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***Tuesday's or Thursday's Child?
The Life Chances of Immigrant Offspring***

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ABSTRACT

Today, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, intense interest exists in the experiences of immigrants, stimulated by their large numbers, their geographical concentration, and by their changing countries of origin. To date, research has concentrated on foreign born adults, many of whom arrive as young adults. In contrast, this lecture focuses on the life chances and experiences of the offspring of immigrants, defined as the 1.5 and second generation. In the past, the theme of intergenerational mobility stimulated the development of a straight-line model of socio-economic success across first, second, and third-plus generations (defined respectively as the foreign born, children of foreign born parents, and those born in the host country of non-foreign born parents). Articulated in the past decade, and informed by patterns of social change, new revisionary models have emerged which cast doubt on intergenerational success stories. These models and their implications are reviewed alongside evidence that assesses the potential outcomes for Canada's immigrant offspring.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Monica Boyd joined the University of Toronto in 2001 as Canada Research Chair in Sociology. Previously, she was the Mildred and Claude Pepper Distinguished Professor of Sociology at Florida State University where she also was a research associate in the Center for the Study of Population and a research affiliate in the Pepper Institute on Aging.

A demographer and sociologist, Dr. Boyd has written numerous articles, books, and monographs on the changing family, gender inequality, international migration (with foci on policy, on immigrant integration, and on immigrant women), and ethnic stratification. Her current research projects are on immigrant inequality in the labour force, the migration of high-skilled labour, the achievements of immigrant offspring, and the social construction of ethnicity (supported by Statistics Canada).

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Introduction

I want to begin my talk this evening by thanking Terry Wotherspoon as Chair and others in the Department of Sociology at the University of Saskatchewan for inviting me to give the 34th Annual Pitirim Sorokin Lecture. Not only is it an honour to be here, but the invitation has reconnected me to Sorokin's important contributions and legacy.

I use the verb "reconnect" rather than "acquaint" for two reasons. First, unknown to most of my colleagues here, I experienced considerable contact with Sorokin's work in graduate school. Although I studied demography at Duke University, the department both offered and required students to take a number of theory courses. Several were taught by Edward A. Tiryakian, who had been a graduate student assistant for Professor Sorokin at Harvard in the 1950s (Tiryakian, 1996). His course requirements included reading Sorokin's books along with those of Talcott Parsons and others.

As a result, I read Sorokin's Social Mobility very early in my academic career. This book, first published in 1927, is the second reason for my use of the term "reconnect." Social Mobility was a pioneering work in the field of social stratification[1]. Despite later criticisms (Carlsson, 1963), three major legacies are evident in current discussions of social mobility. One legacy is the use of evidence. In his book, Sorokin adopted a more quantitative approach than found in his earlier works. He employed data, eschewing speculation and the "illustrative method in which general statements were confirmed by the use of one or two facts (Johnson, 1995).

Sorokin's book Social Mobility also left a rich conceptual legacy. Sorokin defined stratification as the differentiation of a population into hierarchical social strata (upper and lower) and emphasized the three major categories as being economic (income and wealth), political (hierarchies of authority and prestige), and occupationally based. He developed the concepts of horizontal and vertical mobility, defining the latter as the movement of an individual or group from one social strata to another. Such mobility could be upward, represented by movement from a lower social strata to a higher or downward, involving movement from a higher social strata to a lower one. He anticipated the later distinction between equality of condition and equality of opportunity, arguing that in an ideal mobile society, children are in positions that correspond to their abilities, but that for such a state to be realized there must be "an equality in the starting point of children and an equality of chance" (Sorokin, 1959: 530).

The final third legacy of Social Mobility was an investigative agenda that still permeates contemporary sociological research. This agenda included asking why some individuals are at the top of the hierarchy while others are at the bottom. Sorokin's answers emphasized the importance of institutions such as the family and schools (along with the army, churches, political parties, and occupational organizations) as mechanisms or channels of mobility. He also asked what were the consequences of social mobility, offering a range of negative and positive effects (Sorokin, 1922; Sorokin, 1959).

But why go into these specific contributions? The answer is simple - Sorokin's book Social Mobility left an imprint on the field of stratification, and thus – indirectly – on many studies of inequality, including those concerned with immigrants and their children. As I will shortly demonstrate, the topic of today's lecture on the life chances of immigrant offspring is very much a discussion about opportunities, the role of institutions, and intergenerational mobility - all discussed in Social Mobility.

