Residential segregation of West Indians in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area: the roles of race and ethnicity.

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To assess the relative roles of race and ethnicity in shaping patterns of residential segregation, this article utilizes indices of segregation and a geographic mapping strategy to examine the residential patterns of West Indian blacks in the greater New York City area. The socioeconomic characteristics of neighborhoods occupied by West Indian blacks are also examined and compared to those of areas occupied by African Americans. The results indicate that, on one hand, West Indians are largely denied access to residential areas occupied predominantly by whites and are confined to areas of large black concentrations. On the other hand, West Indians appear to have carved out somewhat separate residential enclaves within these largely black areas, and there is evidence to indicate that these areas are of somewhat higher quality than areas occupied by similar concentrations of African Americans. The discussion of these results focuses on the reciprocal relationship between the formation of these distinct residential enclaves and the maintenance of a distinct West Indian ethnic identity.

The incorporation of West Indian blacks into the American economic and social structure long has been considered a crucial test of the deterministic power of race in our society. Touting their economic and occupational successes, several observers have pointed to West Indian immigrants as the black success story (cf. Glazer and Moynihan, 1963; Reid, 1969; Sowell, 1978) and, as Kasinitz (1988) points out, their level of success relative to African Americans is often considered a commentary on the roles of race and racism in shaping the social and economic plight of American blacks. Against this backdrop, a substantial body of literature has emerged focusing on the social assimilation of West Indians (Foner, 1985, 1987; Vickerman, 1994; Waters, 1994) and their socioeconomic success relative to African Americans (Butcher, 1994; Farley and Allen, 1987; Foner, 1979; Model, 1995; Model and Ladipo, 1996; Sowell, 1978), with conclusions often posed in terms of the relative roles of culture, ethnic resources, and racial attributes in shaping these outcomes.

Receiving relatively little attention, however, has been the spatial assimilation of West Indian blacks and the degree to which their residential patterns differ from those of African Americans. The lack of attention paid to this topic is particularly interesting in light of the fact that residential assimilation, especially the attainment of residential proximity to the white majority and access to more affluent neighborhoods, is often considered an important aspect of the social incorporation of racial and ethnic minority groups (Alba and Logan, 1993; Gordon, 1964; Massey, 1985; Massey and Mullan, 1984). This study is intended to help fill this gap in the existing literature by focusing attention on the residential patterns of West Indian blacks in the New York metropolitan area(2) and comparing them to those of African Americans. In addition to supplementing the research on the incorporation of West Indian blacks in the city in which they are most concentrated,
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This article offers an assessment of the relative roles of race and ethnicity in the determination of residential patterns by comparing two groups differentiated by ethnicity but both racially ascribed as black. Among the issues explored are the degree to which West Indians are automatically relegated to black neighborhoods by virtue of their race; whether or not they are more able than are African Americans to gain access to higher-quality neighborhoods; and, ultimately, whether their distinct ethnicity, socioeconomic characteristics, and unique mode of incorporation into U.S. society can alter the seemingly monolithic forces of racial segregation.

RACIAL SEGREGATION AND WEST INDIANS IN NEW YORK

In recent years, a substantial body of research has attempted to document and explain persistent patterns of residential segregation by race, with the bulk of recent research focusing on the case of African Americans, by far this country's most residentially isolated racial group. Overall, levels of black-white segregation remain high today despite recently higher rates of minority suburbanization (Galster, 1991; Logan and Schneider, 1984), the apparent liberalization of white attitudes towards integration (Farley, 1993; Farley et al., 1994), and the moderate changes in levels of segregation at the metropolitan level (Farley and Frey, 1994) as well as within census tracts (Lee and Wood, 1991). And, importantly, blacks remain most segregated from the white majority in those cities in which they are most heavily concentrated and "hypersegregated" in several of these major cities (Massey and Denton, 1987, 1993).

While economic explanations have been advanced to explain the persistent segregation of blacks and other racial and ethnic groups, an overwhelmingly consistent finding of most segregation studies is that black skin represents a substantial barrier to residential assimilation which overshadows all other factors, including socioeconomic characteristics and ethnicity. For example, unlike the prevailing situation for Asian and Hispanic groups, metropolitan area levels of, and trends in, segregation of blacks from whites are apparently unrelated to the aggregate socioeconomic status and acculturation characteristics of group members in the area (Denton and Massey, 1988; Massey and Denton, 1987). And at the individual level, blacks appear less able than other groups to translate their human capital characteristics into access to higher-quality neighborhoods and residences near whites (Alba and Logan, 1993; Logan and Alba, 1993; Alba and Logan, 1991; South and Crowder, 1997), with even relatively well-off blacks often confined to racially isolated neighborhoods with less well-off blacks (Massey and Denton, 1993; Massey, Gross and Shibuya, 1994). Differences in the residential distributions of black and white Hispanics indicate that race also largely overpowers the influence of ethnicity on segregation patterns. Among Caribbean Hispanics, for example, those identified as white are granted much more access to Anglo areas than are those identified as black. Similarly, evidence indicates that Puerto Ricans are more spatially isolated than are other Hispanic groups, a fact Massey and Denton (1989; 1993) attribute to the group's high level of black ancestry (see also Goldstein and White, 1985).

Overall, the segregation literature indicates that race represents a powerful master status by which residential patterns are determined, with black race in particular representing a substantial barrier to full spatial assimilation (Goldstein and White, 1985; Denton and Massey, 1989; Massey and Denton, 1993). Specifically, race represents the primary basis for the stereotypes held by whites (Farley et al., 1994) and the discriminatory practices by real estate agents (Yinger, 1986, 1995; Galster, Freiberg and Houk, 1987), lenders (Shlay, 1988; Leahy, 1985) and local governments (Shlay and Rossi, 1981) which serve to relegate blacks, largely regardless of their own socioeconomic characteristics, to racially isolated neighborhoods.

However, there are several reasons to believe that the spatial distribution of West Indians may represent an important exception to this racial determinism. In particular, the combination of their distinct ethnicity, socioeconomic experiences, and unique mode of incorporation into the U.S. social system may allow West Indians to escape the racial isolation suffered by African Americans and establish a distinct set of residential patterns.

Fed mostly by the promise of opportunities not available at home (Palmer, 1974), West Indian immigrants have been entering the United States since the turn of the century. They have come mainly from former or current British colonies, especially Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad/Tobago, and Barbados, but also from the French-speaking countries of Haiti and Martinique, and in relatively small numbers from the Dutch-speaking islands of Aruba and Curacao. Almost all have been black, at least by American standards, and the majority have been English speaking (Kasinitz, 1992). West Indian immigration has occurred in two main, distinct waves. The first major wave began around the turn of the century, peaked in the 1920s, and continued into the 1930s. By 1930, West Indian immigrants comprised about one percent of the
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country’s black population. As was true of almost all black immigrant groups of the time, the majority of West Indian immigrants settled in New York (Kasinitz, 1992; Bryce-Laporte, 1979). With the Depression, West Indian immigration slowed to a trickle, but it resumed in massive numbers following the passage of the 1965 Hart-Cellar Immigration Reform Act. By 1980, over 50,000 West Indians of diverse class origins were entering the United States annually, with over half of them settling in New York City. By 1990, nearly half of all West Indians in the United States lived in New York State and another 7 percent in New Jersey, with the population in each state heavily concentrated in the major cities of New York City and Newark. According to census data, as of 1990 over one-half million West Indians lived in the New York / New Jersey metropolitan area containing these cities.

