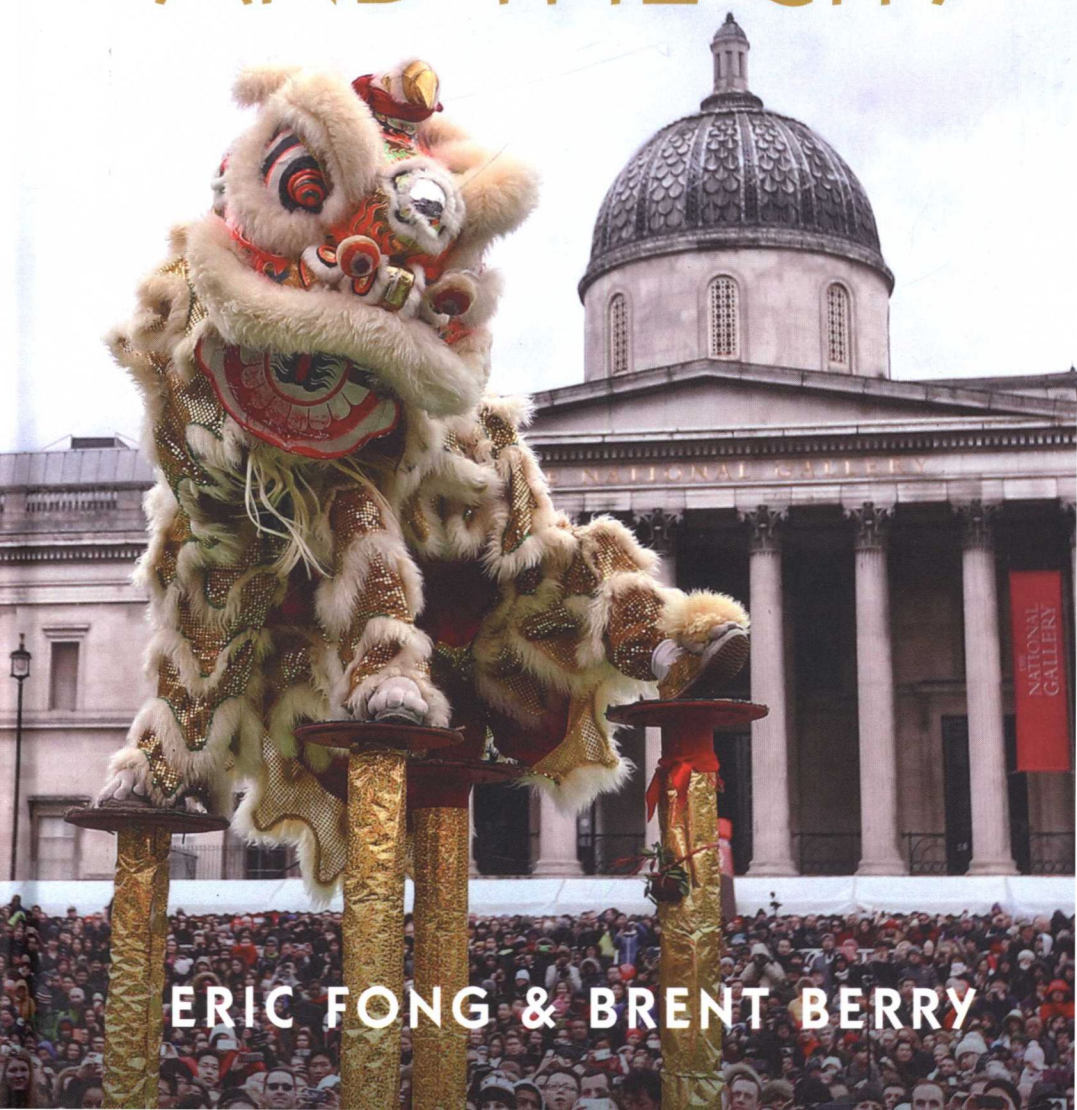


Immigration & Society

# IMMIGRATION AND THE CITY



ERIC FONG & BRENT BERRY



**"Fong and Berry examine immigrants in the United States and Canada to give us a sweeping overview of the diverse experiences of immigrants in cities, mapping the ways immigrants shape the contours of cities and cities define immigrant experiences. This book is a necessary resource to anyone interested in immigration and urban studies."**