In addition to the intellectual connection between Sorokin and today's talk, there also a personal side to Sorokin that connects him to the topic of immigrant children. Sorokin's own immigrant experience was sired in the turmoil of the Russian revolution and in his subsequent imprisonment by the Leninist government. He became a Russian émigré living in Prague, and subsequently was invited by two U.S. scholars, Edward C. Hayes and Edward A. Ross, to present a series of lectures on the Russian Revolution. He arrived in 1923 ahead of schedule in order to learn English, and during the period of preparation also worked on several books (Johnson, 1995). His wife Elena joined him in March 1924, and later that year he received an offer to join the faculty at the University of Minnesota. He moved to Harvard University in 1930. There, in Boston, two sons were born: Peter in 1931 and Sergei in 1933. By Sorokin's own account[2], they were remarkably successful immigrant offspring (Sorokin, 1967:253).

Until recently, the experiences of immigrant offspring were relatively neglected, in part because large flows of international migrants directs attention to their experiences, away from that of later generations. Also, data on immigrant offspring have not been as plentiful as data on adult immigrants. A question on birthplace, for example, has appeared on virtually every Canadian census during this past century whereas questions on the birthplace of parents, necessary to determine offspring of the foreign born, were asked only in 1931 and 1971. This absence of survey data on immigrant offspring is surprising for two reasons. First, looking at the children of immigrants represent another facet of immigrant integration – one that uses a generational approach. Second – as more than one analyst observes – the adaptation of today's and tomorrow's immigrant offspring will be important information for those seeking to assess benefits and costs of immigration.

As it turns out, there has been a revival of interest in immigrant offspring during last decade in North America. This revival has reshaped earlier research on immigrant offspring in three fundamental ways: first, and most importantly, it has rewritten much of the earlier thinking about likely outcomes for offspring; second, it has redirected attention away from the experiences of adults to youth still living with parents; and third, it has broadened the traditional focus on immigrant offspring to include also the foreign-born who have immigrated as children. Taken together, these developments represent a very large area for discussion and research.

My talk today is more specific, and has three major objectives: initially, I want to alert you to the changes in current day approaches to the study of North America's immigrant offspring. My outline of this change has two major components: I begin by reviewing the so-

call “orthodox” approach used to study both immigrants and their offspring. This review will demonstrate that the orthodox approach very much incorporates the concepts of social mobility and life chances. I also itemize those studies supporting the “orthodox” model. I then present the North American revisionist perspectives. The term “North American” is too generic perhaps, for much of this recasting has been done by United States scholars within the context of American history. Because of this, my third objective is to place these recent developments in the Canadian context, both empirically and theoretically. Doing so highlights the applicability, but also possibly lack of fit, of conceptual revisions derived from the United States immigration experience. It also indicates the data gaps and needs for research on immigrant offspring in Canada.

Tuesday's Child

Monday's child is fair of face,
Tuesday's child is full of grace,
Wednesday's child is full of woe,
Thursday's child has far to go,
Friday's child is loving and giving,
Saturday's child works hard for a living,
But the child that is born on the Sabbath day
Is blithe and bonny, good and gay.

(Bray, 1838)

How has research on immigrant offspring been recast in recent years? This question can be answered by looking at the range of outcomes for children, contained in a 19th century ditty, not so coincidentally embedded in an Anglo-dominant culture. Prior to the 1990s, the orthodox approach to the study of the second generation stressed an optimistic scenario for immigrant offspring. Tuesday’s child was indeed within the grasp of those immigrant offspring as each successive generation underwent acculturation and assimilation. Recent revisionary approaches have lingered more on the plight of Thursday's child as an equally likely scenario facing today’s immigrant offspring.

The script of “Tuesday’s Child” rests on the assimilation perspectives originating with Robert Park and other sociologists at the University of Chicago during the 1920s[3]. At that time, Chicago had a large foreign born population, which arrived during a time of unprecedented international migration between the late 1800s and the onset of World War I[4]. Large flows of newcomers raise a number of questions, among them: how well do these newcomers do; what inequalities exist among them and between themselves and the native born; how are they incorporated into the host society; and what are the barriers that exist? In addressing these questions, assimilation perspectives developed at Chicago and elaborated through the 1960s stressed the growing similarity between immigrants and the native born over time (for a review: see Alba and Nee, 1997). Growing similarity could include cultural similarity, often referred to as “acculturation.” However, in the context of the agricultural and manufacturing society of the early 1900s which recruited unskilled immigrant workers, growing similarity implied images of equality and upward mobility with respect to social, political, and economic dimensions.

Drawing on the works of the late 19th century social scientist, Max Weber, economic dimensions included “life chances.” This term was subsequently defined by later writers as those characteristics associated with membership in economic classes and with productive roles (see Tumin, 1967: 56-66). Life chances typically refer to physical and mental health, levels of education, levels of poverty, quality of housing and neighborhoods, occupations and income.

