

Comparing Immigrant Integration in Britain and the US

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Migration is a complex global phenomenon that has grown rapidly in recent decades. The period since 1960 has witnessed a sharp growth of immigration to the US, Canada and Australia, as well as to the countries of Western Europe. Estimates of the global total of international migrants rose from 75 million in 1965 to 120 million in 1990 and 175 million in 2000. The United States towers above all other countries in the number of immigrants received (37.5 million in 2006), followed by the Russian Federation (13.3 million), and Germany (7.3 million). The United Kingdom was ranked eleventh among countries of the world in the number of international migrants in 2000 with 4.0 million. As rates of worldwide immigration sped up at the end of the 20th century the United States once again led the world with a net migration of 6.25 million between 1995 and 2000, followed in order by Germany (924,000), Canada (720,000), Italy (588,000), the United Kingdom (475,000) and Australia (474,000) (Ueda, 2007).¹ These countries have all experienced a growth in the second generation—the children of the earlier immigrants, as well as continued flows of immigrants and refugees.

These large migration flows and the resulting integration challenges have led to a great deal of research on immigrant identities, on transnational

¹ Since 2000 the pace of immigration has increased, especially undocumented immigration. Between 2002 and 2006 the US averaged 1.8 million immigrants per year, with approximately 1 million legal permanent immigrants, 300,000 who enter as temporary immigrants but will end up staying permanently, and 500,000 undocumented immigrants. There has been some speculation that since the economy entered a slow down in 2008, the number of undocumented immigrants entering the US has slowed. (Migration Information Source, http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/FS16_USImmigration_051807.pdf).

connections between sending and receiving societies, and on patterns of social, cultural and economic integration. In an interdependent world of growing geographic mobility, increasing regional integration, and fast and cheap communication, migration is a field with tremendous demographic, economic, social and political significance. Yet most research on immigrant and second generation integration has been conducted within a single nation state (with the vast majority done in the United States), with little comparative analysis. This is changing as Western Europe looks to the US, Canada and Australia for insights into how immigration was successfully managed in the past, and as developed countries look to each other for insights into how to cope with this large scale phenomena.

Comparative research has the capacity to enrich our theories of immigrant integration and to offer public policy options for promoting that integration. Yet there are many difficult problems in doing comparisons—including reaching similar definitions of concepts, overcoming different academic traditions and foci., and making data comparable. Despite these difficulties, there have been increasing calls for cross national research to enrich theory development in the field (Portes and DeWind, 2007), and to lead to better policy solutions to social issues caused by immigration (Metropolis).

In this paper I contrast the integration of immigrants and the second generation in Britain and the US on a number of different axes including racial

and ethnic identity, residential segregation, intermarriage, health outcomes, and religion and the integration of the second generation. I draw from a few explicitly comparative studies, as well as from parallel studies conducted within each nation on the same subject. I argue that these empirical comparisons suggest that explanations and predictions about factors leading to immigrant integration that have been developed in one national context—either the US or the UK do not work the same way in both countries. I focus on empirical puzzles that emerge from these comparisons that challenge the assumptions upon which theories or public policies about immigrant integration have been constructed. I conclude that at the very least these policy and theoretical predictions about what is driving immigrant outcomes should take into account cross national research, which might suggest alternative theoretical approaches, or might suggest that theories that are posited as universal are actually quite context specific.

Overall Similarities and Differences of Societies

The US and the UK are more similar to one another than to other Western European countries on a number of dimensions important to understanding the pattern of immigrant integration. Britain and the U.S. have similar citizenship regimes (civic, not ethnic), similar welfare states and social benefits (especially when compared with more generous European welfare systems), similarly flexible educational systems that provide more opportunities for second chances and less early tracking into vocational education (especially when compared with

other West European nations such as Germany and France), some overlaps in the national origins of immigrants (including sizable numbers of Caribbean blacks, Indians and Chinese) and similar attention to race as an important source of division in society.

It is perhaps this attention to race and the definition of groups as ethnic and racial minorities in both the US and Britain that most differentiates them from other Western European countries coping with integration of immigrants and their descendants. The United States has classified post 1965 immigrants in racial terms, based on a system of classification and social identification that arose out of internal population dynamics owing to a long history of slavery and to the conquest of American Indians and Hispanics in the Southwest and Puerto Rico (Waters, 2008). When Asians started to arrive as immigrants in the late 19th Century they were racially classified by the federal government and a racial exclusion of them was ultimately enshrined in American immigration law until the 1950s. In an ironic turn of events the classification of the population by race, developed in order to discriminate and exclude, was officially enshrined in our federal statistical system after the Civil Rights Movement resulted in legislation designed to prevent and prosecute discrimination, and is now most vigorously defended by racial minorities themselves.

This attention to race and the development of anti-discrimination legislation was also incorporated into British society. Modeled after the US race and civil rights establishment, Britain has developed a policy based on multiculturalism and anti-racism to integrate immigrants and their descendants.

Thus while Britain and the US often perceive their “immigration” integration issues as race relations issues, this is very different from other Western European countries. France explicitly forbids collecting data on race and nationality and in Germany the sharp divisions that surround immigration are about birthplace, citizenship and ethnic belonging, rather than skin color. Yet this common language of race as an organizing principle of difference in Britain and the US can obscure some real differences in what the two countries mean by “race” and in the social construction of ethnicity and in the drawing of group boundaries.

One possible difference has to do with the “color line” in both societies. In the US there is a vigorous debate occurring about the key dividing line in American society. (Foner and Fredrickson, 2004, Gans, 1999). This debate centers on the question of whether the key division in American society is between whites on the one hand and non whites on the other, or whether the division is between blacks and non-blacks. In other words, the question is whether Asians and Latinos are being incorporated into American society onto the “white” or the “black” side of what W.E.B. Du Bois (1903) famously called “the color line”. Before the Civil Rights movement and mass immigration from Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the position of Latinos and Asians was closer in many ways, even legally, to African Americans, than to whites. Recently many scholars have argued that the high rates of intermarriage, residential integration of Asians and light skinned Latinos has meant that the serious ramifications of race for life chances in the US are concentrated among those socially identified

as blacks, not those identified as non-whites. (Waters, 2008, Bean and Stevens, 2003, Kasinitz, 2004).

In the UK, the key distinction might be more clearly drawn between white British and other non-whites. Patterns of acceptance and social identification continue to posit a common “minority” experience, encapsulated in the term BME or blacks and minority ethnics. In addition blacks are not uniformly more separate from whites than Asians are in Britain. Indeed on certain key indicators including intermarriage and residential integration black Caribbeans and black Africans are more integrated with whites than are Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

The countries also have some important differences—a much longer and more prominent role for immigration in American history as opposed to British history, the presence of a large population of native African Americans in the US, the much greater role of Muslim immigrants in British society than in American society, the presence of the European Union in the British case, and the role of the long land border with Mexico and the large dominance of Latino immigrants in American immigration flows. Indeed the most pressing and complex immigration issue facing American society today is the presence of 12 million undocumented immigrants in the United States, approximately 7 million of whom are Mexicans. While Britain also has an undocumented population it is much smaller, both relatively and absolutely. (The Times reported in 2005 that the Home Office had estimated the number of undocumented immigrants in Britain at 500,000). While the US has been a magnet for immigrants from many different countries, Britain drew most of its immigrants in the latter half of the 20th Century

from former colonies. This colonial legacy was quite important in shaping expectations among immigrants of full inclusion in the society and in shaping the immigration laws and bureaucratic directives that allowed people into the country. In recent years Britain has begun receiving immigrants from Eastern Europe, especially Poland, and asylum seekers who may not come from former colonies, perhaps leading to different kinds of accommodation among immigrants in the future (Vertovec, 2007).

