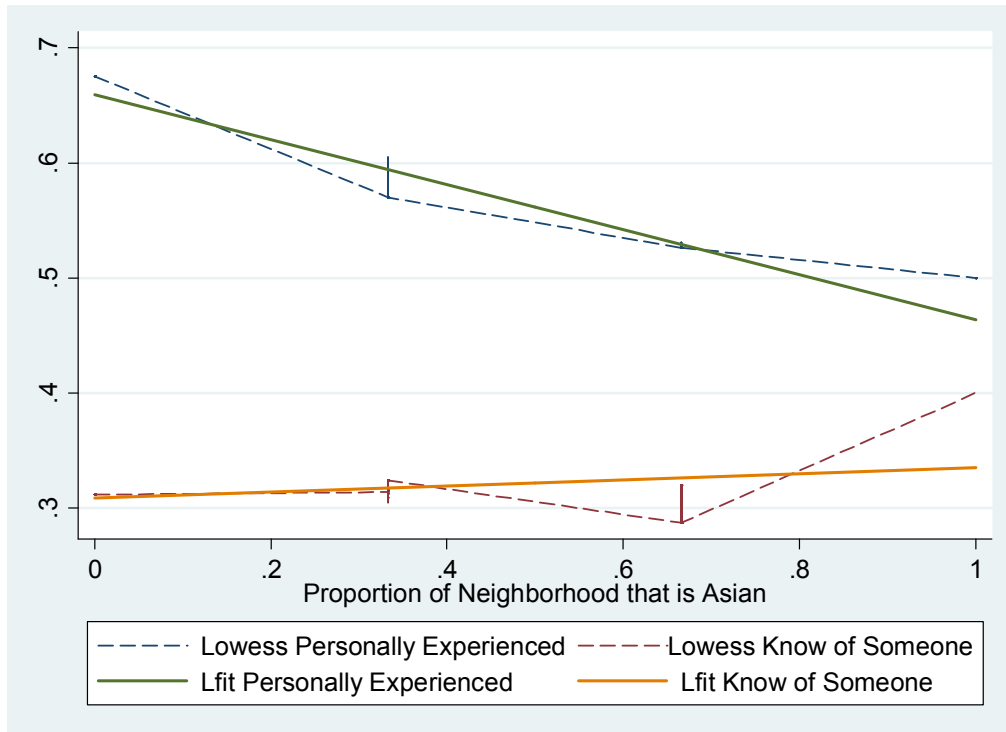
Source: Survey of Asians in the Bay Area

Question wording: “For each of the following, please tell me if this is a major reason, a minor reason or not a reason at all why you came to the United States. First (INSERT FIRST ITEM) is this a major reason, a minor reason or not a reason at all that you came to America?” Items: “To flee political or religious persecution”

### IIIB. Model Results for Citizenship as Legal Status: Discrimination and Patterns of Naturalization among those Fleeing Persecution

Reports of discrimination are one way to directly measure the quality of social interactions between individuals in a given space (as opposed to simply *assuming* the quality of interaction based on demographic groupings). Existing in areas of higher ingroup concentration may serve the “protective” function of decreasing the likelihood that an immigrant will perceive that he has been discriminated against. Figure 4.3 is consistent with the idea that higher ANC protects the respondent from having “personally experienced” discrimination.

**Figure 4.3 Reports of Discrimination: Experienced by Self or Someone in Network,  
By Neighborhood Concentration**



*Notes*

*Source:* Survey of Asians in the Bay Area, San Jose Mercury News/ Kaiser Family Foundation.

*Coding:* All variables are coded 0 to 1. Missing data are excluded.

*Question Wording:*

**Discrimination:** “During the last 5 years, have you, a family member, or close friend experienced discrimination because of your racial or ethnic background, or not? Yes. No.” “Was that you personally or was that someone else?” (Asked of Asians who have, or a family member or close friend has experienced discrimination because of racial or ethnic background. n=331; Indian=42; Chinese=103; Filipino=45; Vietnamese=45). **Neighborhood:** “What percentage of your neighborhood would you say is Asian—zero to less than 25 percent, 25 to less than 50 percent, 50 percent to less than 75 percent, or 75 to 100 percent?”

In separate analyses that control for respondent experiences with discrimination, percent Asian neighborhood concentration is positively associated with naturalization for the sample overall (not shown here). This is in contrast to the model specification that did not include a measure for reports of discrimination, where there appeared to be no relationship between context and naturalization. For the subgroup of immigrants fleeing persecution, those who experience discrimination and reside in a neighborhood with a perceived higher Asian concentration are more likely to naturalize than otherwise (see Table 4.3).



**Table 4.3 Context, Discrimination and Naturalization Patterns**

*Among Respondents Who Immigrated to “Flee Political or Religious Persecution”*

<b>Discrim Know Someone (KS)</b>	-54.243 ***
<b>Percent Asian</b>	75.718 ***
<b>Discrim (KS) * Percent Asian</b>	111.072 ***
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	231.367 ***
<b>Household Income</b>	-128.855 ***
<b>Female</b>	-155.109 ***
<b>Age 18+</b>	146.077 ***
<b>Filipino</b>	-42.282 ***
<b>Indian</b>	-- ***
<b>Chinese</b>	-138.597 ***
<b>Control Variables</b>	
<b>Residential Selection</b>	
Quality Schools	-103.391 ***
Asian Neighborhood	-22.577 ***
Integrated Neighborhood	-51.932 ***
<b>Reason Immig Economic Motivation</b>	-46.098 ***

Significance: # < .10, \* < .05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001

Source: Survey of Asians in the Bay Area

These results are suggestive that space can provide support for immigrants at risk (from discrimination); however, further analysis that conditions on age at immigration are necessary. Spatialized capitals vis-à-vis naturalization could assist individuals who immigrate at an older age to naturalize (the literature argues that these people understand the benefits of naturalization best)

#### **IV. Citizenship as Identity**

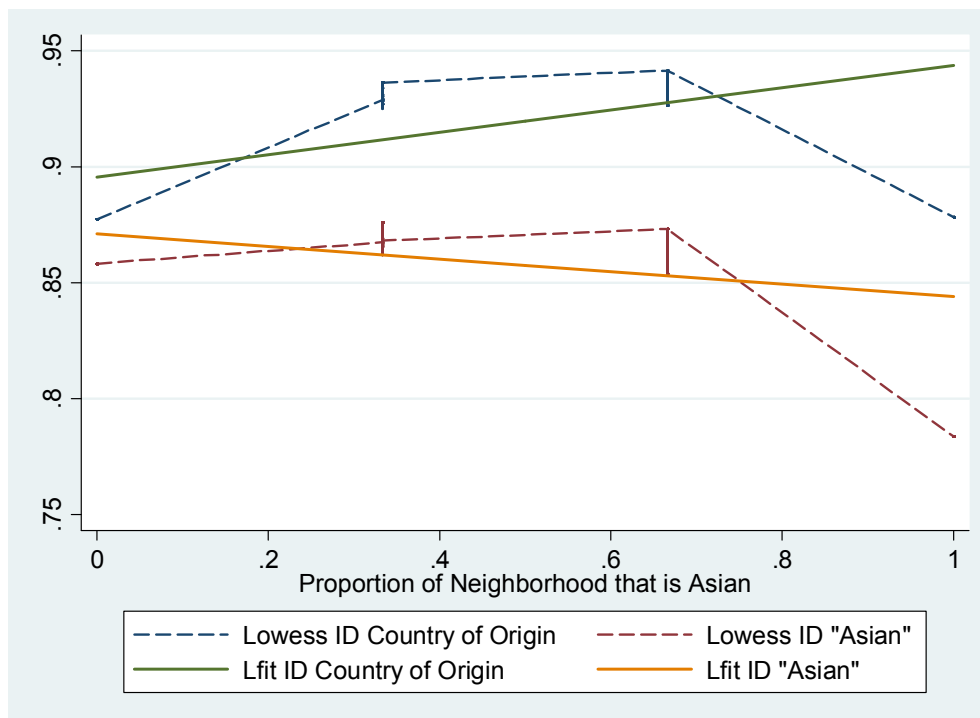
Without adjudicating the normative aspects of whether an American identification is desirable, another important measure to consider is that of self-reported ethnic identification. In this section, I assess the impacts of context on respondent self-reports of (1) country of origin ethnicity, (2) “Asian,” (3)

“American” and (4) “Asian American” identities. I first examine the likelihood of a respondent stating that she had ever identified with one of the four identity categories. I later consider priority in ethnic identity, i.e. which identity is more salient when a respondent is asked to choose.

#### **IVA. Group Differences in Country of Origin, “Asian,” “American,” and “Asian American” Identities**

Figure 4.4 shows descriptively that reports of higher Asian representation in one’s local neighborhood predict that a respondent will be more likely to identify with his country of origin ethnic group. That respondent also appears less like to identify as “Asian” with increases in Asian neighborhood concentration. This pattern suggests perhaps that living among higher ANC increases one’s identification with a national origin ethnic group rather than a broader panethnic “Asian” identity.

**Figure 4.4 Country of Origin or “Asian” Identification,  
By Neighborhood Asian Concentration**



Significance: # < .10, \* < .05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001

Source: Survey of Asians in the Bay Area, San Jose Mercury News/ Kaiser Family Foundation.

Notes: All variables are coded 0 to 1. Missing data are excluded

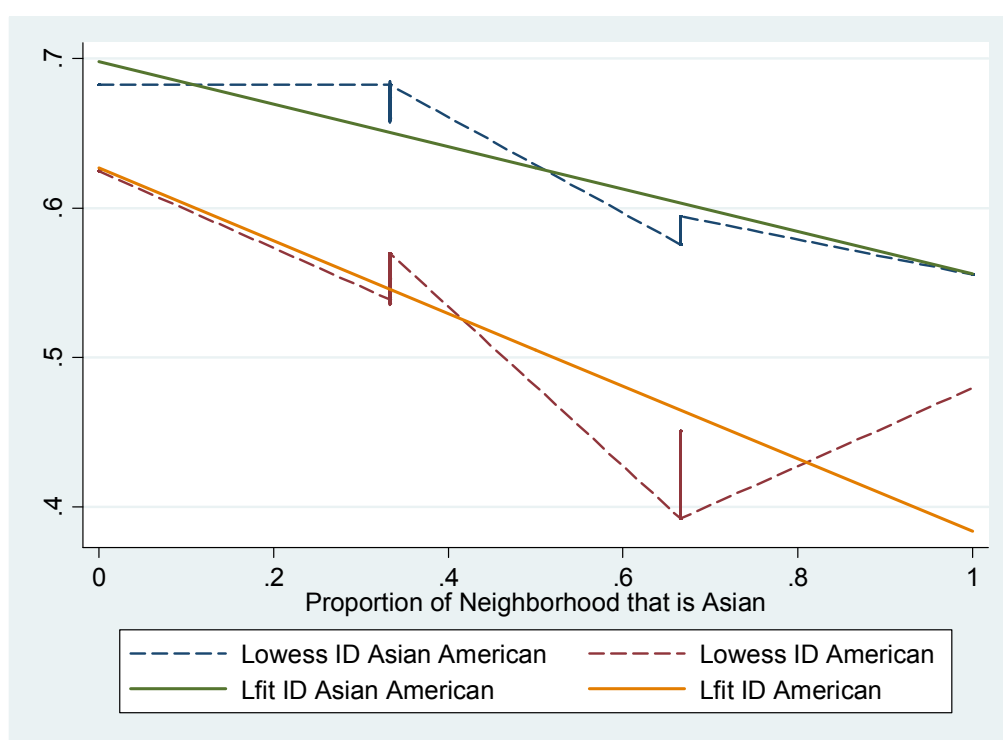
Question Wording:

**Identity** “People choose different terms to describe themselves. I’m going to read you a few different descriptions. Please tell me whether you have ever described yourself as any of the following. Have you ever described yourself as (READ ITEM)?” Items: “a. Country of Origin Group; b. An Asian.”

**Neighborhood** – “What percentage of your neighborhood would you say is Asian—zero to less than 25 percent, 25 to less than 50 percent, 50 percent to less than 75 percent, or 75 to 100 percent

Figure 4.5 shows that in terms of “Asian American” and “American” identities, reports of higher ANC are negatively correlated with both types of American identities. While a greater proportion of respondents identify as “Asian American” than “American” only for any neighborhood concentration, both witness sharp declines as perceived Asian concentration in one’s neighborhood increases.

**Figure 4.6 “Asian American” and “American” Identification,  
By Neighborhood Asian Concentration**



*Source:* Survey of Asians in the Bay Area, San Jose Mercury News/ Kaiser Family Foundation.

*Coding:* All variables are coded 0 to 1. Missing data are excluded.