This depiction of the experiences of newcomers now is called the “straight line” or “linear” assimilation model, and because of its lengthy existence and influence, it often is labeled the “orthodox” assimilation model. The model (which also is sometimes called a “theory”) posits that with increasing length of time spent by immigrants in the host society, “newcomers” and the native-born become similar. This approach remains very much part of the popular and academic vernacular. For example, the question “how long does it take for the earnings of immigrants to ‘catch-up’ to comparably trained Canadian-born” illustrates its continued currency in contemporary research.

However, as any student of stratification knows, the time frame for mobility or change occurs not only over a lifetime, but also over generations. As a result, the linear assimilation model is used to assess the experiences of the immigrant offspring vis-à-vis other generations.

In this approach, distinctions typically are made between the first, second, and third generations. Foreign-born adults are considered to be the “first generation” to arrive in a new country. Canadian-born offspring of this “first” generation are called the “second” generation while those Canadian born who have Canadian born parents are called the “third” generation. In actual use, however, more complex distinctions are employed. Some writers use the term “third-plus” to refer to the fact that the “third” generation will capture those who have been in the host country for successive generations beyond the third only generation. As well, the “first” generation term sometimes refers only to those who arrived as adults, with the term “1.5 generation” referring to those foreign born who immigrated as children, and who thus straddle the first and second generations in terms of exposure to the host country language(s) and institutions.

When applied to intergenerational change, the linear assimilation model posits the following. First, the first generation will be handicapped relative to the second and third generations for any number of reasons: lack of host country language proficiency; unfamiliarity with host society institutions; difficulties in obtaining recognition for credentials and labour market related skills, and quite possible prejudice and hostility toward those with a foreign accent and mannerisms. However, the second generation (and even the 1.5) are educated and socialized within host society institutions. They will not face these difficulties; instead they undergo further acculturation into the dominant culture (Rong and Brown, 2001). The process of near similarity and acculturation is virtually complete by the third generation with the result that these descendants of immigrants are virtually indistinguishable from the rest of society (Gans, 1992). According to this model, the second generation either is like the third generation with respect to any number of life chances (see Handlin, 1966: xiv) or else somewhere in between the

first and third generation. By implication, the 1.5 generation consisting of persons who immigrated as children, should be in-between the first and second generation.

In recent years, research results have prompted a variant of the linear progression model called the “success orientation model” (Boyd and Grieco, 1998) or the “immigrant optimism hypothesis” (Kao and Tienda, 1995). Like the “linear assimilation” model, the success orientation model emphasizes the progress made by “newcomer” groups over generations. However it depicts the relative over-achievements of the second generation compared to the first and third generations. Such over-achievements are attributed to two factors: 1) the success orientation of the foreign born family of origin which communicates high aspirations and expectations to its offspring, and alternatively 2) the marginality which the second generation experiences as a result of standing between two cultures - that of their parents and that of the host society (Handlin, 1966: xv; Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1937).

Does the straight line or “success orientation” model in fact describe the life chances of the immigrant offspring? The answer is bound to vary, depending on the population under scrutiny (the 1.5 or the second generation), the indicator (health versus education), the stage in the life cycle (adults versus children at home) and the reference group[5]. However, a “yes” answer appears to exist with respect to educational and occupational attainments of second generation adults. Analysis of large surveys covering nationally representative populations show that in general the second generation has educational levels and occupational attainments that are superior to the foreign-born population and often over-achieve relative to the third-plus generation. These findings are observed in recent American and Canadian studies for adults (for examples see: Boyd, 2001; Boyd and Grieco, 1998; Farley and Alba, 2002; Hirshman, 2001; Richmond and Kalbach, 1980).

Even though keen interest exists regarding the fate of the second generation, the absence of large surveys or censuses collecting parental birthplace information still forces many researchers to look at the experiences of the 1.5 generation, who are still living with parents [6]. Here findings also are consistent with the linear, or success models. With some exceptions discussed below, adolescents who arrive as children do not appear to drop out of school any more than native born adolescents (Hirshman, 2001). Indeed, study after study reports that the Asian national origin groups uphold the “model minority” image in their higher high school enrollment rates. A comprehensive National Research Council (U.S.) study found that children in immigrant families (including both the 1.5 and second generation) in general had higher grades and scored higher on tests than did the native born. They also had fewer acute and chronic health problems (Hernandez and Charley, 1998). Similar results are reported for Canada, using the national Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (Beiser, Hou, Hyman and Tousignant, 1998; Kobayashi, Moore, Rosenberg, 1998). However, studies in Canada and in the United States confirm that for certain country of origin groups, poverty rates, and welfare assistance rates are higher for children who are living in families where at least one parent is foreign born (Boyd, 2000; Hernandez, 1999; Jensen, 1990; Lansdale and Oropesa, 1995). The critical question here is whether or not these lower life chances in youth will negatively impact

on subsequent life chances, such as those of school leaving, educational attainment and labour force involvement. Alba and Nee (1997) note that childhood circumstances for young immigrant offspring are not necessarily identical to, or predictive, of experiences in adulthood.