Upon entering the United States, West Indian immigrants have generally faced the promise of improved economic opportunities, but also the prospect of America’s troublesome racial dynamics. West Indian immigrants come from a region in which racial identity forms a less-stringent, multicategory continuum from white to black (Bryce-Laporte, 1979; Dodoo, 1991), and where race by itself plays less of a role in determining social status and economic, educational and professional opportunities (Foner, 1979, 1985; Vickerman, 1994). Upon entering the United States, however, they find themselves subject to an institutionalized racial dichotomy in which they are at risk of being relegated to a stigmatized social position based solely on their skin color and largely regardless of their class origins (Vickerman, 1994). The divergence of the social positions at origin and destination is often especially pronounced for those hailing from the British Caribbean (e.g., Jamaica, Trinidad, Bermuda, and Barbados) where blacks are the majority and make up a large part of the upper social classes (Foner, 1985; Kalmijn, 1996).

Despite the apparent dual disadvantage of immigrant status and black race (Bryce-Laporte, 1972), there is a common perception that West Indian immigrants have achieved greater socioeconomic success than their native-born black counterparts in America. Early depictions of West Indian immigrants noted their apparent success in establishing a strong presence among New York’s black business elite (Reid, 1969). However, reliable data on the economic plight of the early West Indian immigrants are quite scant, and the solid evidence that is available suggests that, like African Americans at the time, early West Indian immigrants were concentrated in low-wage jobs and had lower rates of self-employment than other immigrant groups (Gutman, 1977).

Nevertheless, the idea of a relative West Indian socioeconomic advantage pervades more recent writings as well (cf. Foner, 1979, 1985; Harrison, 1992; Sowell, 1978; Steinberg, 1981), with several authors advancing the idea that the economic success of more recent cohorts of West Indian immigrants in comparison in African Americans is rooted in their ability to carve out profitable niches in New York’s growing service industries (Kasinitz, 1992; Garcia, 1986; Petras, 1986; Light, 1972). Supporting the contentions about the relative success of more recent West Indian immigrants, Sowell (1978) found that, as of 1970, first- and second-generation West Indians had substantially higher average incomes than African Americans, and these differences persisted even when controlling for occupation, education, and gender (see also Sowell, 1981). In addition, Sowell presented descriptive statistics indicating greater occupational success for West Indians relative to African Americans. In explaining these differences, Sowell evoked a cultural argument, stating that, because of fundamental differences in the slave systems of the Caribbean and the United States, West Indians have developed a superior cultural ethos emphasizing economic progress through hard work and education (see also Glazer and Moynihan, 1963).

More recent research, however, has raised questions about the actual magnitude of this West Indian socioeconomic advantage, as well as its source. These recent studies have demonstrated that the magnitude of the West Indian socioeconomic advantage over African Americans is by no means large or uniform, varying substantially by gender (Model, 1991, 1995), ancestry (Kalmijn, 1996; Butcher, 1994; Model, 1991), nativity (Model, 1995; Model and Ladipo, 1996), and length of residence in the United States (Chiswick, 1979; Kalmijn, 1996; Model, 1995). Importantly, these studies have demonstrated that many of the differences that do exist, especially group differences in income and earnings, are largely attributable to higher levels of education among some West Indian populations, as well as other group differences in human capital attributes and background characteristics (cf. Butcher, 1994; Kalmijn, 1996; Model, 1991, 1995; Model and Ladipo, 1996). In doing so, these studies have provided convincing evidence that these West Indian African American socioeconomic differentials reflect the selectivity of Caribbean immigration rather than the superiority of West Indian culture (Butcher, 1994; Model, 1995; Model and Ladipo, 1996).

Overall, however, these studies do confirm the existence of at least modest gross differences between the socioeconomic
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characteristics of West Indians and African Americans, with the West Indian advantages in income, occupation, and education being most pronounced among British West Indians (Butcher 1994; Kalmijn, 1996; Kasinitz and Vickerman, forthcoming) who make up a large part of New York’s West Indian population. Furthermore, these individual-level socioeconomic differences tend to understate the relative advantage enjoyed by West Indian households whose pool of resources may be further enhanced by higher levels of female labor force participation (Kasinitz and Vickerman, forthcoming; Model, 1995) and a greater likelihood of having multiple earners in the household (Farley and Allen, 1987; Kasinitz, 1992).

These modest socioeconomic advantages provide a central reason to believe that the residential patterns of West Indians may differ significantly from those of African Americans. To the extent that the availability of economic resources affects households’ access to whiter and more affluent neighborhoods (Alba and Logan, 1993; South and Crowder, 1997), West Indian may have a greater chance than African Americans to avoid relegation to racially isolated neighborhoods based solely on their race. Furthermore, the effect of these relatively modest economic advantages may be bolstered by the existence of ethnically based systems of capital pooling and rotating credit in New York’s West Indian community. According to some authors, the availability of these informal systems of credit and capital accumulation has provided many West Indians in the region access to the capital necessary to purchase homes (Foner, 1979; Bonnett, 1981; Garcia, 1986). African Americans, in contrast, have been forced to deal with often discriminatory outside lending institutions and banks (Massey and Denton, 1993; Yinger, 1995).

While there is ample evidence that West Indians are often subject to discrimination based on their black skin (cf. Dodoo, 1991; Waters, 1994; Vickerman, 1994), several authors have also suggested that their ethnic distinctiveness may place West Indians in a somewhat more favorable position in comparison to African Americans when it comes to interactions with whites. According to one argument, it is the combination of this ethnic distinctiveness and their incorporation into an already large black population that shields West Indians from the level of discrimination faced by African blacks. On the one hand, being absorbed into a large black U.S. population minimizes possibly discriminatory contacts with the white majority, thereby easing the adjustment of West Indian immigrants to life in a new country (Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Foner, 1979, 1985). On the other hand, when their group distinctiveness does come to the attention of the white majority, their achievements are measured, because of their race, against the achievements of African Americans (Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Foner, 1985; Garcia, 1986). As a result, West Indians as a group may come to be viewed in a somewhat more favorable light and as more preferable as employees, coworkers, and neighbors. Indeed, in several surveys West Indians themselves perceived that whites tend to treat them somewhat more favorably than they treat African Americans (Foner, 1985; Waters, 1994; Vickerman, 1994), and in the labor market there is some evidence that West Indians occupy a position above African Americans on the employment queue (Model and Ladipo, 1996; Model, 1997). If this preference for West Indians over African Americans extends to the housing market, it is likely that West Indians will be relatively better able to establish residence near whites and in more desirable locations. In this context, West Indian heritage, and especially a British accent, may work to the advantage of West Indian immigrants in dealing with real estate agents, lending agencies, and white neighbors (Kasinitz, 1992). As a result, one may expect West Indians to have somewhat more success at escaping racial segregation than do African Americans, not only because of their modest socioeconomic advantages, but also because of more favorable treatment from the white majority.