*Question Wording:*

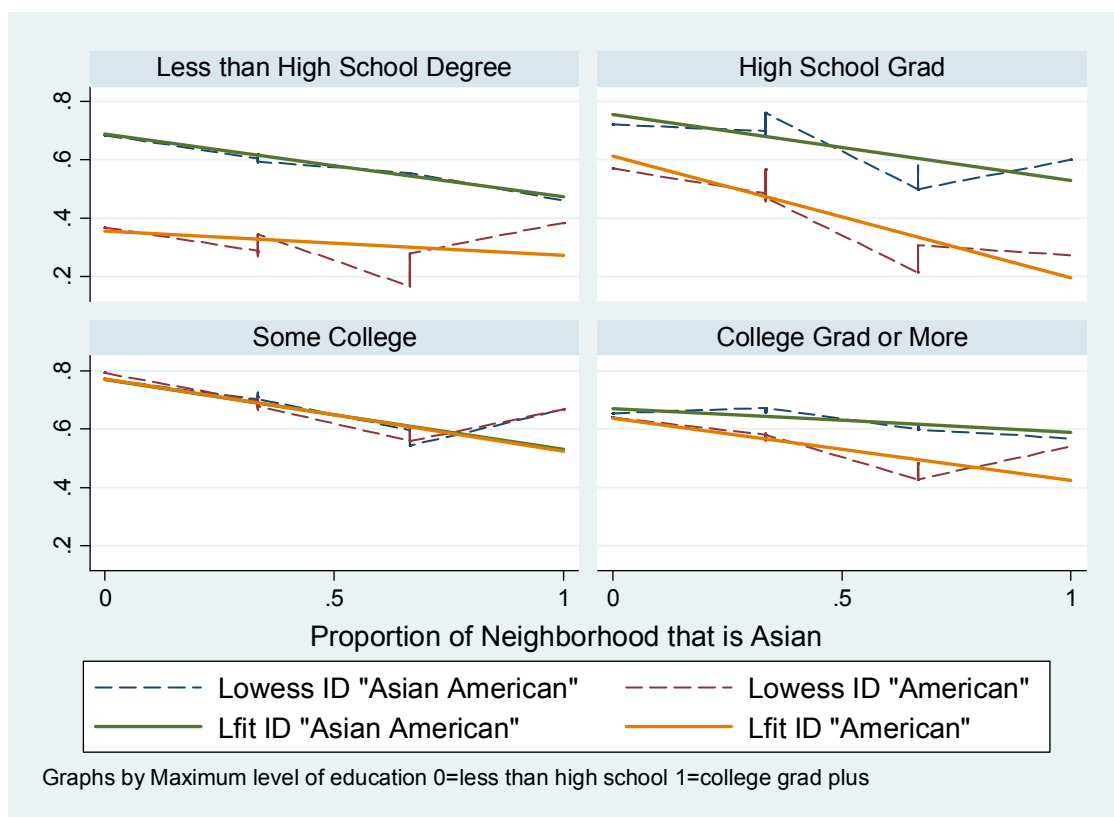
**Identity** “People choose different terms to describe themselves. I’m going to read you a few different descriptions. Please tell me whether you have ever described yourself as any of the following. Have you ever described yourself as (READ ITEM)?” Items: “c. An American; d. An Asian American.”

**Neighborhood** – “What percentage of your neighborhood would you say is Asian—zero to less than 25 percent, 25 to less than 50 percent, 50 percent to less than 75 percent, or 75 to 100 percent

Furthermore, to understand the consistency of this striking pattern across subgroups, I consider how ethnic identification might vary by education, language and income categories. Figures 4.7 – 4.9 show that across educational attainment, English language ability, and Household income groupings, respondents, perceived Asian neighborhood concentration consistently predicts a reduction in

respondent identification with either “Asian American” or “American” identities (see Figures 4.8 and 4.9).

**Figure 4.7 “Asian American” and “American” Identification,  
By Neighborhood Asian Concentration and Respondent Educational  
Attainment**



*Source:* Survey of Asians in the Bay Area, San Jose Mercury News/ Kaiser Family Foundation.

*Coding:* All variables are coded 0 to 1. Missing data are excluded.

*Question Wording:*

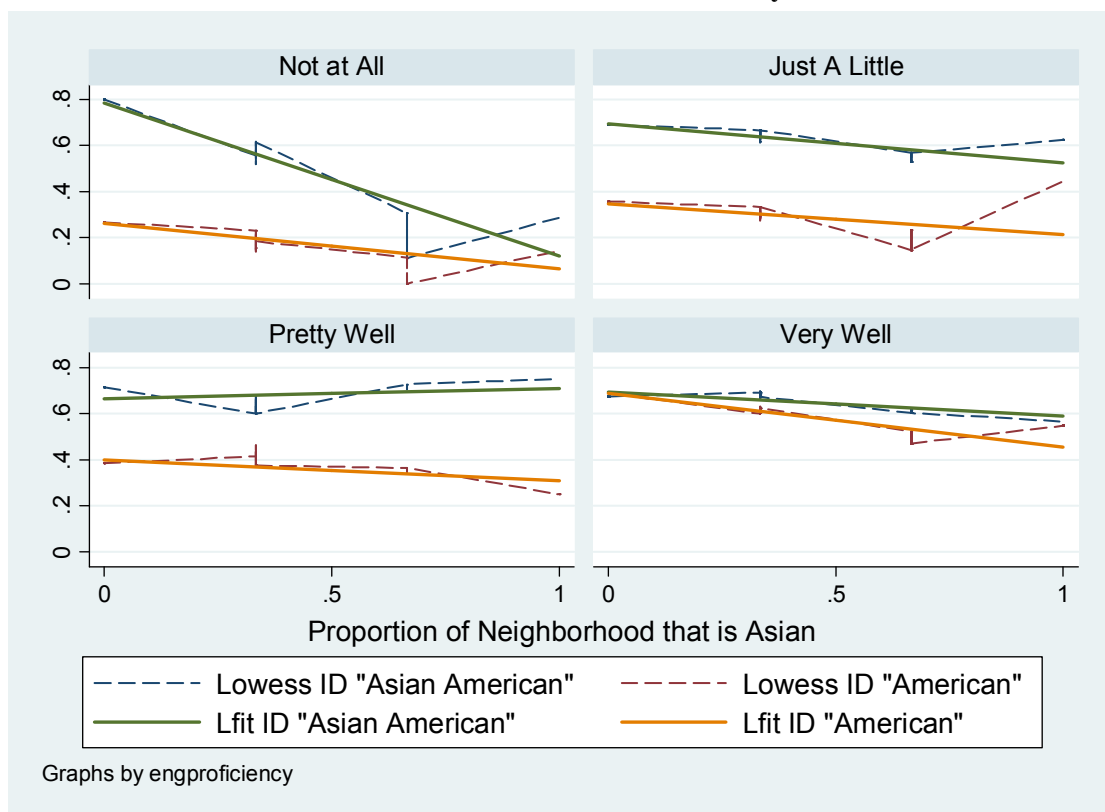
**Identity** “People choose different terms to describe themselves. I’m going to read you a few different descriptions. Please tell me whether you have ever described yourself as any of the following. Have you ever described yourself as (READ ITEM)?” Items: “c. An American; d. An Asian American.”

**Respondent Educational Attainment** is the highest degree attained either in the United States or in the respondent’s country of origin, if the respondent is foreign born: “What is the last

grade or class that you completed in school in the United States?” and “What is the last grade or class that you completed in school in (INSERT RESPONDENTS COUNTRY OF ORIGIN)?”

**Neighborhood** – “What percentage of your neighborhood would you say is Asian—zero to less than 25 percent, 25 to less than 50 percent, 50 percent to less than 75 percent, or 75 to 100 percent

**Figure 4.8 “Asian American” and “American” Identification by Neighborhood Asian Concentration and English Language Conversational Ability**



*Source:* Survey of Asians in the Bay Area, San Jose Mercury News/ Kaiser Family Foundation.

*Coding:* All variables are coded 0 to 1. Missing data are excluded.

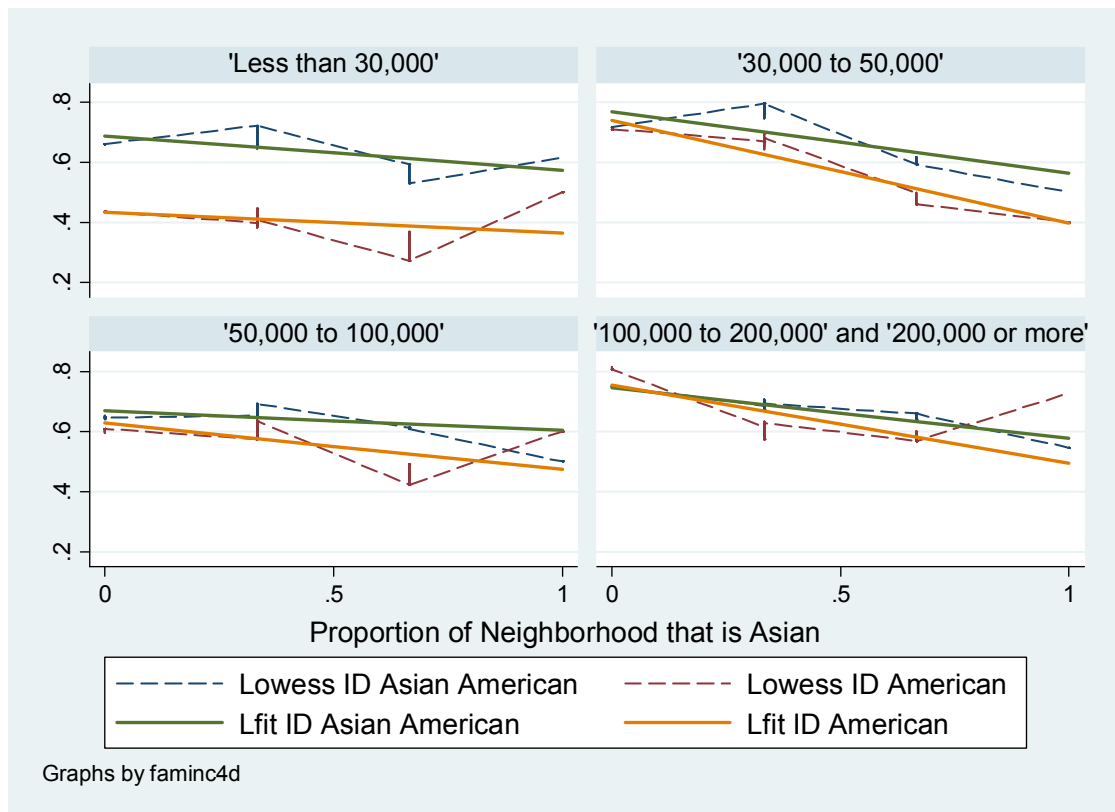
*Question Wording:*

**Identity** “People choose different terms to describe themselves. I’m going to read you a few different descriptions. Please tell me whether you have ever described yourself as any of the following. Have you ever described yourself as (READ ITEM)?” Items: “c. An American; d. An Asian American.”

**English Language Conversational Ability** “Would you say you can carry on a conversation in English, both understanding and speaking, -- very well, pretty well, just a little, or not at all?”

**Neighborhood** – “What percentage of your neighborhood would you say is Asian—zero to less than 25 percent, 25 to less than 50 percent, 50 percent to less than 75 percent, or 75 to 100 percent

**Figure 4.9 “Asian American” and “American” Identification by Neighborhood Asian Concentration and Household Income Category**



*Source:* Survey of Asians in the Bay Area, San Jose Mercury News/ Kaiser Family Foundation.

*Coding:* All variables are coded 0 to 1. Missing data are excluded.

*Question Wording:*

**Identity** “People choose different terms to describe themselves. I’m going to read you a few different descriptions. Please tell me whether you have ever described yourself as any of the following. Have you ever described yourself as (READ ITEM)?” Items: “c. An American; d. An Asian American.”

**Household Income** Category: “Last year, that is in 2003, what was your total household income from all sources? Less than 30,000, 30,000 to 50,000, 50,000 to 100,000, 100,000 to 200,000, 200,000 or more.”

**Neighborhood** – “What percentage of your neighborhood would you say is Asian—zero to less than 25 percent, 25 to less than 50 percent, 50 percent to less than 75 percent, or 75 to 100 percent

#### IVB. Model Results for Citizenship as Identity

Table 4.4 reports the results of a multivariate logistic regression analysis with robust standard errors clustered at the county level. With reports of higher percent ANC, respondents were less likely to identify as “American” and more likely to identify with their national origin ethnic group. This implies that for Asians in the Bay Area, residing with other Asians seems to reinforce one’s national origin ethnic identity. Perhaps context then shapes the nature of citizenship as identification by facilitating a sense of belonging for immigrants and their children. As suggested by *spatialized capitals* theory, identifying with an ethnic group when affected by space is a form of *ethnospatial cognitive capital* that could assist in the long-term incorporation of immigrants, facilitating a sense of belonging among members of immigrant families that might otherwise be lacking.