Thursday's Child Revisited

Despite studies that confirm the orthodox script for immigrant offspring, in recent years this classical model has been extensively criticized. For some critics, the linear assimilation model is historically specific, not only because of the normative element that views acculturation and assimilation as optimal and desirable, but also because of what it omits. At best a socio-cultural theory (Gans, 1992), the straight-line or linear model pays little or no attention to influences coming from the following: shifts from an industrial to a service based economy; economic booms and busts; changing residential patterns in the context of post-world War II metropolitan growth and suburbanisation. Critics also note the altered circumstances of migration. The cessation of immigration flows between World War I and II created a breathing spell during which acculturation and assimilation occurred for many immigrants and their offspring. Today, immigrant groups that arrived in the 1970s and 1980s are constantly replenished by new arrivals in the 1990s and beyond. By maintaining ethnic identity and ethnic based communities, this renewal alters the cultural and social landscape in which immigrant children grow up. Finally, perhaps the sharpest criticism of the linear (and success) model is that it ignores structural impediments arising from ethnic and racial discrimination (Alba and Nee, 1997; Gans, 1992; Massey, 1995; Zhou, 1997a, 1997b).

Given such harsh criticisms, it is not surprising to find that the development of new models that modify the optimistic view of integration and acculturation implied by linear assimilation theory and its related over-achievement model. European scholars have long noted the failure of the linear assimilation model with respect to immigrant offspring. The European experience, with its inflow of migrants viewed as racially distinctive, portrays a situation of structural impediments to both the first and second generation groups and the formation and persistence of a "foreign" underclass (see: Faist, 1993, 1994; Wilpert, 1988). In such circumstances, social mobility of the second generation is depressed, and the socioeconomic position of the second generation is expected to be similar to that of the first generation. Both are disadvantaged compared to the majority native born population. Further, it is uncertain that structural barriers associated with racial discrimination will be removed for the third and later generations.

This portrayal of second generation disadvantage is not uniquely European however. Since the late 1970s, analysts in the United States have noted the underclass characteristics of Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Haitian groups. Building on these observations, American scholars began to discuss the possibility of "second-generation decline" (Gans, 1992) or "second-generation revolt" (Perlmann and Waldinger, 1997) in which immigrant offspring would have

lower achievements than their parents or the third generation. In a separate but related initiative, two American scholars, Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou, advanced two models in which assimilation is segmented. These models rest on the U.S. experience highlighting how race and ethnicity intersects with parental and community based resources to shape the experiences of immigrant offspring (Portes, 1995; Portes and Zhou, 1992; 1993; Zhou and Bankston, 1998).

What scripts do these two models of segmented assimilation provide for immigrant offspring? One depicts offspring rejection of parental values emphasizing education and hard work as mechanisms of mobility in the host society. Instead second generation offspring undergo acculturation and integration into a primarily black inner city underclass where outcomes are those of poverty and irregular employment. According to Portes and Zhou (1993), second generation Caribbean youths are examples of this segmented, or truncated, assimilation. The second scenario emphasizes economic advancement but with deliberate preservation of ethnic membership and values and with continued economic attachment to ethnic communities. Second generation groups who are most likely to display this patterns are members of immigrant groups that have well-developed ethnic economies such as the Chinese or Cuban origin groups (Portes, 1995; Portes and Zhou, 1993; also see Hirshman, 1994; Waters, 1994; 1997).

As developed most fully in the writings of Portes, Zhou and their colleagues, the new sociological perspectives of the 1990s offer conditional scripts. Which pathway is followed by an immigrant offspring group is heavily influenced by two sets of social relations: those which exist between parents and offspring and which convey norms, values, and expectations; and those which link parents and children to others. In the segmented assimilation approach, ethnic community ties and social networks are important mechanisms for accessing resources, particularly when parents lack human capital (such as education, labour market experience, or language skills) necessary to sustain the desired consumption patterns of their children and to socialize offspring for life in the host society. In the absence of human capital, and in the face of racial barriers and inner city residential nearness to the black underclass, social capital is the key to thwarting the segmented assimilation pattern of downward mobility into an underclass culture. Social capital is defined as the ability to command scarce resources by virtue of membership in networks, associations or other social institutions. In an ethnic community, social capital allows parents to call on co-ethnics to reinforce normative expectations and to monitor the behaviours of offspring (see Zhou and Bankston, 1994; 1998). Resources outside the immediate family such as educational loans or jobs for immigrant offspring also may be obtained through networks (Portes, 1995; Portes and Zhou, 1993). In such circumstances, immigrant offspring in adulthood may follow the orthodox model of assimilation into the larger society, or they may remain socially and economically active within an ethnic community.

