Forging Asian Identities Through Marriage: Theory and Reality

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Abstract:

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Using data from the 1980 and 2000 Censuses, this study examines trends in racial and ethnic endogamy for native-born members of three Asian groups in California. This study contributes to the developing literature on Asian racial and ethnic boundaries by examining two aspects of Asian-American marriage that are frequently ignored: first, the impact of foreign-born Asians on marriage choices of native-born co-ethnics, and second, the respective roles of intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic marriage for overall trends in Asian in-marriage. The findings offer mixed support for the claim that growth of Asian populations is leading to the strengthening of ethnic and pan-ethnic boundaries for Asian Americans. Furthermore, the data reveals the dangers of generalizations across and within Asian-American groups, with significant variation in intermarriage by ethnic group, gender, and education level.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of minority populations within the United States in the past four decades has led to renewed scholarly interest in the social construction of racial and ethnic boundaries within an increasingly diverse society. Until recently, the majority of research on the social incorporation of "newer" immigrant groups such as Asians and Hispanics focused on two inter-related questions: one, whether the growth of these groups enhances their ability to maintain distinct racial and ethnic identities; and two, how the growth of these groups affects their interactions with other groups, particularly whites. The works of Padilla (1985) and Espiritu (1992) suggests another important dimension of inter-group relations, namely, relations between members of distinct ethnic groups who, in the American context, find themselves viewed and treated as members of a single category. Espiritu (1992) argues that shared histories of exclusion or rejection from the majority, alongside similar religious and cultural norms, may lead relatively similar ethnic groups to form pan-ethnic groupings where new identity and interaction possibilities can be created, and in which adherence to mainstream norms can be resisted.

Asians provide a critical and complex case to examine the changing contours of race and ethnicity within the United States. Since passage of the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act, the Asian ancestry population has been the fastest growing segment of the US population. Between 1980 and 1990, the number of people claiming Asian or Pacific Islander ancestry increased by 107.8% (Kitano and Daniels 1995), and the 2000 census figures show the Asian population increased a further 45% (US Bureau of the

Census 2000). In addition to their increasing presence, Asians represent an incredible diversity of people across ethnic, religious, and socio-economic groupings. Particularly important for the present study, the simultaneous growth of different Asian ethnic populations within certain geographic regions such as California, allows me to examine the relative importance of intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic interaction for the development of a larger Asian "racial" grouping.

In this paper, I use intermarriage as a barometer to gauge the strength of "racial/ethnic" boundaries for Asian groups within the context of increased immigration and the growth of Asian ethnic populations. More specifically, using data from the US Census (5% Sample),[1] I examine changes in marriage patterns for native-born members of three important Asian groups, Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos, in California from 1980 to 2000. In addition to examining changes in levels of ethnic and racial endogamy for these three groups, this study contributes to the developing literature on Asian intermarriage by examining two aspects of Asian American marriage that frequently have been ignored; first, the impact of the presence of foreign-born Asians for the marriage choices of their native-born co-ethnics; and second, the respective roles of intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic (or what some call pan-ethnic) marriages in overall trends of Asian in-marriage. Finally, using the 2000 census I conduct a more detailed analysis to examine the effects of socio-demographic factors such as age, education level, and gender that have been found to influence marriage outcomes among members of minority groups (Fu 2001; Kalmijn 1998; Liang and Ito 1990; Qian 1997; Rosenfeld 2001).

[1] Data was compiled from the Integrated Public Microdata Series: Version 2.0, Minneapolis: Historical Census Projects, University of Minnesota. (Ruggles, Sobek, et al. 2003).

MARRIAGE: RACIAL/ETHNIC BOUNDARIES AND SOCIAL IDENTITIES

Intermarriage is a valuable indicator of the state of social boundaries that exist for and between groups. For scholars interested in the social incorporation of newer immigrant groups, intermarriage has long been identified as the ultimate outcome of group assimilation (Gordon 1964; Hirschman 1983; Kalmijn 1998). Specifically, early assimilation scholars argued that as each succeeding generation came to identify less with their country of origin, and more with their host society, they would become more likely to marry outside their own ethnic group (Gordon 1964; Park and Burgess 1970).

Intermarriage also serves as a measure of social distance/proximity between groups (Bogardus 1968). Since intermarriage requires two individuals to cross racial/ethnic boundaries, intermarriage reflects both the declining significance of racial/ethnic barriers from the point of view of minorities, as well as the social acceptance of members of these groups by members of other groups. Beyond reflecting current conceptions of group boundaries, intermarriage also creates the context for racial/ethnic identification for future generations. For instance, today, many offspring of mixed marriages fight for recognition as "bi-racials," rather than accepting categorization into either one or the other of their parents' racial or ethnic groups.