**Table 4.4 Self-Reported Ethnic Identity by Percent Asian Neighborhood Concentration**

	Country of Origin	"Asian"	"Asian American"	"American"
<b>Percent Asian</b>	0.967 *	-0.992 #	-0.844 #	-1.412 ***
<b>Educ Attainment</b>	-1.030 ***	0.671	0.037	-0.089
<b>Household Income</b>	1.538 **	0.664	0.437	1.547 *
<b>Female</b>	-0.386	0.130	-0.246	-0.576 **
<b>Age 18+</b>	1.442 ***	-1.061 **	0.090	-0.433
<b>Filipino</b>	2.200 *	-0.193	-0.273	0.559 *
<b>Indian</b>	0.655	-1.286 #	-1.268 ***	-0.819 **
<b>Chinese</b>	0.690	-0.171	-0.236	0.375
<b>Residential Selection Controls</b>				
Quality schools	0.218	-0.446	0.029	-0.815 #
Asian neighborhood	1.368 *	-0.159	0.740 *	-0.069
Integrated Neighborhood	1.300 ***	0.057	-0.418	-0.338

Significance: # < .10, \* < .05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001

*Source:* Survey of Asians in the Bay Area, San Jose Mercury News/ Kaiser Family Foundation.

*Coding:* All variables are coded 0 to 1. Missing data are excluded.

*Question Wording:* “People choose different terms to describe themselves. I’m going to read you a few different descriptions. Please tell me whether you have ever described yourself as any of the



following. Have you ever described yourself as (READ ITEM)?” Items: “a. Country of Origin Group; b. An Asian c. An American; d. An Asian American.”

## **V. Citizenship as Political Activity beyond the Bay:**

The analyses in this chapter so far have focused on Asians in the Bay Area. The reader might ask, to what extent are these relationships applicable to immigrants from other national origin (Asian and Latino) ethnic groups and to other regions outside the Bay Area. In previous chapters, I focused on *minority concentration* as a measure of local context; in this chapter so far, I have focused on *Asian neighborhood concentration*; I now shift to an examination of *national origin group coethnic concentration* across three counties in California. Using data from the 2006 Current Population Survey, I next shift to a three county comparison within California, conducting separate analyses of turnout for each county. This permits me to assess average differences for immigrants and their descendants from different national origin groups, relative to native born whites, within each county under a *most-likely, least-likely* case framework (Bennett and George 2005) while still controlling for state-level differences.

### **VA. “Most Likely” to “Least Likely” Cases in California and Electoral Turnout among Asian and Latino National Origin Groups**

By selecting case studies that are in a single state (California), I will be taking into account the possibility of a particular California effect (Cho et al. 2006 provide that the results of Cain, Kiewit and Uhlaner (1991) rest on the peculiar qualities of their California sample), whereas selecting counties from varied states might introduce some ‘noise’ from differing state institutions. I have selected case studies in Los Angeles, Santa Clara and Orange Counties. By selecting these three counties, I am also varying geographic concentration for a number of national origin ethnic groups under consideration. Single cases can serve the purpose of theory testing particularly well if they are ‘most-likely,’ ‘least-likely,’ or ‘crucial’ cases (Bennett and George 2005, p.80). Using this rubric, for example, one hypothesis is that Vietnamese Americans in Orange County—where they are most concentrated—should be most likely to have their group identities and politics affected by context (most-likely case). In Los Angeles County, where they are the least populous for the three-county comparison, Vietnamese Americans should be least influenced by context effects.

Cases should be chosen to afford the type of control and variation demanded by the research problem. Although these three counties do not have

substantial populations of Cuban Americans, they do have variation in population size and geographic concentration for the Vietnamese American, Mexican American and Chinese American populations.

## **VB. Settlement patterns and Hypotheses**

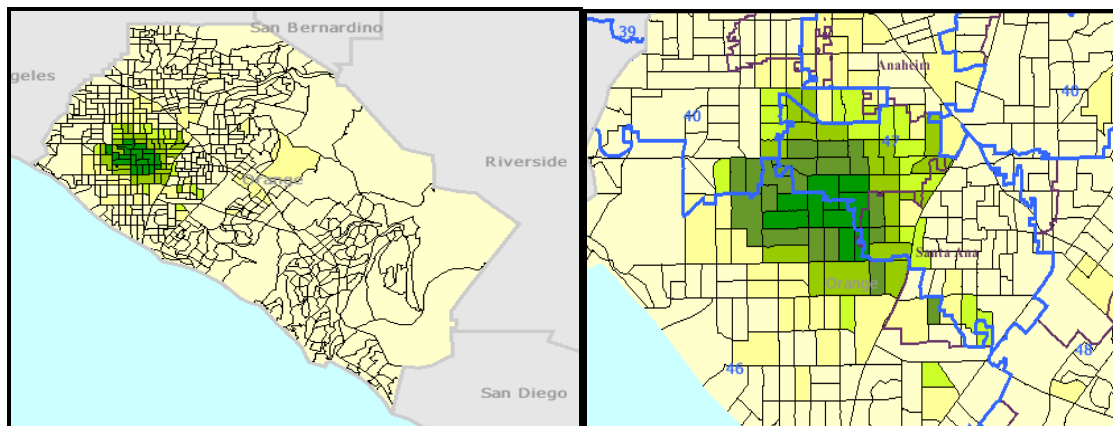
I first provide a statistical profile of Vietnamese Americans relative to other Asian and Latino groups in each of these counties. Although initially dispersed throughout different locales across the country, Vietnamese Americans tended to reside in large, concentrated clusters. The largest number of Vietnamese Americans can be found in Orange County, California, where 135,548 Vietnamese origin residents live. Santa Clara and Los Angeles Counties, both in California, also have large numbers of Vietnamese American residents. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (Summary File 1), Vietnamese Americans make up 4.8% of Orange County's population with an upper limit tract density of 57.2%, followed by Santa Clara (5.9% of county and 43.9% maximum density within tract), and Los Angeles County (0.8% of county population and 14.5% maximum density within tract).

In comparison, Mexican Americans have concentrated and dispersed populations in each of these counties (LA 32% of county pop, 86.8% maximum tract density; OC 25% of county pop, 85.3% maximum tract density; SC 19.2% of county pop, 75% maximum tract density). Chinese Americans make up 6.9% of the population in Santa Clara with a maximum tract density of 36%, 2.1% in Orange County with a maximum tract density of 19.4%, whereas in Los Angeles they comprise 3.5% of the population with a maximum tract density of 68.8%.

Hypothesis 4: In Orange County, where the Vietnamese American coethnic concentration is high (see Figures 4.10), we might expect to see higher rates of participation from for example Vietnamese Americans.

In contrast in Los Angeles County, where Vietnamese Americans are much less concentrated (see Figure 4.11), we might expect Vietnamese Americans to turn out at lower rates. In the analyses that follow, I employ native born whites as the comparison category.

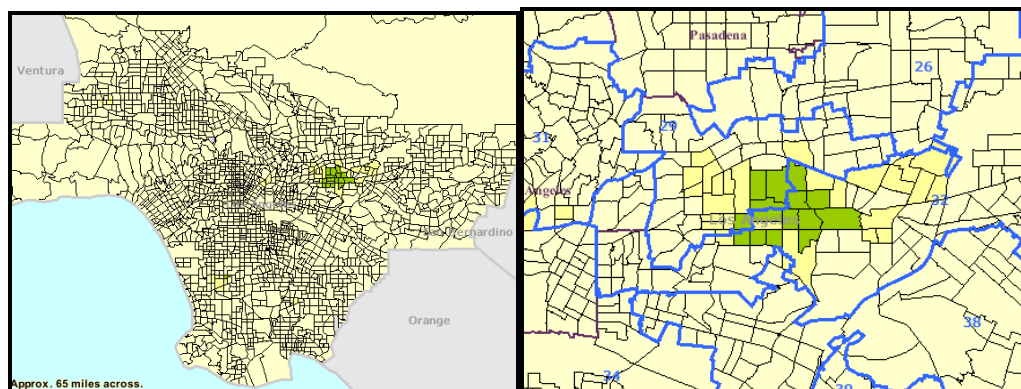
### **Figure 4.10 Vietnamese Americans in Orange County**



TM-PCT015. Percent of Persons Who Are Vietnamese Alone: 2000  
 Universe: Total population  
 Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data  
 Orange County, California by Census Tract

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

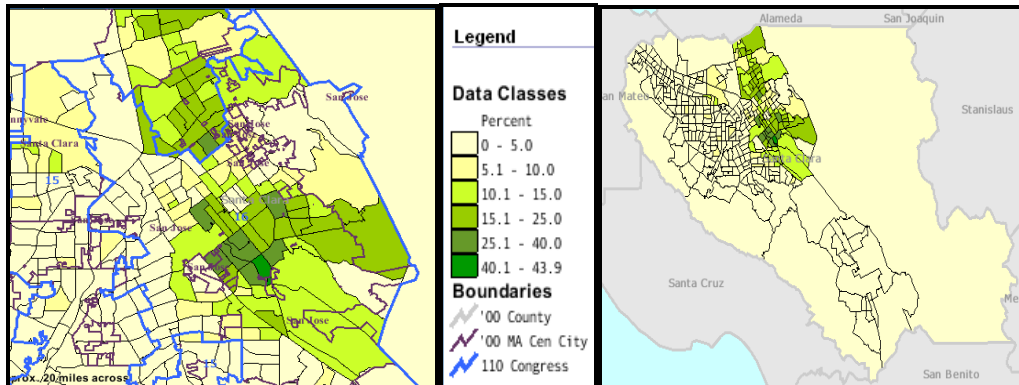
**Figure 4.11 Vietnamese Americans in Los Angeles County**



TM-PCT015. Percent of Persons Who Are Vietnamese Alone: 2000  
 Universe: Total population  
 Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data  
 Los Angeles County, California by Census Tract

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

**Figure 4.12 Vietnamese Americans in Santa Clara County**



TM-PCT015. Percent of Persons Who Are Vietnamese Alone: 2000  
 Universe: Total population  
 Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data  
 Santa Clara County, California by Census Tract

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

According to the American Community Survey in 2007, for the population aged 25 years and over, educational attainment for Vietnamese immigrants appears to be lower than that of the total population across most categories. Whereas the total population percentage for those who have "less than high school diploma" is approximately 16%, that figure for the Vietnamese American population is 27%; only for the percentage who have obtained a bachelor's degree is the Vietnamese American educational attainment slightly higher than that for the total population (19% versus 17%).

Beyond education, employment and income are relevant variables to consider. Vietnamese employment rates seem to be on par with those of the total population. In 2007, approximately 60% of the total and Vietnamese American populations were employed. However, Vietnamese immigrants and their children seemed to be more heavily represented in "service occupations" than the total population (17% versus 25%). Both male and female Vietnamese Americans seemed more heavily represented in "production, transportation and material moving occupations" than the general population (7% higher for both gender categories).

In comparison, according to the American Community Survey in 2006, Vietnamese Americans are half as likely to hold college degrees or higher as compared to Chinese Americans (42%). The 2006 Chinese American median household income is \$63k, whereas the median Vietnamese American household income is \$54k (both figures are higher than the national average). For Cuban Americans, 25% hold college degrees or higher whereas only 8.4% hold college degrees or higher for Mexican Americans (74% held high school degrees or less). The Cuban American median household income is \$42k whereas the Mexican American figure is at \$38k. This suggests that although Vietnamese Americans are not the most economically assimilated Asian origin group, their advancement is on par with Cuban Americans.

And like Cuban Americans, Vietnamese Americans vis-à-vis economic and political incorporation have attained substantial benefits from refugee assistance (Bloemraad 2006 on political incorporation). The median household income for Vietnamese American households was somewhat higher than that for the total population (\$54k versus \$51k). In terms of social security income, a smaller percentage of Vietnamese Americans received Social Security income than that for the total population (16% versus 27%); however, the usage of Supplemental Security Income was higher among slightly higher among Vietnamese Americans (7% versus 4%). The difference in percentages with Food Stamp benefits was only 1%.<sup>21</sup>

#### **VC. Model Results for Three Counties: Citizenship as Political Activity**

Table 4.5 shows the results of logistic regression analyses predicting voter turnout, conditioned by each of the three counties under consideration in California. As one can see, the first column of results for the overall sample leads one to believe that members of some immigrant national origin ethnic groups are less likely to turn out than native born whites (the comparison category). Nevertheless, when we take context into account and condition the analysis by county, patterns indicate that members of many of the same immigrant, national origin ethnic groups are in fact *more likely* to have turned out in the 2006 elections than native born whites. It is worth noting, for example, that where coethnic concentration is high in Orange and Santa Clara Counties, turnout levels

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<sup>21</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey, Single Year Profiles.

among Vietnamese Americans are higher than for native born whites. In Los Angeles County, where the concentration of Vietnamese Americans is lower, they are *less likely* to have turned out in 2006 than native born whites.

