# *The Racial Resegregation of Los Angeles County, 1940-2000*

Released: May 12, 2001

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**A University of**

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**and**

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**Michigan**

**Collaborative**

**Project**

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*Overview of Findings:*

Viewing the entire County of Los Angeles over a long period (1940-2000) and using census tracts as the basic unit of analysis, we have found a clear pattern of "resegregation." Segregation was severe prior to 1965. Since that date, the overall level of "diversity" has clearly increased, and the emergence of Latinos as the largest single group in a no-majority metropolis is a major milestone. But these figures hide a harder truth that we need to confront. Levels of racial segregation remain high among the four principal race-ethnic groups: Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians (including Pacific Islanders). Indeed, *segregation has been increasing faster than integration since the 1960s*.

Three distinct patterns are clear:

1) Whites have retreated to a periphery and the other principal ethnic groups are less and less likely to have them as neighbors.
2) Blacks are the most isolated racial group; other racial groups have remained highly unlikely to have them as neighbors.
3) Hispanics and Asians are becoming more isolated even as they cause the county as a whole to be more diverse.

The patterns also make it clear that the White and Black experiences are very similar. Both are "old immigrants," with greater "seniority" in the region. Although a very small number of Mexican-Americans have the greatest seniority of all (descendants of the original Spanish settlers), the vast majority of Latinos are, along with the vast majority of Asians, "new immigrants." *Spatially, numerically, and proportionally, Whites and Blacks are in retreat.* Their increasing isolation is a function of their

shrinking size and location vis-à-vis the "new immigrants." Latinos and Asians, by contrast, are dynamic populations, growing spatially, numerically, and proportionally. Their communities are exploding around many nodes of original settlement. Their increasing isolation is a function of the classic "immigrant enclave" effect. As our use of the "exposure index" makes clear, *Whites and Blacks together have been somewhat more likely to have Latino and Asian neighbors (simply because they are outnumbered), but Latinos and Asians are decreasingly likely to have White or Black neighbors.*

While we find these patterns to be very clear, we also want to emphasize that they are not the whole story. This study treats Los Angeles County, the nation's most populous at 9.5 million persons) as a single continuous space. Two companion Public Research Reports from our study group analyze the wide variance of conditions among the many specific places *within* LA County.[1]

It is also too early draw a complete set of conclusions about many of the possible causes or effects of these findings. "Segregation" is used here as a *descriptive* term, rather than as a *normative* one. It has had, and certainly can have reprehensible causes and socially destructive effects. It can still be, can certainly has been, caused by overt or systematic housing or job discrimination. When linked to locational disadvantages such as high crime rates, low job opportunity, and poor schools, it can have very negative effects. We have other research projects[2] under way to identify these causes and effects, but this paper sets out primarily to establish the patterns themselves.

Even within the descriptive boundaries of this analysis we have been able to identify two "causes" that have operated to produced the resegregation of Los Angeles County:

a) *The simple spatial arithmetic of population dynamics*. The explosion of Latino and Asian immigrant populations and steady shrinkage of White and Black populations "explains," in a statistical sense, the moderate increase in White exposure to people of color and the rising levels of isolation among the new immigrants.

b) *The patterns of White residential behavior*. Alone among the four principle racial groups, we can say with confidence that Whites have had the freedom to settle wherever their wealth enables them to purchase a home. They have used that freedom *to flee the growing diversity of the metropolis*, either by moving out of the county completely or by retreating to its edges.[3]

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[1]    Myers and Park (Race Contours 2000 Public Research Report 2001-05) emphasize the growth of "Racially Balanced" cities since 1980 among the 177 cities of Los Angeles County, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. Frey and Ethington (Race Contours Public Research Report 2001-06) emphasize the variance in segregation indices among 77 cities of Los Angeles County from 1990 to 2000.

[2]    Ethington, "Segregated Diversity" (Haynes Foundation Final Report, August 2000) shows a very strong correlation between White residential location and high median home prices, suggesting that the "cause" of White/nonwhite segregation is a barrier of very high property values that prevents Blacks and new immigrants (all upwardly mobile groups) from entering White neighborhoods.

[3]    To some extent, members of each racial group have freedom to settle where their wealth can afford a home, and a crucial effort in our ongoing research is to better understand the voluntary decisions of

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people of color to locate among neighbors of their own racial group.  Notwithstanding this phenomenon, however, housing market discrimination against affluent people of color is very well documented, and conversely, discrimination against affluent Whites has never been documented.

## 2.0 Overview of Methods

Questions of method loom large in studies of U.S. Census data. The two crucial areas of methodological concern in this study are: 1) "Why are the data from 1940-2000 comparable and uniform?"; 2) "How did we define the four principal racial groups?" and 3) "What do the different measures of segregation mean?"

### 2.1 The 1940-2000 Dataset

This study is based on a uniform dataset, in which comparable data has been organized into the 2000 Census tract boundaries, from 1940 through 2000 (N=2,055 census tracts). We began with the *Los Angeles County Union Census Tract Data Series, 1940-1990* (Ethington Kooista and DeYoung 2000), which is fitted to the 1990 census tract boundaries. Upon release of the California census data in March of 2001, we constructed variables for the four principal race-ethnic groups (see below) that were most compatible with the way those racial variables were defined in 1990. The entire 1940-1990 data series were then fitted to the 2000 census tract boundaries using ESRI's ArcInfo ® software to reallocate 1990 tract aggregates in areal proportion to the polygonal overlays of the 2000 boundaries.

### 2.2 Definition of Racial Groups

By convention and by virtue of their numerical prominence, social scientists and public policy makers have come to focus on four principal racial-ethnic groups: White, African-American or Black, Hispanic or Latino, and Asian and Pacific Islanders. For technical and also political reasons, Hispanics have been treated by the U.S. Census Bureau as an "ethnic" rather than a "racial" category. Respondents have been asked wither they hare "Hispanic" separately from what racial group they belong to. Hispanics, in other words, can be of any race. We have termed this classification method "Hispanic categorical dominance." (Meyers and James 2001). By convention and also political necessity, researchers have essentially "racialized" the supposedly "ethnic" Hispanic category, by treating "Hispanics" as a comparable category to those of "Non-Hispanic Whites," and "Non-Hispanic Blacks" In everyday life and ordinary speech, "Hispanic" or "Latino" is used in the same sense as "White" or "Black" or "Asian." Thus, we have dispensed with the cumbersome pretense of the race versus ethnic distinction and refer hereafter only to "racial groups." Moreover, the 2000 Census famously allowed each respondent to identify as a member of more than one race. There are many ways of classifying the races now, thanks to the millions who have chosen more than one race. In this study, the most important consideration was to classify races to be most compatible with the 1990 and earlier classification methods. The method used here is the "Hispanic categorical dominance" with "fractional apportionment of multiracials." All persons reporting Hispanic identity are reserved for the Hispanic category. Then, persons reporting more than one race are fractionally apportioned to the races they report. A person reporting herself to be "African American or Black" and "White" is apportioned ½ to Black and ½ to White. If she had reported "Hispanic" in addition to these "racial" categories, then 100% of her would have gone to the Hispanic category. "Asians" include, of course, a

great variety of race-ethnic identities, from Vietnamese to Chinese, Korean, and Japanese.  We cannot deal with the rationality of this system here, but again we are following convention by treating Asians as a single category.  We include as well Pacific Islanders and Native Hawaiians in this category.   Native Americans  and all those classified as "other race," all totaling less than 1% of the Los Angeles County population, have also been added to the Asian category, for reasons of compatibility with the 1940-1990 data series.

Thus, for reasons of simplicity and common sense, "Whites" (in reality Euro-Americans) are called "Whites,"  Non-Hispanic African Americans are called "Blacks"; "Hispanics" and "Latinos" are used interchangeably and Asians and Pacific Islanders are called "Asians."

### 2.3  Explanation of the Segregation Indices

For a complete discussion of the three main indices of segregation used in this study, see Lieberson (1981), Massey and Denton (1988), White (1983), and White (1986).  The following is only a brief overview.