In addition to the potential impacts of socioeconomic characteristics and possible differential treatment from white institutions, the residential patterns of West Indian blacks may also be altered by the group’s attempts to distance themselves, spatially and socially, from American blacks. While ethnic networks and chain migration lead many immigrant groups to form ethnic residential enclaves upon their arrival in the United States (Lieberson, 1963, 1980; Philpott, 1978; Zhou, 1992), the desire to form these separate enclaves may be especially salient for West Indian immigrants. Unlike the situation faced by European immigrants and most other immigrant groups, West Indian immigrants face the prospect of assimilating spatially and socially into the country’s most stigmatized racial group. As Waters (1994:799) notes, “if these immigrants assimilate they assimilate to being not just Americans but black Americans.” Given the strong negative stereotypes attached to black Americans, maintaining their ethnic distinctiveness may be particularly important for West Indian blacks. Recent research indicates that West Indian immigrants are well aware of the stigma attached to being black in America, and, especially among first generation West Indians, there is a strong motivation to maintain their distinction as West Indian ethnic (Waters, 1994). Thus, many West Indian immigrants go to great lengths to differentiate themselves from American blacks, despite the pressures of the country’s racial dynamics to classify them only as black (Foner, 1987; Kasinitz, 1992; Waters, 1994; Vickerman, 1994; Woldemikael, 1989). As one mechanism for maintaining their ethnic
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distinctiveness, the formation and maintenance of distinct residential enclaves, separate from areas occupied by American blacks, may be very important to West Indian blacks. This may be especially true given that relegation to predominantly black areas often means relegation to areas of concentrated poverty, physical decay, and social degradation (Massey and Denton, 1993; Massey and Eggers, 1990). Thus, much like the intentional maintenance of ethnic dress and speech patterns (Kasinitz, 1992; Waters, 1994), the establishment and maintenance of distinct West Indian enclaves may be an important way for West Indians to maintain the distinction between themselves and American blacks and to avoid relegation to poor black neighborhoods.

In sum, it is possible that West Indians’ unique combination of relative socioeconomic success, social origins, distinct ethnicity, and concentration in the New York City area may be enough to overcome, or at least alter, the role of race in determining residential patterns for the group. In fact, recent research provides some indication that these factors may have helped to shape a distinct residential pattern for West Indians. Several authors have noted the apparent concentration of New York’s West Indians in a relatively few neighborhoods that are distinctively Caribbean in character (Kasinitz, 1992; Vickerman, 1994). And using community board census data from 1980, Waldinger (1987) found a good deal of residential separation of West Indians from both blacks and whites in the New York City portion of the metropolitan area. In addition, Waldinger found evidence that West Indians had largely escaped relegation to the poorest of black neighborhoods in the area. The present study, by utilizing current data for the entire metropolitan area, examining several dimensions of the residential segregation of West Indians and African Americans, and more closely examining the racial and economic context of neighborhoods occupied by these groups, aims to provide a more comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the residential plight of West Indians in the city in which they are most concentrated.

DATA AND METHODS

The data for this analysis are drawn from several different 1990 U.S. census files. The 1990 census provides, for the first time, the opportunity to distinguish and study certain black ethnic subgroups since, in addition to race and Hispanic origin items, the census includes a series of ancestry items which includes a West Indian category. The West Indian population for this analysis is defined as those responding to the census ancestry item with an ethnicity falling under the census broad “West Indian” category, including those individuals reporting single, primary or secondary West Indian ancestry. Included in this broad category are Caribbean blacks from a number of islands including the English-speaking islands of Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad-Tobago, the Bahamas, and the Virgin Islands; the Dutch-speaking islands of Surinam, Aruba, and Curacao; and the French-speaking islands of Haiti, French Guyana, Martinique, and Guadeloupe. (3) The census West Indian category does not include those originating in the Spanish-speaking Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, and therefore these groups, sometimes included in analyses of West Indian populations (cf. Kalmijn, 1996), are not included in the current analysis.

According to the census West Indian definition, there were just over 500,000 West Indians in the New York / New Jersey metropolitan area in 1990. Throughout the analysis, the residential patterns of these West Indians are compared most closely to those of the areas African-American population. Using the census race and ethnicity variables, this African-American reference group is defined as all non-Hispanic blacks not reporting West Indian ancestry. It should be noted that the designation of this non-Hispanic, non-West Indian black population as African American undoubtedly disguises a great deal of ethnic diversity within the black community and is used here simply as a convenient base of comparison.

The main census files used for this analysis are: 1) the 1990 Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS) files of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, which provide individual-level data for a 5% sample of the population of the New York / New Jersey metropolitan area; and 2) the census 1990 Summary Tape Files (STF3a) for the New York / New Jersey metropolitan area. The STF3a file contains information on the over 4,000 census tracts in the area which, following most prior research, are treated as a geographical representation of neighborhoods. Census tract boundaries are drawn by the Census Bureau to define areas with populations that are relatively homogeneous in terms of economic and demographic characteristics. Although they vary widely in size, census tracts contain an average of about 4,000 persons.

Each of the two main data sources are used in various ways to investigate the residential patterns of West Indians and to compare these to the residential patterns of African Americans in the New York / New Jersey metropolitan area. The STF3a data are used to calculate segregation indices for the two groups, to produce maps illustrating their settlement...
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patterns, and to compare the basic characteristics of the census tracts occupied by the two groups. In examining some changes in census tracts over time, the analysis is supplemented by the corresponding STF3a file from the 1980 census. The PUMS data, meanwhile, are used to compare the basic socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the metropolitan areas West Indian and African-American populations.

The analysis of West Indian residential patterns involves the calculation of indices of segregation for the population and a comparison of these indices to those of other racial and ethnic groups of substantial size in the area. The first measure calculated is the index of dissimilarity: (4) a commonly used measure of the evenness of a group’s population distribution (White, 1986; Massey and Denton, 1988). Comparing two groups, the index provides a proportion of either group’s population that would have to change tracts of residence in order to be evenly distributed across tracts in the city. The dissimilarity index is a symmetrical measure and ranges in value from 0 (indicating a perfectly even distribution of the populations and no segregation) to 1.0 (indicating complete segregation). Massey and Denton (1988, 1993) suggest a general rule of thumb for interpreting indices of dissimilarity, arguing that values above .60 indicate high levels of segregation, values between .30 and .60 are moderate, and those below .30 indicate low levels of segregation. Past research has indicated that the indices of dissimilarity for blacks from the white majority easily fall above Massey and Denton’s high-segregation threshold in most major cities, especially in those where they are most concentrated (Massey and Denton, 1993; Farley and Frey, 1994).

Another important aspect of the residential experience of West Indians, especially with regard to making comparisons to the residential distribution of African Americans, is represented by the level of exposure they have to other groups. In general, exposure indices measure the level of potential residential contact between the members of two groups (Lieberson and Carter, 1982; White, 1986; Massey and Denton, 1988). As Massey and Denton (1988) point out, measures of exposure are meant to gauge the “experience” of segregation by calculating the actual likelihood of sharing the same neighborhood with a member of the other comparison group rather than simply comparing residential patterns to an abstract population distribution. By examining these indices for West Indians, it is possible to explore whether West Indians have been allowed to achieve higher levels of potential interaction with other groups than have African Americans, a group that experiences consistently high levels of residential isolation (Massey and Denton, 1989, 1993).