**Table 4.5 Model Results: Coethnic Concentration and 2006 Turnout in CA,  
By County**

	Overall Sample	Orange County	Los Angeles County	Santa Clara County
<b>Female</b>	0.053 *** (0.000)	-0.062 *** (0.004)	0.061 *** (0.002)	-0.232 *** (0.006)
<b>Nativity</b>	0.475 *** (0.001)	0.528 *** (0.010)	0.607 *** (0.006)	1.373 *** (0.013)
<b>Age 18+</b>	1.755 *** (0.001)	1.545 *** (0.008)	1.937 *** (0.004)	1.673 *** (0.012)
<b>Education</b>	2.078 *** (0.001)	1.368 *** (0.008)	1.586 *** (0.005)	1.337 *** (0.012)
<b>Household income</b>	0.530 *** (0.001)	-0.052 *** (0.007)	0.854 *** (0.004)	-0.627 *** (0.011)
<b>Marriage</b>	0.199 *** (0.001)	0.477 *** (0.005)	0.298 *** (0.003)	-0.333 *** (0.008)
<b>Length at address</b>	0.960 *** (0.001)	0.607 *** (0.007)	0.878 *** (0.004)	1.138 *** (0.011)
<b>Generation</b>	0.093 *** (0.001)	-0.073 *** (0.011)	-0.538 *** (0.007)	-0.089 *** (0.014)
<b>Home ownership</b>	0.327 *** (0.001)	0.055 *** (0.005)	-0.002 (0.003)	1.442 *** (0.008)
<b>White foreign-born</b>	0.010 *** (0.002)	0.966 *** (0.013)	-0.857 *** (0.006)	--
<b>Black</b>	0.311 *** (0.001)	--	0.021 *** (0.004)	--
<b>Vietnamese</b>	0.001 *** (0.003)	1.167 *** (0.013)	-0.903 *** (0.010)	0.748 *** (0.016)
<b>Chinese</b>	-0.759 *** (0.003)	--	0.173 *** (0.012)	--
<b>Other Asian</b>	-0.496 *** (0.001)	-0.675 *** (0.009)	-0.935 *** (0.005)	-.550 *** (0.014)
<b>Mexican</b>	-0.139 *** (0.001)	0.033 *** (0.007)	0.043 *** (0.004)	0.529 *** (0.008)
<b>Puerto Rican</b>	-0.395 *** (0.002)	--	--	--
<b>Cuban</b>	-0.341 *** (0.003)	--	0.257 *** (0.016)	--
<b>Other Hispanic</b>	0.108 *** (0.001)	-0.585 *** (0.013)	-0.437 *** (0.005)	--

Significance: # < .10, \* < .05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001

Source: Current Population Surveys, November Voter and Registration Supplement 2006

To elaborate, in contrast to the patterns in the overall sample that seem to indicate members of various ethnic and racial groups are on balance less likely to turn out that native born whites, conditioning by context shifts our interpretation of turnout patterns. For example, the first column in Table 4.5 shows that in the overall sample, respondents from most national origin ethnic groups are less likely to turn out (with the exception of African Americans who are more likely to cast a ballot, after the inclusion of various individual level controls such as respondent levels of income and education). However, that analysis does not take context into account and I argue that it is misleading. When the analysis is conditioned by county using the *most-likely* and *least-likely* framework, we can specify more precisely where we might expect to see contextual variation in immigrant turnout rates vis-à-vis a theory of spatialized capitals. We see many of the same patterns between context and turnout for other ethnic groups as was the case for Vietnamese Americans. Chinese Americans are concentrated in Los Angeles, and the model predicts that all else equal, Chinese Americans are more likely to turn out than native born whites in that context. Similarly, Cuban Americans share some concentrated settlement patterns in Los Angeles County and ceteris paribus, the model predicts that they are more likely to turn out in that context. These results provide additional support for a theory of spatialized capitals.

## Conclusion

How does space affect immigrants *a propos* citizenship as legal status? Using the Survey of Asians in the Bay Area, I evaluated the relationships between perceptions of Asian concentration and tendencies toward naturalization, illustrating that those who resided in perceived areas of higher concentration were more likely to naturalize. Augmenting the finding of Portes and Rumbaut (1990) who concluded that those who immigrated because they were attempting to flee persecution were more likely to naturalize than others, I show that living in an area of perceived higher Asian concentration bolstered tendencies to naturalize, even within the political refugee group. These results obtain after adding rigorous controls such as variables that tap preferences in neighborhood composition, as well as other reasons for immigrating to the United States.

Although being discriminated against might conceivably place one at risk for retreating from engaging in the American public sphere, I show that those who report discrimination and residence in an area of higher Asian neighborhood concentration are more likely to naturalize, all else equal. This provides some evidence for the hypothesis that perceived Asian concentration seems to be “protective.” These results obtain after adding controls for preferences in neighborhood composition (desire for quality schools, to live in an Asian neighborhood and to live in an integrated neighborhood).

Moving away from the legal dimension of citizenship to that of identification, this chapter presented evidence that those who report having experienced discrimination and reside in an area of perceived higher Asian concentration are more likely to identify with an ethnic national origin group but that they are less likely to identify as simply “American.” Finally in a three-county comparison, I presented evidence that as predicted, turnout levels for a number of immigrant national origin groups was higher than even those for native-born whites (as reflected in the patterns exhibited by Vietnamese Americans in Orange and San Jose Counties versus Los Angeles County).

Therefore, in a series of increasingly strict tests, we have illustrated that context seems to shape the contours of legal, identificational, and participatory dimensions of citizenship for survey respondents. And there are indeed reasons to believe that *citizenship as legal status*, *citizenship as identification* and *citizenship as political activity* are three distinct but salient dimensions of immigrant adaptation to life in the United States.



## CHAPTER 5: “‘As’ If Informed: Political Decision Making with Limited Information, Group Identity Heuristics and Ethnic Spatial Concentration”

### I. Introduction: The Challenge of Immigrant Political Incorporation

*“Cultural America is under siege. And as the Soviet experience illustrates, ideology is a weak glue to hold together people otherwise lacking racial, ethnic, and cultural sources of community”*

--Samuel P. Huntington (2004, p.12.)

This chapter asks, how can politically unincorporated immigrants make informed judgments about politics?<sup>22</sup> Where they face significant disadvantages from low human capital, can these uninformed voters mimic their informed counterparts through the use of heuristics?

An important distinction is between types of uninformed (potential) voters: the uninformed type who lacks interest and the uninformed type who lacks resources. How do these types map onto U.S. immigrants? One possibility is that many immigrants remain politically unincorporated (i.e., not integrated into the political system as reflected by lower levels of citizenship and electoral participation) due to a general lack of interest in American politics. At the same

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<sup>22</sup> We know that Asian Americans and Latinos vote at substantially lower rates than the rest of the population, but one key question pertains to whether electoral outcomes would differ under the counterfactual scenario of higher turnout. The answer to this question pivots of course on whether the preferences of germane groups diverge from one another and whether these preferences are expressed at the polls. Some research suggests that the benefits to increased turnout levels are unclear. For example, a few scholars have noted that implementing universal turnout simply adds “error” to the existing vote totals (e.g. Selb and Lachat 2009). Nevertheless, due to restrictions in data availability heretofore, it is unlikely that the preferences of various subpopulations have been tapped adequately. That is, immigrant ethnic minority groups could have very different belief systems from those in the survey sample. If their interests do differ from the rest of the electorate, what can we say about the process by which they can come to make informed political judgments?

time, it is important to note that whereas both immigrant and native-born residents may lack time, interest, skills and money, it is the former who may additionally lack citizenship status and strong English language capacities. Shortages in any of these “resources” make participating in the U.S. electoral process much more challenging.

Yet another difference, perhaps linked to English language ability, is the likelihood of receiving mainstream political information. Zaller (1996) shows that as an intense political campaign progresses, voters become increasingly informed about the candidates and issues. Information from the media reaches those most knowledgeable and attentive first and over time, eventually saturates the public. However, current demographic trends challenge existing findings on the reach of media effects; since immigrants often settle in high areas of concentration that can be relatively isolated from the mainstream media, the “spectator sport of politics” (McKelvey and Ordeshook 1985) may not even be a lower level priority in their day-to-day lives.

In a series of seminal articles, McKelvey and Ordeshook (“M&O” 1984, 1985) formally showed how uninformed voters – using only a few key pieces of information such as some directional knowledge of their own positions, poll data and endorsement information – make rational inferences about candidate positions on an issue continuum. Conditioning my analysis by ethnic spatial concentration, I attempt to adapt M&O’s model to the study of boundedly rational decision making for immigrant populations. I ask how does the ethnic spatial concentration of immigrants affect cognition among this pool of uninformed voters? How can immigrants process complex political information given the substantial challenges to their political incorporation?

To preview the argument, I advance that the M&O models continue to have substantial applicability in contributing to our understanding of how uninformed voters might act *as if* they were informed. However, there are some key distinctions worth noting. Opposite the contention that most of the American public does not hold consistent belief systems (Converse 1964, 2006), M&O show that a few simple pieces of information such as an understanding of the ideological spectrum allow for even uninformed voters to apparently make the right decisions. Nevertheless, immigrants face even greater challenges to their decision making because large proportions: 1) lack an understanding of the ideological spectrum, and 2) lack an understanding of or an attachment to either of the two dominant political parties (see Hajnal and Lee 2006) [both of which are supposed to help the “cognitive miser” (Converse 1964) in processing new information in standard analyses of social cognition and voting behavior].

Building on the work of previous scholars (Brady and Sniderman 1985, Dawson 1994), I posit that uninformed voters, in my case immigrants, can employ key groups (primarily the ethnic group in concentrated environments) as heuristics in individual decision making, using their understandings of relative group positions to assess where they themselves should stand on a given issue and whether they should support a given candidate.

The rest of this chapter is divided into five parts: First I make the argument about why ethnic spatial concentration might affect a sense of *closeness to one's own ethnic group*. Second, I argue that this sense of closeness, as well as the formal and informal institutions inhering to one's environment, lay the groundwork for the use of ethnic group cues as heuristics in decision making. Third, I proceed by adapting the seminal models of McKelvey and Ordeshook, moving through static and dynamic scenarios that model how uninformed voters act *as if* they were informed voters. I augment M&O's analysis, however, by adding nuance to how identity is operationalized in the models. Specifically, the model section of the is divided into three segments: 1 - how a voter processes information chapter a single identity dominates, 2 - when dual identities compete, and 3 - when multiple identities overlap. Finally, I conclude by speculating about how over time, in spaces of high ethnic concentration, there could be a speedier process of political learning and incorporation among immigrants. Figure 5.1 below highlights key aspects of the chapter's argument.

**Figure 5.1 Process of Decision Making for a Politically Unincorporated Immigrant, By Ethnic Spatial Concentration**

<b>Immigrant in concentrated environment→</b>		<b>more closeness to group →</b>
<b>more use of group id heuristic →</b>	<b>faster to reach equilibrium of informed decision</b>	
<b>Immigrant in not concentrated environment→</b>		<b>less closeness to group →</b>
<b>less use of group id heuristic</b>	<b>→</b>	<b>slower to reach equilibrium of informed decision</b>

In an era of large-scale immigration, the question that M&O (1985) asked is more appropriate than ever: “When elections in particular and democratic institutions in general appear to be in ascendancy worldwide as the preferred mechanism for choosing governments and for rendering a government legitimate,

we ought to ask whether democracies can function effectively in less than perfect information environments?”

## **II. The Environment: Ethnic Spatial Concentration and the Politically Unincorporated Immigrant**

I theorize that residents of areas with high coethnic spatial concentration face a distinct residential environment. Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995) contributed the idea that citizens are not “disconnected information processors” but rather interdependent citizens. Individuals are embedded in social networks that shape the information they receive via conversations over the water cooler or other aspects of the local information environment.

### Polling of People in One’s Social Environment

For limited English-speaking, low socioeconomic status immigrants, a social network provides additional resources beyond those of the individual. Granovetter (1973) argued that it was the ‘*strength of weak ties*,’ or the power of indirect influences outside one’s immediate circle of family and intimate friends, which influenced an individual’s employment opportunities. Other scholars argued that “strong ties” like those of family were more likely to influence someone to take action on an individual’s behalf. One of the advantages of numerous “weak ties” for Granovetter was that they were more amenable to innovation; “strong ties” tended to reflect a set of relationships with individual sharing the same qualities and opinions. This meant that open networks were likely to communicate new, unfamiliar ideas whereas closed networks would simply reinforce one’s existing knowledge. From the perspective of enhancing group identity, it is the both strong and weak ties in areas of high concentration that may help the uninformed voter to act *as if* informed by conveying a clear group message to individuals possessing the same ethnic identity.

