

## Neighborhood racial change and regional differences in segregation trends

John R. Logan  
Brown University

Charles Zhang  
Texas A&M University

Global neighborhoods, where not only whites and blacks but also Hispanics and Asians interact in their search for a place in the metropolis, are creating new forms of residential diversity and separation. Analyses of neighborhood racial composition in the period 1980-2000 demonstrate that in multiethnic metropolitan regions, the most common path of change is for Hispanics and Asians to serve as the pioneer integrators of white neighborhoods, later followed by blacks. Large and growing shares of every racial group now live in neighborhoods where all groups have a substantial presence. However the potential for lower segregation of minorities from whites is reduced by whites' reluctance to enter all-minority areas and by their exodus from mixed settings. The number of all-black census tracts has not changed, and the share of all-minority tracts is increasing. Hence globalization of neighborhoods adds a positive new element of diversity that alters but does not erase the dynamic of minority invasion-succession that has characterized segregation between blacks and whites since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Where this is occurring, we identify the emerging phenomenon of "global neighborhoods" – neighborhoods where the simple place categories of predominantly white, predominantly black, or racially mixed are no longer adequate. This is a development anticipated by Lee and Wood (1991) based on their studies of racial change in the 1970s. "The dominant trend," they hypothesized, "is toward complex multiethnic neighborhoods in which all four groups are present. Whether the dynamics underlying this trend are captured adequately by the succession model seems doubtful. At a minimum, the way in which the model depicts competition needs to be extended beyond the simple two-group scenario" (1991, p. 37).

In a previous study we analyzed neighborhood change in racial composition using information from 1980 through 2000 for a set of multiethnic metropolitan regions. To accomplish this we first developed criteria for a multifold classification of local areas based on the distribution of residents by race and Hispanic origin. We evaluated the distribution of neighborhoods across these types in 1980 and 2000, showing the overall rise and fall of each category. We then traced the evolution over time of each type of neighborhood. We also analyzed the predictors of several common paths of change that represent increasing or decreasing diversity. We found that when diversity is reduced it is most often the result of white exodus from racially mixed neighborhoods; when diversity is increased it is most often by introduction of a new minority group into a neighborhood where whites are already present, and most often by the inclusion of blacks in previously white-Hispanic-Asian neighborhoods.

That analysis pooled together the experience of 24 multiethnic metropolitan regions to describe a national pattern. In this new study we distinguish between two major regions of the country that have had very different trajectories of change in racial segregation. One is the older

metropolitan areas of the Northeast and Midwest where segregation has historically been high and reductions in the last twenty years have been small. We have specifically selected the New York-New Jersey CMSA and the Chicago metropolitan region to represent this case. The other is the metropolitan regions of the Southwest and West where the black population has historically been smaller, segregation lower, and reductions in segregation over time have been more substantial. Our question is: Are there different paths of neighborhood change in these two zones that can explain the differences in black-white segregation outcomes? Or if similar trajectories are occurring in both, what accounts for different outcomes?

Like our previous work, this study relies on tract-level data from the Census of Population in 1980, 1990, and 2000. We use the Neighborhood Change Database (NCDB) which provides 1970 through 2000 long-form census variables recalculated and normalized to the 2000 census tract boundary. As a result, all higher level geographies including metropolitan regions for previous censuses adopt the Census 2000 definition.

The core of the analysis is examination of change in racial composition over 20 years at the tract level. Results are presented in the form of transition matrices, similar to the approach of Denton and Massey (1991) and Alba et al. (1995). Along the x axis tracts are categorized by their composition in 2000; their 1980 composition is shown on the y axis. Cell entries are the number of tracts.

We have completed this part of the analysis separately for NY-Chicago and Texas-California metropolitan regions. The principal results are as follows:

- Different levels of black-white segregation in these two zones are consistent with differences in tract composition that have persisted over time. For example, the proportion of tracts characterized as all-white was 2-3 times greater in NY-Chicago; all-black tracts were rare in Texas-California but were a rising share of tracts in NY-Chicago (8.5% in 1980, 9.2% in 2000). Conversely, the share of tracts where all four groups were present (we use the notation WBHA) was much higher in Texas-California (23.3% in 1980, rising to 36.2% in 2000) than in NY-Chicago (12.9% and 18.8% respectively).
- In both zones, the principal source of growth in the number of WBHA tracts was transition in tracts that previously included all but blacks (WHA tracts).
- A limitation of future diversity in tract composition is the declining pool of WHA tracts to draw from, especially in Texas-California.
- A counter-trend to increasing tract diversity is the loss of whites from previously integrated settings. Although the share of all-white tracts has been dramatically reduced in both zones, the share of tracts with no white presence has increased in both Texas-California (from 9.7% to 18.9% of tracts) and in NY-Chicago (from 21% to 28.3%). And in both zones, there are virtually no cases of white entry into all-minority tracts.

## References

- Alba, Richard D. Nancy A. Denton, Shu-yin Leung, and John R. Logan. 1995. Neighborhood Change under Conditions of Mass Immigration: The New York City Region, 1970-1990. *International Migration Review* 29:625-656.
- Denton, Nancy A. and Douglas S. Massey. 1991. Patterns of Neighborhood Transition in a Multiethnic World: U.S. Metropolitan Areas, 1970-1980. *Demography* 28:41-63.
- Lee, Barret A. and Peter B. Wood. 1991. "Is Neighborhood Racial Succession Place-Specific?" *Demography* 28 (February):21-40.