The measure of exposure calculated here is the commonly used interaction index, (5) or [Mathematical Expression Omitted]. It measures the extent to which members of group X are exposed to members of group Y by virtue of sharing a common census tract. Related to this index is the isolation index, [Mathematical Expression Omitted], which measures the extent to which members of group X are exposed only to other group X members rather than members of other groups. Both the interaction index and the isolation index vary from 0 to 1.0 and are interpreted as the proportion the comparison group (group Y for the interaction index and group X for the isolation index) forms of the total population in the tract of the average member of group X. Unlike the index of dissimilarity, this measure of exposure is asymmetrical since the probability of a member of one group interacting with the member of another group is a function of the relative size of the two groups as well as their residential distributions. Specifically, the smaller a group’s proportion of the total population, the less likely it is that a member of another group will come into contact with a member of the first group on the basis of sharing a residence tract. This is an important fact in interpreting the interaction indices for relatively small population groups such as West Indians.

The next stage of the analysis involves describing the basic characteristics of the tracts in which West Indians live. Areas of West Indian concentration are identified by looking at each tract’s West Indian population. Doing so reveals that there are 70 tracts in the metropolitan region with populations that are between 30 and 40 percent West Indian, 27 more that are between 40 and 50 percent, and four additional tracts that are more than 50 percent West Indian. Basic socioeconomic characteristics such as median household income, educational levels, and the percentage of the housing stock that is owner-occupied, as well as basic racial composition, are calculated and cross-classified with the tracts’ West Indian percentage. For the sake of comparison, similar calculations are made for tracts with comparable population proportions of African Americans.

RESULTS

Drawing on data from the 5% PUMS file for the area, Table 1 presents the distribution of specific ancestry origins of the West Indian population in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area. The first column of the table presents the first
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ancestry of those reporting any West Indian first ancestry while the second column reports the second ancestry of those reporting any West Indian second ancestry. Overall, the table indicates that West Indians from the British-speaking islands dominate the metropolitan area’s total West Indian population. Among those reporting a West Indian first ancestry, about 75 percent are from current or former British colonies, with those from Jamaica representing the most common origin group. Only a very small percentage come from the Dutch West Indies and about 25 percent come from Haiti and other French-speaking islands. Among those reporting a West Indian second ancestry, the predominance of British West Indian ancestry is even greater; over 80 percent report national origins in a British West Indian ancestry, with almost half of those reporting Jamaican ancestry.

TABLE 1
NATIONAL ORIGINS OF WEST INDIAN BLACKS IN THE NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY METROPOLITAN AREA. PUBLIC USE MICRODATA FILES: 1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ancestry Reported</th>
<th>Percent of Those Reporting West Indian Ancestry</th>
<th>Percent of Those Reporting West Indian First Ancestry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English-Speaking Islanders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahamian</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbadian</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belizean</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bermudan</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaican</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidadian-Tobagonian</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Virgin Islander</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other British West Indian(a)</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>39.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch-Speaking Islanders(b)</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| French-Speaking Islanders  |                                               |                                                     |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|                                                     |
| Haitian                    | 24.4                                          | 8.9                                                  |
| Other French West Indian(c)| 0.2                                           | 0.6                                                  |

a Includes Cayman Islanders, British Virgin Islanders, British West Indians, West Indians (Arawak, Caribbean, Garifuna, West Indies).
b Includes those from Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire, and several other small islands.
c Includes those from Martinique, French Guyana, Guadeloupe, and several other small islands.

Table 2 presents the basic demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of West Indians and African Americans age eighteen and over from the 5% PUMS sample for the New York / New Jersey metropolitan area in 1990. The two populations are similar in terms of average age and sex composition, but a higher percentage of the adult West Indian population than the adult African-American population was married and slightly more had children present at the time of the 1990 census. As expected, a much greater proportion of the West Indian population was born outside of the United States; about 85 percent of the West Indian adults in the region were born abroad compared to 12 percent of those labeled here as African American. Despite the group differences in origin, differences between the groups in terms of English language ability are small. About 96 percent of the West Indian population speaks English well or very well compared to 99 percent of the African American population. The high English proficiency of the West Indian population obviously reflects the high percentage of immigrants from English-speaking Caribbean islands among New York’s West Indian population.

The differences between the West Indian and African-American populations in terms of socioeconomic characteristics are
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somewhat more pronounced but still fairly modest. Higher overall levels of education among the adult West Indian population are indicated by the somewhat higher proportions having at least a high school diploma - just over 70 percent of the West Indian population compared to about 67 percent of the African-American population. Furthermore, almost 14 percent of the West Indian adult population has a college degree while the same is true for about 12 percent of African-American adults. Consistent with previous research, differences in terms of labor force participation and employment status are slightly more prominent. About 79 percent of New York’s adult West Indian population is currently in the labor force, compared to about 69 percent for African Americans and, among those in the labor force, about 91 percent of the West Indians and 88 percent of the African Americans are currently employed. Among the employed, a somewhat greater proportion of West Indians are wage earners in private companies and a lower proportion are government workers. Consistent with the findings of Kasinitz (1992), rates of self-employment are fairly low for both West Indians and African Americans, despite the emphasis some authors have placed on the entrepreneurialism of West Indian immigrants (Garcia, 1986; Light, 1972). Also consistent with previous research, absolute differences in household income are substantial, with average African-American household incomes falling about $6,000 below their West Indian counterparts. These differences are likely the product of a combination of modestly higher earnings for individual West Indian workers, higher rates of employment and labor force participation, and the higher percentages of West Indian households with multiple earners. The socioeconomic success of West Indians relative to that of African Americans is also reflected in their higher levels of home ownership. Rates of home ownership in the area are about 9 percent higher among West Indian adults than those among African Americans. Finally, Table 2 indicates that both West Indians and African Americans are highly concentrated in the central cities of the region. About 78 percent of the West Indian population resided in census-designated central cities at the time of the 1990 census compared to about 72 percent of the African-American population.

While the socioeconomic differences between West Indians and African Americans are overall fairly modest, they may be significant in determining the groups’ residential patterns. Greater levels of employment and income, as well as the home ownership they make possible, are considered crucial aspects of the spatial assimilation process. Central to the purpose of this study is to determine whether West Indians in the New York region are able to parlay their modest socioeconomic advantages and the possible benefits of their distinct ethnicity into access to more racially integrated and/or higher-quality neighborhoods than those occupied by African Americans. In other words, the question remains whether a distinct ethnicity and somewhat greater group resources are sufficient to overcome the preeminence of race in determining residential patterns, or, alternatively, whether black race remains the master status by which West Indians are relegated to racially segregated neighborhoods along with their African-American counterparts.

Table 3 presents indices of dissimilarity comparing West Indians, African Americans, non-Hispanic whites, and several other groups of significant size in the area that are included for comparison. The indices of dissimilarity reveal interesting patterns of residential segregation, particularly with regard to the residential patterns of West Indians and African Americans. As other studies have consistently documented, the residential distribution of the region’s African-American population is highly uneven. The index of dissimilarity comparing African Americans to non-Hispanic whites is .813, well within the high range and indicating that 81 percent of either the African Americans or non-Hispanic whites living in the metropolitan area would have to move to a different tract in order to obtain even distributions of whites and African Americans. A key finding presented in Table 3 is that New York’s West Indian population is no more evenly distributed than is the African-American population. The West Indian to African-American white figure is .819, just higher than the figure comparing whites and African Americans. Overall, the observed dissimilarities appear to indicate that, despite their greater socioeconomic and ethnic resources, West Indians are not able to gain any more access to areas occupied by Anglos than do African Americans. In fact, the West Indian to African-American white dissimilarity index is among the highest in the region and indicates that, in essence, 82 percent of either the West Indian or Anglo populations would have to relocate to another tract in order to achieve even population distributions.