From a statistical perspective, an individual who lives in an area of high ethnic concentration is more likely to obtain a reliable sample of ethnic group opinion, with his everyday environment facilitating multiple *pseudo random samples*<sup>23</sup> of the same ethnic population every day. As the individual conducts

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<sup>23</sup> Of course, the individual is not carrying out a simple random sample (SRS), where each individual is likely to be chosen each time an observation is drawn. Bias in the poll’s sample is plausible. However, neither is the identification process purely determined by selection since many of the individuals encountered while out running errands in the community etc. will be

repeated measurements, sampling from the people he bumps into as he carries on with his daily life, he should be able to record a new sample mean  $\bar{X}$  over and over. By recording how  $\bar{X}$  varies from one sample to another, he is then able to form a sense of the sampling distribution  $p(\bar{X})$  of those mean values. Because of averaging, the sample mean for a group's opinion in a given poll will not be as extreme as the single individuals in the population.

$$\bar{X} = 1/n [X_1 + X_2 + \dots + X_n]$$

$$E(\bar{X}) = 1/n [E(X_1) + E(X_2) + \dots + E(X_n)]$$

$$E(\bar{X}) = 1/n [\mu + \mu + \dots + \mu]$$

$$= 1/n [n * \mu] = \mu$$

$$= \mu \quad (\text{Wonnacott and Wonnacott 1990})$$

Hence, on average the sample mean of  $\bar{X}$  will be equal to  $\mu$ . With repeated sampling, noise should cancel out, and through repeated observation, the respondent can begin to gain confidence about the reliability of his assessment of his ethnic group's opinion.

For the immigrant living in an area of *low* coethnic concentration, it may be much more difficult for the individual to sample the opinions from his same ethnic group. When he does conduct repeated measurements, each (small) coethnic sample may yield different results simply due to random error. A single sample mean is likely to fluctuate above and below its target  $\mu$  simply based on the luck of the draw. The standard error of  $\bar{X}$ ,  $SE = \sigma / \sqrt{n}$ , emphasizes that the larger the values of  $n$ , the smaller the SE becomes. Two plausible scenarios face this immigrant: he could either rely on bad information or he could eschew the precision of his opinion poll as a poor estimate of the overall ethnic group's opinion.

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strangers who happen to be in the same location at the same time (chance run-in at the supermarket, gas station, eatery, etc).

In statistics, the *Normal Approximation Rule* provides that as the size of a random sample increases, the sampling distribution of  $\bar{X}$  begins to concentrate around its target  $\mu$  and more closely approximates a bell-shaped curve. With repeated samples, the resident of an enclave can get a better sense of his group's mean and median position, as well as a loose sense of the group's variation around that measure of central tendency.

#### Other Aspects of the Informational Environment – Cues from Ethnic Media and Advocacy Organizations

Although Converse (1964) believed in an “innocence of ideology” (with most people holding attitudes that were not worthy of the name), later research has shown that respondents sample (from the top-of-their-heads) from among the many considerations that could be applied to answering a particular question (Zaller 1992). Unstable responses simply reflect that individuals are ambivalent rather than empty-headed (Zaller and Feldman 1992). If the information provided to residents of high areas of spatial concentration is tailored in a way that is consistent, one would expect that exposure to that information environment would produce fewer conflicting considerations.

Even where a resident lacks an extensive social network, simply living in an enclave can activate his identity through a consistent presentation of symbolic imagery or the framing of messages by ethnic media, organizations and community elites. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) wrote that social institutions interacting with citizens were central to cultivating psychological engagement with politics. A substantial literature in political psychology also contributes to our knowledge of how local media contexts, through framing and priming, will influence how we understand and prioritize issues (Iyengar and Kinder 1987). Churches and ethnic media play substantial roles in immigrant political socialization. Ethnic advocacy organizations also have a role. For example, ethnic organizations like the Vietnamese American Public Affairs Committee (VPAC) interview regional candidates for office and publicize their endorsements in the ethnic community broadly.

I expect that ethnic enclaves can be accompanied by different structures that can affect immigrant political incorporation by maintaining ethnic identity among residents at a higher steady-state of activation. *Ceteris paribus*, those in higher concentration areas are already activated because of a distinctive residential environment. Some studies have found that social concentration might increase an individual's sense of group identity (Lau 1989). Some scholars have noted that those possessing a strong sense of group consciousness are far more

likely to be politically involved (Olsen 1970; Verba and Nie 1972). Claudine Gay (2004) found that whereas better neighborhood quality decreases the salience of race, exposure to the “race-oriented predispositions of high-status blacks” increased its significance. This steady state of identity activation may aid in the processing of new information through group cues for the unincorporated immigrant, just as a well-spring of knowledge allows the sophisticated voter to quickly process new information online, manifesting in developed schematic structures that could produce *ethnospatial cognitive capital*.

### **III. Available Group-Based Voter Strategies for Decision Making**

Social category membership has long served as the basis for studies of vote choice (e.g., Berelson et al. 1954, Campbell et al. 1960). Beyond racial or ethnic group membership, social categories commonly thought to be important could include class, language, religion, and partisan groups. Yet not all these forms of social identities are necessarily salient in intra-individual and inter-individual comparisons. The analysis in this chapter moves away from the “primordialist assumptions” of homogeneity and fixed boundaries in ethnic group preferences (Chandra 2001). Rather than nominal ethnic group membership alone, I have argued that it is ethnic spatial concentration which affects the homogeneity and boundaries of ethnic group preferences.

High levels of ethnic spatial concentration can facilitate the acquisition of key information by providing immigrants with access to resources such as an ethnic media, ethnic advocacy organizations, and people who they can talk to in order to gauge a relevant group’s public opinion. In these concentrated environments, immigrants can poll coethnics as they go about their daily lives, receive endorsements from key organizations, and more generally learn about where their ethnic group stands on a given issue or candidate choice. If he feels close to their ethnic group and where a poll result frequently returns the same answer, then perhaps our uninformed voter could come to trust his assessment of his ethnic group’s position on a given issue and then adopt that position as his or her own.

McKelvey and Ordeshook (1985) provide a discussion of how voters can effectively use “relatively costless cues in deciding for whom to vote...in lieu of reading every news item analyzing current events and in lieu of a thorough analysis of each candidate’s record, (voters) often use seemingly irrelevant contemporaneous information on which to base their decisions about how to vote

(e.g., ‘I voted for...because my brother-in-law preferred...,’ or ‘I preferred...because Sam Donaldson slanted the news in favor of the other candidate’))” (p.204). Consistent with their set of assumptions, I will assume for most of this that information arriving vis-à-vis group heuristics is essentially costless. For McKelvey and Ordeshook’s models of voting, however, citizens know their relative placement on the ideological spectrum. Previously, I noted that the unincorporated immigrant voter of interest in this chapter does not have a clear understanding of either the two-party system or the liberal-conservative ideological spectrum.

The uninformed voter in an area of high ethnic spatial concentration could use his ethnic group’s preferences as heuristics for his own preferences in decision making. Michael Dawson (1994) has argued that a long and painful history of discrimination and ongoing instantiations of racial injustices against African Americans provide impetus for a sense of *linked fate*, where racial group interests generally supersede individual economic interests. Dawson created the *black utility heuristic* to argue that because African Americans believe their lives are affected on a group basis, they will evaluate policies, parties, and candidates on that basis. I hypothesize here that a sense of closeness to one’s ethnic group, as influenced by levels of coethnic spatial concentration, could lead to a more general *ethnic group utility heuristic* (this hypothesis seems logical but needs evaluation, to be conducted in later work).

Although ethnic group identity may very frequently dominate others in areas of high ethnic spatial concentration, what happens when other social identities come into play? How is our uninformed voter to sort through the various informational heuristics available to him via competing social identities? This is an especially important question for long-term decision making in immigrant communities. In the short run, new(er) immigrants may be especially reliant on group cues as a heuristic with which to process political information. With time and increased exposure to the political process, however, the uninformed voter may *come to be* an informed voter (defined as someone who knows the candidate positions on an ideological spectrum). Moreover, this newly informed voter may come to rely on more than one identity as opposed to a single ethnic group identity. I attempt to address strategies for both the uninformed and newly informed voters under various scenarios in the subsequent models.

Tables 5.2 – 5.4 show a range of scenarios for identity choice that might face a voter seeking to maximize his utility in an election where two candidates, *A* and *B*, compete. For all scenarios, assume an election between Candidates *A* and *B* occurs along a single issue dimension.



Table 5.2 depicts four possible scenarios for an individual with only one salient identity (which in this is in most cases the ethnic group identity). Under straightforward assumptions of utility maximization in *Scenario 1*, the voter is faced with a decision and only one salient identity, which makes for an easy choice between hypothetical candidates *A* and *B*. For *Scenario 2*, the voter uses cues from two sources that agree, with an easy decision to make since both messages agree on the right candidate. Under *Scenario 3* in which the ethnic group has no position, he relies on information from other sources; however, one of the group cues he employs is that of a group he dislikes (the “likability heuristic” Brady and Sniderman 1985), wherein the voter infers that a group he does not like will also adopt positions to which he is averse. *Scenario 4* is similar to *Scenario 2* but the messages from group cues now diverge, so the voter uses information from sequential polls to locate the candidate midpoint. In all the scenarios discussed thus far, only one identity is salient to the voter. Note, however, that in three of the scenarios, the uninformed voter will accept additional information from an outside source, repeating the sequential process of receiving new information and adjusting his position until he reaches equilibrium.

**Table 5.2 Uninformed Voter Strategies in Decision Making (Single Identity)**

Single Identity	Group 1 (Own Ethnic Group)	Group 2 (Source of External Info)	Group 3	Type	Outcome
<b>Scenario 1</b> Preference Info Type Uninformed Voter	Candidate - A Poll of Ethnic Group	N/A	N/A	Static	Voter chooses Group 1's Position; <i>Choose Candidate A</i>
<b>Scenario 2</b> Preference Info Type Uninformed Voter	Candidate - A Endorsement from Ethnic Group	Candidate - A National Poll	N/A	Dynamic	Voter uses group cues: coethnic endorsement and national polls Both Group 1 and Group 2 agree <i>Choose Candidate A</i>

<b>Scenario 3</b>					
Preference Info Type	No Position	Candidate - B Likeability heuristic, assume negative stance to endorsement	Candidate - A National Poll	Dynamic	Voter uses group cues: no information from Group 1, endorsement from disliked group (assumes that if Group 2 chooses Candidate B, then Candidate A is closer to his ideal point) and national polls <i>Choose Candidate A</i>
Uninformed Voter					
<b>Scenario 4</b>					
Preference Info Type	Candidate - A Endorsement from Ethnic Group; Poll of Ethnic Group	Candidate - B Poll of Some Group 2		Dynamic	Voter uses group cues: multiple sequential polls to reach equilibrium <i>Repeat adjustment following sequential polls to reach equilibrium</i>
Uninformed Voter					

Table 5.3 delineates three possible strategies for an individual with two salient identities, where the voter accepts cues from both relevant identity groups. For all three scenarios, the voter receives poll data from both his social groups. With *Scenario 5*, the voter makes use of two identities in his decision making but both groups agree so the voter simply chooses Candidate A. Since the voter receives conflicting information during the first round in *Scenario 6*, he then accepts more poll information in a sequence of moves, adjusting his position toward the candidate midpoint, until he reaches equilibrium. For *Scenario 7*, the voter receives conflicting information from his social groups but he knows the candidate midpoint *a priori* (an informed voter) and therefore simply maximizes his utility.

**Table 5.3 Uninformed and Informed Voter Strategies: Identities in Decision Making (Dual Identities)**

Dual Identities	Group 1 (Own Ethnic Group)	Group 2 (Second Identity Group)	Group 3	Type	Outcome
<b>Scenario 5</b>					
Preference Info Type	Candidate - A Poll of Ethnic Group	Candidate - A Poll of Second Group	N/A	Static	Receives info from both groups Simultaneously <i>Choose Candidate A</i>
Uninformed Voter					

<b>Scenario 6</b>					
Preference Info Type	Candidate - A Poll of Ethnic Group	Candidate - B Poll of Second Group	N/A	Static for one round; Dynamic thereafter	Voter uses group cues: poll of ethnic group and poll of second group Group 1 and Group 2 disagree <i>Repeat adjustment following sequential polls to reach equilibrium</i>
Uninformed Voter					
<b>Scenario 7</b>					
Preference Info Type	Candidate - A Poll of Ethnic Group	Candidate - B Poll of Second Group	N/A	Static	Voter uses group cues: poll of ethnic group and poll of second group <i>Select candidate that maximizes utility, assumes knowledge of candidate midpoint (strategy for informed voter)</i>
Informed Voter					

Table 5.4 describes a single decision making strategy (*Scenario 8*) for an individual with three potentially competing identities. The voter in this models is informed, i.e., has knowledge of the candidate midpoint *a priori*, and tries to maximize his utility across identities (e.g., “ethnic,” “panethnic” and “American”). Since he would like to minimize the dissonance between salient identities, he maximizes utility for the greatest number of identities by assessing the region of overlap between preference utility functions (a region of overlap represents a shared and acceptable position on the issue space). In this scenario, the voter must decide simultaneously from three salient identities (and the accompanying cues) that may or may not be providing signals in the same direction.

