



The American Ethnic Geographer

A Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers

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Goals of the American Ethnic Geography Specialty Group

The goals of the American Ethnic Geography Specialty Group are to promote the common interests of persons working in American ethnic geography, to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information for its members, and to undertake activities with the Association of American Geographers.

In This Issue:

Recent Publication Reviews	2
<i>Having Our Say</i>	
Reviewed by Ines Miyares	
<i>Fresh Blood</i>	
Reviewed by Ines Miyares	
<i>Ethnic "Electronic Communities"</i>	
Reviewed by Carlos Teixeira	
Internet Resources	3
Members Research News	3
News From Canada	4
A.A.G. Session Report	4
<i>Ethnic Entrepreneurship in a Comparative Context I</i>	
Report by Daniel Hiebert	
A.E.G.S.G. Officers	6

Comments from the A.E.G.S.G. Chair

With the growing national political focus on immigration and ethnicity, our specialty group has the potential of influencing the debate on ethnicity on college campuses and among the general public. We have the opportunity, through courses designed to fulfill "pluralism and diversity" requirements, to replace emotional and rhetorical responses to immigrants and ethnic communities with knowledge. So much of the current debate on immigration, whether documented or undocumented, reflects the historical trend in our country to resort to "immigrant bashing" during periods of slow economic growth. The media tend to portray immigration and ethnic minorities as ubiquitous and a national threat. As geographers specializing in ethnicity in America, we are in a position to dispel these myths and to make students and colleagues more aware of the truth that we are a country built on a history of immigration and ethnic diversity, and that it is foolish to make universal statements about the impacts of immigration without discussing the geography of ethnicity.

In our newsletter this year, we will strive to continue to provide resources to facilitate this pedagogical goal. This issue contains, for example, a list of suggested Internet Websites that could contribute to classroom and research use. As you come across additional sites, please forward the addresses to Carlos Teixeira, our newsletter editor, so that they can be listed in forthcoming issues. Additionally, by early fall I hope to have our Website up and running and linked to these other sites. I would also encourage you to continue to send us syllabi, reading lists, and brief reviews of books and videos for classroom use.

This is an exciting time as we plan next spring's A.A.G. meeting in Fort Worth. Members of our specialty group and related groups have organized what should prove to be an excellent set of sessions. For example, David Kaplan of Kent State University has organized a paper session and a panel session on ethnic enclave economies co-sponsored with the Urban Geography Specialty Group. We have invited Ivan Light, Professor of Sociology at UCLA and a leading scholar in this field, to serve as discussant for the paper session and to be the key presenter for the panel session. Additional sessions are listed on page 3.

We will be co-sponsoring, with the Population Specialty Group, an informal workshop entitled "Making Census Data Accessible for College Classes: the SSDAN

continued on page 6...

Recent Publication Reviews

Delany, Sarah L. and A. Elizabeth Delany with Amy Hill Hearth (1993). *Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters' First Hundred Years*. New York: Dell Publishing.

Having Our Say is an excellent first-person account of the African-American experience in the late 19th and 20th centuries as told by Sarah (Sadie) and A. Elizabeth (Bessie) Delany. Written in the tradition of the African griot, the sisters describe the history of their family, from the slave roots of their father and the mulatto roots of their mother, the daughter of a white man and an "issue-free" black woman. While this book does not overtly teach geography, it traces the differences in experience as the geography of the Delany family and of African Americans changed.

The story begins in the South, in Florida, Virginia, and North Carolina prior to the enactment of Jim Crow laws. The Delanys grew up at the St. Augustine School (now College) in Raleigh, North Carolina, where their father, an Episcopal priest (later the first black Episcopal bishop) was vice-principal. The book contrasts the experience of the educated versus the uneducated, the "privileged" versus the "dirt-poor" blacks of the Post-Reconstruction South. The sisters also describe the changes which occurred in the South as a result of Jim Crow laws and the varying experiences of blacks in small towns and rural areas versus a larger community such as Raleigh.

As they moved into adulthood, most of the Delany children moved to Harlem and were part of both the Harlem Renaissance and the Civil Rights movements. They tell of the evolution of the black community in Harlem as a growing number of black professionals migrated to New York. The next step in their migration was to home ownership in the Bronx, and subsequently as being among the first African Americans to move to the suburb of Mount Vernon in Westchester County, now an overwhelmingly black community.

With each move, the sisters offer insights into their migration decision-making process and their continuing ties to the South and to Harlem. In doing so, they give an insider's face and voice to the African American community that few scholarly texts can offer. This book is an excellent resource for undergraduate ethnicity and cultural diversity courses either as required or supplemental reading for teaching both the historical and contemporary geography of African Americans.