Despite their comparable levels of segregation from non-Hispanic whites, the figures in Table 3 indicate that West Indians and African Americans are somewhat segregated from each other as well. This residential unevenness should probably not be overstated since the dissimilarity index comparing West Indians and African Americans (.425) is in the mid-moderate range. Indeed, West Indians appear to be substantially less segregated from the African-American population than from any other group in the area, as well as from the aggregate remainder of the population. In fact, only the dissimilarity score for the comparison of West Indians to African Americans falls below the high range. On the other hand, the fact that the residential dissimilarity between West Indians and African Americans is as high as it is appears to
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indicate that West Indians are not evenly distributed within black communities either. Instead, the calculated indices seem to hint at the existence of somewhat separate pockets of West Indian populations within black residential areas. In his examination of community board level data for the New York City portion of the metropolitan area in 1980, Waldinger (1987) found similar evidence of residential separation of West Indians from African Americans, coinciding with fairly high levels of segregation of both groups from whites. Thus, there is evidence that the general patterns revealed by these segregation indices have prevailed for at least the two most recent decades.

Overall, these calculated indices of dissimilarity support the contention that race is a dominant factor in determining the residential patterns of West Indians. Presumably on the basis of their race, West Indians are largely denied access to Anglo residential areas and are less segregated from African Americans than from any other group. On the other hand, the fact that West Indians are not fully integrated into African-American residential communities seems to indicate that West Indian ethnicity plays a role as well.

The interaction indices presented in Table 4 largely substantiate the story told by the indices of dissimilarity; West Indian segregation patterns are similar to those of African Americans but important differences exist. The West Indian / non-Hispanic white exposure index of .202 indicates that, given prevailing residential distributions, a randomly drawn West Indian has about a 20 percent chance of interacting with a member of the white majority. Similarly, the index of exposure of African Americans to non-Hispanic whites indicates that a randomly drawn African American has about an 18 percent chance of interacting with a white neighbor. These figures support the conclusion that West Indians, like African Americans, are subject to residential contexts that are substantially separate from those occupied by non-Hispanic whites.

The isolation indices presented in Table 4 (in italics) provide an indication of intragroup contact in residential areas and provide additional support for the contention that somewhat separate residential clusters of West Indians exist within largely black areas. The isolation index for African Americans of .513 indicates that the average African American lives in a tract that is over 50 percent African American while the isolation index for non-Hispanic whites of .821 indicates that the average white lives in a tract that is over 80 percent white. In addition to indicating the extreme levels of residential isolation of these groups, these high isolation indices also reflect the effects of their relatively large group population sizes which allow each group, especially whites (62% of the metropolitan population), to dominate many entire census tracts. This situation stands in contrast to the case of West Indians who, by virtue of their relatively small population size (3% of the metropolitan area’s population), [TABULAR DATA FOR TABLE 4 OMITTED] are unable to populate many census tracts completely. At least partly as a result of this, the isolation index for West Indians (.178) is modest compared to that of both non-Hispanic whites and African Americans.

On the other hand, like the conclusion drawn from the indices of dissimilarity, these isolation indices are indicative of at least a few somewhat distinct West Indian residential enclaves. If West Indians were evenly distributed throughout the entire metropolitan area, one would expect to see a West Indian isolation score directly in line with the group’s population proportion; that is, one would expect to see an isolation index for West Indians of about .03 since they make up roughly 3 percent of the metropolitan areas total population. In fact, the isolation index for West Indians of .178 indicates that the average West Indian lives in a tract that is 18 percent West Indian rather than the 3 percent that would occur if no West Indian residential concentrations existed. Thus, while the West Indian isolation index is modest in comparison to those of both whites and African Americans, it is impressive given their small population numbers and supports the conclusion that West Indians have formed somewhat distinct residential enclaves in the area. This conclusion is bolstered by the difference between the score for the interaction of West Indians with African Americans (.414) and the African-American isolation index (.513). If West Indians were distributed residentially in the same manner as are African Americans, the average West Indian’s chances of interacting with an African American would be similar to the chance of the average African American interacting with another African American. This is clearly not the case. In essence, the average African American lives in a tract that is just over 50 percent African American while the average West Indian lives in a tract that is about 40 percent African American.

The exposure indices in Table 4 also provide some indication of the location of the apparent West Indian residential enclaves. These indices reveal that West Indians in the metropolitan area are about twice as likely to interact with another black on the basis of sharing the same tract than with a member of the white majority (exposure indices of .414 versus .202), despite the fact that there are over three times as many non-Hispanic whites as African Americans in the metropolitan area (10,672,475 non-Hispanic whites versus 2,901,581 African Americans). Thus, while ethnicity appears to
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play a role in determining the existence of West Indian residential enclaves, the role of race is also apparent in the location of these enclaves in largely black areas.

Overall, the segregation scores presented in Tables 3 and 4 appear to indicate that West Indians are no more able than their African-American counterparts to gain access on a large scale to white neighborhoods, but are also not necessarily distributed evenly among black neighborhoods. Instead, there is evidence to indicate that a substantial proportion of West Indian population in New York/New Jersey is concentrated in distinct residential enclaves within black areas. This conclusion is substantiated by examining more closely the actual residential patterns of West Indians in Brooklyn, the borough of New York City in which the group is most concentrated. The maps in Figure 1 examine these residential patterns with the first map showing the distribution of non-Hispanic blacks in the borough and the second showing the distribution of West Indians. The first map clearly illustrates the level of segregation experienced by non-Hispanic blacks who are confined to a well-defined set of census tracts that are tightly clustered, mostly black, and largely separate from those areas occupied by whites and other groups. A large number of tracts that are between 80 and 100 percent non-Hispanic black make up the core of this residential enclave and are surrounded by a contiguous group of tracts that are between 20 and 80 percent black.

Also consistent with the segregation indices presented in Tables 3 and 4, the second map in Figure 1 shows that the West Indian population of Brooklyn is not evenly distributed within the black area of the borough. Instead, a well-defined West Indian residential enclave within the highly black area of the borough is clearly distinguishable. A few core tracts in this enclave have populations that are over 50 percent West Indian, and a solid group of adjacent tracts have between 30 and 50 percent West Indian populations. While these West Indian tracts are clearly within the boundaries of the largely black area illustrated in the first map, they are also very concentrated in one distinct section, substantiating the existence of distinct West Indian residential enclaves within largely black areas. The West Indian enclave pictured in the second map encompasses a good part of the Crown Heights, East Flatbush and Flatbush sections of central Brooklyn and represents the largest and most ethnically distinct of the West Indian areas in the metropolitan area. Indeed, nearly 30 percent of the metropolitan areas total West Indian population lived within this one residential enclave in 1990 (140,122 of the areas 513,893 West Indians).