#### 2.31  The Diversity Index

The Diversity Index ranges from 0 to about 1.4, and increases as the four racial groups become more balanced within tracts, regardless of their proportion in the County as a whole.  The table below shows the Diversity Index and percentage racial populations for five tracts in the year 2000: the least diverse, the 25th percentile, the median, the 75th percentile, and the most diverse.  Note that the actual population proportions for the county as a whole in 2000 were 32% White; 9.7% Black, 44.6% Hispanic, and 13.7% Asian.

| Tract | Diversity Index | White | Black | Hispanic | Asian | Percentile |
|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|----------|-------|------------|
| 620003 | 0.00 | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | Lowest |
| 541400 | 0.66 | 1% | 26% | 73% | 1% | 25th |
| 297000 | 0.87 | 69% | 3% | 21% | 7% | Median |
| 311800 | 1.06 | 36% | 3% | 50% | 10% | 75th |
| 572201 | 1.37 | 24% | 19% | 25% | 32% | Highest |

#### 2.32 The Index of Dissimilarity

The Index of Dissimilarity, or "ID,"is the most commonly used measure of "segregation" in American social science since the 1950s.  Based always on a comparison of two groups (eg, White vs. Nonwhites, Blacks vs. Nonblacks), this measure is very easy to interpret.  The Index of Dissimilarity ranges from 0 to 1 (or 0% to 100%), and tells us the percentage of a given population that would have to change its residential location in order to even-out the distribution of that groups across the metropolitan space.  If Blacks were evenly settled across the entire

county, for example, their ID would be 0 (perfectly integrated). If Blacks only lived in census tracts that were 100% Black, and no where else, then their ID score would be 1 (or 100% -- perfectly segregated). Scores of 70% or higher are considered to show serious segregation. Blacks in U.S. cities have shown scores higher than this figure since the Second World War, and yet in many western cities this figure has come down significantly. Here in Los Angeles the ID for Blacks has decreased significantly from the very high 88% in 1960 and 1970 to the relatively moderate 57% in 2000. Characterizing 57% as "moderate" is merely a relative judgment. It still means that 57% of all Blacks would need to move their place of residence in order to achieve perfectly even distribution across the county.

Although the ID is important and useful, at least because it is so widely used, it is also a rather crude measure of segregation and needs to be supplemented with more nuanced measures. It is totally insensitive to actual and relative group population sizes, for instance. For example, Blacks in Los Angeles County might have the same ID score of, say, 57%, if there were only 10 Blacks in the county, 1,000 Blacks, or 1,000,000. It only tells us how many Blacks would have to move to even out the distribution, and it does not say anything about relative group sizes or their relative location.


### 2.33 The Exposure Index

The Exposure Index is the central tool used to evaluate trends in segregation in this study. The Exposure Index takes into account the relative sizes and locations of the various groups in the county and calculates the probability (ranging from 0% to 100%) that members of one group will have members of the other groups (or members of their own group) as neighbors. The unit of analysis is the census tract, which is taken to represent the "neighborhood." The median tract population in Los Angeles County in 2000 was 4,461; the average was 4,633. The "probability" of "exposure" then, is that a person will have a member of X group as a residential neighbor within their own census tract of residence. *The Exposure Index is a measure of residential segregation only*. It does not measure the "exposure" of groups to one another in the workplace or in public places such as parks or shopping malls.

The most powerful feature of the Exposure Index is that it is asymmetric. For example, Blacks in 1940 had a 45% chance of having White neighbors, but Whites only had a 1% chance of having a Black neighbor. Why this asymmetry? Whites (at 2.6 million in 1940) vastly outnumbered Blacks (75,000 in that year) in Los Angeles County. Moreover, the vast majority of Whites lived in segregated neighborhoods in which Blacks were not permitted to live. Conversely a great many Whites lived in the neighborhoods segregated for nonwhite residence (very few tracts were more than 50% Black even in Jim Crow's heyday). Thus, by virtue of the specific locational and proportional conditions of the county in 1940, Blacks were "exposed" to Whites much more frequently than Whites were to Blacks, and a strong measure or segregation should tell us this.

The very strength of the Exposure Index—that it allows us to see the segregation condition between more than one group at a time and from the different perspectives of each of these groups, also leads to a confusing number of indexes: Between Blacks and

Hispanics, Hispanics and Blacks, Blacks and Asians, Asians and Blacks, Blacks and Whites, Whites and Blacks, and so on.  In order to manage this complexity and also to make the greatest sense of the data, we have paired the charts displaying trends in the Exposure Index by the two underlying "perspectives" implied by the asymmetric pairs. We call these two perspectives "Neighbors" and "Settlers."

**Example: "White Neighbors"**  (Asks: what is the probability that Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians will have White neighbors?)

Whites

Blacks

Latinos                    Whites ?
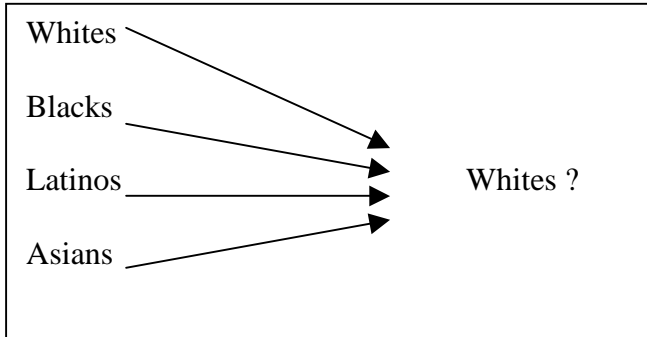
Asians

**Example: "White Settlers"**  (Asks: what is the probability that Whites will have Whites, Blacks, Latinos, and Asians *as* neighbors?)

                    Whites ?

                    Blacks ?

Whites

                    Latinos ?

                    Asians ?
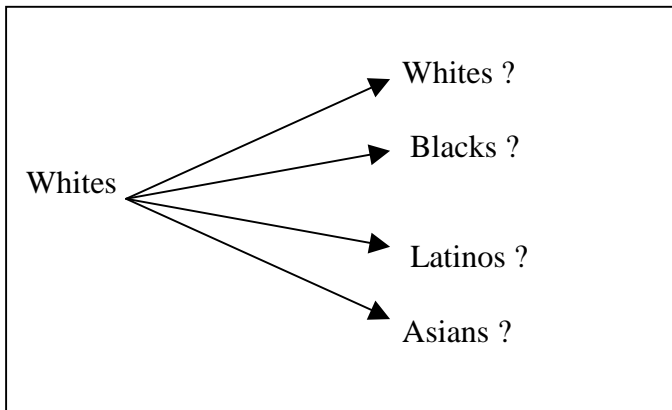
We have also taken care to explain our findings in straightforward, intuitive terms.  Each chart is accompanied with an explanation of the trends represented in it.

**3.0  Summary of Specific Findings**:


Great differences in the historical and recent dynamics of each of the major racial groups requires us to look at the question of "segregation" from each group's perspective:

### *WHITES*

- Whites became less isolated from all other racial groups, but only relatively so. Most  of this "desegregation" is merely attributable to the simple decline in the number and  proportion of Whites in the county (from 81% in 1960 to 32% in 2000).  Indeed, all four principal racial groups (Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians) were less likely to have White neighbors.

- While the Index of Diversity has steadily increased for the entire Los Angeles County, the Index of Dissimilarity (the standard measure of segregation), has remained constant for Whites since 1970, at exactly 57.

- If Whites have any neighbors of color, they are most likely in 2000 to be Hispanic (25% probability).  Twenty-five percent is the greatest chance Whites have ever faced of having a nonwhite neighbor.  Whites had very little likelihood of having a Black or Asian neighbor through 1970 (no greater than 2%), but this likelihood increased only slightly by 2000.  Whites have a 14% probability of having an Asian neighbor; they still have only a 5% probability of having a Black neighbor.

- Thus, from a White perspective, sharing neighborhoods with persons of color has only advanced for the two groups whose population explosion since 1960 has virtually forced this sharing.

- As a rule, Whites have *resegregated* themselves as the county as a whole has become hugely diverse.  Simply by being outnumbered, the White population *only seems* less spatially exclusive on the face of certain indices.  Examination of maps shows that the White population has retreated to the suburban fringe of the metropolis, barricaded now behind the highest property values.

### *BLACKS*

- Blacks have seen a very different transformation than Whites.  The probability that blacks would have White neighbors actually fell steeply from 1940 through 1970, from 45% to 15%, and has stayed virtually constant ever since (hovering between 17% and 18%.  Blacks have far fewer White neighbors than they did two generations ago, and no progress has been made since the nadir of the "urban crisis" in 1970.  Blacks have a slightly greater chance of having Asian neighbors since 1970, but this figure is still only 9% in 2000.  Most striking is that Blacks are far more likely to have Hispanic neighbors.  This probability shot up from 11% in 1970 to 41% in 2000.  Like Whites, Blacks have been less and less likely

to have members of their own race as neighbors (since 1970), but the probability that any other group would have Blacks as neighbors has stayed virtually constant at less than 10% since 1940 (except for three decades, 1950-1970, when Asians were slightly more likely to have Black neighbors).

- Blacks remain the most segregated racial group in Los Angeles County, by any measure.  Like Whites, the movement of Blacks displays a "retreat" pattern in the face of growing Hispanic and Asian populations.  Moreover, the compactness of the Black population seems to be reinforced by the voluntary self-segregation of affluent Blacks, who may choose not to assert their relatively greater freedom to settle in non-Black neighborhoods since the Civil Rights movement.