**Table 5.4 Identities and Voter Strategy in Decision Making (Three Identities)**

Three Identities	Group 1 (Own Ethnic Group)	Group 2 (Second Identity Group)	Group 3 (Third Identity Group)	Type	Outcome

<b>Scenario 8</b>					Voter uses group cues: polls from three groups <i>Select candidate that maximizes utility for greatest number of identities near the median, assume knowledge of candidate midpoint</i> (strategy for informed voter)
Preference	Candidate - A	Candidate - B	Candidate	Static	
Info Type	Poll of Ethnic Group	Poll of Second Group	- A Poll of Ethnic Group		
Informed Voter					

The discussion thus far has focused on decision making for voters. However, when a voter is faced with conflicting messages that produce feelings of ambivalence in real life, the voter could choose to abstain<sup>24</sup> from participating. He has the option of taking in costless information such as another group's cue through subsequent polling or endorsements as discussed; alternatively, he could decide to investigate further himself but doing so would be costly (cost  $c$ , not modeled here but perhaps in later work).

Below, I explore in greater detail a number of models for scenarios where the outcome of the decision making process is not self-evident (as in the static models when all cues point toward the same candidate, i.e., not the first scenarios under the single identity nor under the dual identity frameworks). Where scenarios share the same general structure (i.e., differ slightly but share the same basic decision making process), I select a representative one for the purposes of in-depth illustration.

#### IV. Models of Decision Making

##### SINGLE IDENTITY: Dynamic Models for *Scenarios 2 & 3* In Depth

In their simplest example of information shortcuts, McKelvey and Ordeshook outline the following assumptions. Assume that an election concerns a single issue space consistent with the Median Voter Theorem; that each voter has a well-defined ideal point on the issue (e.g., is slightly conservative); and that his utility declines as he moves away from that ideal. If the electorate is divided between two subgroups—those who are informed and those who are uninformed—and a poll result is available showing that the electorate is split for

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<sup>24</sup> In this, I focus on how the uninformed voter might act *as if* informed, so I exclude all those who abstain in subsequent analyses. However, abstention from the polls is certainly a viable option for a cross-pressured citizen and I would like to explore it in later work.

the candidates 50-50, then the uninformed voter will recognize that he is closer to the conservative candidate.<sup>25</sup>

In order to adapt the M&O model to uninformed voters residing in areas of high ethnic spatial concentration, we have to modify one key assumption: uninformed voters do not know their position on the issue spectrum before the process begins.

To recapitulate:

Scenario 2					Voter uses group cues: coethnic endorsement and national polls Both Group 1 and Group 2 agree <i>Choose Candidate A</i>
Preference Info Type	Candidate - A Endorsement from Ethnic Group	Candidate - A National Poll	N/A	Dynamic	
Uninformed Voter					
Scenario 3					Voter uses group cues: no information from Group 1, endorsement from disliked group (assumes that if Group 2 chooses Candidate B, then Candidate A is closer to his ideal point) and national polls <i>Choose Candidate A</i>
Preference Info Type	No Position	Candidate - B Likeability heuristic, assume negative stance to endorsement	Candidate - A National Poll	Dynamic	
Uninformed Voter					

In *Scenario 2* the uninformed voter obtains an understanding of the current election by extracting two pieces of information from a single (her ethnic group's) endorsement: knowledge of whether the group prefers a liberal or conservative candidate and an understanding of which candidate is to the left of the other. This voter knows the distribution of opinion in her own ethnic subgroup and she knows the position of her subgroup relative to the rest of the population (how many outside voters are to the left and right of her group). Since she feels close to her group in an area of high ethnic concentration, she adopts the group's position as

<sup>25</sup> McKelvey and Ordeshook (1985) note that although informed voters should not be influenced by the poll (they do not update their positions, since they knew where the candidates stood in advance), uninformed voters should find the poll useful (unless the uninformed voter assumes that the poll results are meaningless, i.e. few people know where the candidates stand). If the uninformed voter assumes that everyone else is informed, then either both candidates are extremists on opposite ends of the spectrum or in fact both are very near to the median of the respondent (another division, such as one with a moderate conservative and an extremist liberal would produce results where the moderate leads, not the 50-50 split).

her own. The voter would like to avoid extremist candidates; but she does not know whether both candidates are far to the left, close together in the middle, or divided but at each extreme. She then takes a national poll into account, which tells her the overall breakdown of the vote. Armed with these three pieces of information (two from a single endorsement from her ethnic group and one from the national poll), she now is in the same position as the M&O uninformed voter. In a dynamic process where the uninformed voter takes cues from sequential polls, she moves toward the candidate midpoint until she reaches equilibrium.

*Scenario 3* is also dynamic but differs from *Scenario 2* in one key aspect. The voter's ethnic subgroup has no preference on the election. Therefore, she obtains endorsement information from a disliked group. She assumes that a group she is averse to will assume positions that she also dislikes (likeability heuristic from Brady and Sniderman 1985). She obtains two pieces of information from this negative endorsement: knowledge of whether the group prefers a liberal or conservative candidate and an understanding of which candidate is to the left of the other. Since she knows her interests are opposite to those of the endorsing group, she assumes a contrarian's position. Having taken this into account, all else equal with *Scenario 2*, the voter now takes utilizes the results of successive national polls and moves toward equilibrium. Each successive poll allows her to gain more precise knowledge of the location of the true candidate midpoint relative to her own ideal point.

Following the example of M&O, I outline the dynamic process for *Scenarios 2* and *3* in more technical detail below.

An electorate is made up of both informed and uninformed voters who can be represented with a series of probability density functions that depict the utility curves of groups of voters and the associated cumulative distribution functions. Using a number of assumptions and definitions, M&O describe the process of how uninformed voters come to behave like informed voters, using information acquired through the publication of sequential poll results in order to determine how their ideal points on an issue continuum compare to that of the "true" candidate midpoint.

Assumptions:

Number of informed voters is equal to the number of uninformed voters in the group

Uninformed voters receive complete information from previous polls

Vote share for one candidate increases monotonically

Informed voters observe actual candidate positions  
Voters will seek to maximize their payoff strategies

Where:

$x^0$  = initial poll  
 $x^{t-1}$  = previous poll  
 $x^t$  = current poll  
 $x^*$  =  $(S_A + S_B) / 2 \rightarrow$  actual candidate midpoint  
where  $S_A$  = position of Candidate A  
where  $S_B$  = position of Candidate B  
 $f_U(x)$  = PDF for uninformed voters in group  
 $f_I(x)$  = PDF for informed voters in group  
 $f(x)$  = PDF for all voters in group  
 $F_U(x)$  = CDF for uninformed voters in group  
 $F_I(x)$  = CDF for informed voters in group  
 $F(x)$  = CDF for all voters in group  
 $b$  = best vote to cast, conditional on beliefs  
 $\alpha$  = a voter  
 $I$  = set of informed voters  
 $U$  = set of uninformed voters  
 $e$  = endorsement  
 $e^-$  = disliked group endorsement (anti-endorsement)  
 $y_\alpha^*$  = ideal point of voter

For:

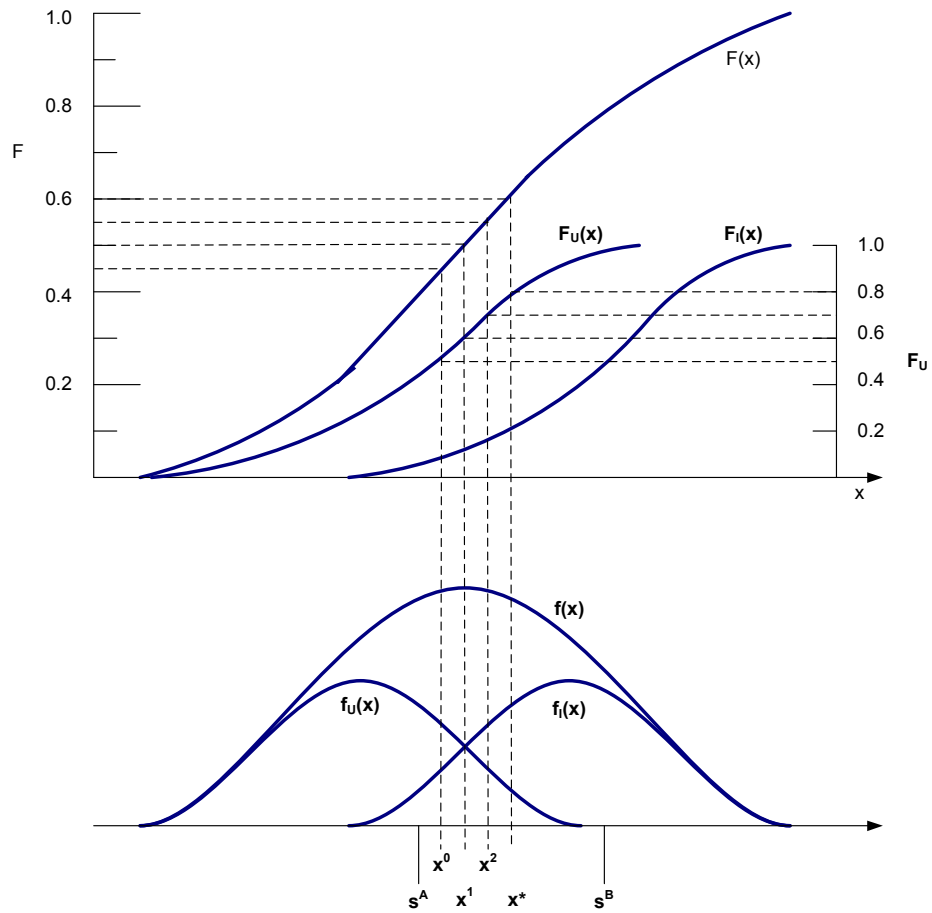
$\alpha \in I, \quad b_\alpha^t = e \quad \text{if } y_\alpha^* < x^*$   
 $\rightarrow$  Set of informed voters choose the endorsed candidate where their ideal point is less than the actual candidate midpoint  
 $b_\alpha^t = - (e^-) \quad \text{if } y_\alpha^* < x^*$   
 $\rightarrow$  Set of informed voters choose the anti-endorsed candidate where their ideal point is less than the actual candidate midpoint  
 $\alpha \in U, \quad b_\alpha^t = e \quad \text{if } y_\alpha^* < x^{t-1}$   
 $\rightarrow$  Set of uninformed voters choose the endorsed candidate where their ideal point is less than the previous poll perceived midpoint  
 $b_\alpha^t = - (e^-) \quad \text{if } y_\alpha^* < x^{t-1}$   
 $\rightarrow$  Set of uninformed voters choose the anti-endorsed candidate where their ideal point is less than the previous poll perceived midpoint

Figure 5.2 (adapted from McKelvey and Ordeshook 1985) shows the probability density functions and associated cumulative distribution functions for the uninformed, informed and total electorate. The initial poll midpoint is shown at point  $x^0$ . Through subsequent polls ( $x^1$  and  $x^2$ ), the uninformed voter's position becomes more consistent relative to the actual candidate midpoint ( $x^*$ ).

Table 5.5 shows the progressive updates made by the uninformed voter over the course of the four polls included in this analysis. Initially, the uninformed voter casts her ballot randomly in  $x^0$  as she has no information. Then, as she receives successive poll information, she updates her positioning relative to a new understanding of the candidate midpoint (combined with the endorsement from the group), maximizing her utility relative to the information provided in the current poll. The uninformed voters to the left of the candidate midpoint vote for the candidate on the left while the uninformed voters to the right of the candidate midpoint vote for the candidate on the right.