It is interesting to note here that the areas constituting this main West Indian enclave of Brooklyn are near long-established black enclaves, but not [TABULAR DATA FOR TABLE 5 OMITTED] long ago also contained significant numbers of whites. In the 1970s, many whites abandoned these neighborhoods for the city’s outer boroughs and suburbs. This white exodus, likely spurred in part by the encroachment of some black households, created significant numbers of vacancies and made possible the expansion of the growing black population into these neighborhoods. According to several reports, West Indians were likely among the first black pioneers in this succession process (Foner, 1987; Kasinitz, 1992), but other blacks soon followed, and the racial turnover of the area was nearly complete by the 1980s. Today these central-Brooklyn neighborhoods have African Americans as the largest population group next to West Indians.

However, as Kasinitz (1992) points out, these neighborhoods did not suffer the level of deterioration experienced by areas in the Bronx and Brownsville experiencing similar magnitudes of racial turnover. Thus, there is some indication that the residential enclaves carved out by West Indians in the largely black areas of the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area are not only distinguishable by their population compositions, but by their relative quality as well. Table 5 addresses this issue by examining the characteristics of census tracts by the percentage of their population that is West Indian and African American, thereby allowing for a comparison of those tracts with large West Indian concentrations versus those with comparable concentrations of African Americans. Since the figures in this table are weighted by the total group populations in the tract, they represent, in essence, the average neighborhood characteristics experienced by African Americans and West Indians living in neighborhoods with the given racial and ethnic concentration (see Alba, Logan and Crowder, 1997).

Focusing first on median household income, Table 5 indicates that West Indians have indeed established residential niches in relatively affluent neighborhoods. The average median household incomes in West Indian tracts are consistently higher than those in tracts with similar percentages of African Americans. In addition, median household incomes are highest in those tracts with the highest concentrations of West Indians. Higher median household incomes are an important quality of the neighborhoods in which West Indians have settled since an areas income distribution is likely crucial in determining the strength of its tax base and, in turn, the quality of its public services, parks, schools, and even...
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Police protection. Thus, it appears that West Indians, by carving out somewhat separate residential niches within the black community, may have gained some protection from relegation to those largely African-American neighborhoods where access to quality public services is most limited (Schneider and Logan, 1982). The higher socioeconomic standing of the residential enclaves established by the West Indian population is further indicated by the greater educational attainment of their populations. At each level of concentration, the West Indian neighborhoods have larger percentages of their population with at least some college and higher proportions of college graduates. In addition, among the West Indian communities the proportion of the population with at least some college increases at higher concentrations of West Indians, substantiating the conclusion that the most ethnically distinct of the West Indian communities are also of relatively higher quality.

Finally, the relative quality of New York’s West Indian enclaves is reflected in the figures showing the percentage of the housing units in each type of neighborhood occupied by the owner (Table 5). Home ownership is consistently more common in West Indian neighborhoods than in comparable African-American neighborhoods, and the largest difference exists between the most concentrated West Indian and African-American neighborhoods. In areas with 50 percent to 60 percent of their populations comprised of the given group, only about one-third of the housing units in the largely African-American communities are occupied by the owner compared to almost 43 percent of those in the West Indian areas. These higher rates of home ownership in West Indian areas mirror the higher rates of home ownership among the individual members of the West Indian population in the area (see Table 2).

In addition to exemplifying the general residential patterns of West Indians in New York, the West Indian residential enclave of Brooklyn (see second map of [ILLUSTRATION FOR FIGURE 1 OMITTED]) further illustrates the relative quality of the residential niches carved out by the group. Overall, this contiguous West Indian residential enclave(10) has an average median household income of just over $32,000, over 31 percent of the housing units are owner occupied, and almost 40 percent of its population has at least some college while another 14 percent has graduated from college. These figures stand in stark contrast to characteristics of the remainder of the highly black tracts in Brooklyn. Those tracts that are more than 40 percent black and outside of the West Indian enclave have a median household income of just over $19,000, a home ownership rate of only about 18 percent, and a population of which only 27 percent have some college experience and 9 percent are college graduates. Furthermore, the average median value of homes in the West Indian enclave is about $55,000 higher than that in the remainder of Brooklyn’s black area ($170,000 compared to $115,000). Clearly, the best-defined and ethnically distinct of the residential enclaves established by West Indians in the city is substantially more favorable in terms of socioeconomic status, tenure, and housing value than the larger, predominantly black area of which it is part.(11)

The final two rows in Table 5 present figures on the racial composition and change of those areas occupied by different concentrations of West Indians and blacks. At each level of group concentration, the areas occupied by West Indians had larger white populations in 1980 and experienced greater reductions in this white population between 1980 and 1990 than did their African-American counterparts. Those few areas with the highest concentrations of West Indians (50% and more) had populations which were, on average, about 24 percent white in 1980. In the following decade, however, the white population of these same tracts had plummeted by an average of over 19 percentage points. In contrast, those areas occupied by comparable concentrations of blacks started out with lower white percentages and experienced relatively less change in these populations between 1980 and 1990. These racial composition figures provide some indication of the path by which West Indians have established their somewhat higher-quality residential enclaves. Specifically, West Indians appear to have gained some of their access to better-quality residential areas by establishing themselves in areas formerly occupied by whites, areas in which the housing stock is of somewhat greater value and in which the socioeconomic characteristics of the population are somewhat more favorable.

Overall, the figures in Table 5 provide some idea of the benefit gained by West Indians in establishing somewhat separate residential enclaves. Given the patterns of residential segregation outlined in Tables 3 and 4, it can be assumed that West Indians in the New York metropolitan area would be distributed, on the basis of their race, fairly evenly among highly black areas if their ethnicity made no difference in determining their residential patterns. The comparison of neighborhoods occupied by West Indians and African Americans presented in Table 5 indicate that the average neighborhood context experienced by West Indians would suffer without the establishment of distinct residential niches. In particular, they would likely be relegated to poorer areas with less-educated populations and with lower levels of home ownership.
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DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This article set out to provide an analysis of the residential patterns of West Indians in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan region, a task that allows for the examination of the nexus of race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic factors in determining patterns of residential segregation. Before discussing the results of this examination, it is important to point out several shortcomings of the data utilized here which have the potential of obscuring some realities. First, these data ignore possible differences in residential patterns between West Indian ancestry groups and between native and foreign-born West Indians. These are potentially important drawbacks given the apparent differences in socioeconomic prospects by ancestry (Kalmijn, 1996) and nativity (Model, 1995; Model and Ladipo, 1996), and the theoretical reasons to expect greater spatial assimilation for longer-term U.S. residents (Massey, 1985; Alba and Logan, 1993). While there are some indications of substantial integration of various West Indian ancestry groups (Conway and Bigby, 1987), these data constraints make it necessary to view the findings presented here as a first general examination of the residential patterns of West Indians which likely obscures some important subgroup variations.