### *ASIANS AND HISPANICS*

- Asians and Hispanics, as "new immigrants" both differ from the experience of Whites and Blacks, who are best classified as "old immigrants."  Both of these groups have been less and less likely to have White neighbors, and more likely to have only members of their own racial group as neighbors.  But neither Asians nor Hispanics are more likely to have Blacks as neighbors.  Asians had a 16% chance of having a Black neighbor in 1960, but only a 4% probability of that now.  For Hispanics, the figure has simply remained consistently low, ranging between 5% and 9% since 1940.

- Both Hispanics and Asians are in a classic clustering enclave phase of immigration, but unlike historic waves of European immigrants, their enclaves are highly dispersed, and this sets the stage of much lower rates of segregation in the future.

## 4.0 DETAILED FINDINGS

### CHART 1: OVERALL POPULATION FIGURES

**Total and Proportional Racial Population of Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**

| | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Asian | 52,911 | 57,582 | 123,638 | 201,704 | 536,241 | 963,642 | 1,308,766 |
| Hispanic | 61,248 | 249,173 | 582,309 | 1,288,716 | 2,071,530 | 3,359,526 | 4,242,213 |
| Black | 75,206 | 214,897 | 459,806 | 755,719 | 924,774 | 931,449 | 924,518 |
| White | 2,620,450 | 3,796,190 | 4,897,580 | 4,798,872 | 3,977,480 | 3,647,555 | 3,043,840 |
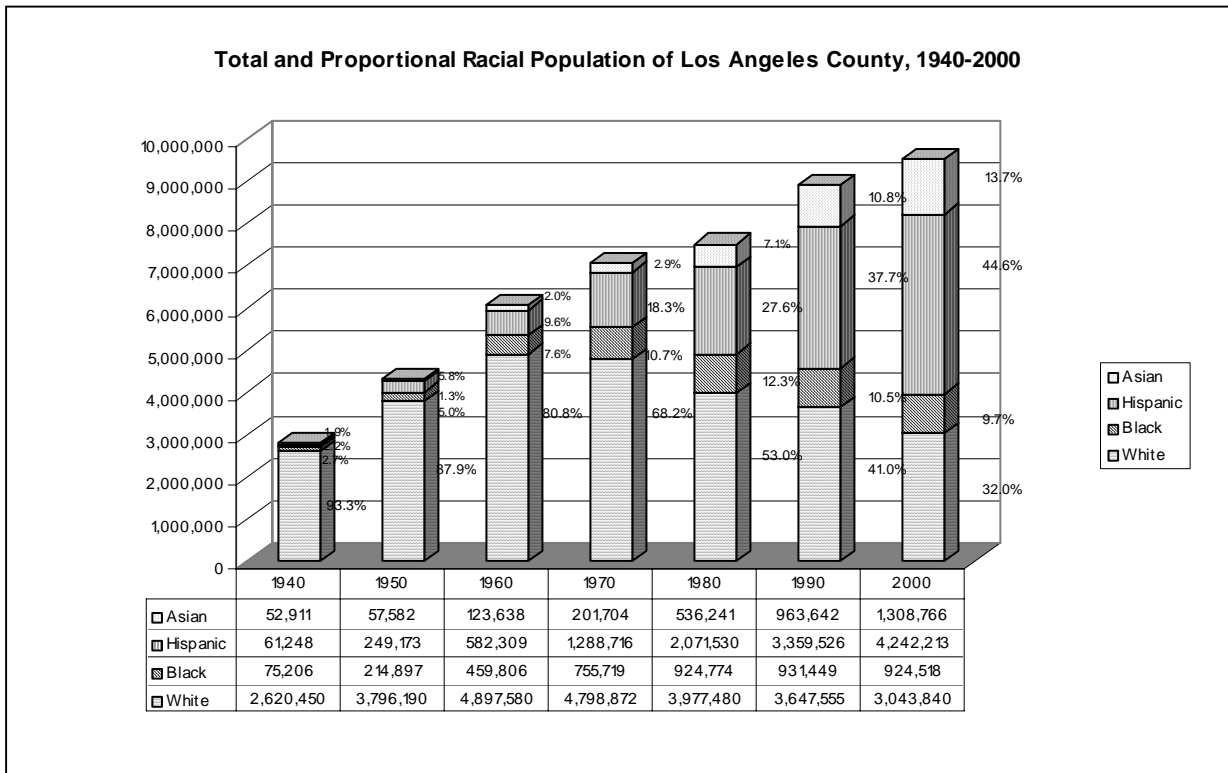
**Chart 1, "Total and Proportional Racial Population of Los Angeles County, 1940-2000,"** displays the total population, total subgroup population, and proportional share of each population in percentages, from 1940 to 2000.

While the most obvious fact about the county is its great diversity, notice also that even by 1980, a most important feature of the overall patterns is that Whites reached the apogee of their population size as early as 1960, and have been declining in absolute numbers ever since.

The Black population peaked in 1990, but has remained almost constant since 1980, at just under one million persons.

Indeed, despite spectacular growth of the Los Angels metropolis since 1940, Whites in 2000 are only slightly more numerous than they were in before the Second World War.

In other words, the growth of Los Angeles County since 1960 is almost entirely the work of non-White and non-Black groups.

# CHART 2: DIVERSITY INDEX

**Diversity Index: Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**

(c) Philip J. Ethington, University of Southern California. "Race Contours 2000 Project" http://www.usc.edu/sppd/Census2000

| | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Diversity Index | 0.22 | 0.23 | 0.38 | 0.54 | 0.73 | 0.82 | 0.84 |
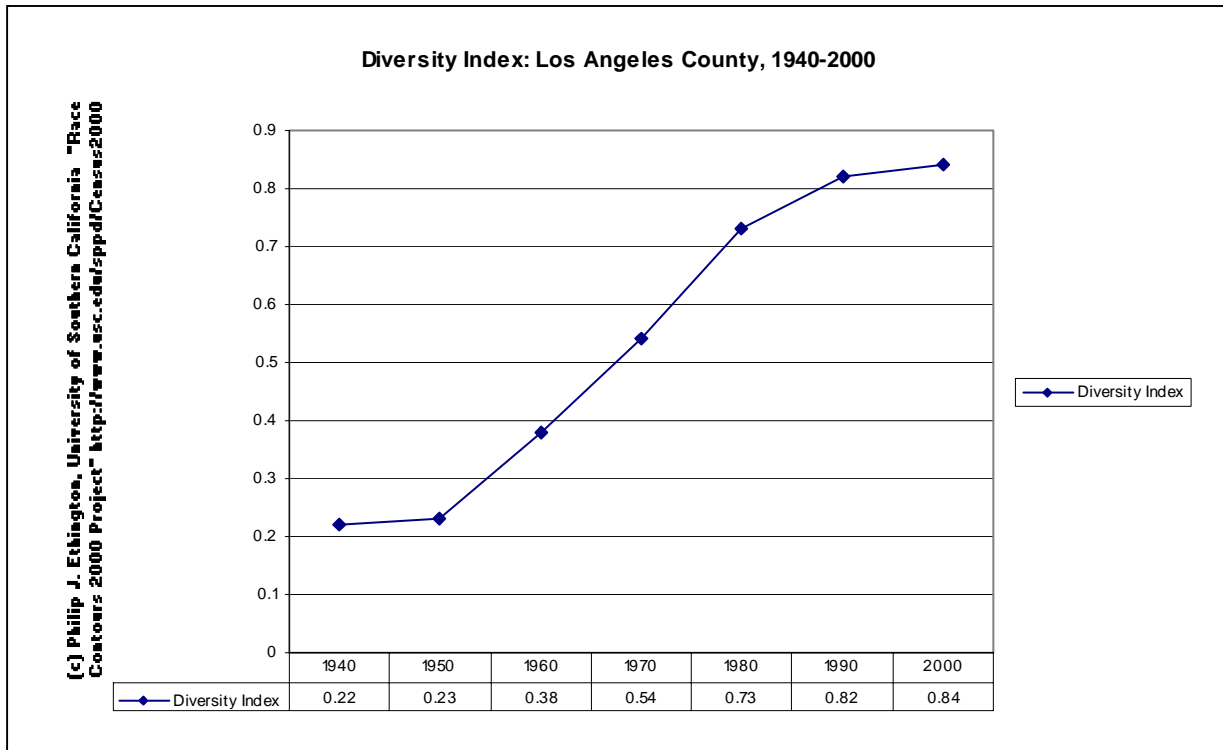
**Chart 2:** "**Diversity Index: Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**," is a very important measure of the increasing balance of the County's four principal racial groups since 1940.

In 1990, it was not clear if the Diversity Index was beginning to flatten-out, but the 2000 data clearly show that it is. Los Angeles County may be stabilizing in the extent of its diversity.