The US does not have a comparable flow of “white” European immigrants. The flow into Britain from elsewhere in Europe includes professional and highly educated workers from elsewhere in the European Union, as well as large unskilled workers from Eastern Europe. These workers are moving into parts of the UK, especially rural areas outside of the southeast near London and outside of the industrial northwest and midlands, that have not previously dealt with immigrants. In that sense these “new immigrant destinations” are similar to places in the American South and Midwest that have received large numbers of Latino immigrants in the last decade (Massey, 2008). These new immigrant destinations also have no history of accommodating immigrants and they struggle with integration and diversity issues. In both countries language issues are at the forefront as well as the burdens on schools that have to accommodate new influxes of immigrant children. A key difference is that in the UK these new immigrants are white and in the US Latinos are perceived as being racially different. No comparative research has yet been conducted on these new immigrant destinations in both countries but the similar shocks to rural areas and

yet the different racial backgrounds of the immigrants would yield very interesting comparisons.

How scholarship differs

Comparative studies of immigration and ethnicity in the US and Europe have become more numerous in recent years but the field is still in its very early stages. Two issues plague comparative research—different theoretical and analytical frameworks and a lack of comparable data and statistical definitions. In a helpful article on the state of comparative immigration research, Morawska (2008) explores differences in theories and analytical approaches. She argues that scholars in the US and Europe talk past each other in debating the usefulness of the concept of assimilation. The term assimilation is widely used in American immigration research. But American researchers use the term to refer to “a multiplace, multipath, context-dependent process of incorporation of immigrants and their offspring into the economic, civic-political, and social institutions and culture of different segments of the host society” (Morawska, 2008:468). This modern concept of assimilation, fleshed out in detail in the major theoretical book by Alba and Nee (2003) is most decidedly a two way process in which immigrants change American society as well as being changed by it.

Yet European scholars continue to see the term assimilation in a negative way, interpreting it in the way it was used in the early 20th Century as a one way

requirement of immigrants that they “melt” into American society by giving up their ethnic distinctiveness. Morawska argues that European scholars often use the term “integration” to invoke the same process of mutual accommodation that American scholars refer to with assimilation.

In either case both European and American scholars have recognized the complex multicultural nature of the societies into which immigrants are assimilating. This complexity is captured in the American case through the concept of “segmented assimilation” and in the European case through the concept of “integration clusters” among and within immigrant groups. (Morawaska, 2008:470). These concepts allow for the analysis of what parts of the host society immigrants and their descendants are joining. In the case of segmented assimilation in the US, Portes and Zhou (1993) argue that immigrants can join the mainstream middle class, or can assimilate into a predominantly African American segment trapped in urban poverty and often referred to as the “underclass”. Assimilation also has been decoupled from mobility—assimilating into the host society might mean upward or downward social mobility over time. This is a theme I will return to in the last part of the paper where I examine the outcomes among the second generation.

Favell (1999) correctly argues that the nuts and bolts of empirical comparisons of how immigrants and their descendants are doing in European societies “must be related systematically back to the political construction of the

problem in each country” There are important differences in the academic approach to studying immigrant incorporation in Britain and the US, with much more attention paid to generational change in the US, and much more attention paid to class stratification in the UK. Indeed Favell describes the state of immigration research in Britain as “significantly out of step with the rest of mainland Europe”. This is because Britain has had less large scale quantitative research on immigrants and their integration into the society than other countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and France. Instead, according to Favell, British quantitative research has focused on ethnic minorities, self identified using the categories developed for the census, without attention to generational change. This developed out of the “conceptual history that has always looked for its normative inspiration to American race relations of the 1960s and has always defined Britain more narrowly as a country of post colonial immigration only”²

Modern migration to Britain is often dated to the arrival of one ship from the Caribbean, the Windrush, which arrived in 1948. The people who arrived were not framed as “immigrants” because as subjects of the British Empire they had citizenship and the right to move to Britain. Over time the source countries of most international migrants to Britain came from former colonies—in the Caribbean, South Asia and Africa. (This is changing rapidly very recently with

² There are some great resources for the study of ethnic minorities in Britain such as the 1993/1994 National Survey of Ethnic Minorities and the Millenium Cohort Study which has a significant over sample of ethnic minority groups. The issue is that much of the quantitative research in the UK has focused on ethnic minorities vs. whites, not on immigrants by generation over time. The privileging of race and ethnicity as independent variables in mobility research in Britain means that immigrant and second generation integration has received less attention.

immigration of asylum seekers and Eastern European labor migration). While restrictions were placed on who could migrate, the differences between these new arrivals and established citizens was framed around race rather than citizenship—and beginning in the 1960s managing “immigration” came to be seen as managing “race relations”. Thus immigrant groups are ordinarily referred to as “ethnic and racial minorities” rather than as first, second or third generation migrants. And immigration policy has always been intertwined with race policy in Britain— Much of recent British discussion of immigration and citizenship acquisition has been covering new territory and inventing new policies and approaches as sources of immigrants have changed dramatically in the 1990s and 2000s. (The UK government has passed five major pieces of legislation related to immigration in 1993, 1996, 1999, 2002 and 2004).

The long standing political concern with race mapped onto an academic concern with social class among social scientists working in Britain. Social science research in England has had a strong tradition of documenting and explaining divisions in British society around social class. Thus British quantitative social science has been at the forefront of measuring social class and class mobility across generations (Goldthorpe, 1987). As the number of international migrants and their children increased in British society in the 1960s, 70’s and 80s scholars studying social class began to look at class mobility among ethnic and racial minorities alongside the white English. These studies of ethnic and racial disadvantage, and the class mobility of ethnic minorities discuss “ethnic penalties” owing to discrimination, but do not ordinarily look at

generational progress or spheres beyond socioeconomic status. There has been much less attention to the classic questions of American immigration assimilation theory—generational change, and cultural and structural assimilation. This makes it difficult to ascertain if different trends exist by generation, or if the finding on ethnic minorities refer equally to the first, second and subsequent generations.

Most studies of Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Chinese, Black-Caribbeans, and Black-Africans in Britain, judge it adequate to study these ethnic minority groups largely as an undifferentiated mass, or decompose them by the older and younger generation. The history of each ethnic minority, especially their periods of mass emigration and arrival into Britain helps in attempting to determine what proportion might be second generation, but this approach is not entirely satisfactory. In contrast, US researchers have expended some effort in using generational status as a crucial analytical tool in studying immigrants in the US. The second generation is defined as persons who have at least one foreign born parent, and the 1.5 generation as persons who were born in a foreign country but came to live in the United States before the age of 12. These precise definitions, though known by British researchers, are rarely used in the British race relations and ethnic minorities' literature.

History has also shaped the ways in which American researchers frame their research questions. A long history of immigration from Europe to the US in the 19th and early 20th centuries gave rise to a tradition of American immigration

research. This research examined how immigrants and their descendants integrated into American society, using generation and ethnic or national origin as key independent variables (Warner and Srole 1945, Lieberman and Waters, 1988). This research was largely separate from race relations questions which addressed the relations between the black descendants of slaves and the white majority, sometimes also including the study of American Indians. Asians and Hispanics fit awkwardly into both these traditions. Hispanics were brought into the US originally not through migration but through conquest of Puerto Rico and the American southwest. Asians were immigrants but defined racially in ways that prevented them from following the generational progress towards full inclusion that defined the experience of European immigrants. The American “immigration” tradition of scholarship treats these groups awkwardly or not at all. The very large flows throughout American history of immigrants from Europe provided a great deal of fodder for social science study of immigrants and their descendants.

In the 1980s the distinctions between race relations research and immigration research began to break down as scholars began to study the post 1965 wave of immigrants and their children, who are from Asia, Latin America and Africa and the Caribbean and who are largely defined as non white. The study of the incorporation of these post 1965 immigrants has once again given primacy to generation as an independent variable, comparing the progress of the first, second and increasingly third generations, while also acknowledging the importance of race in the context of reception of these new Americans (Portes

and Rumbaut, 2001). Thus it has been only in the last few decades that the idea that generation should be taken into account when discussing race differences has been taken seriously. It is increasingly the case that race relations in the US is very much about immigrant integration and immigrant integration is increasingly about race relations. This is clear in an examination of the data in Table 1 which presents the major ethnic and racial groups in the United States by generation. These historical legacies and academic preoccupations are reflected in the ways in which the two countries count and classify their populations.