*Rhacel Salazar Parrenas, University of Southern California*

**"Immigration and the City provides an illuminating and comprehensive portrait of how immigrants are being incorporated into cities in the United States and Canada, and how the immigrants and their children are, in turn, transforming the urban landscape in these two countries. The book offers a strong theoretical base from which to understand these processes and the social and economic forces that shape them."**

*John Iceland, Penn State University*

The majority of immigrants settle in cities when they arrive, and few can deny the dynamic influence migration has on cities. However, a "one-size-fits-all" approach cannot describe the activities and settlement patterns of immigrants in contemporary cities. The communities in which immigrants live and the jobs and businesses where they earn their living have become increasingly diversified. In this insightful book, Eric Fong and Brent Berry describe both contemporary patterns of immigration and the urban context in order to understand the social and economic lives of immigrants in the city. By exploring topics such as residential patterns, community form, and cultural influences, this book provides a broader understanding of how newcomers adapt to city life, while also reshaping its very fabric.

This comprehensive and engaging book will be an invaluable text for students and scholars of immigration, race, ethnicity, and urban studies.

**Eric Fong** is Professor and Chair of the Department of Sociology and Director of the Research Centre on Migration and Mobility at the Chinese University of Hong Kong

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# Immigration and the City

*Eric Fong and Brent Berry*

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# 1

## *Introduction*

We are living in an “age of migration” (Castles et al. 2013). In 2011, about 6 million people in Canada were foreign-born, representing 21 percent of the total population (Statistics Canada 2013). In 2010, about 39 million people in the United States were foreign-born, representing 13 percent of the total population (Singer 2013). Most immigrants settle in cities when they first arrive. This is not a surprising pattern, as the majority of the Canadian and American populations reside in urban areas: 82 percent of the population of Canada and 81 percent of the population of the United States (World Bank 2015). Although many countries have experienced tremendous growth in immigration, this book largely focuses on the settlement and acculturation of immigrants in Canada and the United States. Rich data related to immigration are available in both countries, enabling effective comparisons.

Most people know a little about the settlement patterns of immigrants in cities from discussion with friends and media reports. This book explores these patterns, specifically how geographic contexts shape the settlement patterns of immigrants in contemporary cities. It also explores key aspects of immigrant housing attainment; community, business, and economic activity; and contributions to cosmopolitan city life. The settlement patterns, community forms, and economic endeavors of immigrants have become more varied and dispersed in contemporary cities, so a “one-size-fits-all” approach to explaining adaptation

of immigrants in cities is no longer appropriate. Social scientists have been forced to expand and qualify their descriptions of these patterns, and also to use new forms of evidence, such as time-use data, to understand the behaviors of immigrants.

Understanding the social and economic lives of immigrants in cities is an important topic, and requires two processes to be clarified simultaneously: how immigrants adjust to the social, cultural, and economic environment of the city, and how they contribute to the social, cultural, and economic development of the city.

### *Characteristics of Contemporary Immigration*

Many immigrants living in Canada and the United States arrived after 1970 as a result of changes in immigration policies. This new wave of immigrants has two major characteristics. First, many now come from non-European countries. The 2011 National Household Survey in Canada revealed that about 10 percent of immigrants in Canada were from African countries and nearly 60 percent were from Asian countries, especially the Philippines, China, and India, which represented 13 percent, 11 percent, and 10 percent of the total immigrant population respectively (Statistics Canada 2013). In 2013, most immigrants in the United States were from Mexico, at 28 percent of the total immigrant population, followed by India and China at 5 percent each, and then the Philippines at 4 percent (Zong and Batalova 2015). Because most of these immigrants chose to settle in major cities, one major direct consequence is the increasing racial diversity of cities, so the processes of immigrant integration may differ from those of European immigrants in previous generations.

The second characteristic is the increasing socioeconomic disparity among immigrants: some arrive with limited language and education, while others may have completed higher education and have considerable financial resources. In 2013, about 50 percent of immigrants aged 5 or older in the United States reportedly spoke English “not at all,” “not well,” or “well,” and about 50 percent only spoke English or spoke English “very

well.” Additionally, about 30 percent of immigrants did not have a high school diploma, while 28 percent had completed a university degree (Zong and Batalova 2015). According to the 2011 Canadian National Household Survey, about 5 percent of immigrants aged 25–64 in Canada were not able to hold a conversation in either English or French; about 12 percent did not have a high school diploma, while about 31 percent had completed a university degree. These differences shape diverse integration outcomes: some immigrants have more resources to help them adapt, and more residential options. Because socioeconomic differences can lead to diverse assimilation outcomes, not all immigrants go through the same processes of integration.