This graph of the sharply increasing Diversity Index can be very misleading, however. It seems to suggest that the Metropolis is becoming a multiracial borderland, wherein the races mix freely. Such is not at all the case, as the following Charts will make clear.

## CHART 3: INDEX OF DISSIMILARITY



**Index of Dissimilarity for Whites, Blacks, Hispanics and Asians in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**

| | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blacks | 0.82 | 0.82 | 0.88 | 0.88 | 0.76 | 0.64 | 0.57 |
| Whites | 0.62 | 0.71 | 0.64 | 0.57 | 0.57 | 0.57 | 0.56 |
| Asians | 0.57 | 0.7 | 0.5 | 0.44 | 0.51 | 0.5 | 0.51 |
| Hispanics | 0.58 | 0.85 | 0.56 | 0.48 | 0.36 | 0.41 | 0.43 |

**Chart 3**: "**Index of Dissimilarity for Whites, Blacks, Hispanics and Asians in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**," displays the most commonly used measure of "segregation" in American social science since the 1950s. Based always on a comparison of two groups (eg, White vs. Nonwhites, Blacks vs. Nonblacks), this measure is very easy to i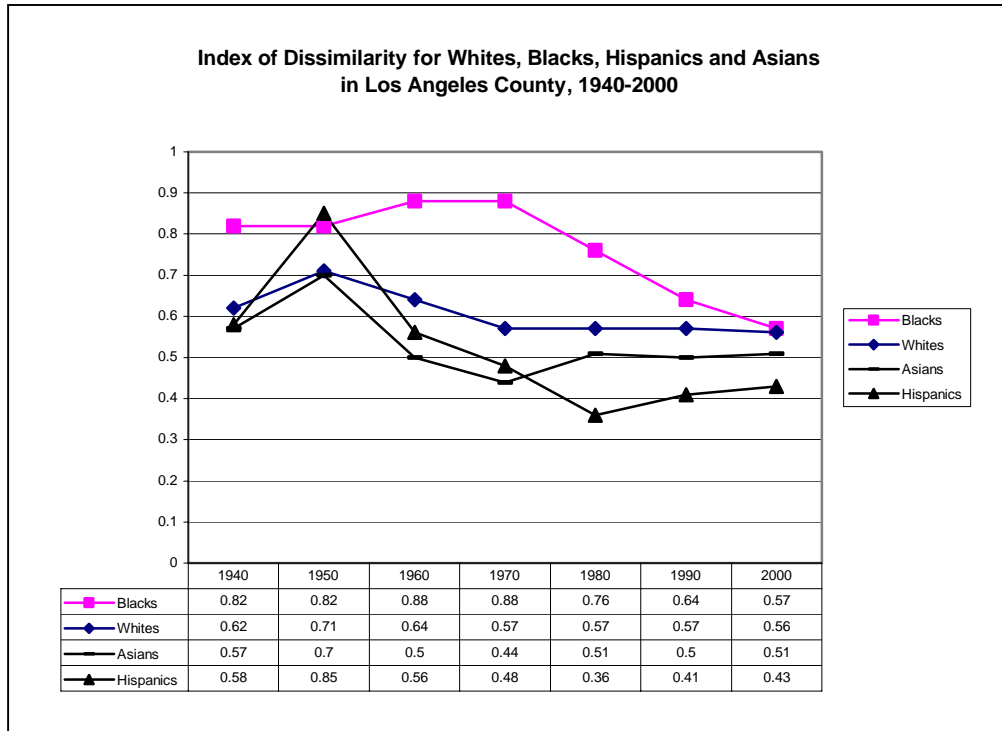nterpret. The Index of Dissimilarity or "ID" ranges from 0 to 1, and tells us the percentage of a given population that would have to change its residential location in order to even-out the distribution of that groups across the metropolitan space. If Blacks were evenly settled across the entire county, for example, their ID would be 0 (perfectly integrated). If Blacks only lived in census tracts that were 100% Black, and no where else, then their ID score would be 1 (perfectly segregated).

Scores of 70% or higher are considered to show serious segregation. Blacks in U.S. cities have shown scores higher than this figure since the Second World War, and yet in many western cities this figure has come down significantly. Here in Los Angeles the ID for Blacks has decreased significantly from the very high 88% in 1960 and 1970 to the relatively moderate 57% in 2000.

Just as remarkable, however, is how little the ID for Whites has changed: almost not at all since 1960. The figure has remained frozen at 57 or 56 since 1970, which is precisely the same in 2000 as the ID for Blacks. In other words, the ID also shows us that Whites and Blacks are equally segregated, and that most members of each group would need to move to achieve integration.

The ID scores for Hispanics and Asians are also significant. Hispanics are the least segregated racial group by this measure. Less than half of all Hispanics would need to move in order to achieve full spatial integration. Their score fell from 1950 to 1980, but is clearly on the rise again.

Asians are only moderately segregated, and have remained at the same level of segregations by the ID measure since 1980. About half would need to move to even out the spatial distribution in the county.

**Probability that Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians
in Los Angeles County will have White Neighbors, 1940-2000**



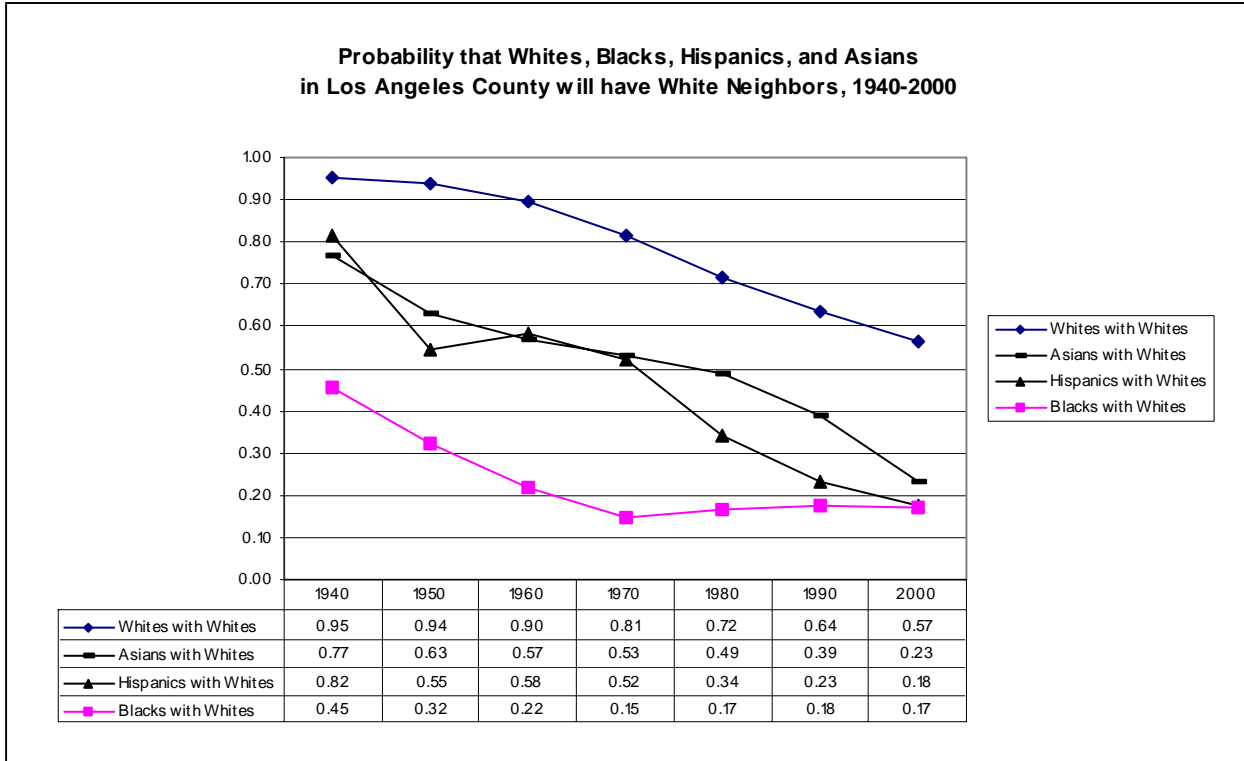|  | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Whites with Whites | 0.95 | 0.94 | 0.90 | 0.81 | 0.72 | 0.64 | 0.57 |
| Asians with Whites | 0.77 | 0.63 | 0.57 | 0.53 | 0.49 | 0.39 | 0.23 |
| Hispanics with Whites | 0.82 | 0.55 | 0.58 | 0.52 | 0.34 | 0.23 | 0.18 |
| Blacks with Whites | 0.45 | 0.32 | 0.22 | 0.15 | 0.17 | 0.18 | 0.17 |

**Chart 4a**, "**Probability that Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians in Los Angeles County will have White Neighbors, 1940-2000**," uses a much more powerful and revealing measure or segregation than the Index of Dissimilarity. The measure used in Charts 4a through 7b is the "*Exposure Index*," which measures the probability that members of one group will have neighbors of any other group. It ranges from 0 to 1. Unlike the relatively crude Index of Dissimilarity, the Exposure Index *takes into account the relative size of different groups*, and is capable of measuring the segregation conditions between *multiple racial groups* simultaneously. In order to make these patterns as clear as possible, we present them in pairs, each pair exploring the experience of each of the four principal racial groups.