A second problem associated with the ancestry item from the census summary tape files used to identify the West Indian population is that it fails to capture some individuals with origins in the West Indies. An examination of the PUMS data for 1990 reveals that about 20 percent of New York’s non-Hispanic blacks born in the Caribbean (13) do not report a West Indian ancestry and, therefore, would not be categorized as West Indian in the STF3a data. As a result, it is quite likely that the aggregate census data used here tend to underestimate the level of West Indian concentration actually existing in some neighborhoods and may misrepresent the level of segregation experienced by the West Indian population as a whole. Unfortunately, the absence of alternative measures of aggregate population counts by ethnicity makes it difficult to fully assess the precision of the current estimates. (14)

Finally, the residential patterns described in the current analysis may be affected by group differences in the risk of being excluded from census counts altogether. Because the census tends to undercount certain groups, including blacks and the poor (Fern, 1990), both African Americans and West Indian blacks are likely to be underrepresented in the aggregate census counts used to characterize the residential patterns examined here. This problem of census undercount may be exacerbated by the fact that some West Indians living in the United States are undocumented residents who are particularly unlikely to be counted by the Census Bureau (Foner, 1987; Model, 1995; Warren and Passel, 1987). To the extent that the residential patterns of uncounted West Indians and African Americans differ from those of the enumerated populations, this undercount is likely to affect conclusions regarding aggregate population distributions. Fortunately, the extent of this bias may be fairly minor given recent improvements in census coverage (Fern, 1990) and generally modest differences between the characteristics of undocumented immigrants included in the census and those excluded from the enumeration (Chiswick, 1988).

These potential data pitfalls notwithstanding, the current analysis reveals some intriguing patterns in the spatial distribution of West Indians in the New York metropolitan area which attest to the salience of race in determining residential distributions. Despite their somewhat more favorable socioeconomic conditions, the potential social advantages associated with a distinct West Indian ancestry (Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Foner, 1979, 1985; Waters, 1994), and the supposed superiority of West Indian culture (Glazer and Moynihan, 1963; Sowell, 1978), it appears that West Indians in New York are still largely denied access to currently white neighborhoods. Presumably on the basis of their race, West Indians in the area are concentrated in largely black tracts within the metropolitan area, and their levels of segregation from the white majority are comparable to those experienced by African Americans.

On the other hand, the case of West Indians in this region also demonstrates that ethnicity may play a substantial role in altering the residential determinism of race. While relegated to largely black sections of the region, they are not spread evenly among these black areas. Instead, West Indians have established somewhat separate, ethnically distinct residential enclaves within these black areas. Furthermore, there is strong evidence to suggest that these West Indian residential enclaves have been established in more favorable parts of black areas - formerly white neighborhoods with more affluent and highly educated occupants and higher rates of home ownership. Thus, the city’s West Indian population is able to avoid relegation to the most depressed black neighborhoods by accessing higher-quality, racially changing neighborhoods and establishing ethnically distinct residential enclaves in these areas.

The establishment of comparatively high-quality West Indian residential enclaves in formerly white areas points to the
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relative advantage of West Indian ancestry in altering the impact of race on residential patterns. What is not clear is the source of this advantage. One possible explanation for the entry into better-quality neighborhoods by West Indians, and especially their more ready access to formerly white areas, is that they simply face lower levels of racial discrimination than do African Americans (Foner, 1985; Garcia, 1986; Kasinitz, 1992). This explanation, however, is contradicted by the fact that West Indians appear to be allowed little if any additional access to currently white areas than are other blacks and, to a large extent, are forced to establish their residential enclaves in or near mostly black areas of the city.

An alternative explanation is that West Indians’ establishment of separate, somewhat higher-quality neighborhoods in formerly white areas, even in the face of racial discrimination, is rooted in the combined effects of their somewhat higher average socioeconomic characteristics and their utilization of various ethnic resources. In as far as securing capital is an important factor in residential self-determination, the relative socioeconomic standing of West Indians and African Americans may be important in explaining their somewhat divergent residential patterns. Regardless of whether it is rooted in a distinct West Indian culture (Glazer and Moynihan, 1963; Sowell, 1978), the selective nature of West Indian migration (Light, 1972; Model, 1995; Steinberg, 1981), or their unique mode of incorporation into the broader black community (Foner, 1979, 1985; Kasinitz, 1992), the ability of West Indians to secure some small advantages over other black populations in terms of income, employment, and occupational status has likely played a substantial role in the establishment of relatively high-quality West Indian enclaves in the city.

But while the modest socioeconomic differences between West Indians and African Americans may be important in themselves, these differences are likely magnified by West Indians’ utilization of ethnically based systems of credit and capital accumulation. The existence of informal, ethnically based systems of capital pooling and rotating credit has likely provided many West Indians in the region access to the capital necessary to purchase homes (Foner, 1979; Bonnett, 1981; Garcia, 1986; Kasinitz, 1992; Light, 1972), thereby increasing their access to better-quality neighborhoods dominated by owner-occupied housing. In contrast, African Americans have been forced to deal with often discriminatory outside lending associations and banks (Massey and Denton, 1993; Yinger, 1995), further limiting their opportunities for home ownership. In addition, the existence of formal and informal realty networks that steer West Indian clientele into ethnic areas are also likely crucial to the formation and maintenance of distinctly West Indian neighborhoods. High levels of West Indian ownership, combined with informal ethnic networks, help to maintain these ethnic neighborhoods as West Indians often adhere to ethnic and familial ties when deciding where to buy a home (Kasinitz, 1992). Even in tracts with limited numbers of single-family homes, residential enclaves may be maintained as West Indians purchase apartment buildings and rent almost exclusively to other West Indians (Kasinitz, 1992; Laguerre, 1984; Waldinger, 1987). Once established, these enclaves are maintained and grow through the influx of new immigrants from the Caribbean, being bolstered, as are many other immigrant enclaves, through ethnic networks and chain migration.

To varying extents, each of the mechanisms supporting the creation of West Indian enclaves hinges on the strength of ethnic solidarity. In particular, the maintenance of ethnic ties and the utilization of ethnic and class resources facilitate the development and maintenance of distinctly West Indian neighborhoods in fairly high-quality black areas and serve to channel ethnic resources into these areas. Nevertheless, another crucial factor is simple demography. For example, because they were but a small part of a much larger black migration to New York at the time, the first cohort of West Indian immigrants was largely relegated to neighborhoods that were segregated by race but integrated by ethnicity and class (Kasinitz, 1992). This was true despite contentions that this first cohort of West Indian immigrants was a highly selective group (Steinberg, 1981) with presumably strong ethnic solidarity. In contrast, the ability of the second wave of West Indian immigrants to utilize their ethnic solidarity and resources to establish separate neighborhoods has been enhanced by their sheer numbers.

To a large degree, the formation of distinct West Indian neighborhoods can be seen as a reaction to the unique intersection of race and ethnicity characterizing the plight of West Indian immigrants and the incongruence between the racial dynamics of their origin society and the problematic racial dichotomy of the United States. These factors create a dilemma for West Indian immigrants to which they react, in part, by carving out an intermediary position based on both their race and ethnic identity. While West Indians often share with African Americans a common racial identity forged by experiences with racism in the United States (Vickerman, 1994), most West Indians also see themselves as very distinct from African Americans (Foner, 1985; Waters, 1991, 1994; Vickerman, 1994) and, as Foner (1985) points out, they have a vested interest in maintaining this distinction. In so far as West Indian blacks are viewed in a somewhat more favorable light than are African Americans, maintaining ethnic distinctiveness may help to lessen the sting of racism and provide a
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A measure of protection against relegation to America’s lowest social position. An important mechanism for maintaining this ethnic identity may very well be the formation of ethnic neighborhoods with distinctive Caribbean institutions, businesses, and cultural flavor (Conway and Bigby, 1987; Kasinitz, 1992) which are themselves supported by West Indian ethnic solidarity. In essence, the maintenance of ethnic identity and the creation of ethnic neighborhoods are reciprocal processes that provide a measure of social protection for West Indian blacks. New immigrants have the opportunity to enter a somewhat more favorable residential context with familiar West Indian institutions and culture, thereby easing their incorporation into the American system and protecting them somewhat from immediate instances of discriminatory treatment.