Without social capital intimately associated with ethnic bonds, four other factors can determine the pathway of immigrant offspring. According to Portes and Zhou, in the absence of strong community ties, parental authority is most likely to be undermined under conditions of poverty and/or in settings where only one adult is present or when employment demands frequently make both parents absent. The absence of a strong parental influence on normatively

set goals is most likely to be converted into that of downward mobility and oppositional behaviours when three additional conditions hold: 1) geographical residence in poor inner city areas of the United States; 2) historically rooted racial barriers which over time have created an underclass culture; and 3) the existence of institutions such as schools which provide settings in which underclass norms and oppositional cultures are communicated. Depressed economic opportunities either due to economic restructuring or to pre-existing racial/ethnic barriers contribute further to the likelihood of assimilation into an underclass culture and to downward mobility when compared to the parental generation or to mainstream groups.

In sum, scholars now outline three possible outcomes for immigrant children: 1) straight line assimilation to the mainstream society, with health, education, and economic success being major indicators; 2) a continued emphasis on ethnic identity accompanied by integration into ethnic enclaves; and 3) the assumption of underclass identities along with marginal labour market integration. Class and race/ethnicity influence the likelihood of each scenario. Groups that immigrate with high economic resources appear to be the most likely to follow the first pathway. Lower resources and strong racial/ethnic fault lines increase the likelihood of the second or third pathway. However, by themselves, low resources and ethnic boundaries do not illicit one segmented assimilation outcome versus another for immigrant offspring. Whether the second or third scenario holds is conditional on two factors: 1) exposure to alternative ethnic and racial identities and 2) the presence or absence of ethnic communities with economic and social resources that can be accessed by parents and offspring.

A Forward Look: Immigrant Offspring in Canada

The segmented assimilation models of the 1990s rest heavily on American empirical research and conceptual endeavors. Left relatively unexplored, however, is the applicability of these segmented assimilation models to other countries and the conditions under which immigrant offspring in other societies might follow the three models of linear (or success) assimilation, ethnic incorporation or underclass assimilation. In the remaining time left in this lecture, I want to pursue this, focusing on immigrant offspring in Canada. My remaining objectives are two-fold: 1) to review with you what we know empirically - what studies so far have told us about the fates of immigrant offspring; and 2) to conceptually assess the “fit” of the American derived models with the Canadian experience.

In terms of what we know, it is worth reiterating that early studies, conducted through the 1970s and 1980s generally support the linear assimilation model with respect to socio-economic achievement. This is not a case of the general masking the particular. Earlier Canadian studies also find inter-generational mobility for immigrant offspring belonging to various ethnic origin groups (see: Boyd, 1982; Boyd and Norris, 1994; Chimos, 1990; Isajiw, Sev'er and Driedger, 1993; Jones, 1985; Kalbach et. al., 1983; Koch, 1986; Richmond, 1986; Richmond and Verma, 1978). More recently in the 1990s, a few studies of adults and many studies of children and

youth offer support for the linear assimilation model.

However, in past studies of adults, most of the 1.5 and the second generations are of European origin. Why this is so should be fairly evident – immigrants arriving as children and those born in Canada to foreign-born parents have to grow up before life chance indicators such as education, earnings can be observed. Before the 1960s, various immigration acts and regulations severely limited migration from regions other than Europe. Changes in 1962 and in 1967 to immigration regulations (upheld later in the Immigration Act, 1976) replaced national origins as the criterion of admission with those of family reunification, labour market skills and, more recently, refugee status.

As a result, the geographical origins of the foreign born shifted dramatically away from European and United States source countries. Census data for 2001 show declining shares of these groups by period of admission. Among those immigrants who arrived in Canada before 1961 and were counted in the 2001 census, 94.5% were born in the United States or Europe while 3.2% were born in Asian countries. But for those immigrating to Canada between 1991 and 2001, less than a quarter (22.3%) were from the United States or Europe while nearly 6 out of 10 (58.2%) were born in Asia. In turn, these changes in the origin countries of immigrants have altered the ethnic and racial composition of Canada's foreign-born population. In 2001, three-quarters (73%) of immigrants who came in 1990s were members of visible minority groups[7].