Chart 4a tells us the probability that Whites, Blacks, Hispanics and Asians will have White neighbors. The probability that Whites will have white neighbors is a measure of their "isolation," and we see here that Whites have become less and less likely to have White neighbors. On the face of it, this seems like clear evidence of desegregation. But that is not the case. Notice that all racial groups have been less and less likely to have White neighbors since 1940! Indeed, Asians, Hispanics and Blacks in 2000 had less than a 24% chance of sharing their neighborhoods with Whites.

Blacks have been no more likely to have White neighbors in all the years since 1960.

The simple fact explaining the patterns in **Chart 4a** is that Whites are only seeming to be less isolated because they are grossly outnumbered, and some greater level of "exposure" to other racial groups is inevitable as the length of the perimeter, or circumference, around the segregated core of the metropolis continues to grow. **Chart 4b** will better clarify this situation.
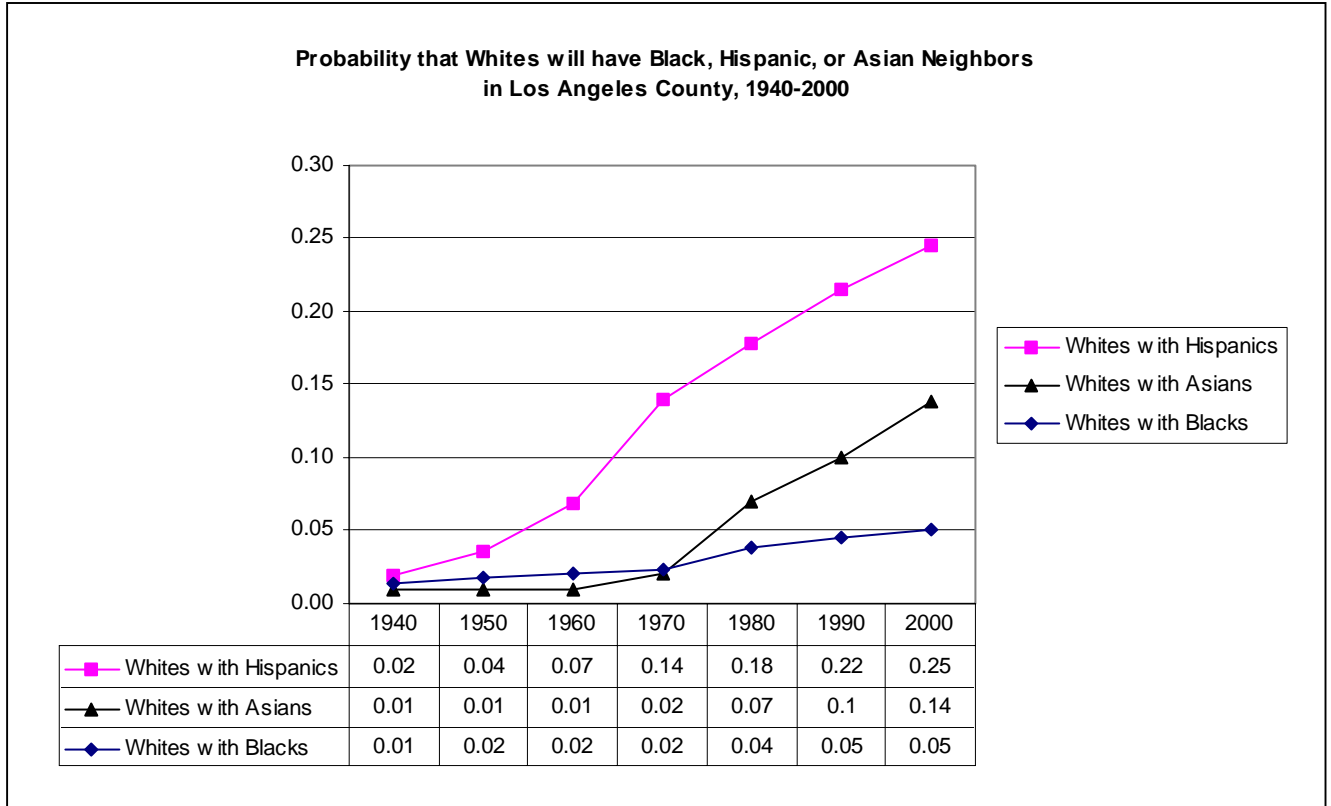
## Chart 4b: WHITE SETTLERS

**Probability that Whites will have Black, Hispanic, or Asian Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**

|  | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Whites with Hispanics | 0.02 | 0.04 | 0.07 | 0.14 | 0.18 | 0.22 | 0.25 |
| Whites with Asians | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.07 | 0.1 | 0.14 |
| Whites with Blacks | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.04 | 0.05 | 0.05 |

**Chart 4b**, "**Probability that Whites will have Black, Hispanic, or Asian Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**," looks at the White residential experience from the other direction as that shown in 4a. The Exposure Index is "asymmetric," which means that we can see the segregation relation from two different perspectives for each pair of racial groups. Since the groups are all very different in size and location, these figures are not simple the inverse, but reveal the less obvious conditions of segregation that are a function of location. Thus, for example, looking back at **Chart 4a**, we see that Blacks had a 45% chance of having White neighbors in 1940, but here in **Chart 4b** we see that Whites in that same year had only a 1% chance of having a Black neighbor. This asymmetry can easily be explained by the fact that Blacks were vastly outnumbered in 1940, and because most Black neighborhoods had significant White populations as well (which is no longer the case: Whites have almost completely removed themselves from Black neighborhoods).

The hard fact is that this severe level of segregation has not changed significantly in 60 years of struggles against the White-Black divide. White families in Los Angeles County in 2000 still had only a 5% chance of sharing their neighborhood with African American families.

Whites are significantly more likely to have Hispanic neighbors, 25% in 2000 compared with 14% in 1970. But again, this figure is easy to explain by rapid increase in the Hispanic population and the steady decrease of the White population. The Hispanic population has grown around many clusters of settlement in the County, and so the "edges" between Hispanic and White areas have grown in length, making increasing "exposure" more likely. To put this figure in perspective, we must again refer back to **Chart 4a**: Hispanics are less likely to have Whites as neighbors (18%), and this figure has been steadily declining.

Whites are only in the year 2000 significantly likely to have Asian neighbors (14%), but again, **Chart 4a** shows that as Asians grow in population size, they are less likely to have White neighbors (down to 23% in 2000 from 49% in 1980).
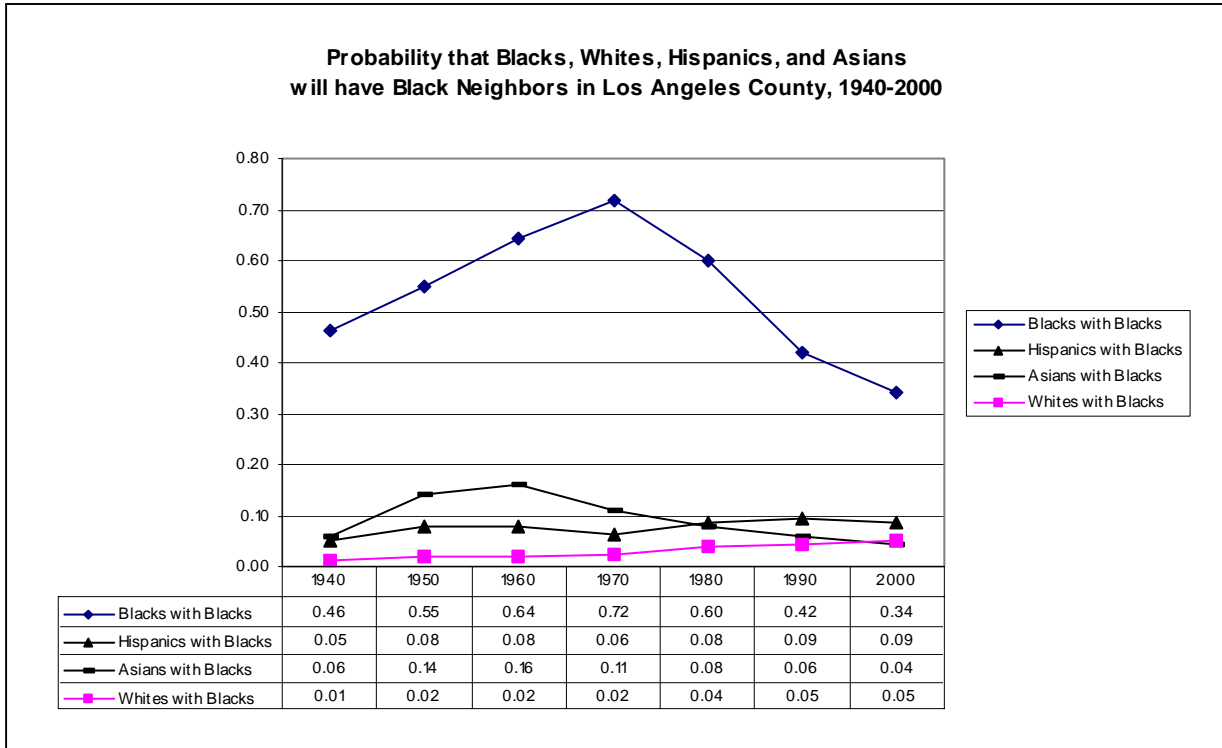
## Chart 5a: BLACK NEIGHBORS