Table 1 about here

Social Construction of Ethnic and Racial Categories

A common saying about Britain and the US is that they are two nations separated by a common language. This saying comes to mind when one compares the common use of the terms “racial and ethnic minorities” in the two countries. Despite the fact that both countries classify and count their populations based on race and ethnicity and even use some of the same labels, they socially construct the categories and definitions of who falls into which category in different ways.

The censuses both countries conduct are a good starting place to examine this. While the US has asked about the racial origins of its population since the first census of 1790 (in order to record black slaves separately than

whites), Britain only began asking a race/ethnicity question in 1991. The 2000 US Census and the 2001 British Census reflect the historical and social constructions of each nation's groups. Table 2 shows the categories of race and ethnicity in the 2001 Census of England and Wales (Northern Ireland and Scotland had different ethnic and racial categories on their census form) and the percent migrant in each group. The 2001 British question asked "What is your ethnic group? Then it presented some racial categories, with subethnicities below. The first category listed is white, with British, Irish and "other White background" as options. The second category was Mixed with the categories "White and Black Caribbean", "White and Black African", "White and Asian" and "Any other Mixed Background" as options. The third category was "Asian or Asian British" with the categories, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and "Any Other Asian Background" on offer. Next was "Black or Black British", with the categories Black-Caribbean, Black African, and "Any other black background" listed. Finally was the category "Chinese or any other ethnic group" with a separate category to say you are Chinese, and one for any other ethnic group".

In addition to the race/ethnicity question, the British Census of 2001 also asked a religion question which found that 72% of the population identifies as Christian, 15% state that they have no religion, 8% declined to answer the question, and 5.4% chose a non-Christian religion. Among those choosing a non-Christian religion, Muslims were the most numerous with 1.5 million, followed by Hindus, Sikhs, Jews, and Buddhists.

Table 2 about here

The US census asks three questions designed to ascertain respondents' racial and ethnic identity—the race question, the Hispanic origin question and the ancestry question. It is against the law for the US government to collect data on citizen's religion so the census not only does not ask the question, they do not record answers such as Jewish or Muslim if the respondent writes them in in response to the race or ancestry questions. The federal government issues directives on how race and ethnicity is to be reported, not only by the census but by the rest of the federal statistical system. This directive aggregates responses by people into what the historian David Hollinger (1995) has called the ethno racial pentagon, including the categories white, black, Asian, American Indian and Hispanic. While Hispanics were always counted separately and could also choose a racial identity such as white or black, in 2000 the census began allowing respondents to select all races that applied to them. Multiple racial responses were counted for the first time in 2000.

The 2000 US Census race question provides respondents with the categories, white, black (including African American and Negro), American Indian or Alaskan Native, and then a long list of national origin groups from Asia and the Pacific, including Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Native Hawaiian, Guamanian or Chamorro, Samoan, and Other. There is also a space for someone to write in "Some other race" if none of the above categories fit. Respondents are directed to check categories that apply, there is no "mixed category". The census reports all the various combinations of

the six single race categories—15 biracial combinations, 20 three way combinations, 15 four race combinations, 5 five way combinations, and one six way combination, resulting in 63 unique racial categories. Since Hispanic origin is measured separately the data are also combined with whether the respondent is Hispanic or not, resulting in 126 unique racial/Hispanic categories.

The census categories in the two countries reflect deep assumptions about the nature of race/ethnicity as well as the unique histories of the two nations. The use of the term “Asian” in both censuses illustrates this point. In Britain “Asian” refers to people having their origins in the former colonies of South Asia—the current nations of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. People with origins in South Asia are also classified as “Asian” in the United States, with only the Indian population being large enough to earn its own category check box. But most Americans would be bewildered by the exclusion of Chinese from the Asian category in Britain because Chinese are the largest and most visible and identified with the category “Asian” in the US. Indeed, in most American’s minds, Asian means “East Asian” and many people would not automatically include South Asians in the category.

The treatment of blacks and mixed race people is also quite different in the two censuses. While many subcategories of Asian ethnicity are provided to Americans, there is no separation of different ethnicities among blacks the way that there is in Britain, although the US has sizeable Caribbean origin and African origin blacks. Of course Britain lacks a sizeable population of blacks comparable to native born African Americans who have been in the US for generations

(although there has been a black population in Britain for centuries, see Small, 1994). Yet for Britain the recent ethnic origins of black respondents are important, and for Americans the division of blacks among immigrants and natives is left to specialized academic reports.

Another category in Britain that does not appear in the US census is “White—Irish”. Irish was added to the 2001 census after the Commission for Racial Equality in the mid 1990’s recommended the inclusion of the Irish in ethnic monitoring and issued a report documenting discrimination against the Irish. Various studies of ethnic mobility in Ireland have found that “the Irish are located in an intermediate position—doing less well than Indians and Chinese, better than Black Caribbeans” (Hickman, 2005:22).

The number of people choosing to identify as White-Irish on the British census is much smaller than what one would expect given the large numbers of migrants to Britain from Ireland in the post World War II period. Most of those who chose White-Irish were first generation immigrants—people born in Ireland. Thus many second, third and later generation people of Irish ancestry in Britain no longer identify as Irish, at least in the census. In the US the census does not allow people to identify as Irish on the race question but the ancestry question does allow people to state their ethnic ancestry. This question “What is your ethnic ancestry?” is open ended and is the main way the US census identifies the detailed ethnic origins of the population. The “stickiness” of Irish identity is quite different in the US where Irish is a wildly popular identity. In 1994 Hout and Goldstein analyzed these data and found many more people identifying as Irish

on the 1990 American census than one would expect given historical numbers of immigrants and natural increase. Their article, entitled “How 4.5 million Irish Immigrants came to be 41 million Irish Americans” argued that the large number of people identifying as Irish was due to the offspring of intermarriages between Irish and non Irish disproportionately claim Irish as their identity. While both the US and Britain have histories of anti-Irish discrimination, it is a distant and often forgotten memory in the US and perhaps more salient and recent history in Britain.

The greater recognition and attention to mixed race people in Britain reflects the much higher intermarriage rates between blacks and whites that characterize that society. Yet it is not just the recognition and attention to the phenomenon of intermixing, but the self conscious identity of people as mixed that differs between the two countries. The number of blacks in the US who probably have mixture with whites and other racial groups in their genetic heritage has been estimated to be quite large, yet a very small fraction of these people self-identify as anything other than African American, owing in large part to the legacy of the one drop rule that had legally identified all mixed race people as African American up until as late as the 1960s. When the decision was made in 1998 to begin allowing Americans to identify with more than one race in federal government statistics there were two competing models considered—a “check all that apply” option that was eventually adopted, as well as a “multiracial” or “mixed” option that was advocated by some, but ultimately rejected. Over time it will be very interesting to watch the differences in identity that develop in these

two societies among the population having two or more races in their backgrounds, who now face different models of measurement of “mixedness” in their government statistics.

The official recognition of multiple race people begun in 2000 has opened the door for Americans to begin to recognize their ancestries. The British case may in that sense be a window on the future as the size of the mixed Black Caribbean population enumerated in 2001 was very high—almost as high as the number identifying as Black Caribbean. We will see below that this is a result of much higher intermarriage rates of whites and blacks in Britain than in the United States.

Studying the dynamics of stratification and integration of immigrants and their descendants in these two societies is complex given the measurement and conceptual issues outlined above. Yet enough comparative or parallel research has been conducted in both countries to explore the overall patterns in terms of residential integration, intermarriage, health, and socioeconomic outcomes among the second generation.

Residential Segregation

In the aftermath of the July 2005 bombings in London, a debate raged in Britain and in the rest of Western Europe of the dangers of “home grown terrorists”—second generation immigrant youth who turned to Islamic fundamentalism because of their disaffection and lack of integration into British society. Soon after these bombings, Trevor Phillips, the head of the British

Government 's Commission for Racial Equality gave a speech in which he worried about segregation in British cities—and he asked whether Britain was “sleepwalking” into segregation and ghettoisation, on a scale similar to the segregation of African Americans in the United States. A debate arose among British social scientists about the empirical basis of Phillip’s fears.