One implication is that immigrant offspring who are children today and who will be adults in the future have very different ethnic and racial characteristics and identities from the traditional European-US profile of earlier groups. They also are highly concentrated in a few cities or areas - New York, Miami, and Los Angeles in the United States and in Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton, and Vancouver in Canada. When they enter the labour force, they will participate in a highly restructured economy compared to the past. Today's post-industrial economy is the result of employment shifts away from manufacturing to services. Further, jobs in high wage service industries exist alongside high demand for workers in low wage service jobs where economic advancement may be limited.

The shifts in ethnic and racial composition of immigrant youth, high geographical concentration and a bifurcated post-industrial economy raise scenarios of second generation decline and of segmented assimilation. But what evidence do we have that these outcomes have or will occur? The answer is equivocal. American studies do observe diminished life chances for specific groups of the 1.5 or second generations. Most of these studies focus on children and many are in depth case studies that emphasize the corollaries of ethnic identities. At this very moment, we have only a handful of Canadian studies on the topic of the life chances of visible minority immigrant offspring, including the second generation. One cluster observes that the 1.5 generation youth of refugee origins experience high levels of mental stress, but comparisons groups are not provided, and it is difficult to know if these levels of stress will persist into adulthood. My own research, just published, does not support the underclass segmented

assimilation model. Compared to the not-visible-minority third-plus generation, the odds of attaining at least a high school certificate or degree are over 4 times greater for the visible minority 1.5 and second generations who are between 20 and 65 years of age (Boyd, 2002). As well, immigrant offspring who are members of visible minority groups have close to a year more of schooling than do the third non-visible minority generation of Canadians. In research to be presented at the end of March, I also examine the earlier adulthood transitions for the visible minority 1.5 and second generation versus Canadian born youth age 20-24 who are still living with parents in 1996 (Boyd, 2003)[8]. Consistent with earlier research, I find the highest educational achievements are obtained by the second generation visible minority.

My own research findings are consistent with other studies on the topic of visible minorities and educational attainments. In their analysis of young adults in Toronto, Simmons and Plaza (1998) find that visible minority groups born in Canada are more likely to be attending or have completed university. Using 1991 census data, Guppy and Davies also find that virtually all of the visible minority groups have high school graduation rates that are superior to other Canadians. Similar patterns of educational over-achievements are reached with years of schooling and with data from a 1994 Statistics Canada survey. Overall, there is no evidence of blocked educational mobility for many visible minority groups in Canada (Davies and Guppy, 1998; Guppy and Davies, 1998).

These results are suggestive rather than conclusive for two reasons. First, the true “test” of a segmented underclass model demands comparisons of specific groups occupying the same geographical space, and with a well established reference group whose behaviors may be adopted. To date, specific visible minority second generation groups in Canada are still small in size, preventing extensive inter-group comparisons. As well, existing analyses of census and survey data do not incorporate local residential arrangements when investigating generational outcomes, in part because such local area studies are better suited to case study research designs. Second, educational achievements is only one rung on a ladder of socioeconomic success, and it does not capture possible labour market discrimination in later adult years[9]. But to the extent that much of the American saga of segmented assimilation to the underclass is one that focuses on youth and young adults, Canadian research suggests that the new models of assimilation may be less applicable to Canada. In addition, the underlying assumptions of the segmented assimilation models, which derive from the United States experience, may not hold in Canada. Let us review these assumptions with Canada’s social structure and history in mind.

At least three factors appear necessary for the segmented model of socio-economic success but continued ethnic group attachment: 1) high volume of migration from a given area; 2) sustained flows of large numbers over time; and 3) residential concentration. Two additional assumptions exist. First, this model assumes a relatively low level of institutional barriers to participation in core societal institutions such as education and the economy. Second, the model assumes the existence of an ethnic economy that is large enough to absorb successive generations of offspring.

At first glance, Canada appears to meet all of these preconditions – high immigration sustained over time with geographical concentration in a context where institutional barriers, at least in terms of access to education, appear low. Many of the non-European ethnic origin groups in Canada appear to have well-developed ethnic economies, where members are self-employed, and/or own businesses that both service and employ co-ethnics. For the largest of these groups, such as the Chinese, the model of ethnic enclave assimilation may characterize immigrant offspring. However, the extent to which this route is followed has been questioned. In their critique of the ethnic enclave concept, Alba and Nee (1997) suggest that ethnic economies have not been large enough to offer much employment for subsequent generations. They note that most immigrants and their offspring work in the “open” or non-ethnic economy.