**Probability that Blacks, Whites, Hispanics, and Asians will have Black Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**

|  | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blacks with Blacks | 0.46 | 0.55 | 0.64 | 0.72 | 0.60 | 0.42 | 0.34 |
| Hispanics with Blacks | 0.05 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.06 | 0.08 | 0.09 | 0.09 |
| Asians with Blacks | 0.06 | 0.14 | 0.16 | 0.11 | 0.08 | 0.06 | 0.04 |
| Whites with Blacks | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.04 | 0.05 | 0.05 |

**Chart 5a**, "**Probability that Blacks, Whites, Hispanics, and Asians  will have Black Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**,"  Shows first of all that Whites, Hispanics, and Asians are very unlikely to have Black neighbors in 2000.  Indeed, Whites and Hispanics are no more likely to have Black neighbors than they were in 1940 (or insignificantly so).

The second most striking pattern in Chart 5a is that Blacks become increasingly isolated from other groups (more likely to have only other Blacks as neighbors), from 1940 though 1970, and then that trend reverses.  In 1970, Blacks had a 72% of having black neighbors, but by 2000, Blacks had only a 34% chance of having a Black neighbor.

How is this second finding consistent with the first finding: that other groups re very unlikely to have Black neighbors?  Looking at **Chart 5b** explains what is happening.
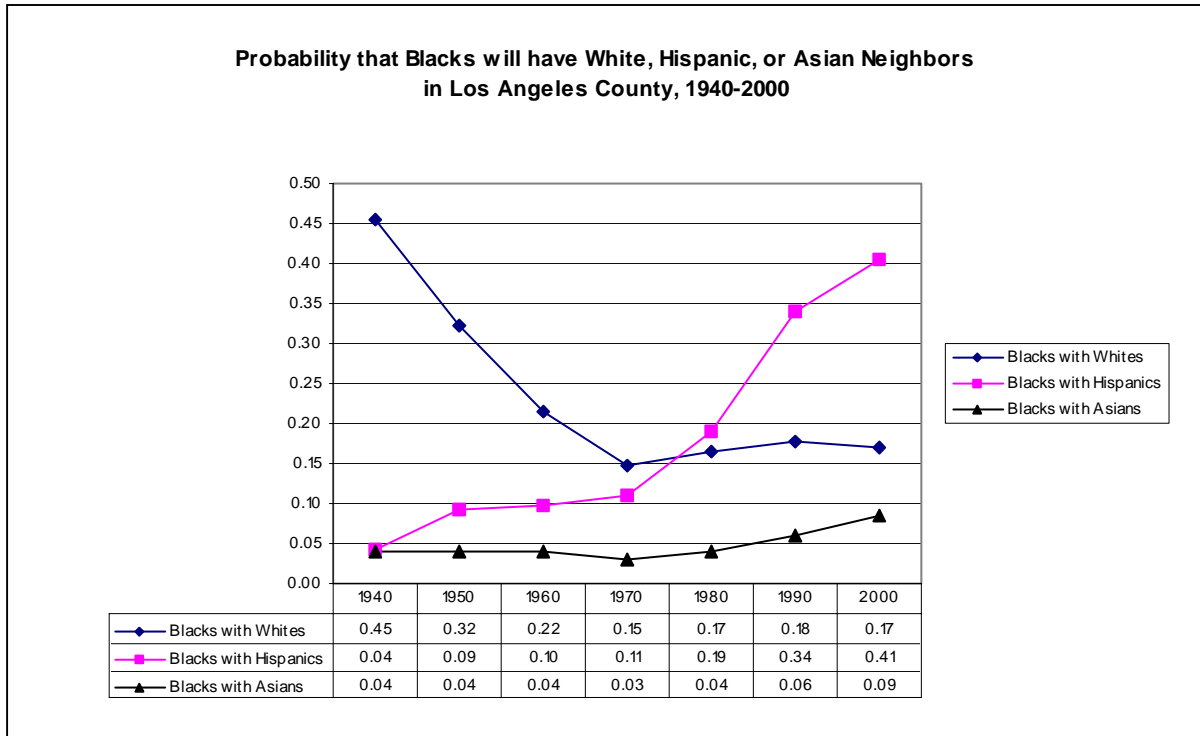
# Chart 5b BLACK SETTLERS

**Probability that Blacks will have White, Hispanic, or Asian Neighbors
in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**



|  | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blacks with Whites | 0.45 | 0.32 | 0.22 | 0.15 | 0.17 | 0.18 | 0.17 |
| Blacks with Hispanics | 0.04 | 0.09 | 0.10 | 0.11 | 0.19 | 0.34 | 0.41 |
| Blacks with Asians | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.04 | 0.06 | 0.09 |

**Chart 5b**, "**Probability that Blacks will have White, Hispanic, or Asian Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**," shows that the reason for Blacks' decreasing isolation is an increased sharing of neighborhood space with Hispanics, the most dynamic and rapidly expanding racial group in the metropolis.

Blacks are no more likely to have Whites as neighbors than they were at the peak of their isolation, in 1970. This probability has

And Blacks are still quite unlikely to have Asian neighbors, a rate which has increased from a mere 4% from 1940 through 1980 to 9% in 2000.

This chart points up the very serious question of Black-Hispanic territorial transitions. The time-series maps show high levels of displacement of Blacks by Hispanics since the 1960s.
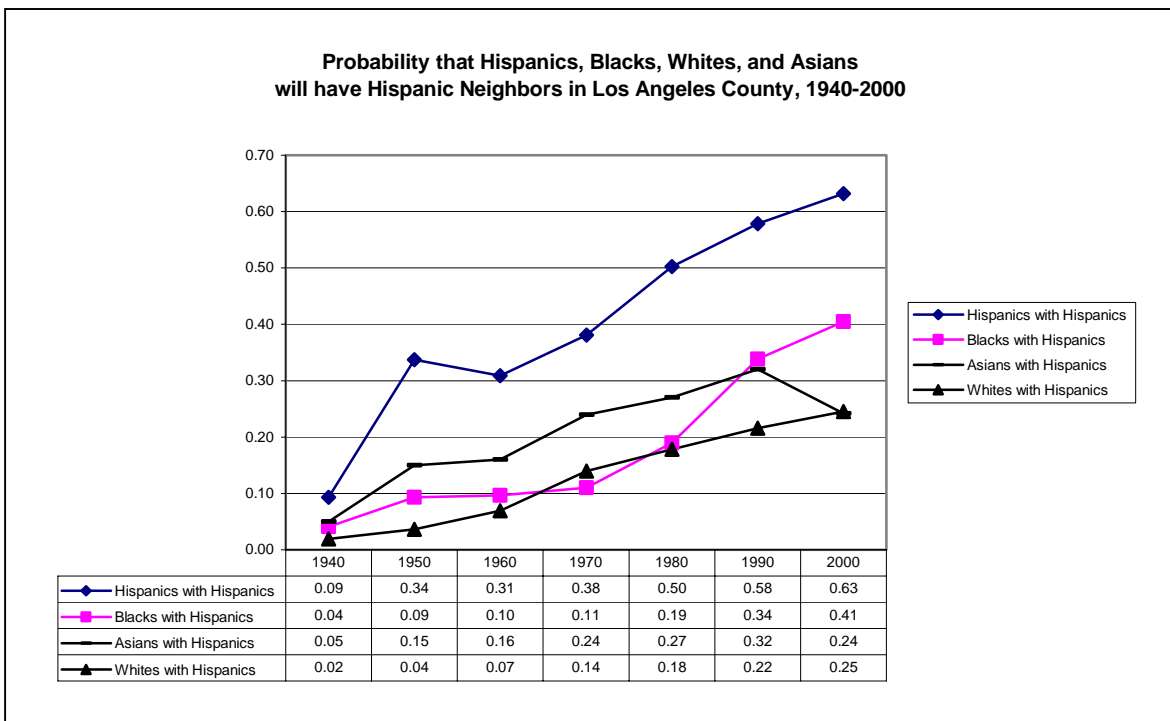
Charts 6a HISPANIC NEIGHBORS

**Probability that Hispanics, Blacks, Whites, and Asians
will have Hispanic Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**

|  | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hispanics with Hispanics | 0.09 | 0.34 | 0.31 | 0.38 | 0.50 | 0.58 | 0.63 |
| Blacks with Hispanics | 0.04 | 0.09 | 0.10 | 0.11 | 0.19 | 0.34 | 0.41 |
| Asians with Hispanics | 0.05 | 0.15 | 0.16 | 0.24 | 0.27 | 0.32 | 0.24 |
| Whites with Hispanics | 0.02 | 0.04 | 0.07 | 0.14 | 0.18 | 0.22 | 0.25 |

**Chart 6a**, "**Probability that Hispanics, Blacks, Whites, and Asians will have Hispanic Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**," shows first of all that all groups have been increasingly likely to have Hispanic neighbors since 1940.