**Figure 5.2 Dynamic Models for the Uninformed Voter, *Scenario 2&3***





Relationship between the CDF and PDF (used for calculations in Table 5)

$$F_U(x) = f_U(x) / f(x)$$

$$F_I(x) = f_I(x) / f(x)$$

$$F(x) = F_U(x) + F_I(x)$$

**Table 5.5**

**Sequential Poll Results for Dynamic Models of Uninformed Voters, *Scenarios 2&3***

	Poll Initial ( $x^0$ )		Poll 2 ( $x^1$ )		Poll 3 ( $x^2$ )		Poll Final ( $x^*$ )	
	$S_A$	$S_B$	$S_A$	$S_B$	$S_A$	$S_B$	$S_A$	$S_B$
Informed Voters	0.40	0.60	0.40	0.60	0.40	0.60	0.40	0.60
Uninformed Voters	0.50	0.50	0.60	0.40	0.70	0.30	0.80	0.20
Total Electorate	<b>0.45</b>	<b>0.55</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.55</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>0.40</b>

As shown in Figure 2 vis-à-vis subsequent polls  $x^1$  and  $x^2$ , the perceived candidate midpoint (as reflected by the overall poll) is moving to the right. With each adjustment to new polls, the uninformed voter approaches equilibrium at midpoint  $x^*$ . Whereas the initial poll  $x^0$  of the entire electorate showed that Candidate A was losing (45 to 55), he is actually the preferred candidate of the electorate by the final poll  $x^*$  (60 to 40). Since the informed voters never change their votes, it is the updating uninformed voters who have now altered the outcome of the election.

SINGLE IDENTITY: Dynamic Models for *Scenario 4* In Depth

In *Scenario 4* the voter obtains an understanding of the current election by extracting two pieces of information from a single (her ethnic group's) endorsement as before: knowledge of whether the group prefers a liberal or conservative candidate and an understanding of which candidate is to the left of the other. This voter knows the distribution of opinion in her own ethnic subgroup and she knows the position of her subgroup relative to the rest of the population (how many outside voters are to the left and right of her group). Since she feels close to her ethnic group in an area of high concentration, she adopts the group's position as her own.

However, she receives poll information from her ethnic group and another group and now the messages (received simultaneously) from the two groups diverge. Although her preference curve does not shift (she maintains her  $G_1$  identity), she uses the average of  $G_1$  and  $G_2$  group polls to determine the candidate midpoint. Calculating the overall perceived candidate midpoint for the entire electorate  $x_1$  is a simple average  $(x_{1G1} + x_{1G2}) / 2$ . Midpoint  $x_1$  then

influences the second poll as the uninformed voter updates her position with the information obtained.

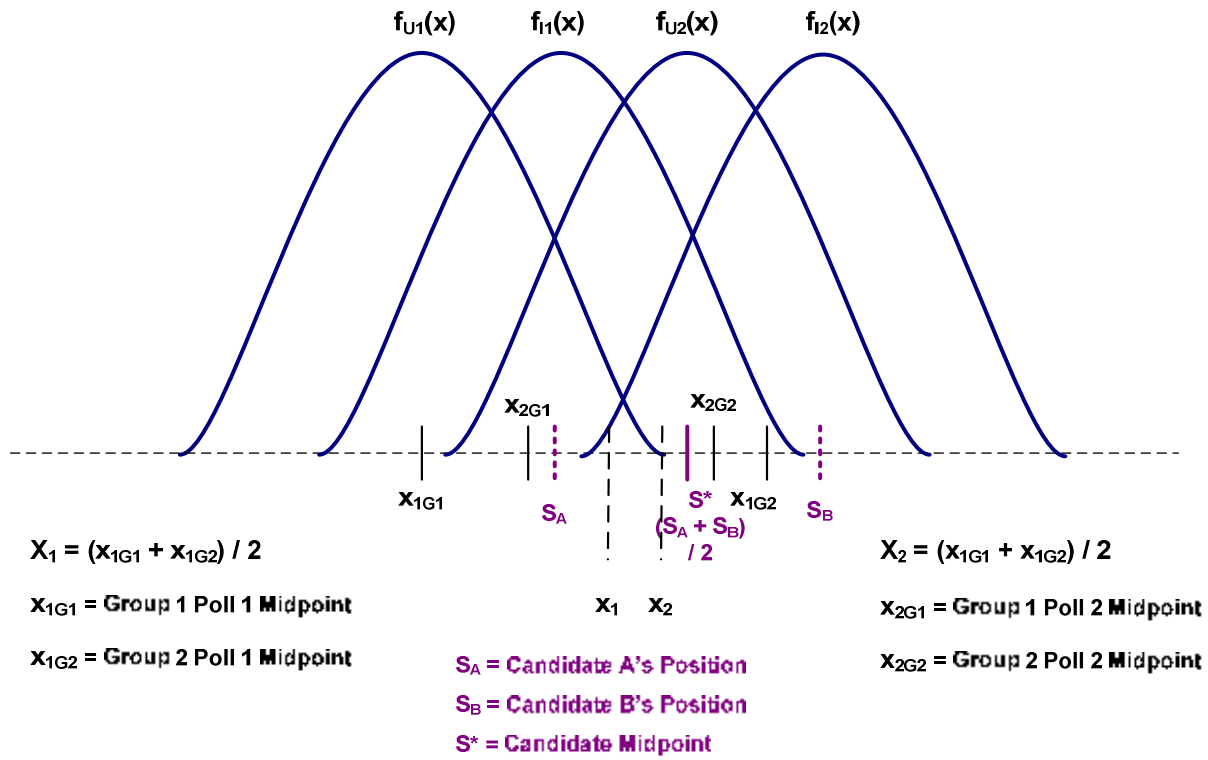
To recapitulate:

<b>Scenario 4</b>				
Preference	Candidate - A	Candidate - B	Dynamic	Voter uses group cues: multiple sequential polls to reach equilibrium <i>Repeat adjustment following sequential polls to reach equilibrium</i>
Info Type	Endorsement from Ethnic	Poll of Some Group 2		
Uninformed Voter	Group; Poll of Ethnic Group			

Figure 3 shows two groups ( $G_1$  and  $G_2$ ) deciding between two candidates ( $S_A$  and  $S_B$ ) in an upcoming election. There exist two separate preference curves for uniformed and informed voters within each group:  $f_U(x)$  and  $f_I(x)$ . As before, there are an equal number of informed and uninformed voters within the electorate (and now also within each group). In the first poll, we find that  $G_1$  *informed voters* split 75 - 25 in favor of Candidate A whereas  $G_2$  *informed voters* split 35 - 65 in favor of Candidate B. Both sets of *uninformed* voters cast their ballots randomly in the first round.

The voter uses the information obtained from successive polls (using the same averaging process) to locate perceived candidate midpoints in an updating process. Since the uninformed voter believes that she is the only one who is uninformed (i.e., all others are informed), she maximizes her utility by updating her position with subsequent poll information as before. The models that follow are adapted directly from M&O (1984).

**Figure 5.3 Dynamic Models for the Uninformed Voter, *Scenario 4***



**Table 5.6**

**Sequential Poll Results for Dynamic Models for the Uninformed Voter,  
Scenario 4**

	Poll 1 ( $x^1$ )		Poll 2 ( $x^2$ )		Poll Final ( $S^*$ )	
	$S_A$	$S_B$	$S_A$	$S_B$	$S_A$	$S_B$
<b>G<sub>1</sub> Informed</b>	0.75	0.25	0.75	0.25	0.75	0.25
<b>G<sub>1</sub> Uninformed</b>	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.25	0.99	0.01
<b>Total Group</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>0.25</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>0.13</b>
	$S_A$	$S_B$	$S_A$	$S_B$	$S_A$	$S_B$
<b>G<sub>2</sub> Informed</b>	0.35	0.65	0.35	0.65	0.35	0.65
<b>G<sub>2</sub> Uninformed</b>	0.50	0.50	0.45	0.55	0.51	0.49
<b>Total Group</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>0.40</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>0.57</b>
<b>Overall Result</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>0.65</b>	<b>0.35</b>

Where

- $x_1$  =  $(x_{1G1} + x_{1G2}) / 2 \rightarrow$  overall midpoint of poll
- $x_{t-1}$  = previous poll
- $x_t$  = current poll
- $S^*$  =  $(S_A + S_B) / 2 \rightarrow$  actual candidate midpoint
- $v$  = vote total

Then

- $x_{tGn} = f_U(v_x^{t-1}) \rightarrow$  if  $t=0$ , i.e if no previous poll, exists,  $x = 50/50$  split
- $\rightarrow$  if  $t>0$ , i.e. if a previous poll exists, voter will maximize  $f_U(x)$  based on midpoint of previous poll

Until

- $x_t = S^* \rightarrow$  Polls continue until all uninformed voters behave as if informed and reach equilibrium at the actual candidate midpoint

The interaction of uninformed voters with subsequent polls produces, as shown in Table 5.6, shifts in the uninformed voters' positions such that they move closer to the true midpoint of the candidates. The results of poll 2 show that *G<sub>1</sub> uninformed voters* now split 75 - 25 in favor of Candidate A while *G<sub>2</sub> uninformed voters*, who happen to already be very close to the true candidate midpoint, adjust slightly to 45 – 55 in favor of Candidate B. Now, the combined poll results yield a new midpoint at  $x_2$  which is closer to  $S^*$  than  $x_1$ . By performing an additional

poll (#3), the uninformed voters acquire more information based on point  $x_2$  and are able to reach the true candidate midpoint  $S^*$ .

### DUAL IDENTITIES: Dynamic Model for *Scenario 6* In Depth

Decision making for the voter who has two equally salient identities is similar to the dynamic process for one salient identity described previously, where sequential polling moves the voter toward equilibrium. One key distinction, however, is that the voter's initial estimate of his ideal point might be affected by the information he simultaneously receives from both salient groups. In this case, the voter could weigh the recommended issue positions equally and take the average as his own position (or weight them differentially depending on which identities are more or less important). After the uninformed voter establishes his ideal point on the issue position, subsequent to considering relevant group cues, he is able to determine candidate positioning and move toward equilibrium with information from successive polls as in previous analyses.

To recapitulate:

<b>Scenario 6</b>					
Preference	Candidate - A	Candidate - B	N/A	Static for	Voter uses group cues: poll of
Info Type	Poll of Ethnic	Poll of Second		one round;	ethnic group and poll of second
	Group	Group		Dynamic	group
Uninformed				thereafter	Group 1 and Group 2 disagree
Voter					<i>Repeat adjustment following</i>
					<i>sequential polls to reach</i>
					<i>equilibrium</i>

### THREE IDENTITIES: Dynamic Model for *Scenario 8* in Depth

Political learning and socialization in areas of high ethnic concentration could occur, such that over time uninformed immigrants acquire knowledge of and interest in the political system (they move toward increasing political incorporation). One could imagine that in such a scenario, the immigrant might know the position of Candidates *A* and *B* along an issue continuum; with the passage of time, however, one could also picture that this voter begins to adapt other identities that could complement or compete with his ethnic group identity. How might we model a newly informed voter who would like to maximize his utility in decision making with three equally salient identities?

Assume that the voter receives information from each of three relevant groups simultaneously but the group cues provided lead to some ambivalence

(internal conflict for the voter arising from inconsistent group cues). When these identities overlap or share similar utility functions, the choice is easier. However, when these identities are in competition, the voter must make tradeoffs in the decision making process.

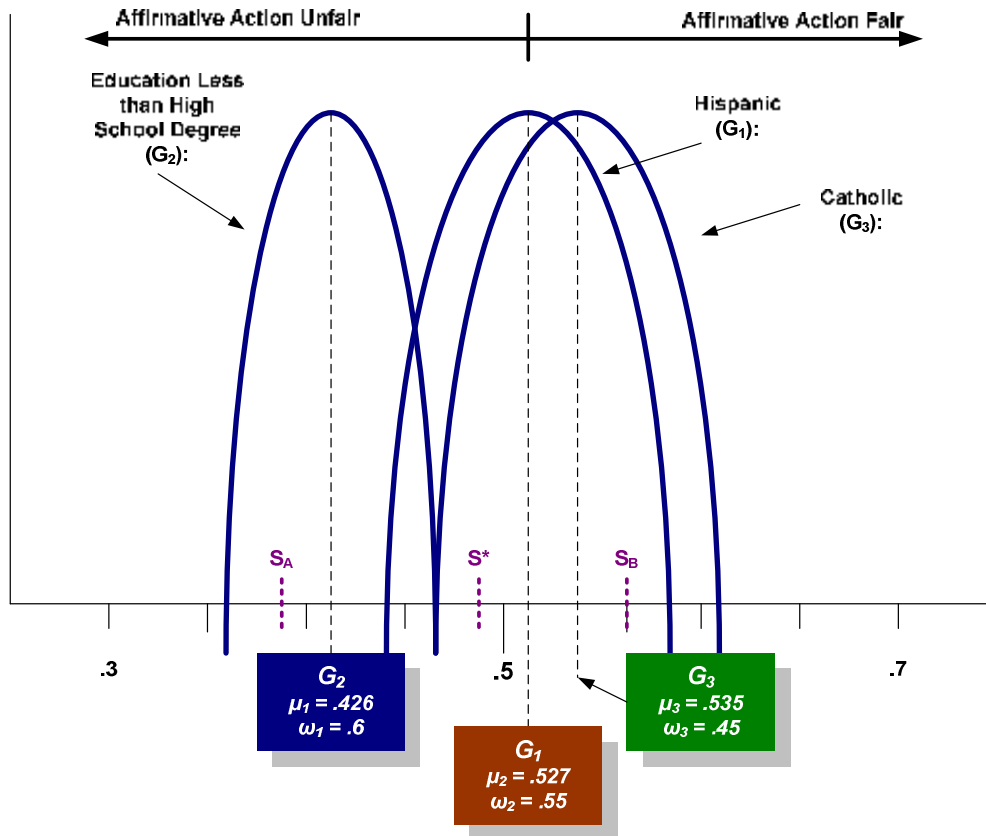
Figure 5.4 shows a voter with three identities who is considering a decision on the issue of affirmative action: whether these policies give unfair advantages to minorities and women. The voter in question has three group identities:  $G_1$  Hispanic,  $G_2$  Education Less than High School Degree and  $G_3$  Catholic. Three preference curves are shown on an issue space (x-axis) with a total range of 0 to 1 (with 0 anchoring the position *agrees that affirmative action policies give unfair advantages* and 1 anchoring the position *disagrees that affirmative action policies give unfair advantages*).