What about the so-call “underclass” model? What are its assumptions, and are they replicated in Canada? The segmented assimilation model that emphasizes downward mobility into an underclass assumes low levels of parental and community resources. It also assumes a highly racialized population (Miles, 1989) with structural barriers curbing the life chances of groups differentiated from the majority on the basis of phenotypical characteristics. In the United States, the history and political economy of colonial and post-colonial settlement fostered a process of racialization in which immigrant arrivals were defined as members of the white or non-white and black groups. These distinctions were integral components of key institutions ranging from the polity (the right to vote and Jim Crow), to education (racially segregated) and housing, as well as to the economy (no blacks need apply) (Omi and Winant, 1994; Small, 1994, 1998).

As a result, a large “involuntary minority” population of blacks is a key feature of contemporary American society. Defined as people who were brought into their present society through slavery, conquest or colonization, involuntary minorities after arrival may develop their own oppositional cultural frames of reference and identity, including an anti-academic success orientation and peer pressure not to use education as route to socioeconomic success (Gibson, 1991; Ogbu, 1991). Clearly, this depiction is an over-simplification of the experiences and identities of black Americans. However, along with existence of structural barriers, the segmented assimilation model of under-class assimilation in the United States also demands the existence of a large involuntary minority population, characterized by an oppositional culture and identity, living in close propinquity to recently arrived immigrant minorities.

Given these assumptions for segmented assimilation into the under-class, I argue that the “underclass” scenario for immigrant offspring is less likely to be observed in Canada for two reasons. First the historical context that fueled the development of institutional barriers differs in degree from that of the United States. To be sure, racialization and discrimination along color lines existed throughout Canada’s history and continues into the present day (Henry, Tator, Mattis, and Rees, 1998; Kelley and Trebilcock, 1998; Li, 1999; Satzewich, 1998). However, slavery was outlawed in Britain and in the dominions in 1834. Canada did not experience a war of succession over slavery. In all, the particular configuration of forces shaping race relations in the United States - reliance on slavery to maintain the plantation economy, a civil war rooted in a

pervasive and pernicious system of black exploitation, and subsequent actions by the white majority to maintain power over blacks in the South – were not replicated to the same extent in Canada.

Second, and equally important, Canada's black population historically was small in contrast to a larger American black population, and it never dominated a geographical area. Notwithstanding the formation of a black community in Nova Scotia in the aftermath of the American Revolution, numbers were more dispersed across Canada in comparison to the heavy concentration of the American black population in the South. Further, the Canadian black population is internally diverse in history, origins, and arrival dates. In addition to those arriving after the American Revolution, United States blacks also came in the 1800s while other black peoples have immigrated primarily since World War II from the Caribbean, Latin America and, to a much lesser extent, from Africa. The resulting small and heterogeneous black population casts doubt on the black population in Canada acting as a reference group for segmented assimilation.

Are there other groups in Canada that have been racialized, subjected to institutional barriers over a long period of time, and thus might serve as a reference group that acts in opposition to the values and majority institutions? Canada's aboriginal population comes closest to the American black population in terms of historically rooted marginalization. However, I argue that aboriginal youth have a low potential for influencing immigrant offspring for many reasons: numbers are relatively small; many migrate from reserves to cities as older adolescents or as adults; they thus are not attending elementary or secondary schools; and the geographical space occupied in cities is not as extensive as found in many inner-city ghettos in the United States. Perhaps most important, the sites of much off-reserve location are cities, such as Saskatoon, Regina, and Winnipeg, where immigrants do not concentrate. Overall, one task in any future Canadian depictions of underclass assimilation will be to identify the underclass reference group population(s) for immigrant youth.

Conclusion

To conclude, my talk today traces the conceptual developments, the new agendas, and remaining issues that shape our understanding of the immigrant offspring experience in the early twenty-first century. The linear assimilation model used to discuss the life chances of immigrant children was developed in the aftermath of the largest inflows of immigrants in the 20th century, occurring before World War I. This model assumed acquisition of dominant cultural values and participation in core institutions. In tandem with the development of large surveys and quantitative analysis in American sociology, research prior to the 1990s primarily emphasized socio-economic outcomes, and focused on adults.

The segmented assimilation models that developed in the early 1990s also occurred in

response to large inflows of immigration, primarily of people from non-European countries. As well, the societal context that informs research underwent transformation in the United States and in Canada. Greater awareness, concern and research existed with respect to the pernicious effects of ethnic and racially based hierarchies. In sociology, keen interest in understanding social processes was revitalized as researchers increasingly used qualitative methods and case studies to unravel the complexity of social relations. Given these developments, it is not coincidental that new approaches arose with respect to the life chances of immigrant offspring, which broadened to include educational attainment, school drop-outs, poverty, and health. Although differing in the outcomes posited (success within an ethnic community or downward mobility to an underclass), a key element in segmented assimilation models was the role of acculturation, defined as continued adherence to the norms, values and institutions of an offspring ethnic group, or as the acquisition of new beliefs, values and behaviours which are oppositional and anti-mainstream. Both models also asked how groups are handicapped or helped by ethnic/racial identities, ethnic/racial boundaries and barriers. Both utilized case studies or analyzed data on youth, available from select surveys. Overall, these alternative models of assimilation provide enriched insights and new scripts regarding the life chances of the 1.5 and second generations. They also challenge Canadian researchers to determine which models hold in Canada, why and under what conditions.