Reviewed by Ines Miyares

Ungar, Sanford J. (1995). *Fresh Blood: The New American Immigrants*. New York: Simon and Shuster.

As the debate on immigration and the formation of new ethnic enclaves continues to heat up, Sanford Ungar's book, *Fresh Blood*, makes a powerful contribution to the diversity of settlement and experience of a number of recent immigrant groups. Ungar attempts to move the focus away from the political debate by introducing his readers to members of these communities. Through a series of cases studies ranging from Mexicans in Temecula, California and Cubans in Miami to Ethiopians and Eritreans in Washington, DC and Cambodians in Revere, Massachusetts, Ungar describes the process and impacts of recent immigration and settlement patterns from the perspective of both the immigrants and the host communities. While the book does discuss many of the current political debates on immigration and immigration control, it does so in an objective manner, striving to educate the reader on causes of immigration and refugee resettlement, migrant destination selection, and ways both the immigrants and the host communities are adapting to each other. Social, economic, and cultural costs of coming to the U.S. are also portrayed, with a particular emphasis on the generational impacts of acculturation on the various ethnic communities. This book, either in part or as a whole, is excellent as required or supplemental reading for both undergraduate and graduate reading and makes a strong contribution to the current immigration debate.

Reviewed by Ines Miyares

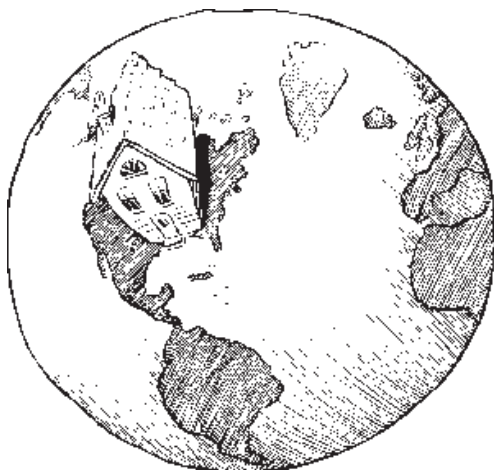
Brunn, Stanley D., Jeffery A. Jones and Darren Purcell (1994). *Ethnic Communities in the Evolving 'Electronic' State: Cyberplaces in Cyberspace in Political Boundaries and Coexistence*, edited by Werner A. Gallusser, Matthias Burgin and Walter Leimgruber, New York: Peter Lang, pp. 415-424.

Brunn, Stanley D. and Darren Purcell (1996). *Ethnic 'Electronic Communities': New Immigrant Linkages in a Wired World in Fraternalism in Immigrant Countries*, edited by Matjaz Klemen, Maribor, Slovenia: Univerza -Maribor, pp. 337-343.

These two essays by Brunn et al. represent a reconfiguration of the traditional "boundaries" of ethnic geography within the challenging extraterritorial context of cyberspace. In *Ethnic Communities in the Evolving 'Electronic' State: Cyberplaces in*

Cyberspace, the authors discuss the rapid advances in global electronic communications that are redefining the concept of the ethnic community. They argue that physical location within a neighbourhood or community of ethnic group members is no longer absolutely essential to identification with the community as one may be a part of a "virtual community" transcending distance and political boundaries. This implied challenge to the current relationship between ethnic communities and nation states, and states' reactions to this challenge, are but two of the issues touched upon in this article. In *Ethnic 'Electronic Communities': New Immigrant Linkages in a Wired World*, Brunn and Purcell expand upon their previous work by focusing on those computer resources - USENET and LISTSERV - which allow ethnic communities (here Central European groups) to redefine their identity and power networks within a changing "wired world".

Reviewed by Carlos Teixeira



Internet Resources

A new, expanded WWW Virtual Library, *Migration and Ethnic Relations*, is now online. The Virtual Library provides access to over 180 online resources on Migration and Ethnic Relations. As well, an Interactive Information Board is available on which, as the Virtual Library receives over 1000 visitors every week, information requests and announcements reach a large, mostly professional, audience. The new URL is: [HTTP://WWW.RUU.NL/ERCOMER/WWWVL/INDEX.HTML](http://WWW.RUU.NL/ERCOMER/WWWVL/INDEX.HTML)

In addition, the WWW Virtual Library notes over 10 mailinglists in the field of Migration and Ethnic Relations. These may be found at: [HTTP://WWW.RUU.NL/ERCOMER/WWWVL/LISTS/INDEX.HTML](http://WWW.RUU.NL/ERCOMER/WWWVL/LISTS/INDEX.HTML) For further information, you may contact Arthur J. Kosten at: AJKOSTEN@FSW.RUU.NL