### *Characteristics of the Urban Context*

Since the 1970s, there have also been unique developments in the urban contexts where immigrants settle. Most major cities underwent rapid suburbanization between 1950 and 1970. Cities became more dispersed and decentralized, and a larger proportion of the population in urban areas settled in the suburbs. In 2006, Statistics Canada estimated that only 48 percent of the population in all metropolitan areas lived in neighborhoods less than 10 kilometers from the city center (Turcotte 2008). Suburban sprawl is known to affect daily activities and group interactions. The scattered residential arrangements of suburban areas encourage automobile culture, weakening close networks among neighbors and neighborhood shops. Suburban sprawl also usually means more distance between residence and workplace. Additionally, most suburban households are middle class, suggesting a possible socioeconomic segregation from people living in the city center.

The economies of cities have also changed to benefit more educated immigrants working in globally connected businesses at the expense of low-skill immigrants working in traditional manufacturing jobs. Since the 1970s, many manufacturing jobs have moved to developing countries. In the United States, for example, Chicago lost 177,000 manufacturing jobs and Detroit

lost 87,000 between 1995 and 2005 (Pacione 2009). In Canada, the percentage of manufacturing jobs dropped from 22 percent to 17 percent of all jobs in only five years, from 1975 to 1980. Low-skill immigrants have been seriously affected, because manufacturing jobs are their major source of employment. At the same time, demand for skilled workers has increased.

This book explores immigrant settlement patterns within this increasingly complex context: how do urban forms shape the integration patterns of immigrants, and how does the adaptation of immigrants change urban forms?

Chapter 2 focuses on an issue central to understanding immigration and the city: the residential patterns of immigrants. It summarizes the classic perspectives and explores how scholars have recently developed new perspectives in an attempt to address some of the limitations of the classic perspectives. Almost all these theoretical perspectives suggest that the residential patterns of immigrants reflect their adaptation. In other words, their adaptation to the new country shapes urban forms. Chapter 2 also reviews the findings from current studies, which clearly show that no single perspective can be applied to all immigrant groups. Finally, it focuses on four types of neighborhoods that have been largely shaped by the process and outcomes of immigrant integration: mixed, gentrified, economically polarized, and immigrant suburban.

Chapter 3 focuses on the attainment of housing by immigrants at the individual level. It presents different trajectories of housing attainment related to individual socioeconomic resources. The discussion will reveal how immigrants with different socioeconomic resources adapt to the existing urban context. It will also show how the development of the physical housing environment is shaped by the socioeconomic and demographic background of immigrants. Overall, immigrants with different socioeconomic resources have diverse paths to housing attainment.

Chapter 4 focuses on immigrant community: the social and economic activities that bind immigrants together. Specifically, how have changes in the socioeconomic backgrounds of immigrants led to changes in the membership and functions of the commu-



nity? The discussion will reveal that immigrant communities are beneficial to not only the first generation, but also the second generation. Chapter 4 also presents a review of two recent urban developments: the concentration of immigrants in suburban areas, and the transnational dimensions of immigrant communities. It will explore how the adaptation of immigrants transforms urban patterns, and how the nature and functions of immigrant communities are becoming more complex.

Chapter 5 focuses on immigrant businesses. Economic activities are one of the major activities of immigrant communities in cities. To help clarify the concentration of immigrant businesses, it presents a few ways to capture the complexity of contemporary economic activities among immigrants. As immigrant businesses become more diverse in size and involved in different industrial sectors, their geographical distribution is affected. Additionally, city contexts shape the earnings of individuals involved in immigrant businesses.

Chapter 6 explores the presence of immigrants in relation to the culture of the city. First, it focuses on how the food offered in local restaurants is influenced by immigrant communities and how the status of ethnic cuisine is elevated. Second, it explores how the socioeconomic background of immigrants shapes their participation in different leisure sports. Finally, it reviews how the cultural practices of immigrants shape the suburban landscape and public spaces.

Chapter 7 addresses the need for different types of data in research about the increasing complexity of immigrant adaptation and its relationship to urban patterns. It illustrates how time-use data can help clarify immigrant adaptation in a city. These data provide detailed information about individuals, so they reveal how people spend their time and how these patterns shape integration patterns, which in turn can lead to different urban forms.