None of these conceptual and empirical developments would have been of surprise to Pitirim Sorokin. He used various types of evidence in his writing, ranging from data on populations to his own voluminous intellectual arsenal. He was well aware of the challenges arising from social change. And finally, in his own contributions to the conceptual underpinnings of stratification research, he emphasized the importance of institutions such as family and schools in facilitating social mobility. Were he writing today, in a time of recasting orthodox assimilation theory, he no doubt would have highlighted ethnic community and ties as mechanisms of mobility. I am delighted that his contributions to sociology, recognized in the annual Pitirim Sorokin Lecture series, provided the opportunity for me to be here tonight. Thank you.

Endnotes

[1] Upon the publication of Social Mobility, E. A. Ross wrote Sorokin in a prescient tone "your book Social Mobility has just come to hand and I hasten to congratulate you upon it.... From now on every general treatise in sociology will contain a chapter or chapters on social mobility. I foresee that you are destined to become a very large figure among American sociologists" (quoted in Johnson, 1995:37). Some fifty years later, at the centennial celebration of Sorokin's life in 1989, Edward A. Tiryakian stated "... so much of occupational stratification research today has in its lineage Sorokin's classic starting point, rediscovered by Blau and Duncan twenty years ago in their seminal American Occupational Structure" (Tiryakian, 1996: 17).

[2] Sorokin recounted in his autobiography: "Both [sons] graduated ... from Harvard University with high honours; both did their graduate work at Harvard: Peter in the department of applied physics, Sergei at Harvard Medical School. Both received their doctor's degree.... Both selected scientific and academic careers: Peter as a research scientist with IBM and Sergei as an instructor and research associate at Harvard Medical School. Both have already published a number of studies of some importance and both are doing their scientific work satisfactorily. I would not be surprised at their eventually becoming noted scientists in their special fields" (Sorokin, 1967:253).

[3] Ironically, Sorokin had little use for the contributions of researchers in the Chicago school, arguing that their emphasis on case studies and ethnographies was less valuable than the emphasis on statistical methods (Johnston, 1998:12).

[4] Between 1900 and 1914, more than 2.9 million people immigrated to Canada, nearly four times as many as had arrived in previous 15 years between 1885 and 1899. Immigration accounted for 44% of the growth in Canada during the first decade and 20% of the growth between 1911 and 1921(Boyd and Vickers, 2000). Today this flood has resumed. Between 1991 and 2001, nearly 2.5 million persons came to Canada, with net migration accounting for 42% of the intercensal growth.

[5] Two types of comparisons are possible: 1) assessing the situation of the second generation relative to the first or third-plus groups; and 2) comparing groups with respect to levels of inter-generational mobility. The first cannot be equated with the second although some writers slide into making such equivalencies.

[6] As Hernandez (1999: 15-16) observes, this methodology is fraught with difficulty. Youngsters who are second generation by virtue of having one foreign born parent may be classified as third generation if that parent is absent and the remaining lone parent is native born.

[7] "Visible minority" is a term first used in the early 1980s to denote groups that are distinctive by virtue of their race, color or "visibility." Developed by the federal government to meet data needs of federal employment equity legislation and program requirements, the term is a socially

constructed measure generally equated with “people of color.” In accordance with guidelines established by the Interdepartmental Working Group on Equity Employment, ten visible minority subgroups are identified: Black, South Asian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, South East Asian, Filipino, Other Pacific Islanders, West Asian and Arab, and Latin American.

[8] This particular population, age 20-24 and still living with parents was selected because of the need to distinguish among the various generational statuses. The 1996 census did not ask respondents to provide the birthplace of parents. As a result, only if offspring were still residing with parents, could the place of birth of parents as well as the place of birth of offspring be determined. Both pieces of information are required to construct 1.5, second, and third-plus generation groups.

[9] However, my most recent research (Boyd, 2003) finds that compared to other groups, visible minority young adults who are 1.5 or the second generation are less likely to be unemployed, slightly more likely to hold higher skilled occupations, and have higher employment earnings, net of education. Again, such findings rest on an analysis of those age 20-24 who are still living with parents in 1996. Future research will look at the experiences of adults, using data from the 2001 census which asks persons age 15 and older to provide the birthplace of parents.

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