Careful research comparing residential segregation among blacks in the US and the UK has been done by the geographer Ceri Peach. Peach shows that the levels of hyper-segregation of African Americans in the United States are much, much higher than those exhibited by any ethnic or racial group in the UK. Peach argues that there is an important difference between ghettos—externally enforced segregation, and enclaves—which are more positive and self chosen. He also shows that blacks in Britain are much less residentially concentrated than some South Asian groups, especially the Bangladeshis and Pakistanis.

Peach argues that the Caribbean black population has followed what he calls the “Irish model” of assimilation through working class integration, movement out of highly concentrated neighborhoods and high amounts of intermarriage with the white working class. This is largely possible because immigration from the Caribbean to the UK has slowed to trickle after laws were passed in the early 1960s cutting off the possibility of further immigration. This meant no replenishment of new immigrants from the Caribbean over time and the aging generationally of the community. Thus the assimilation that has occurred

over three or four generations among black Caribbeans has led to a hollowing out of the neighborhoods where they had once concentrated as more assimilated later generation black Caribbeans intermarry, or otherwise move into wider British society. This is akin to the visible assimilation of white ethnics in the United States where “little Italys” in cities such as Boston, New York and San Francisco emptied out as no new Italian immigrants arrived and later generations moved to the suburbs and other parts of the country. This is in contrast to Chinese neighborhoods in American cities that remain quite visibly Chinese. This is not because later generation Chinese Americans live there for the most part but because new immigration is constantly replenishing these neighborhoods even while later generation Chinese follow many of the same paths as later generation Italians did.

South Asians, in Peach’s opinion, are following a “Jewish model” of economic integration but low intermarriage and high amounts of residential concentration. Examining changes in ethnic segregation between 1991 and 2001 Peach concludes that segregation declined for all the groups during the decade. The average index of dissimilarity for 12 British urban areas was 35 for Caribbeans, 40 for Indians, 54 for Pakistanis and 61 for Bangladeshis. These numbers are all far lower than the levels of segregation recorded in American cities for African Americans, which are most often in the 70s and even 80s in most large American cities. They are comparable to the levels of segregation

measured for Hispanics (48 on average in 1990) and Asians (40 in 1990) (Charles, 2003: 174). Yet the issue of South Asian segregation remains very visible in British cities and these neighborhoods remain very vibrant, in part because immigration from South Asia is more recent than among black Caribbeans, and because of family reunification continues to replenish these neighborhoods. (Simpson, 2008 has an excellent discussion of the age, family and life cycle components of neighborhood change among South Asians).

Research on segregation patterns in the US find that new immigrants and their children experience much less segregation than African Americans, and are much better able to translate a higher social class position into a better residential location (Charles, 2003) Iceland and Nelson (2008) find evidence of a black/non-black divide in residential integration among new immigrants. They find that generally Hispanics are assimilating residentially across generations, though race plays a role in shaping segregation patterns. They find that black Hispanics are more segregated from non-Hispanic whites, foreign born and native born black Hispanics are as likely as African Americans to be segregated from all other groups.

The big picture is that segregation among African Americans in the United States is far more extensive than segregation among other non-white groups in the US and far more extensive and isolating than any segregation measured for any ethnic group in the UK. This segregation has been linked to negative outcomes for African Americans on a whole variety of factors, including concentrated poverty, worse health, worse government and city services, worse

schools, higher crime, and worse amenities such as parks, libraries and grocery stores. Segregation in the US makes African American poverty more concentrated and isolating than white poverty, and exacerbates the negative consequences of this poverty (Massey and Denton, 1993).

Much research in the US has shown that this residential segregation is imposed on African Americans. In survey after survey, scholars find that African Americans would choose to live in a far more integrated neighborhood than whites would. While the average white would accept a neighborhood with a minority of African Americans, they do not want a neighborhood with equal numbers of blacks and whites. Blacks desire neighborhoods with an equal number or large presence of whites. These preferences combine to make integrated neighborhoods very unstable. Precisely when blacks find a good balance of whites and blacks, whites begin to see the neighborhood as too integrated and flee.

The knowledge that segregation has such negative effects on African Americans, along with the knowledge that the vast majority of African Americans would like to live in mixed neighborhoods, means that American scholars who study residential segregation tend to see the phenomena in negative terms. It leads to negative outcomes for African Americans and it is not the result of their own choices or preferences.

In Britain the debate about residential segregation and integration is somewhat different. The degree of segregation of any ethnic group is far lower than the levels of black white segregation measured in the United States. In addition many of the communities who do show relatively high levels of segregation are more recent immigrant groups who cluster together for cultural and religious reasons that in part reflect a choice for ethnic co-residence. While no doubt some South Asians and blacks in the UK who live in segregated neighborhoods do so because of racial prejudice that steers them to certain neighborhoods or makes them feel unwelcome in more mixed neighborhoods, some of the segregation is voluntary. Thus critiques such as Trevor Phillip's criticizing "self segregation" are countered with careful discussions of the dynamics of residential choice, and reminders that the levels of segregation in Britain are nothing approaching the levels in some American cities.

Perhaps a better comparison between the two countries would be the levels of residential segregation of immigrants and their descendants, excluding African Americans. In that case the levels of segregation of Asians and Latinos are roughly comparable to the levels of South Asians and Black Caribbeans, and most probably reflect a mix of choices of immigrants to be with a community that shares their language and customs as well as a reaction to white rejection and prejudice. In both cases one would expect that the descendants of these immigrants will move away from these concentrations. But unlike little Italy the ethnic neighborhoods themselves will not disappear, but rather will continue to look stable as new replenishment of immigrants continues the core

concentration, even while the housing stock turns over from more established families to new families just arriving from abroad.

Health

In the United States health researchers have been studying the “healthy migrant paradox” for the last decade or so. For most health outcomes, foreign born individuals from a variety of different sending countries have better health outcomes than comparable natives. This finding is a strong one—immigrants lived 3.4 years longer on average than the native born in 1999-2001. (Adler and Rehkopf, 2008). Moreover this immigrant advantage is pronounced for non-whites—Hispanics and foreign born blacks have much better health outcomes than natives. This is all the more puzzling for researchers because poor health is highly correlated with low socioeconomic status, for both whites and blacks. Yet, Hispanics, who now comprise 13% of the US population, have better health outcomes than other groups, and show this lower mortality even when demographic and socioeconomic characteristics are controlled. (Rosenwaike, 1987, Liao et. al. 1988; Palloni, 2004). This “immigrant advantage” in health lasts into later generations for Hispanics. Singh and Siahpush (2002) found that US born Hispanics have lower mortality rates than US born non Hispanic whites—even beyond the immigrant generation.

The healthy migrant effect also holds for black immigrants in the US—foreign born blacks have healthier babies than American born blacks (Cabral et al 1990, Pallotto et al 2000, Acevado-Garcia et al 2005, Howard et al 2006). West Indian immigrants have health outcomes that are the same as non Hispanic whites in the US, much better outcomes than native born African Americans.

Three explanations for these findings have been vigorously debated in the literature. One explanation is that somehow these findings are artifacts of health and mortality data (Hahn, 1992, Rosenberg et al 1999). The hypotheses investigated here include the question of whether healthier migrants are more likely to return to their home countries to grow old and die, thus artificially reducing mortality rates, or that some issues around self and other identification are affecting reporting. Perhaps individuals are identified as Hispanic on birth certificates but wrongly coded as white on death certificates (Hahn). While this may account for some of the findings it is unlikely to affect the findings in the second generation, and to affect all of the different migrant groups for whom this finding of better health is so robust.

Another explanation is the selectivity of migration (Jasso et al 2002). This hypothesis is that migrants are healthier than natives because they are a selected group. (Abraido-Lanza et al 1999, Palloni and Morenoff 2001, Sorlie et al 1993). Palloni and Arias (2004) reason that if selectivity is partly explaining the better health outcomes among Hispanic immigrants, those who live close to the border are less selected than those who have traveled further into the US.