In the following sections, I identify some of the major theoretical arguments regarding how recent demographic and social changes are likely to impact the marriage patterns for Asian groups and what this implies for long-term conceptions of Asian identity and patterns of ethnic endogamy.

Theory #1: Strengthened Pan-Ethnic and Revitalized Ethnic Identities

Historically, Asian ancestry groups within the United States have taken great pains to avoid being lumped into the general category of Asian, and particularly not to be mistaken for members of other Asian groups. Attempts to maintain separate group identities were a result of both pre-existing historical enmities that immigrants from different Asian countries brought to the United States, and the belief that antipathy directed towards members of other Asian groups by whites could be forestalled against one's own group by creating distinctions between the groups in the minds of whites (see Daniels 1988: 113-114; and Espiritu 1992: 23).

Espiritu (1992: 21-25) argues that beginning in the late 1960s, and in large part inspired by the Black Power movement, there was a fundamental shift within some segments of the Asian community towards recognizing the shared consequences of racial oppression faced by different Asian immigrant groups. Particularly critical for this development was improved relations between Asian countries, which reduced frictions between members of these groups within the United States. Another factor was declining residential segregation between these groups, which undoubtedly created greater contact between the groups, thus increasing awareness of their shared circumstances within American society. She notes that this pan-ethnicity was at first "primarily the ideology of native-born, American educated, and middle class Asians," and one that was frequently not shared by members of Asian ethnic enclaves who still chose to identify exclusively with respect to their national origins (1992: 50). Implied here is that later on even working class Asians came to embrace this pan-ethnic identity.

Espiritu (1992: 13) describes how the nature of American public policies, particularly at the governmental level, which frequently allocate economic and political resources based on more general racial categories (i.e. blacks, Asians, Hispanics, Native Americans), created incentives for Asian ethnic groups to act collectively in order to achieve instrumental goals. Espiritu sees the incentive of organizing on the basis of pan-ethnic identities as having the potential to lead to a shared pan-ethnic cultural consciousness, one that would be reflected in friendship and marriage patterns among members of different Asian groups. With respect to marriage, she believes "just as intermarriage between major ethnic groups can obliterate boundaries, so intermarriage within these categories can fuse sub-groups into one pan-ethnic group (1992: 167-168).

The dramatic growth of Asian populations through immigration may also create forces conducive to the retention of distinctive Asian ethnic identities. Massey (1995: 645) argues that during periods of high immigration, group identity is more dependent on the immigration population than their descendents, and that ethnicity is more closely linked with the "language, culture, and ways of life of the sending society." From this point of view, increased immigration is seen to facilitate the formation of ethnic communities and networks, which allows the immigrant generation to maintain its home language and culture, reduces the need of members to adapt to the norms of the dominant culture, and increases the likelihood that the immigrant generation can pass on its native culture to succeeding generations. For native-born co-ethnics, increased opportunities to take part in structures and organizations that foster participation within the "ethnic community" (such as language schools or ethnic campus groups), is seen to facilitate interactions within the ethnic group. This in turn, enhances the salience of ethnicity for

group members as they make marriage decisions, and increases the likelihood of co-ethnic marriages.

Regardless of the specific type of interaction, whether intra-ethnic or inter-ethnic, many researchers (i.e. Hwang et al. 1994; Lee and Fernandez 1998; Rosenfeld 2002; Shinagawa and Pang 1996) argue that increased immigration and the growth of Asian populations make it more likely that Asians will interact with other Asians, countering trends towards greater incorporation into main-stream "Anglo" culture.

Theory #2: Segmented Assimilation and Mainstream Receptivity

Other theorists suggest that ethnic and pan-ethnic mobilization may have decreased in recent years as racial hostility towards certain groups, like Asians, has waned in the Post Civil Rights era. According to the segmented assimilation model, how rapidly an immigrant group is integrated and accepted into the American mainstream is dependant on four critical factors: 1) the history of the immigrant generation; 2) the pace of acculturation of parents and children; 3) the barriers faced by native-born members in their attempt to assimilate; and 4) the family and community resources for confronting these barriers (Portes and Rumbaut 2001: 45-46; Portes and Zhou 1993). For those groups with high average levels of human capital and few racial or cultural markers that identify them as distinct, acceptance into the mainstream of American society is expected, and logically their children would seek marriage within this segment of society. For other groups, either poorer, or more racially or culturally distinct (i.e. darker skinned) the likely trajectory is a downward spiral into the underclass of American society.