I model the decision making process for a hypothetical voter who must simultaneously balance cues from three groups in his decision making. He acquires information from three polls of subgroups with which he fully identifies: Hispanics and Catholic identities have means ( $\mu$ ) of .527 and .535 on the issue space in the dataset, respectively. His utility curves for each identity share significant overlap. Since an overlap of preference curves denotes an area of agreement, one strategy for the voter who is seeking to maximize his utility is simply to adopt the position that affirmative action is fair, since that would be consistent with two of his three salient identities. Another strategy is to calculate the individual utilities for each of his identities, and compare those to the utility derived from the region of overlapping identities. In this example, the voter selects a position between .527 and .535 where there is overlap (a region of acceptability between identities) for our hypothetical voter.

To recapitulate:

<b>Scenario 8</b>					
Preference	Candidate - A	Candidate - B	Candidate	Static	Voter uses group cues: polls
Info Type	Poll of Ethnic	Poll of Second	- A		from three groups
	Group	Group	Poll of		<i>Select candidate that maximizes</i>
			Third		<i>utility for greatest number of</i>
Informed			Group		<i>identities,</i>
Voter					<i>assume knowledge of candidate</i>
					<i>midpoint</i> (strategy for informed
					voter)

**Figure 5.4 Static Models for the Informed Voter, *Scenario 8* (3 Identities)**



The voter can calculate the utility for the region of overlap. Following Gill (2006), I draw utility curves as parabolic shapes of the general form

$$f(x) = \tau - (\mu_i - x)^2 \omega_i,$$

where:  $\mu_i$  represents the group's mean position as known by the voter from the latest poll of the group (either through a published poll or in simple discussions with multiple members of the group),  $\omega_i$  determines how fast the utility diminishes moving away from the mean position (in general, the standard deviation of the normal distribution curve for the group position) and  $\tau$  = maximum possible value along x-axis. He can then make his decision and determine the overlapping region with

$$A = \int_x^{x^1} \text{for } G_1 \text{ (quadratic)} + \int_x^{x^3} \text{for } G_3 \text{ (quadratic)}$$



I have discussed this model of decision making with respect to *Scenario 8* (static, 3 identities) but the same basic process could apply to decision making in *Scenario 7* (static, dual identities).

Finally, the models so far have provided that the uninformed voter is an immigrant who resides in an area of *high coethnic spatial concentration*. *Ceteris paribus*, what would we expect for the uninformed, low SES, limited English speaking voter residing in an area of *low coethnic spatial concentration*? Since the uninformed voter in an area of low concentration might not have access to her ethnic group's opinion through either polls or through endorsements, she might abstain (remaining disinterested in a seemingly abstract political process). Were she to have some knowledge of her ethnic group's stance, she might still abstain from the political process and from adopting any position since her sense of *common fate* is reduced in these low concentration areas. In the event that she does adopt her ethnic group's position on the issue spectrum, she might do so with less precision; in combination with new information from sequential national polls, she might update toward a poorly located ideal point and perhaps even cast a ballot for the "wrong" candidate.

#### IV. Conclusion

In this chapter, I first describe how living in areas of high ethnic concentration should increase one's sense of closeness to coethnics (and theoretically, the salience of the ethnic group heuristic). Furthermore, I argue that given current scholarly understandings of the complex nature of identity, we can supplement the M&O analysis by adding what we now recognize about identity—individuals have multiple, fluid identities that can be activated differently across environments. Vis-à-vis immigrants, I have attempted to model how uninformed voters balance their social group identities when they receive cues that are *consistent* (where cues provide clarifying information for an uncertain voter who faces an ambiguous world) versus cues that are *conflicting* (where the voter experiences cross-pressures and feels *ambivalent*).

Rather than becoming isolated and hypersegregated from the rest of the system, enclaves may reduce cognitive dissonance to decision making and participation in American democracy, even where a) immigrants come from countries that did not facilitate democratic governance (authoritarian regimes) and b) lack the resources that are advantageous as in the traditional socioeconomic model of participation. This means that, in the same fashion that civic

organizations served in educating Americans (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995), maybe ethnic spaces of high concentration are actually places of civic education that assist residents in making decisions on complex political issues by providing accessible information through group-related heuristics.

This chapter is an attempt to formally understand the role spatial ethnic concentration plays in the political incorporation of new immigrants, primarily through informational processing given the complex task of politics and tremendous resource differentials between informed versus uninformed voters. The concentration of immigrants in ethnic enclaves and a politics based on ethnicity are not novel developments. Glazer and Moynihan (1963) noted that in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Italians and the Irish voted so as to divide offices along ethnic lines. Rather than worry about whether immigration and diversity (Putnam 2007) threaten the fabric of American social trust and democratic stability (Huntington 1975, 2004), perhaps it is worthwhile to shift the debate to understanding how (the mechanisms) varying ethnic spatial concentrations could be impacting decision making and participation. This is true in the short term with, for example, a given election and the cumulative effects over time as reflected in overall immigrant political learning and socialization.

## Dissertation Conclusion

How do various ethnic contexts influence the political incorporation of immigrants? Do high spatial concentrations of immigrant populations reinforce group differences that can lead to greater conflict and tension between groups? Or do they play pivotal roles in aiding adaptation to a new homeland and assist in diverse interest representation, as well as facilitate increases in immigrant political participation? Perhaps both? My research focuses on how various contexts—ethnic and racial group concentration in space—affect the social and political incorporation of immigrants into American society. This topic relates to social problems and policies in a variety of domains, including intergroup relations and ethnic prejudice, educational and economic inequalities, pathways to citizenship and political engagement, and residential and social mobility. Immigration into the United States has grown rapidly since 1965 and large-scale changes in the demographic makeup of the country are expected to continue. According to recent projections from the Pew Research Center, the population of the United States will increase from 296 million in 2005 to 438 million in 2050; and 82% of that increase will be due to immigrants arriving during that period and their U.S.-born descendants.

A central issue that has emerged from scholarship is the extent to which new immigrant groups are following the path of *straight-line assimilation* of earlier waves of immigration (Gordon 1964), with steady progress in language acquisition, socioeconomic mobility and political participation. Or, are current trends more complicated as scholars of *segmented assimilation* advance, with a bifurcated trajectory wherein some immigrant groups advance linearly and other groups are subject to “downward assimilation” into an urban underclass comprised primarily of low-skilled African Americans (Portes and Zhou 1993, Portes and Rumbaut 2001)? My own research introduces the systematic study of how ethnic and racial contexts—i.e., spatial concentrations of coethnics (members of the same parental national origin group); Asian and Latino concentrations; and broader minority concentrations (Asian American, Latino and African American concentrations combined)—shape the life chances of minority groups, particularly immigrants.

My doctoral dissertation addresses two key literatures that speak to immigrant incorporation. First, I consider ethnic and racial context where it has largely been ignored in the political science literature on public opinion and

political behavior. The vast majority of these studies analyze predictors of outcomes for individuals without considering key elements of their social environments. I posit that many studies fail to provide a complete picture of the lives of native-born whites; even more problematic, however, is overlooking context in attempts to understanding the lives of immigrants who are faced with the necessity of adapting to new and probably dissonant environments. Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995) contributed the idea that citizens are not – disconnected information processors – but rather interdependent citizens, who are embedded in social networks that shape the information they receive via informal conversations and other aspects the local information environment. My dissertation work shows that for immigrants, context shapes a given individual's social interactions (and in particular, reports of discrimination), which then condition the very formation and development of their ethnic identities.

Outside of political science, the second theoretical intervention that I attempt addresses the dominant paradigm in studies of immigrant adaptation in sociology: segmented assimilation theory (Portes and Zhou 1993). In particular, segmented assimilation theory argues that second generation immigrant acculturation is effected by an interaction between the socioeconomic status of immigrants and key elements of their receiving contexts, i.e., a hostile geographic location where immigrants and their children are —rebuffed because of their race or poverty “and a changed labor market where — the middle layers of jobs that provided mobility opportunities for earlier children of immigrants are thinning” (Portes and Rumbaut 1986, p.251). In contrast to manual laborers, higher status immigrant professionals are in a position to protect themselves from nativist hostility because they have the resources to disperse away from areas of ethnic concentration. According to their theory, successful adaptation therefore does not pivot on context for *higher status* immigrant professionals.

I build on segmented assimilation theory in several ways. First, where it has largely been ignored in the sociological literature on immigrant adaptation (although see Bloemraad 2006 as an exception), I consider politics (and political incorporation) in addition to context and socioeconomic status. There is reason to believe that political adaptation is distinct from economic adaptation, as the relationship between socioeconomic status and political participation is not deterministic. With regard to the “puzzle” of Asian American participation, for example, Asian Americans on average possess a combination of relative affluence and higher levels of education, but they also exhibit lower rates of citizenship and voter registration compared to the marginal voting age population (Lien, Collet, Wong and Ramakrishnan 2006). More broadly, simple crosstabulations appear to show that members of immigrant groups do appear to vote at lower rates than

native-born whites. However, patterns markedly deviate when I condition the analysis by a number of counties with variation in coethnic concentration using the Current Population Survey's November Voting and Registration Supplement File (2006 congressional elections). I show that although a given immigrant groups' level of participation might appear low overall, residing in a place of high coethnic concentration can actually be associated with higher levels of turnout, once controls such as income, education, citizenship, and length of residence are included in the model specifications. Strikingly for a number of Asian and Latino immigrant groups, the models predict that all else equal, for example, Vietnamese Americans in high coethnic concentration counties are *more likely* to vote than native born whites.

Moving to the development of my own theoretical framework, I put forward that space facilitates a steady state of heightened identity that may aid in the processing of new information through frequent contact and group cues for an unincorporated immigrant, manifesting in developed schematic structures that could produce *ethnospatial cognitive capital* (knowledge of group and identification) and *ethnospatial psychological capital* (self-esteem of individual). These capitals among others, then interact with the built environment (distance to key locations, options available for participation) to produce a process that *spatializes* social and human capital.

Shifting from theoretical interventions to conceptualization and measurement, my doctoral dissertation contributes to existing studies of diversity and context by examining various conceptualizations of context: ranging from *coethnic* concentration, to *Asian* or *Latino* concentrations, to a broader conceptualization of *minority* concentrations. I advance that only after considering these (and potentially other spatial) conceptualizations can we understand how to define the relevant "community" and context. To illustrate, I find that *minority* concentration is an important contextual variable in the development of identities among the children of immigrants. That is, those who attended a higher minority concentration school were *less likely* to report having been discriminated against; furthermore, those who reported that they had been discriminated against (and were in a high minority context) were likely to adopt a *panethnic* identification (e.g., Latino, Hispanic, or Asian). Similarly, among adult Asians from immigrant families, those who reported having personally experienced discrimination and reported residing in an area of higher Asian neighborhood concentration were more likely to adopt a *panethnic* identification.

More broadly, this project examines the effects of ethnic and racial spatial concentration on immigrant across three variable groupings: experiences with

discrimination, ethnic identity (ethnic group, panethnic Asian or Latino, and American types), as well as political behavior variables (such as voter registration and turnout). I utilize a range of information including both longitudinal and cross-sectional datasets for adolescents and adults, as well as Census population data, and examine how a range of ethnic and racial contexts might impact the adaptation of Asian and Latino adolescents and adults from immigrant families. My work highlights, furthermore, interethnic group differences in patterns of immigrant incorporation. Hence, I note that the adaptation of foreign and native-born Asian and Latino adolescents and their families is contingent upon the ethnic group under consideration, which is consistent with the multiple outcomes and pathways associated with segmented assimilation theory. Yet I attempt to specify with greater precision the mechanisms at work vis-à-vis ethnic and racial contexts. This study may help researchers to understand the political adaptation of immigrants across contexts during an era of large-scale immigration in a seemingly polarized political environment with significant contention over immigration and assimilation policies

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