In conclusion, it appears to be the intersection of race and ethnicity that determines the residential patterns of West Indians in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area. On the one hand, West Indians are essentially denied access to stable white communities and confined to areas already dominated by blacks or experiencing rapid reductions in their white populations. On the other hand, faced with the prospect of relegation to the lowest social status and relatively inferior quality black neighborhoods, the growing West Indian population has apparently capitalized on class and ethnic resources to form somewhat distinct ethnic neighborhoods and to maintain the ethnic institutions and traditions that distinguish them from the African-American community. By maintaining this ethnic distinctiveness, West Indians are better able to avoid automatic relegation to America’s most oppressed racial group and the worst residential areas.

2 The New York/New Jersey metropolitan area coincides to a great extent with the New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA) as defined by the Census Bureau. The area used here excludes the small Connecticut portion of the CMSA since very few West Indians live in this area.

3 It is likely that some subgroups of West Indians exhibit much greater levels of segregation from other groups than does the West Indian ancestry group as a whole. One example of this situation is the case of Trinidadians and Guyanese of Asian Indian descent who are mainly concentrated in the Richmond Hill area of Queens, but whose separation from other West Indian populations is largely concealed by the aggregation of all West Indian groups into a single ancestry category.

4 The index of dissimilarity is calculated as follows:

\[ D_{i} = \frac{\sum |t_{i} p_{i} - P|}{2TP(1-P)} \]

where \( t_{i} \) and \( p_{i} \) are the total population and minority proportion of areal unit \( i \), and \( T \) and \( P \) are the population size and minority proportion of the city as a whole. A full description of the properties of the index is found in Massey and Denton (1988).

5 Exposure indices are calculated as:

\[ \text{Exposure indices} = \frac{x_{i} y_{i} t_{i}}{X t_{i}} \]

where \( x_{i} \), \( y_{i} \), and \( t_{i} \) represent the number of x-group members, y-group members, and total population of areal unit \( i \), respectively, and \( X \) represents the number of X-group members in the entire city. Isolation indices are calculated in the same manner but compare exposure of x-group members to other x-group members rather than to y-group members.

6 About 95% of the West Indians in the 5% PUMS sample reported a West Indian ancestry as their first ancestry. It should be noted that individuals may be represented in both columns of Table 1 since some individuals reported both a first and second West Indian ancestry.

7 The West Indians of the area are particularly concentrated in Brooklyn and the Bronx; about 40% of the areas total West Indian population resides in Brooklyn and another 17% in the Bronx.

8 The first map in Figure 1 shows the distribution of all non-Hispanic blacks, summing the West Indian and African-American populations of the tracts. West Indians and African Americans are included together here to illustrate the shape of the non-Hispanic black area of Brooklyn in general of which the West Indian residential enclave is a part.
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9 The unshaded tracts in the middle of the West Indian enclave are quite conspicuous. The southernmost of these tracts is a cemetery, while the smaller unshaded tracts to the north represent a Hasidic Jewish enclave with essentially nonexistent populations of West Indians or non-Hispanic blacks.

10 The West Indian residential enclave of Brooklyn is defined as the 106 contiguous tracts in the central part of the borough with at least 20% of their population comprised of West Indians. These tracts have West Indian populations ranging from 20% to just over 60% West Indian with an average percentage of 33%. This West Indian enclave is compared to those tracts in Brooklyn that are also at least 40% non-Hispanic black but are not included in the 106 tracts making up the West Indian enclave.

11 The assumption here is that these West Indian neighborhoods were of higher quality prior to the influx of West Indians. An alternative explanation is that the generally higher socioeconomic quality of these West Indian enclaves primarily reflects an aggregation of the somewhat higher socioeconomic characteristics of West Indians themselves. Some light is shed on this alternative explanation by examining the characteristics of these neighborhoods in 1980, presumably prior to the entrenchment of the West Indian population there. Examination reveals that these areas were indeed of generally higher quality even prior to the great influx of West Indians. For example, in 1980 the West Indian enclave of Brooklyn had a median household income of just over $14,000 and an owner occupancy rate of over 29%. These figures compare to a 1980 median household income of about $8,600 and an owner occupancy rate of just over 15% in those highly black tracts outside of the enclave. Similar differences existed between West Indian and non-West Indian black neighborhoods throughout the NY/NJ metropolitan area. These figures lend support to the interpretation that West Indians were able to gain access to neighborhoods that were of somewhat higher quality even before their arrival and contradict the idea that the quality of these neighborhoods by 1990 merely reflects the characteristics of the West Indians themselves. It should be noted, however, that it is not strictly possible to determine the level of West Indian occupation of these neighborhoods in 1980 since, as noted earlier, the 1980 census did not contain a comparable item for West Indian ancestry.

12 These differences across ancestry groups are quite apparent from an examination of the British, French, and Dutch West Indians in the PUMS sample for the metropolitan area. As expected, the British West Indians in the area - most of whom are Jamaican and who make up the bulk of the West Indians in the sample - have substantially higher average incomes, educational levels, employment rates, home ownership, and are concentrated more heavily in higher-status occupations than the French West Indians (most of whom are Haitian). The tiny Dutch West Indian population takes an intermediate position between the French and British in terms of most of these socioeconomic characteristics. Of course, substantial socioeconomic differences likely exist between specific ancestry groups within these broad categories as well.

13 For this test, the population was defined as those foreign-born non-Hispanic blacks born in any Caribbean country, including each of the British and French West Indian countries.

14 Some indication of the potential direction of the bias this may introduce comes from a closer examination of the individual-level data in the census PUMS files. These data indicate that, while about half of those West Indian-born blacks not reporting a West Indian ancestry reported no ancestry at all, about 34% reported their ancestry to be "Afro American." Furthermore, in comparison to those reporting a West Indian ancestry, those individuals of West Indian descent who do not report a West Indian ancestry have moderately lower average household incomes and slightly fewer are home owners or college educated. Given their slightly less advantageous socioeconomic characteristics and fairly frequent self-identification as African American, it is quite possible that the West Indians not counted with the census ancestry item are more likely than the general West Indian population to be located in poorer neighborhoods and areas populated predominantly by African Americans. As a result, the use of the census ancestry data to identify the location of the West Indian population may lead to some overestimation of the actual level of residential segregation between African Americans and the West Indian population as a whole. However, three facts indicate that the magnitude of this overestimation, if it does in fact exist, may be quite small: 1) the vast majority of those born in the West Indies are included in the population defined by the West Indian ancestry item; 2) the socioeconomic differences between those West Indians counted by the ancestry item and those not counted are very modest (about a 4% difference in average income, a 1-point difference in the percentages with a college degree, and a 4-point difference in the percentages owning a home); and 3) the two groups are very similar in terms of employment status, English proficiency, and almost all other objective individual characteristics that may affect residential outcomes. Nevertheless the cautionary note presented here
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is warranted.

15 An enlightened portrait of the importance of home ownership in the West Indian community and the means used to obtain this ownership are also depicted in Paule Marshall’s (1959) novel about Barbadian immigrants in Brooklyn.

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