Many researchers argue that the economic and cultural barriers faced by Asian immigrant groups, particularly those who come with high levels of human capital, have

decreased in recent years. Alba and Nee (1999) and Perlmann and Waldinger (1999), for example, point out that while non-European groups faced greater levels of discrimination in the past, perceptions of racial distinctiveness as well as negative stereotypes have decreased somewhat for Asians. Moreover, many of these researchers suggest that native-born Asians may not choose to associate with foreign-born co-ethnics at rates in the past given residential dispersion among the native born. Thus, Alba and Nee (1999) caution against assuming that growth of foreign-born populations necessarily means greater influence on their part with respect to the attitudes and behaviors of native-born group members. As they note (1999: 148), even if high level of immigration were to persist, it does not necessarily follow that these groups will be "locked into the same communal life and economic niches of the first generation."

Current conditions of high immigration and reduced barriers for native-born Asians within American society may thus lead to enhanced opportunities for the foreign born to maintain their distinct cultures, while at the same time native-born Asians assimilate to mainstream American culture at high rates. Increased participation and acceptance of native-born Asians in mainstream society, particularly compared to the "culturally" distinct foreign born, may therefore reduce the likelihood of pan-ethnic identification and revitalized co-ethnic identification for native-born Asians, thereby decreasing the likelihood of endogamy of all variations.

Gender Differences and an Imbalanced Marriage Market

Patterns of endogamy and intermarriage may also vary by gender depending on the preference patterns of males and females of various racial and ethnic groups. Liang and Ito (1999) offer several cultural explanations for the higher rates of out-marriage

observed among Asian-American women compared to their male counterparts. First, they argue that images in American popular culture that romanticize Asian females and deride and ridicule Asian males help shape the way Asian males and females are viewed as potential spouses among whites. Second, they argue that the desire by Asian women to find more egalitarian relationships may lead them to prefer whites over members of their own ethnic group or members of other Asian groups.

Regardless of the underlying cause, if native-born Asian women are more likely than native-born Asian men to out-marry whites, then it will be more difficult for Asian males to find native-born co-ethnic partners. Hence, we may find that the growth of foreign-born populations provides an important supplementary marriage pool for native-born Asian males seeking co-ethnic partners.

Data Constraints and Intermarriage Trends Among Asians

Several recent studies of Asian intermarriage support aspects of theory one and suggest that increased immigration and the growth of Asian populations are leading to higher levels of intra-ethnic and pan-Asian marriages (Hwang et al. 1994; Lee and Fernandez 1998; Rosenfeld 2001). For instance, Lee and Fernandez (1998: 338) show that "social distance" as measured by rates of intermarriage between Asian Americans and Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics grew between 1980 and 1990. Similarly, in a cross-sectional study of 14 California metropolitan areas, Hwang et al. found that areas with larger ethnic populations had higher levels of Asian in-marriage. They argue that this finding supports the contention that the growth of ethnic populations makes it possible "for minority group members to accrue the critical mass needed for self-sufficiency, and thus to resist pressure for assimilation (Hwang et al. 1994: 411)." However, because these

studies fail to distinguish between inter- and intra-marriage between native- and foreign-born Asians, it is unclear to what extent the effect of the foreign-born presence is related to high rates of endogamy *only* among the foreign born.

Indeed, Lee and Fernandez acknowledge that between 1980 and 1990 the marriage patterns of foreign-born and native-born Asians diverged substantially. Their data indicates that while the foreign born became less likely to be found in racially exogamous marriages during this period, native-born Asians were increasingly likely to out-marry, despite overall growth in the number of both foreign- and native-born Asians (see Table 1).

Data constraints further confuse interpretation of patterns among the foreign and native born. The 1980 Census was the last census to ask age of marriage, a question necessary for determining when and where someone married. If researchers do not know whether people arrived already married, or married subsequently to arriving in the U.S., the effect (on marriage patterns) of foreign-born presence cannot be easily determined. Thus researchers, such as Hwang et al. (1994, 1997), interested in studying the direct influence of structural characteristics like group size on intermarriage, are forced to use 1980 Census data that allow only limited understanding of Asian groups. Given the relatively small number of native-born Asians of marriage-able age captured in 1980 data, their findings are probably more generalizable to the immigrant generation than to the native born.

In one of the rare studies that looked directly at the influence of group size on the native-born, Qian (1997) found that native-born Asians (and Hispanics) were increasingly likely to out-marry from 1980 to 1990. But even Qian's study provides an

incomplete picture because it ignores co-ethnic marriages between the native and foreign born, an important configuration for assessing certain theoretical arguments. Further none of these studies discusses the relative roles of ethnic endogamy and inter-ethnic marriage for either development of pan-Asian or revitalized ethnic identities. Given current population growth among most Asian ethnic groups, due to both immigration and natural increase, we need to consider how this growth affects patterns of ethnic and pan-ethnic marriage and identity.