He indeed finds that the healthy migrant effect is more pronounced for Hispanics the further one gets from the border---Mexican immigrants in Texas or California have mortality rates that are 71% as high as non Hispanic whites in those two states. Those who live elsewhere in the US have a mortality rate only 41% of non Hispanic whites living in the same states.

The third argument is that there are cultural differences in health behaviors, levels of stress and coping mechanisms across different groups. Migrants might have better diets, less dangerous behaviors, more social support mechanisms (Rumbaut, 1997) . Frisbie et al (2001) argue that there are elements of Hispanic culture that are protective against negative health outcomes. The fact that the longer migrants live in the US, the worse their health outcomes, and that the first generation has better health outcomes than the second, lends some support to this hypothesis.

A comparison with British research on ethnic disparities in health casts some doubt on many of these possible explanations for the American outcomes. Comparisons are limited by data comparability issues. Mortality data are not available by ethnic group in the UK. Country of birth, not ethnicity, is recorded on death certificates but because a large number of white British people were born in former colonies, it is impossible to disaggregate the death data by race and ethnicity within national origin categories. Country of birth data also do not

identify the second generation, who are a large part of some groups in the UK, most notably the Black Caribbeans. The UK does have good survey data on health outcomes by ethnicity. Nazroo (2003) summarizes the findings: “For most outcomes Bangladeshi and Pakistani people report the poorest health, followed by Caribbean people and then Indian people, with Chinese and white people having the best health”. Indeed, even after controlling for socioeconomic status, Britain does not show a “healthy migrant effect”. There are interesting patterns within ethnic and racial groups that are often grouped together. Thus there are clear differences in Nazroo’s data between Bangladeshi and Pakistani outcomes, with Bangladeshis having worse health outcomes, partly owing to their lower socioeconomic status, but even after controlling for SES, the Bangladeshis report high levels of poor health.

Nazroo et al (2008) specifically contrast the health outcomes of Caribbean origin blacks in Britain and the US. While many studies in both countries have just compared “race disparities in health”, finding that blacks have worse health outcomes and higher mortality in the US and in Britain, Nazroo et al compare Caribbean origin blacks in both countries. They find that Caribbean blacks in the US are faring much better in terms of health outcomes than Caribbean blacks in Britain. Using similarly designed surveys in both countries, they examine patterns of self assessed health. They find that while Caribbean origin blacks in the US have similar health outcomes to white Americans, the Caribbean origin blacks in the UK have much worse health outcomes than white English. When

the Caribbean origin people are compared between the US and the UK, those in the US have better health outcomes.

In the US ethnic inequalities between blacks and whites are large at younger ages, and narrow at older ages. The pattern is the opposite in Britain where ethnic disparities grow at older ages (Nazroo 2003:281). Nazroo argues that this could reflect the different age profiles of the generations in Britain, with first generation migrants more likely to be older and experiencing worse health, and second generation migrants being younger and less likely to experience poor health. Because generation is not collected in these surveys, it is not possible to determine whether this is true.

What do these comparisons of health data show us? First, the healthy migrant effect is not evident in Britain where immigrants and even the second generation report worse health than the native born white English. On the other side of the Atlantic, the American “healthy migrant” effect holds even when controlling for socioeconomic status, and it holds across Hispanic, black and Asian groups. Over time the health status of these groups begins to fade as the later generation blacks, Hispanics and Asians report worse health outcomes. It may be that the theories developed in the American context to explain these outcomes are valid—however the British empirical patterns would give one pause at least. If the healthy migrant effect is the result of return migration patterns, why would unhealthy migrants to Britain not be returning to their home

countries? If it is due to selectivity why would migrants from Bangladesh and Pakistan have such poor health outcomes, when they are far from their home country and should exhibit some of the same selectivity that characterizes the healthy Hispanic migrants in the US? And if it is cultural differences that lead to these outcomes then why would Caribbean origin blacks who come from the same countries (albeit migrating in different decades for the most part) not exhibit some of the same protective cultural behaviors in the two receiving societies?

Nazroo argues that researchers seeking to understand ethnic differences in health outcomes pay more attention to patterns of discrimination and other factors that might be subsumed under the idea of “context of reception” as explanatory variables in health outcomes. While this may help to explain patterns of ethnic differences within countries, it does not explain the fundamental empirical puzzle these data lay bare. In Britain, to be an immigrant or an ethnic minority leads to poor health, in the US immigrants enjoy better health than comparable natives.

Intermarriage

Intermarriage has long been used as an important indicator of social relations between groups, both because of the social intimacy it signals for the people who intermarry and also for its potential to change the nature of racial and

ethnic groups in the future through the children and grandchildren of the intermarried couples. A maxim in American research on this topic is that all racial and ethnic groups in the US have higher intermarriage rates than blacks, and that for immigrants and their descendants generation matters a great deal—immigrants intermarry at low rates, but the second and third generation generally intermarries at much higher rates. Another maxim in intermarriage research is that social class matters—generally better educated Americans are more likely to marry outside their ethnic group than less educated Americans. A comparison of British and American intermarriage patterns challenges some of these suppositions.

Suzanne Model and Gene Fisher have compared intermarriage rates for blacks and whites in Britain and the United States. In a comparison of black and white intermarriage rates based on data from the early 1990s in the US and England, Model and Fisher (2002:728) conclude that “blacks in Britain are significantly more likely to have a native born white partner than their US counterparts”. This could be due to the large presence of African Americans in the US, with a very different relation with whites than immigrant blacks have in both countries. Indeed an earlier study (Model and Fisher, 2001) had compared intermarriage rates within the US between African Americans and Black Caribbeans, and had found that for most gender and generation groups, unions between Black Caribbeans and native whites were more common than unions between African Americans and native whites”. This is partly due to the better

educations of Black Caribbeans that make them more likely to out-marry in general. Once the authors controlled for these factors they found only later generation female Black Caribbeans were more likely to out-marry. This reflects attitudinal differences. Whites and blacks in the US are more likely to tell pollsters that they disapproved of intermarriages than are blacks and whites in Britain.(Patterson, 2005).

So Model and Fisher specifically compare Caribbean blacks in both countries, and find that Black Caribbeans in England are much more likely to intermarry with whites than Black Caribbeans in the US.. They tie this finding to the generally much higher levels of residential integration of whites and blacks in Britain, as well as to the presence of a large pool of African American potential marriage partners for Caribbean blacks in the US, a pool that is non-existent in Britain.

Data from the 2000 US census and the 2001 British census can update some of these figures. Voas (forthcoming) has calculated the outmarriage rate for the main racial/ethnic categories in Britian. In all cases except for the Chinese, men are more likely to out-marry than women, sometimes markedly so. In Britain 24.6% of Black Caribbean men have intermarried with whites, and 14% of Black African men have. Among people of mixed Black Caribbean origin, 76% have married whites, and among mixed white-Black Africans, 53% have. Intermarriage rates for the South Asian groups are quite low, with 5.7% of Indian

men marrying whites, 4.3% of Pakistani men, and only 2.6% of Bangladeshi men. Only the Chinese show high out-marriage rates among women than men, with 11% of Chinese men marrying a white, and 25% of Chinese women reporting a white husband.

Lee and Edmonston (2005) have calculated the outmarriage rates for the US. (Lee and Edmonston) Among African American men 9.7% have white wives. Among African American women the number is much lower, with only 2.7% reporting a white husband. Hispanics, who are comparable in some ways with South Asians in terms of educational qualifications and low income, have rather high outmarriage rates for the native born (29% of Hispanic men have a white non Hispanic wife). Asians have high outmarriage rates, especially among women. 22% of Asian women report a white husband, and 9.5%% of Asian men report a white wife. Among the native born the rates are much higher with 32% of native born Asian men and 44% of native born Asian women out-marrying. Gender patterns also differ among the groups. Women are more likely to out-marry among Asians, Hispanics tend to out-marry at the same rates among men and among women, but for blacks men are far more likely to out-marry than women are.