A new web site sponsored by the APSA Section on Race, Ethnicity and Politics - including information about the Section, a complete program for the 1996 APSA Annual Meeting, and e-mail links to 1996 panelists and authors - is now online at: [HTTP://WWW.PROVIDENCE.EDU/POLISCI/REP/](http://WWW.PROVIDENCE.EDU/POLISCI/REP/)

Related, recommended resource sites include:

Native American Resources at: [HTTP://WWW.COWBOY.NET/NATIVE/](http://WWW.COWBOY.NET/NATIVE/)
Latinoweb at: [HTTP://WWW.LATINOWEB.COM/FAVISION/RESOURCE.HTM](http://WWW.LATINOWEB.COM/FAVISION/RESOURCE.HTM)
Asian American Resources at: [HTTP://WWW.MIT.EDU:8001/AFS/ATHENA.MIT.EDU/USER/t/r/IRIE/WWW/AAR.HTML](http://WWW.MIT.EDU:8001/AFS/ATHENA.MIT.EDU/USER/t/r/IRIE/WWW/AAR.HTML), and *Universal Black Pages* at: [HTTP://WWW.GATECH.EDU/BGSA/BLACKPAGES.HTML](http://WWW.GATECH.EDU/BGSA/BLACKPAGES.HTML)

Thomas Archdeacon, Dept. of History, University of Wisconsin, has a Web site containing many useful immigration tables, graphs etc. (eg. Table: *Immigration, 1820-1994: by Region and Country of Origin*; Table: *African-American Shares of Regional Population, 1870-1990*; *Residential Segregation in New York, 1960...*). URL is: [HTTP://WWW.WISC.EDU/HISTORY/404TJA/SUPP.HTML](http://WWW.WISC.EDU/HISTORY/404TJA/SUPP.HTML)

News of A.E.G.S.G. Members and Research in Progress

Planned Sessions at the 1997 AAG Conference in Fort Worth, Texas

- ❖ *Urban Ethnic Economies*. David Kaplan (KAPLAN@HUMBOLDT.KENT.EDU)
- ❖ *Using the Internet for Maintaining Ethnic Community and Identity*. Lawrence Estaville (LE02@SWT.EDU)
- ❖ *Immigrants and Refugees in North American Cities: a comparative approach*. Carlos Teixeira (CART@SCAR.UTORONTO.CA)
- ❖ *Migration as an Expression of Culture*. James Tyner (JTYNER@SCT.USC.EDU)
- ❖ *"Colonias"*. Nancy Torrieri (NANCY.TORRIERI@QUICKMAIL.GEO.CENSUS.GOV)

- ❖ *Re-Thinking Race, Ethnicity and Indian-ness in Geographic Research*. Kate Berry (KBERRY@SCS.UNR.EDU)

Research in Progress

Yu Zhou, Vassar College is currently conducting research on a) *Place Matters: Comparative Research on Development of Chinese Communities in Los Angeles and New York*; and b) *The Changing Gender Identity Among Chinese Women Immigrants in Great New York Area*. For further information concerning these two projects, contact YUZHOU@VASSAR.EDU

News from Canada

Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement - Canada

On March 22, 1996 the Canadian Government announced the creation of four Canadian Centres for Research on immigration and integration - representing the combined talents and resources of 15 of Canada's leading universities located in four of the country's main immigrant destination cities; Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton and Vancouver - as major components of Canada's participation in the Metropolis Project.

This international initiative examining the impact of immigration on cities around the world will bring together researchers from the full range of academic and professional disciplines in the United States, Canada, The United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy and a number of other countries. The four Canadian Centres will receive a total of \$8 million over six years.

These four centres will promote innovative, multidisciplinary research on the integration of immigrants into Canadian economic, social, political and cultural life within an urban context. Their research programs will, in general, cover five broad domains relating to the demographic and economic impact of immigration and integration:

- ❖ neighbourhood life, residential mobility, and community resources;
- ❖ education and training;
- ❖ social services, health, and justice issues;
- ❖ social and linguistic integration; and
- ❖ citizenship and culture.

This research will serve to foster critical discussion by public authorities and concerned citizens and groups, and provide information and an Internet-accessible database to promote informed public policy. Collaborative, comparative studies between cities within both national and international contexts will be encouraged.

