

**Immigrant Adaptation via Intermarriage:
The Residential Concentration and Racial Identification of
Multiracial Asian Americans, 1980-2000**

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With the large influx of immigrants around the turn of the last century, people became concerned with the cohesion of ethnic communities and the processes of generational change; in short, the assimilation prospects for these foreign groups of people. One hundred years later, we are again experiencing a growing concern about immigrants in the U.S. One way to investigate these processes is through an analysis residential concentration and intermarriage. It has been argued that the residential concentration of immigrant or ethnic groups has important implications for group trajectories. Because residential location influences individual interactions, where an individual resides has a strong effect on social structural outcomes, such as educational opportunities, economic opportunities, and marriage opportunities. Following this logic, we would expect residential concentration to influence marriage patterns and the subsequent racial identification of racially mixed children. The proposed research will examine the linkage between residential concentration and the racial identification of children in interracial married families over time for two immigrant-origin populations in the United States.

Using the U.S. Census data from 1980, 1990, and 2000, I identify interracial married Japanese families and interracial married Chinese families to examine how parents specify the racial-ethnic identification of their children. I use the details of the census data (IPUMS) to select a large number of respondents in states with high levels of Japanese American and Chinese American concentration. I utilize the race and ancestry questions in these censuses to classify couples and to explore the ways that they racially identify the children living in their households. Incorporating change over time, I use multinomial logistic regression to examine how the characteristics of parents, children, and the surrounding community contribute independently to the ways that racial-ethnic identification is selected for the children living in the household.

The first dependent variable is the racial identification of children living in Japanese-white households. It was coded trichotomously into white, Japanese, or “other.” This variable was

constructed from the race reported for the children in the household. Racial identification was coded as WHITE when all children in the household were so identified by their parents; racial identification was coded as JAPANESE when all children in the household were so identified by their parents. Households in which children were labeled neither Japanese nor white, or had inconsistent labels (e.g., one white child and one Japanese child), were coded as OTHER. The regression analyses estimate the likelihood of children being racially identified as Japanese relative to white, controlling for other, or the likelihood of children being racially identified as other compared to white, controlling for Japanese. A parallel procedure will be used for the children of Chinese-white couples.

Besides the influence of residential concentration, I examine the roles of gender (for example, I analyze whether the race of the father or the mother was the better predictor of children's racial identification), parents' educational attainment, and parents' time of immigration when foreign born in influencing the racial identification process.

In previous research restricted to Japanese Americans in California, I found that a rough co-ethnic density measure was significantly related to the racial identification of children in multiracial families. In this research, I will incorporate a more refined measure of residential concentration and expand the analysis to include locations beyond California as well as the Chinese American population.

I expect high levels of residential concentration to be predictive of an "Asian" racial identification. However, I also expect the co-variates, particularly gender of the Asian parent and location in the U.S. to have a strong influence on identification. By looking at two ethno-racial groups with long histories of residence in the U.S., I use theories of assimilation, human ecology, and racial formation to comment on the adaptation of Asian-origin groups to the U.S. at the end of the 20th century through an analysis of residential concentration and the racial-ethnic identification of multiracial children.