Recent data from the American Community Survey of the census bureau provides more fine-grained data, and allows a comparison between Asian Indians and Chinese in the US and in Britain. Among all Asian Indians, 5.5% of

men have white wives, and 4.3% of women have white wives. Among the second and greater generation, and including first generation people who immigrated before age 14, 18.5% of men have white wives, and 18.9% of women have white husbands. Among the Chinese, 5.3% of men have white wives, and 13.9% of women have white husbands. Among the second generation and later 40.4% of Chinese women have white husbands, and 20% men have white wives.

Several themes stand out in these comparisons. Among the Chinese in Britain a quarter of women marry whites—among Asians in the US 22% do (among the native born it rises to 44%). Among blacks, intermarriage is much higher in Britain than the US. A striking difference is the results for “mixed” black-white individuals. In Britain 76% of those of mixed Black-Caribbean origin have married whites and 53% of mixed Black Africans have. Qian and Lichter (2007) examined this question among young couples age 20-24 and they find that in the US 15% of those identified as black-white have married whites.

Orlando Patterson (2005:109) has argued that these intermarriage patterns reflect fundamental differences in the nature of race in the two settings and he predicts that the boundary between blacks and whites might well disappear in Britain in just three generations.

But what do these patterns mean for theories of assimilation? As an indicator of assimilation, analysts expect intermarriage to increase with each generation, and to increase with social mobility as individuals with higher

educations and higher status occupations enter the mainstream and live, work and study in more diverse environments. This is true for immigrant groups in the US and demonstrates the rapid assimilation of Asian Americans., Qian and Lichter examined patterns of out marriage by generation for young couples age 20-34 and they find that they go from an out-marriage rate of 33% in the first generation to 60% in the second and higher. The link between SES and intermarriage also holds for Latino men and women who have much higher out-marriage rates at higher educational levels.

Religion

Another key difference between the UK and the US is in the role of religion in the integration of immigrants and their children. As Nancy Foner and Richard Alba (2008) argue in a recent article, in Western Europe religion is seen as a barrier to inclusion, and in the US it is generally seen as a bridge. Foner and Alba argue that this is not only true of popular discourse about religion and immigration, but also characterizes social science analysis of the phenomena. They argue that in the American case, “A bottom-line conclusion in the social science literature is that religion helps to turn immigrants into Americans and gives them and their children a sense of belonging or membership in the United States” (Foner and Alba, 2008:365) They contrast this with Western Europe where “ a prevalent view is that the culture of Islam and the west are

irreconcilable". Indeed Modood argues that "Muslimophobia is at the heart of British and European cultural racism". (Modood, p.370)

This difference in looking at religion stems from a number of factors but the most prominent difference between the US and most of the countries of Western Europe lies in the role of Islam among immigrants and their descendants, and the challenges Islam poses to integration in Western European countries. This challenge is much less problematic in the United States.

Data were collected on religion for the first time in the 2001 British census. The US census is prohibited from asking a question on religion. Both countries have fielded a number of surveys to determine the demographics and characteristics of its religious groups. Similar proportions of both countries are Christian. In Britain, 72% of respondents to the census said they were Christian, 15% said they had no religion, 8% declined to answer the question, and 5.4% chose a non-Christian religion. 1.5 million people in Britain said they were Muslim. In the US 77% of the population is Christian, 1.7% Mormon, 1.7% Jewish, .7% Buddhist, .6% Muslim and .4% Hindu. The Pew Center for the Study of Religion estimates that there are 1.5 million adult Muslims age 18 and above, and 2.35 million total Muslims in the US. So even though Muslims are a very visible group and their integration a very controversial issue in Britain, as contrasted with the US where Muslims are largely invisible and usually not referenced in any debates about immigration, the numbers of Muslims is larger in

absolute terms in the US. (Of course the US has such a larger overall population that the relative numbers of Muslims as a percentage of the overall population, as well as a percentage of all immigrants are much less) Among US Muslims, 65% are foreign born, 7% are second generation and 28% are third and later generation, the vast majority of these later generation Muslims are African Americans. Muslims in the US are a very diverse group. Among the foreign born, 24% come from Arab countries, 8% from Pakistan, 4% from India and 3% from Bangladesh. An additional 8% come from Iran and 5% from Europe, many of the latter are Bosnian refugees who arrived in the 1990s.

The most striking thing about American Muslims, especially in comparison to Muslims in Western Europe, is how well they are doing socioeconomically and in terms of integration into American society. Indeed the Pew report on their survey of Muslim Americans is entitled “Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream”. Muslims in the US are very similar to other Americans in their educational qualifications and income. 26% of American Muslims report that they earn 75,000 a year or more, compared to 28% of the general public. Muslim immigrants are even more qualified and exceed the general public’s profile. The situation is quite different in the UK. The Pew Center reports that 61% of Muslims in the UK report that their household income was less than 30,000 pounds, compared to 39% of the general public. Indeed in the UK, the Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims are the least likely of all groups to be in the

professional class, suffer from high levels of unemployment and low labor force participation.

Foner and Alba argue that there are a number of reasons for the differences between American and European attitudes towards the role of religion in immigrant integration. Partly they argue that this is due to the different social characteristics and size of the Muslim populations in the two locations. In general Muslim immigrants are a small portion of all immigrants to the US, and they tend to be a selected, educated more professional group. In addition, they argue, the United States is a country where the population is still very religious and expects religion to be an important part of people's lives. In addition religion is strictly separated from the state and there are no institutionalized Christian elements in the American state, the way that there are in European countries. The secular nature of most Western European countries, including the UK, means that religious immigrants confront a society in which any practice of any religion is a marker of difference. The US is not very secular. For instance while 61% of Muslims report in the Pew survey that they pray every day, 70% of US Christians report that they pray every day. Indeed Foner and Alba (2008:378) point out that the religious group most likely to be demanding accommodation of its views and practices by the state in the US are fundamentalist and evangelical Christians (378).

The Pew surveys contrasted the viewpoints of Muslims in the US and a number of Western European countries, including the UK. They find that American and British Muslims are similar to one another in their reported concern about Islamic extremism in the world these days (51% and 52% respectively). They are quite different in this belief than Muslims in France (35%), Germany, 29%) and Spain (29%) who have much lower concerns. While American Muslims do report more discrimination since September 11th, 2001, by a nearly 2 to 1 margin Muslim Americans do not see a conflict between being a devoted Muslim and living in a modern society.

In a qualitative study of Bangladeshi Muslims in Britain and the US, Kibria (2007) examines the appeal of “revivalist Islam” to the second generation in both countries. Kibria finds that British Bangladeshis are more likely to invoke a narrative of downward mobility, while American Bangladeshis are more likely to invoke a narrative of upward mobility. This reflects the better educational qualifications, greater degree of residential integration and the more sophisticated urban origins of the first generation among Bangladeshi Americans as contrasted with British Bangladeshis. Surprisingly though she finds that both groups find some solace in revivalist Islam. For the downwardly mobile second generation in Britain revivalist Islam provides an antidote to underclass British culture. For the upwardly mobile Americans, revivalist Islam provides an antidote to the cultural loss and isolation associated with moving into the American mainstream. In both cases the second generation sees some value in a more

intense and strict Islam than their parents practiced or believed in. The recency of Muslim immigration to the US means that there are few studies of second generation young adults in the United States, and the lack of representative survey data for the second generation by religion means that it is not possible to ascertain how widespread beliefs such as these are.

I

The Second Generation

There are currently two major theories of immigrant assimilation that point to very different processes underlying second generation outcomes – the standard or straight line assimilation theory and segmented assimilation theory. The standard assimilation theory is associated with the work of the founders of the Chicago School of Sociology. These scholars studied the integration of the first and second generation European immigrants in the first few decades of the 20th century (Park and Burgess, 1925). The straight line assimilation model describes generational succession with each generation showing social mobility in terms of education and occupation along with greater integration into the American mainstream and less ethnic distinctiveness in terms of language use, residential segregation, and intermarriage patterns (Warner and Srole, 1945). More recently, Alba and Nee (2003) have reformulated this theory in reference to the post-1965 immigrants, retaining many of the key insights of the earlier theorists. Their new assimilation theory posits greater integration of the second

generation into the mainstream over time and argues that immigrants and their descendants achieve better socioeconomic outcomes over time not by remaining separate but by moving into the mainstream economy, culture and society. Their book improves on earlier theories of assimilation by stressing how the American mainstream also changes as a result. As immigrants and their children become less ethnically distinctive – in terms of language, residential concentration, occupational specialization and intermarriage patterns, they also become socioeconomically similar to other Americans, and American society evolves and changes as it absorbs immigrants and their children.