While numerous prominent scholars and researchers will participate in this effort, there is also an emphasis upon the training of graduate students - within an international, multidisciplinary collaborative environment - in some of the most advanced data analysis techniques, scientific methodologies and theoretical apparatus in fields ranging from industrial relations, public administration, education and psychology, to geography, sociology, demography, economics, language studies, social work and urban studies.

Carlos Teixeira

A.A.G. Session Report

American Ethnic Geography and Urban Geography Specialty Groups (summary of discussant comments)

Ethnic Entrepreneurship in a Comparative Context I

(Organizer: Carlos Teixeira, York University)

The opening session on ethnic entrepreneurship was comprised of four papers that each explored some aspect of the changing political space-economy of immigration. All of the authors raised important questions about the interface between culture and economy. While it is simply impossible to do justice to these finely-textured papers in the space of 1000 words, I hope this summary provides readers with at least some sense of the authors' basic arguments. Even so, I am conscious of the fact that I have been able to focus on only one or two points per paper, and I encourage interested readers to contact the authors directly for further information.

Alan Nash, Concordia University, *Ethnic entrepreneurship: the case of Canada's business immigrants*

Based on comprehensive research extending over the past decade, Alan Nash provides a brief overview of Canadian initiatives to attract wealthy immigrant entrepreneurs and investors. Officially, these programs are judged highly successful in terms of capital transfer, business creation, and employment growth in Canada, but Nash raises a number of challenges to this interpretation. Given the paucity of detailed research, we do not really know the impact of business immigrants in Canada; from the little we do know, it appears that much of the investment associated with this group is in real estate, not in the targeted sectors of manufacturing and trade. Over ninety percent of these immigrants are male, a telling indicator of priorities in the application assessment system. Nash also worries about the economic problems created in source countries as successful entrepreneurs migrate to the global North. Finally, Nash notes the uneven pattern of settlement of business immigrants in Canada which tends to exacerbate already-existing regional disparities. These are real problems and Nash offers a variety of policy suggestions that are too detailed to reiterate here. Basically these are sound, though it is difficult to imagine government tampering extensively with these programs at a time when entrepreneurialism is viewed in quasi-sacred terms. In fact, Canadian policy-makers are increasingly adopting the rhetoric of "competitiveness" in immigration policy — i.e. the idea that there is a fixed supply of entrepreneurs out there and that Canada should do what it can to attract as large a number as possible. Of course in all this a fundamental question remains unanswered: do business migrants actually bring all of their

capital with them? If not (as I believe), then both the benefits for Canada as a receiving nation and the problems of source countries are overstated.

Yu Zhou, Vassar College, *Searching for the location: spatial organization of Chinese producer services in Los Angeles*

Yu Zhou attempts to merge the insights of recent theories of industrial organization that stress the importance of transaction costs together with theories of ethnic entrepreneurialism. This innovative combination that has the potential to explain important developments in North American cities (i.e. suburbanized ethnic neighborhoods and their relationship with peripheral industrial districts) and to challenge "faceless" theories of flexibility as well as theories of ethnic self-employment that ignore wider economic structures and change. Investigating the participation of Chinese-American entrepreneurs in accounting, banking, and computer distribution in Los Angeles, Zhou documents two distinct patterns of inter-firm linkages and their associated spatial arrangements. Chinese-owned accounting and banking firms, both highly dependent on face-to-face meetings and trust, mainly serve the Chinese-American community and need centralized locations to prosper. In the case of accounting companies, this entails placement in "Chinatown". Banks also need to provide services in the center of the Chinese-American community and establish branches in Chinatown; however, to maximize access to financial information and networks, and to gain credibility, their head offices are mainly located near other financial institutions in downtown LA. In contrast, computer firms tend to purchase supplies from Chinese-owned wholesalers but serve a primarily non-Chinese market that is dispersed throughout the urban area. In this extremely competitive sector, proximity to customers is crucial and Chinese-owned firms are located in several LA neighborhoods. This is an impressive and sophisticated study that deserves careful reading and wide circulation. My only concern is the extent to which Zhou is able to maintain autonomy between the complex economic and cultural factors she tries to hold in creative tension — at times, it seems as though ethnic patterns are read as reflex responses to economic constraints, and perhaps more attention should be given to an opposite reading (i.e. to see economic patterns as outcomes of minority participation).