The most dramatic increase has been in the isolation of Hispanics. By 2000 Hispanics were 63% likely to have only other Hispanic neighbors.

Next most dramatic has been the increase in likelihood that Blacks will have Hispanic neighbors, a pattern we already explored in Table 5b. However, here we can see that Blacks have increased their exposure to Hispanics at a higher rate and at greater levels that either Whites or Asians.

Whites and Asians have the lowest probability of sharing neighborhoods with Hispanics, and the score for Asians has actually decreased since 1990, from 32% to 24%.

Bear in mind, however, that the "Hispanic Neighbors" perspective is looking at Hispanics from the outside in. **Table 6b** shows what Hispanics see from the inside of their community looking out at Whites, Blacks, and Asians. The story is very different.
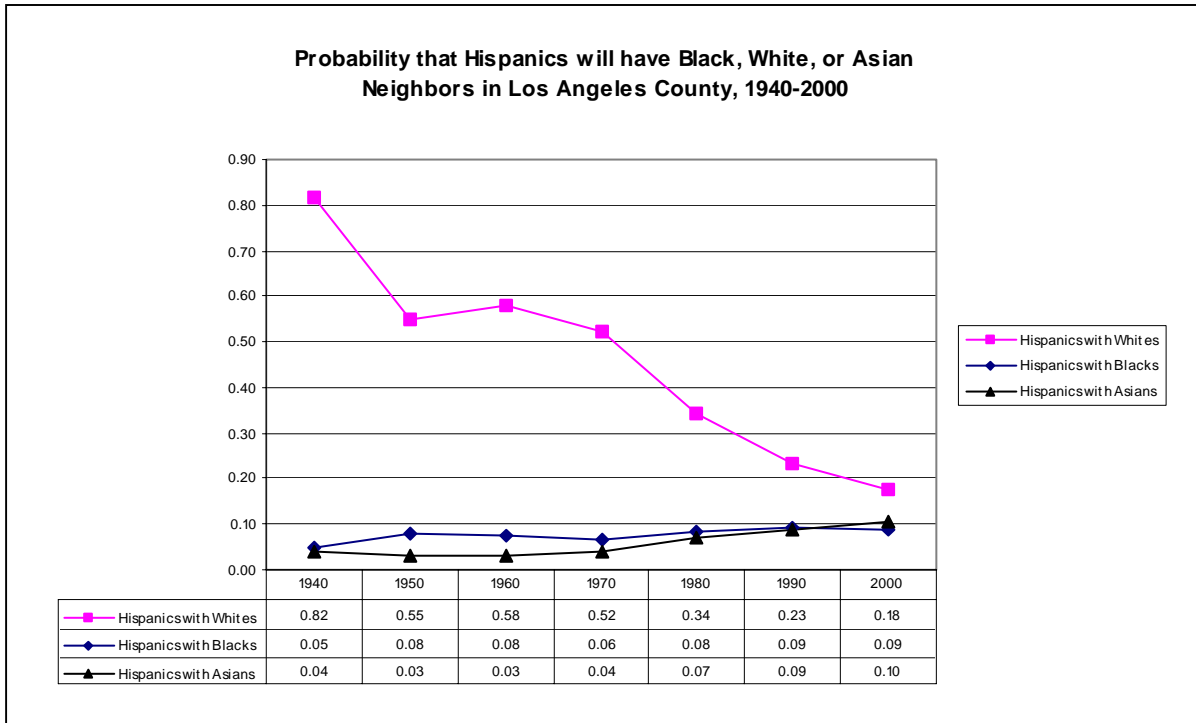
**Chart 6a HISPANIC SETTLERS**

**Probability that Hispanics will have Black, White, or Asian Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**

| | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hispanics with Whites | 0.82 | 0.55 | 0.58 | 0.52 | 0.34 | 0.23 | 0.18 |
| Hispanics with Blacks | 0.05 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.06 | 0.08 | 0.09 | 0.09 |
| Hispanics with Asians | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.04 | 0.07 | 0.09 | 0.10 |

**Table 6b**, "**Probability that Hispanics will have Black, White, or Asian Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**," tells a very striking story. Hispanics are increasingly unlikely to have non-Hispanic neighbors.

The steepest decline has been in the chances Hispanics have of sharing neighborhoods with Whites. This was a very high 82% in 1940 and has plummeted ever since, to only 18% in 2000.

Just as striking is that Hispanics have never had much exposure to Blacks or Asians as neighbors. These figures have remained almost flat at less than 10% since 1940.
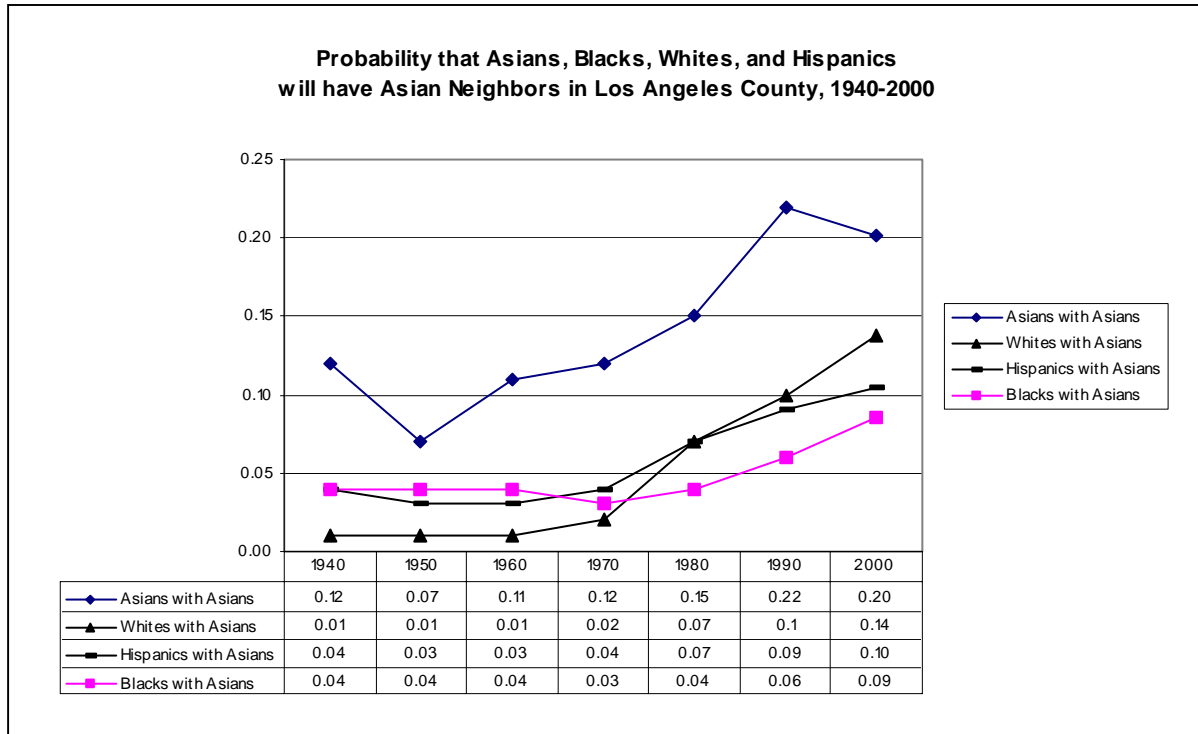
# Chart 7a: ASIAN NEIGHBORS

**Probability that Asians, Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics will have Asian Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**

| | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Asians with Asians | 0.12 | 0.07 | 0.11 | 0.12 | 0.15 | 0.22 | 0.20 |
| Whites with Asians | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.07 | 0.1 | 0.14 |
| Hispanics with Asians | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.04 | 0.07 | 0.09 | 0.10 |
| Blacks with Asians | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.04 | 0.06 | 0.09 |

**Chart 7a**, "**Probability that Asians, Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics will have Asian Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**," shows modest increases that all groups will have Asian neighbors—but most of all that Asians are more likely to have Asian neighbors.