Segmented assimilation theory has emerged and been embraced as an alternative to straight-line assimilation theory. It has been enormously influential in studies of the new second generation. This theory – formulated by Alejandro Portes and his collaborators and elaborated and tested empirically by Portes and Ruben Rumbaut (Portes and Zhou, 1993; Portes and Rumbaut, 2001) – poses starkly different possible outcomes for the second generation. In their words, the second generation can end up “ascending into the ranks of a prosperous middle class or join in large numbers the ranks of a racialized, permanently impoverished population at the bottom of society” (Portes, Kelly and Haller, 2005:1004).

Segmented assimilation posits three possible paths for the second generation: upward assimilation, downward assimilation, and upward assimilation combined with biculturalism. These paths correspond to three types of processes that summarize the relations between immigrant children, their

parents, and the wider ethnic community- consonant, dissonant and selective acculturation. Consonant acculturation occurs when the children and the parents learn America and American culture and gradually abandon their home language and “old country” ways at about the same pace. Thus, as children enter the mainstream, they not only achieve upward mobility, but they do so with the support of their parents. Dissonant acculturation occurs when children’s learning of the English language and American ways outstrips that of their parents, who are more likely to cling to immigrant identities. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) argue that this process often leads to downward assimilation, as young people confront racial discrimination, bifurcated labor markets and an often nihilistic inner city youth subculture on their own, without strong parental authority and resources and with few community resources and supports. The third process, selective acculturation is the one that leads to upward assimilation and biculturalism. Selective acculturation occurs when “parents and children learn English and American customs at the same rate, where parents and children are inserted into the ethnic community. It is characterized by “preservation of parental authority, little or no intergenerational conflict and fluent bilingualism among children” (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001:52).

More specifically, Portes and his collaborators argue that selective acculturation is especially important for racial minorities who are subject to racial discrimination in the wider American society.

Selective acculturation offers the most solid basis for preservation of parental authority along with the strongest bulwark against effects of

external discrimination. This happens because individuals and families do not face the strains of acculturation alone but rather within the framework of their own communities. This situation slows down the process while placing the acquisition of new cultural knowledge and language within a supportive context. (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001:54)

The theory of segmented assimilation also takes into account background factors such as parental human capital (including parents' education and income) modes of incorporation (state definitions of immigrant groups, eligibility for welfare, degree of discrimination and antipathy towards immigrant groups), and family structure (single vs. married couple families as well as multigenerational vs. nuclear family living arrangements). Although less explicitly stated as part of the segmented assimilation model, their work also points to the varying degrees of transnational connection among immigrant groups as an important element of the context of reception.

This theory has helped to organize and systematize a large volume of work on immigrant incorporation. The concept of "modes of incorporation", for instance, has been extremely useful in systematizing the relationship between varying political and cultural reactions to immigrant groups and the experiences of acceptance or resistance of individual immigrants themselves.

The key point to note here is that these theories highlight the importance of generational status in either confirming or disproving their predictions. Recent studies on the second generation in the United States have found "segmented

assimilation” theory to be overly pessimistic. Some studies have shown that apart from the Puerto Rican second generation, all other second generation immigrants in the United States are doing quite well when compared to their parents, including the most disadvantaged group, Mexican Americans. (Alba and Nee 2003, Kasinitz et.al., 2008, Smith, 2003). Nationally, the second generation is more likely to finish college than both the first generation and members of the third and higher generation. A number of studies find that while different groups have different degrees of social mobility there is no evidence of second generation decline in terms of educational outcomes (Zhou, 1997, Waldinger and Feliciano, 2004).

Kasinitz, et al (2008) conducted the most comprehensive study of the second generation in young adulthood. Their study, based in New York City, explored outcomes among young adults whose parents had come to the US from China, the West Indies, the Dominican Republic, Russia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. They find that the second generation is surpassing their parents in terms of educational outcomes and surpassing comparable natives of the same racial ethnic background. Thus West Indians have a higher percentage of people graduating from college than African Americans (23% vs. 16%), Dominicans (19%) and South Americans (22%) have higher college graduation rates than Puerto Ricans (12%) (a native group since they have US citizenship) and Chinese (55%) have comparable college graduation rates to native born whites (59%). Russian Jews have lower completion rates than native whites but far surpass the other groups (46%). Kasinitz et al 2008 term this finding the

“second generation advantage.” Controlling for parental background they find that the second generation does better than comparable natives, not only in school but in the labor market. They give several explanations for this, ranging from the cultural and financial capital the second generation enjoy from their parents, the skills the second generation obtain, and the advantages from straddling two worlds and having access to multiple social networks.

The general finding on second generation ethnic minorities in Britain is that they have on average higher educational attainment than first generation ethnic minorities (Dustmann & Theodoropoulos 2006; Modood et al 1997; Simpson et al 2006). Comparing the second generation to native born British whites, Dustmann & Theodoropoulos (2006) using the British Labor Force Survey (LFS) found that both first and second generation ethnic minorities had on average higher levels of education compared to their white native peers. Additionally, second generation immigrants in all six ethnic minority groups had higher educational attainment than their parents. Among the second generation, Black-African males and females have the highest years of education followed by the Chinese and then the Indians. There is an observable gender gap except for among the Chinese. However, all ethnic minority second generation females have more years of full-time education than white native females. They found the overall difference in years of full-time education between second generation ethnic minorities and their British born peers to be 1.3 years for males and 0.8 years for females (p.19). They also found that second generation ethnic

minorities with the exception of Black-Caribbeans were more likely to obtain higher educational qualifications than their white British born peers.

Unfortunately, this educational advantage of second generation ethnic minorities over their British peers is not carried over into the labor market, as the second generation do “substantially worse than their native white peers”. This is true for both males and females (Dustmann & Theodoropoulos 2006; Heath and McMahon 1996: Simpson et al 2006; Strelitz 2004). Heath and McMahon (1996) found using data from the 1991 census, that second generation ethnic minorities with the exception of first generation Black-Caribbean women, were significantly less likely to be employed in the “salarial”³ than their white British peers.⁴ They termed this an “ethnic penalty,” and defined it as “all the sources of disadvantage that might lead an ethnic group to fare less well in the labor market than do similarly qualified whites....it is a broader concept than that of discrimination, although discrimination is likely to be a major component.” (Heath and McMahon, 1996:91)

Heath and McMahon set out to investigate whether British educated second generation ethnic minorities would be more competitive than their parents in the labor market since their qualifications could not be discounted in the same way their parents could. They conclude that the experiences of the second generation in the labor market are similar to that of the first generation (see also

³ “The salariat or service class consists of salaried employees such as managers, administrators, or professionals, have relatively secure employment, an incremental salary scale, fringe benefits (e.g pension schemes), and significant promotion chances” Heath and McMahon (1996:92).

⁴ Their analysis excluded second generation Chinese and Bangladeshis because of negligible numbers.

Blackburn et al 1996 who confirm this finding). Simpson et al (2006) confirmed the existence of an ethnic penalty among the second generation as they found that Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Black-Caribbean men had greater unemployment rates than comparable white British peers when age, qualifications, and a range of family circumstances were held constant.

Dustmann & Theodoropoulos's study provides more details. Using data from the British Labor Force Survey, they find that overall, 79.6% of second generation ethnic minority males were employed compared to 84.0% of native males, and 72.3% of female ethnic minorities were employed compared to 80.2% of native females. There was some heterogeneity by ethnic minority. Second generation Pakistanis and Bangladeshis had the lowest employment rate (56.4% and 57.6% respectively), while Chinese and Indians had the highest employment rates (81.1 and 80.1 respectively), followed by Black-Caribbean (72.6%) and Black African (71.8%). The low employment rate of Pakistani and Bangladeshi second generation ethnic minorities is driven by the high unemployment rates among women.