Wei Li, University of Southern California, Los Angeles' *Chinese ethnoburb: overview of ethnic economy*

The suburbanization of Los Angeles' Chinese-origin population is also investigated by Wei Li, but from the vantage point of urban theory. Li develops the "ethnoburb" model, arguing that their combination of enclave and suburban characteristics makes these emerging spaces unique from previous forms of immigrant settlement. According to Li, ethnoburbs are

deliberate creations made by individuals with enough purchasing power to be able to choose where to live; they are also multi-ethnic in composition, contain a greater mix of economic activities, and allow a wider range of entrepreneurial activities. Li also makes the provocative, though unexplored, claim that "race" is constructed differently in these new settings than in traditional inner-city reception neighborhoods. These conceptual points are followed by an empirical examination of LA's "Chinatown" vs. Chinese-origin settlement in the San Gabriel Valley, and Li is able to verify most of her earlier propositions about the ethnoburb. However, one salient issue is unresolved in this work: the extent to which the ethnoburb model can be generalized to other places. While Li is careful not to extrapolate beyond the LA context, I hope she tries to frame a more widely applicable model. In so doing, I believe, Li should begin by acknowledging the wide diversity of minority suburbanization experiences across North America. Certainly not all immigrants move to suburban locations out of choice, and there are pockets of marginalized immigrant groups in even quite distant suburbs in many cities. Ethnoburbs, then, may be just as varied as suburbs already are, which would make a general model difficult to conceptualize, but highly interesting nonetheless.

Giles Andrew Barrett, John Moores University, *African-Caribbean entrepreneurship in 1990s Britain*

While there are notable exceptions, researchers generally adopt a positive tone when discussing the possibilities of entrepreneurialism for minority advancement. Giles Barrett's study, still at an early stage, has the potential to provide several important correctives to this literature. By examining the experiences of Afro-Caribbeans in England, Barrett allows us to see the problems of a highly marginalized group that is slowly beginning to develop internal business networks. Barrett argues that the deep-seated experience of racism by Afro-Caribbeans in the standard labor market pushes them to self employment and that (contrary to the optimism of many researchers) pervasive racism also limits their success as entrepreneurs. As a result, resilient intra-ethnic business networks have been slow to develop and the growing level of self-employment among Afro-Caribbeans is, to the general public, all but invisible (aside: there is a rich irony here, in that a "visible minority" whose presence is so well-publicized in certain facets of social life, such as the criminal justice system, can be "invisible" in other facets — but this is fodder for a much longer discussion). Meanwhile, the frequent comparisons made by state officials and the media between the success of Indo-Pakistani entrepreneurs vs. the lack of success of Afro-Caribbean entrepreneurs only intensify the problem of racism, since they appear to validate the view that blacks are inherently less capable. Barrett's work therefore illustrates the key

continued on page 6...

A.A.G. Session Report...*continued from page 5*

point that minority groups do not all face the same forms of marginalization, again demonstrating the complexity of social relations in multi-ethnic societies. However, two significant issues remain unresolved in Barrett's paper: first, while it appears abundantly clear that Afro-Caribbeans experience a particularly immobilizing form of discrimination in England, this is more stated than "proven" by Barrett — and his argument is unlikely to convince skeptics; second, by problematizing "race" but not capitalism, Barrett implies (though never states) that a less discriminatory capitalism will make for a better world — I suppose that's true, but I can't help wondering ... how much better?

Report by Daniel Hiebert

Chair's Comments...*continued from page 1*

Network". Dr. William Frey, University of Michigan Population Studies Center, has developed an excellent set of modules for using census data in lower division courses using StudentChip, an inexpensive (\$5!) and very user-friendly statistics package. Several geographers, including myself, have been working with Bill to develop modules for teaching population and ethnic geography, and we will be presenting how we are using these materials in our courses.

Additionally, we will be continuing our tradition of honoring a distinguished senior scholar who has studied various aspects of ethnic geography, thus contributing to the development of our field. This year we will be honoring Dr. Allen G. Noble, Professor of Geography at the University of Akron. Professor Noble will be focusing his comments on the changing ethnic geography of Utica, NY, describing the spatial impacts of various waves of immigration on the city's landscape and culture. Dr. Peter Hogle (Texas A & M), Ary Lamme (University of Florida) and Jesse Mckee (Southern Mississippi) will serve as discussants for this presentation. Many thanks to Dick Nostrand for organizing this excellent session!

I would also like to thank Lawrence Estaville for continuing his commitment to organizing sessions on teaching ethnic geography at NCGE meetings. I encourage those of you who will be at the Santa Barbara meetings this fall to attend and contribute to what have proven to be excellent sessions each year. Thank you for your support at the meeting in Charlotte. We look forward to a very exciting year of continued growth and interest in teaching and scholarship focusing on American ethnicity.

Ines Miyares, Chair

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Editorial Note:

The next issue of **The American Ethnic Geographer** will be published in February 1997. The deadline for submission of items for the next issue is February 1, 1997.

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