Even so , it is very important to note that the rates a quite low. This chart is scaled to reach its maximum at 25%, so the values in it a quite small despite the visual effect of the rising lines.

The bottom line is that Whites, Blacks, and Asians in 2000 still had no more than a 14% chance of having an Asian neighbor.

The Asian population has bee rising more slowly than the Hispanic, to compare the two main immigrant groups, but its volume has now surpassed the one million mark, so we would expect that the non-Asian groups will be more likely to have Asian neighbors. The relatively low figures here, however, suggest that Asians are settling in clustered enclaves, a prediction supported by the companion **Table 7b**.
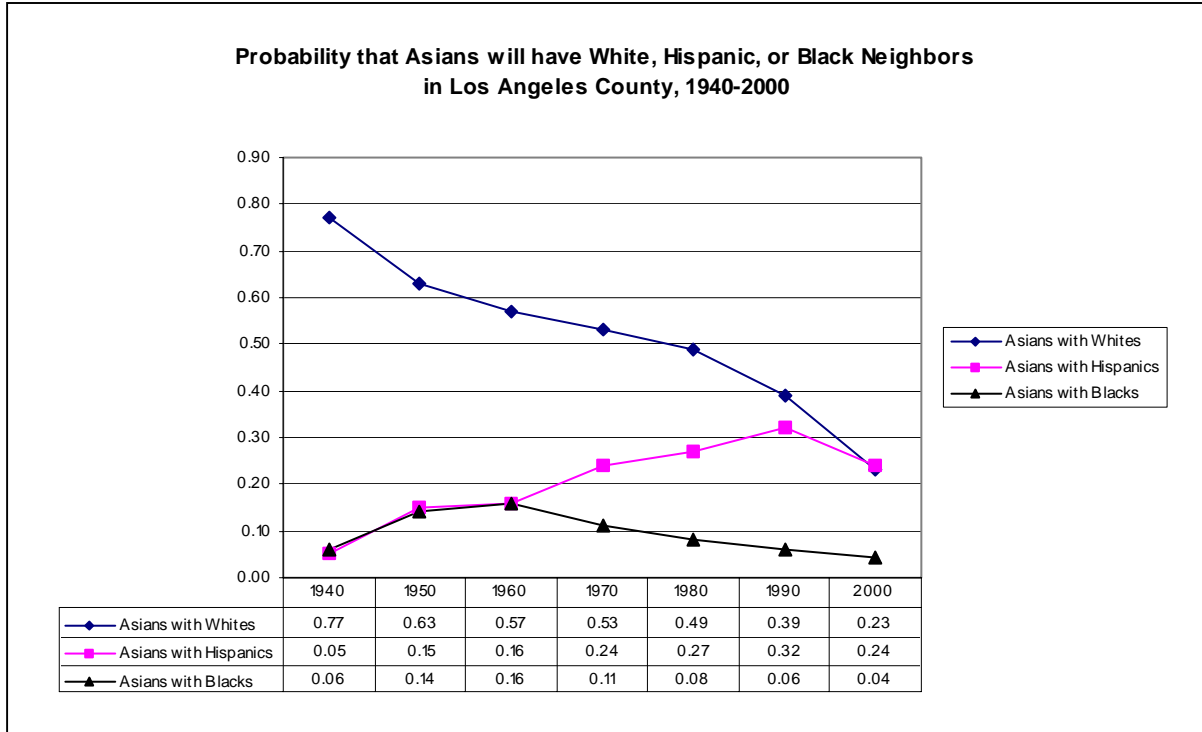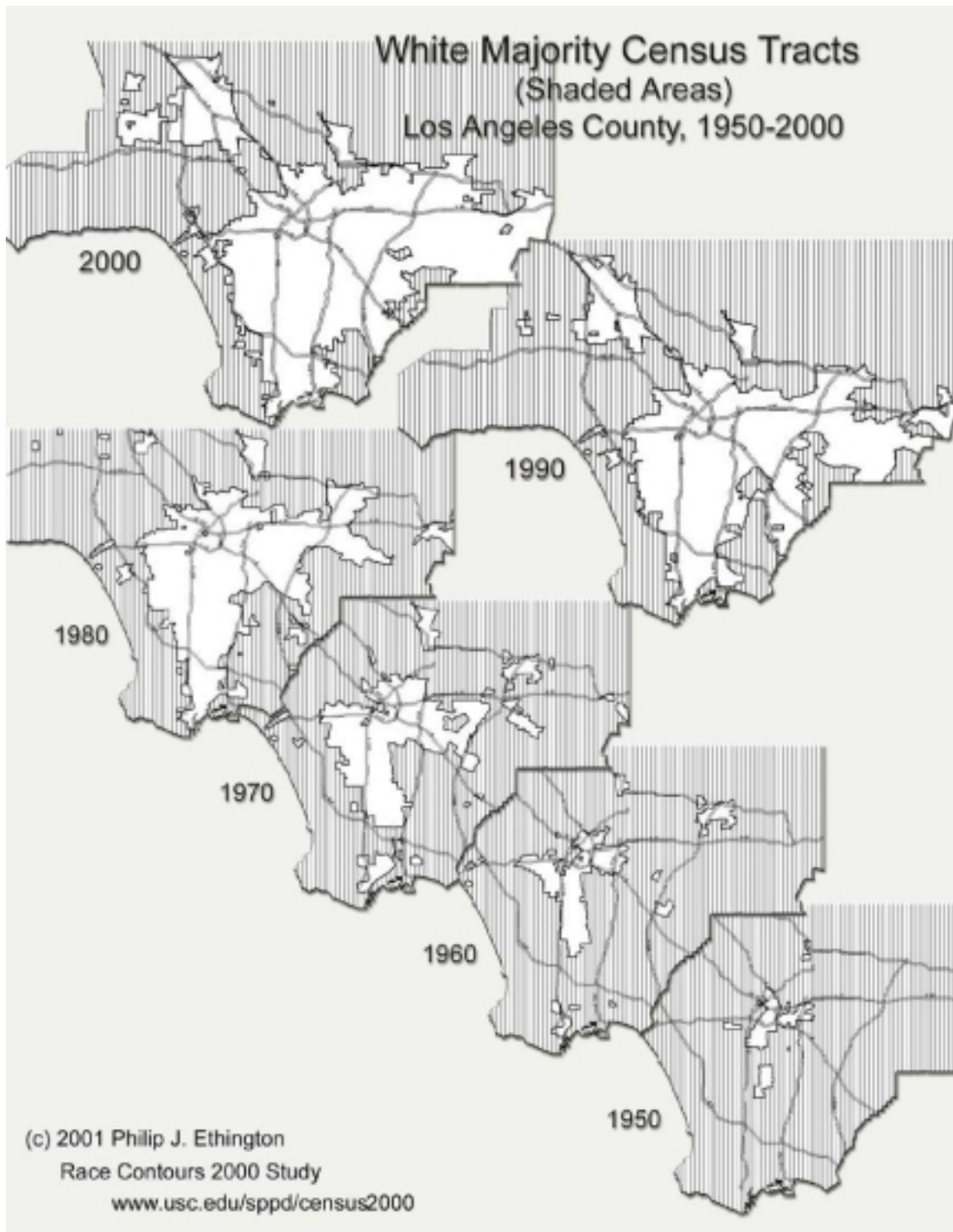
**Chart 7a: ASIAN SETTLERS**

**Probability that Asians will have White, Hispanic, or Black Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**

| | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Asians with Whites | 0.77 | 0.63 | 0.57 | 0.53 | 0.49 | 0.39 | 0.23 |
| Asians with Hispanics | 0.05 | 0.15 | 0.16 | 0.24 | 0.27 | 0.32 | 0.24 |
| Asians with Blacks | 0.06 | 0.14 | 0.16 | 0.11 | 0.08 | 0.06 | 0.04 |

**Chart 7b**, "**Probability that Asians will have White, Hispanic, or Black Neighbors in Los Angeles County, 1940-2000**" reinforces all the trends we have seen in the previous tables.

Asians are less and less likely to have White neighbors. This figure has dropped from 77% in 1940 to 39% in 1990 and 23% in 2000.

Asians were increasingly likely to have Hispanic neighbors until 1990, but this figure had begun to drop as well, to 24%.

Asians were never very likely to have Black neighbors, and this has steadily decreased since 1960, to a mere 4% in 2000.

White Majority Census Tracts
(Shaded Areas)
Los Angeles County, 1950-2000

2000

1990

1980

1970

1960

1950

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Race Contours 2000 Study
www.usc.edu/sppd/census2000

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