Other studies on British ethnic minorities have looked at intergenerational social mobility. Heath and Yu (2001) discovered that second generation Indians have higher social mobility than second generation Black-Caribbeans in Britain. They argue that social class is as, if not more important than ethnic origins. Demireva (2006) using the Labor Force Survey, found that second generation Black-Caribbeans were more likely to enter low skilled positions rather than

intermediate ones compared to second generation Indians and Pakistanis even after controlling for job search method and educational attainment.

To summarize, second generation ethnic minorities are disadvantaged in labor market participation when compared to their British white counterparts. All second generation males and females from all ethnic groups have higher unemployment rates than their white British peers. Indian and Chinese second generation persons are the most successful in the British labor market when compared to other second generation ethnic minorities. Lastly, Black-Africans despite their high educational levels have been unable to translate this into socio-economic and labor market success (Blackburn et al 1996; Daley 1996; Heath and McMahon 1996).

Overall, the research on the second generation in the US shows generational progress vis a vis the first generation for all groups. Only the Chinese second generation have caught up with native born whites, but the other groups are doing better than comparable native born groups who share their racial background. In that sense then we see some segmented assimilation into different parts of American society. In all we see generational progress in both education and the labor force in the US.

In Britain we see evidence of straight line assimilation in education for the second generation, but in the labor force we see evidence of segmented assimilation with a marked “ethnic penalty” leading to higher unemployment and lesser status occupations. The theory of segmented assimilation would predict that some members of the second generation would do better in the British labor

market if they acculturated selectively, remaining in the ethnic neighborhood and in heavily ethnic businesses and industries. Would this be a strategy for avoiding the ethnic penalty in the labor market or would this exacerbate the lower returns to education for ethnic minorities?

The theory of segmented assimilation posits that part of the reason for downward mobility in the second generation is adopting an “oppositional identity” that leads to disinvestment from education and involvement in crime and negative behaviors. In the theory this is associated with residence in urban high poverty neighborhoods with poor African Americans (Portes and Zhou, 1993). What would this look like in Britain where there is no comparable native born African American community? What does “associating with the wrong crowd” look like for second generation black Africans and black Caribbeans and South Asians in Britain? Would that mean that working class, poor whites in the UK play the role of blacks in the US in providing oppositional/anti-achievement culture for children of immigrants who are dark skinned?

Research on the second generation in Europe is only now beginning to catch up with research on the second generation in the United States (Morawska, 2008, Crul and Thompson, 2007). Many European scholars are testing whether the theory of segmented assimilation that has motivated an intense debate in the United States can be exported to a European context (Heath, Rethon and Kilpi, 2008). A recent qualitative study by Warikoo (forthcoming) found that second generation youth in London and New York secondary schools had very similar outcomes and attitudes towards school and

the presence or absence of native born African Americans seemed to make very little difference to their educational attitudes or outcomes.

Conclusion

This rather sprawling comparison of different patterns of integration of immigrants and their descendants in Britain and the US suffers from many of the standard ills of comparative research. The immigrant groups are largely different in the two countries, and even groups that are similarly present in both places such as black Caribbeans and Chinese arrived at different times and were subject to different kinds of selectivity and filtering both through immigration regimes and historical patterns of migration. Censuses and surveys in the two countries collect different kinds of data so questions of health or residential segregation cannot be directly compared. In addition, theories and analytical concepts such as assimilation and integration are used by authors on both sides of the Atlantic but sometimes with different definitions and suppositions.

Overall though I have presented some clear findings and empirical puzzles that pose challenges for theories and public policies that have emerged in just one national context. First, a comparison of the social construction of racial and ethnic categories in both countries demonstrates that these are indeed socially constructed and do not represent geographical or natural boundaries. The decisions made about labeling and collecting ethnic and racial data may

have long term effects on the actual relations among groups and identities developed among people. Thus the decision of the British census to collect data on “mixed” people and the decision of the US census to have people “check all races that apply” could have long run consequences in how the descendants of intermarried couples come to see themselves.

Second, the debates about residential segregation in the two countries are interesting to compare side by side. In the US the segregation of African Americans drives research on the issue and academics concentrate on showing the ill effects of involuntary segregation. In Britain levels of segregation are much lower and less survey work has been conducted to determine how much of the segregation is voluntary as opposed to involuntary. Political debates about the levels of segregation are puzzling to American outsiders given that much of recent debate has been addressing the question of whether “self-segregation” is a healthy outcome for immigrant groups.

Third, comparisons of the link between health, immigration and ethnic minority status show that theories developed in one national context that purport to be universalistic do not travel well. The Latino health paradox in the US has generated a great deal of research and debate. Some scholars have theorized that the selection effects of immigration can explain the better health outcomes of first generation poor and uneducated Latinos. However such selection also must play a part in the immigration of South Asians to Britain, yet they have much

worse health than comparable white British people. Unpacking the causes of health disparities and tying them to migration, racial discrimination and social class disparities is an important goal for researchers. More cross national research should provide an important corrective to theories which aim to be universal.

Fourth, patterns of intermarriage are so much higher for blacks in Britain as compared to the US that they challenge explanations of the immutability of race in the American context. While other ethnic groups showed declining intermarriage rates over time African Americans continued to show low rates of intermarriage. The British example not only shows that it is possible to have rapid change on this issue, but also shows that rising intermarriage does not also necessarily lead to high levels of social mobility and acceptance in the ways in which intermarriage was a leading indicator for white ethnics in the 20th century.

Fifth, debates about Islam and its cultural role in limiting integration abound in Europe. The Muslim immigrants in Europe, including Britain, are quite different from those in the US, but the limited evidence on Muslim immigrants and their success in the US points to other factors besides religion and culture in explaining patterns of deprivation. So too the larger point made by Foner and Alba (2008) is that religion should not automatically be seen as an impediment to immigrant integration. In the US at least religion has worked as a bridge to immigrant incorporation.

Finally discussion of the second generation in both Britain and the US has pointed to the context dependent nature of these theories. Similar patterns of adaptation in schooling are clear in both Britain and the US but Britain lacks the population of native born African Americans who are so important to the segmented assimilation theory. So too, some scholars such as Kasinitz et al 2008 have pointed to the role of affirmative action programs to explain the educational success of the second generation in the US. Britain does not have such a program yet does seem to have similar patterns of educational mobility for the second generation. It remains to be seen whether the existence of an ethnic penalty in Britain is in part due to the absence of affirmative action type policies.

Table 1

Race and Ethnicity in
Three Generations,
United States, 2000
(percent)

Generation	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic White	Proportion of ethnic population that is of this generation
1 st	6.3	61.4	39.1	3.6	10.4
2 nd	3.9	26.6	28.5	7.3	10.0
3 rd	89.9	12.1	32.4	89.1	79.6
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number In group (millions)	35.5	10.9	32.8	193.6	

Source: Adapted by the author from A. Dianne Schmidley, *Profile of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2000*, US Census Bureau Current Population Reports ser. P23-206 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2001), figure 9.1, p. 25.

Note: Totals may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Table 2 Ethnic composition of the English population

	Number	Per Cent
White British	42,747,000	87
White Irish	624,000	1.3
Other White	1,308,000	2.7
Black Caribbean (incl. mixed)	793,000	1.6
Black African (incl. mixed)	552,000	1.1
Other Black	95,000	0.2
Indian Asian	1,029,000	2.1
Pakistani Asian	707,000	1.4
Bangladeshi Asian	275,000	0.6
Other Asian	238,000	0.5
Mixed White and Asian	184,000	0.4
Chinese	221,000	0.5
Other (incl. other mixed)	336,000	0.7

Source: James Y. Nazroo and David R Williams. "The social determination of ethnic/racial inequalities in health." Chapter 12 *in Social Determinants of Health*, Second Edition, edited by Michael Marmot and Richard G. Wilkinson, Oxford University Press, 2005.

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