## 2

# *The Residential Patterns of Immigrants in Cities*

Immigrant neighborhoods can be found in most large North American cities, such as New York, San Francisco, Toronto, and Vancouver. For example, we see Chinese immigrants in Diamond Bar, Los Angeles County, California; Salvadoran immigrants in Mount Pleasant, Washington, DC; Korean immigrants in Palisades Park, Bergen County, New Jersey; and Asian immigrants in Brampton, Ontario, Canada. In these neighborhoods, ethnic signage is everywhere. It is common to hear people speaking their own ethnic languages and see them dressed in distinctive ethnic clothing. Some of these neighborhoods were developed long ago by earlier generations, but others have only recently become associated with an ethnic group.

## *Why Study Immigrants' Residential Patterns?*

For decades, researchers have sought to identify the residential patterns of immigrants and to explain the causes, perpetuation, and consequences of these patterns (Farley and Allen 1990; Frey and Farley 1996; Iceland and Scopilliti 2008; Lieberman 1963; Massey and Denton 1990). Some studies have focused on all immigrants together, while others have focused on particular groups (Fong and Hou 2009; Iceland and Scopilliti 2008; Massey and Denton 1988a). The term “immigrant residential segregation” usually refers to the physical separation of immigrants from non-

immigrants (Lieberson 1963). Immigrant residential segregation occurs when immigrants are not evenly distributed across a city's neighborhoods; this unevenness can be mild or extreme. Patterns of segregation can be further characterized by examining how immigrants vary from the general population in terms of demographic and socioeconomic variables.

What are the social implications of immigrant residential segregation? Some studies have concluded that opportunities in life are strongly related to residential location (Massey and Fong 1990; Massey et al. 1987; Ramey 2013; Schieman 2005; Villarreal and Silva 2006). For example, neighborhoods with lower socioeconomic standing are usually associated with lower school completion rates (Massey et al. 2006), less access to job information (Smith 2005; Wilson 1996), higher rates of unemployment (Wilson 1996), and poorer physical health among residents (Hou and Myles 2005; Schieman 2005). Neighborhoods with low socioeconomic standing also have fewer good schools (Smith et al. 1997), worse physical amenities (Massey and Fong 1990), and more exposure to criminal activity (Sampson 2012; Sampson et al. 1997). Therefore, immigrant groups that are segregated into neighborhoods with low socioeconomic standing are likely to face greater challenges in terms of social and economic disadvantages.

For immigrants living in segregated neighborhoods, even affluent neighborhoods, social isolation is a hurdle to achieving full integration into the new society. Insufficient opportunities to interact with the local-born population limits the diversity of social networks and delays learning about the new culture and environment (Alba and Nee 2003; Massey and Mullan 1984; Massey et al. 1987). This social isolation effect can have a lasting impact, not only for the first generation, but also for children of immigrants. Zhou (1997) suggested that immigrant segregation in poor neighborhoods can inhibit the integration of second-generation immigrants: the children of immigrants living in poor neighborhoods are deprived of social and economic resources, such as better schools and access to good job information from neighbors. The social environment of these neighborhoods fosters social deprivation, which in turn may promote an "oppositional culture"

among members of the younger generation who feel abandoned by society (Ogbu 2008). They may be skeptical of the ability of school achievement to provide upward mobility and have little hope of ever joining the middle class.

## *How to Measure Residential Segregation*

Scholars have proposed many measures of residential segregation, but no single measure conceptually captures the five distinctive dimensions of segregation that have been identified: evenness, exposure, concentration, centralization, and clustering (Massey and Denton 1988b). “Evenness” is the extent to which the distribution of two groups living within geographic units in a city reflects their overall citywide proportions. In the ideal case, an “even” distribution of two groups means that the proportion of the two groups in each neighborhood is the same as the proportion in the entire city. “Exposure” refers to the possibility of interaction between two groups in geographic units in a city based on their relative proportions. This is not based on deviation from the ideal of “evenness.” A high exposure refers to the high likelihood of a group member who is “experiencing segregation” (Massey and Denton 1988b) being exposed to members of another group living in the same neighborhood. Thus, exposure is affected by the sizes of the two groups being compared. “Concentration” refers to the relative amount of space occupied by members of a group (Massey and Denton 1988b). Concentration can be absolute or relative. Absolute concentration refers to the area occupied by a group, whereby a group occupying a smaller area is more concentrated, whereas relative concentration takes into consideration the concentration of the other group. “Centralization” refers to the level at which a group resides in or near the central area of the city. It can also be absolute or relative. Absolute centralization refers to the proportion of the group occupying the central area, while relative concentration refers to the proportion of the group that would need to move to match the centralization of a different group. “Clustering” refers to the extent to which members of a