DATA AND METHODS

The data for this study come from the 1980 and 2000 5% Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS), specifically, data on native-born Asians groups in California. California is a particularly appropriate area within which to examine the simultaneously changing contours of Asian ethnic boundaries and the potential development of a broader pan-ethnic identity. If the size and growth of Asian ethnic populations are seen as important for increased in-group interaction, California should provide conditions favorable to both increased co-ethnic and pan-ethnic marriage. California is the state with the largest and fastest growing (in absolute terms) Asian population. In 1980, California over 1/3 of the nearly 3.5 million Asians found in the United States lived within its borders. From 1980 to 2000, as the US Asian population grew nearly three times in size, California's growth kept pace, and today 36% of the 10.2 million Asians are found there (see Table 2).

Given my theoretical interest in the influence of social conditions within the U.S. on marriage decisions for Asian Americans, and concerns raised in the last section about

how to interpret data on marriage among the foreign born, I focus solely on the marriage decisions of native-born Asians for this study. I am also concerned that in some earlier studies outcomes for the foreign born were generalized to the group as a whole, masking the distinct patterns for the native born. However, since increased immigration also shapes the context of marriage decisions of the native born by creating a pool of single foreign born that may be available for marriages, I examine the extent to which ethnic endogamy among the native born results from marriages with native-born and foreign-born co-ethnics (revitalized ethnic cohesion).

As noted earlier, the three groups I examine are Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos, the three largest Asian groups in California. Demographically and historically, these groups are well suited for examining the relationship between immigration, population growth, and marriage decisions. Each has a relatively long history of settlement in California, allowing time for the development of ethnic communities, and assuring enough native-born members of marriage age for the proposed analysis, and native-born members of these three ethnic groups spearheaded pan-ethnic coalitions in California during the 1960s and 1970s in order to create Asian American departments on college campuses, and to promote "Asian" political agendas (Espiritu 1992). For these reasons, patterns of endogamy and intermarriage among these groups are especially useful for assessing identity patterns among native-born Asians.

The three groups also differ on key dimensions that could affect marriage patterns. In terms of recent immigration flows, both Chinese and Filipinos have had their populations supplemented by large influxes of newer immigrants. Hence, these groups have populations dominated by immigrants, with the foreign born making up 87.5% of

the adult Chinese population in California, and over 90% of the adult Filipino population in 2000. On the other hand, the adult Japanese population is predominantly composed of people born and raised in the US, with nearly 60% native born.[2] This pattern might suggest higher rates of native-foreign born co-ethnic endogamy for Filipinos and Chinese, if the ethnic revitalization hypothesis holds.

Native-born members of these three groups also differ with respect to education and occupational prestige. Both native-born Chinese and native-born Japanese are highly educated, with higher percentages of college educated than even whites, and they also score higher in terms of occupational prestige. Filipinos, on the other hand, despite slightly higher levels of college completion than whites, score somewhere between whites and groups such as native-born blacks and Hispanics in terms of occupational prestige (Barringer et al. 1993). These experiences in higher educational settings and in high prestige occupations suggest high proximity to high status whites and minorities, and less contact with and reliance upon ethnic enclaves. All these groups, as the result of education and occupation, could expect mainstream receptivity and therefore high rates of exogamy irrespective of size of foreign-born and native-born populations if traditional assimilation theory holds.

Sample

For this research, I chose a sample of native-born Asians[3] whose ages made them likely to have married within 20 years of the 1980 and 2000 censuses. The age group selected was those between the ages of 20 and 45 and their spouses for each period. Although the twenty-five year age interval potentially allows for a slight overlap across

[2] Based on 2000 IPUMS data (Ruggles, Sobek, et al. 2003).
[3] Those who self-classified as Chinese, Japanese, or Filipino.

the two census periods, the larger range with a high age of 45 reflects the tendency of college educated, who are over-represented in these groups to marry later in life.[4]

Matching data from the 1980 and 2000 Censuses entailed two other considerations: one technical, one theoretical. In the 2000 Census, individuals did not all have an equal likelihood of being selected for the PUMS 5% sample, therefore 2000 Census data was weighted in the analyses that follows. The 2000 Census is also the first census that allowed for respondents to select more than one racial category. Allen and Turner (2001) offer several possible alternatives to bridge 2000 data with earlier data; adding mixed race individuals completely to one race category (or "whole assignment" methods), giving fractional assignments to individuals to different racial categories, or only counting individuals who identify solely as one category. Given the theoretical question at hand, it is unclear whether a marriage to a mixed-race individual (i.e. white-Asian) should be considered ethnic endogamy, exogamy, or some other distinct category. Given the relatively infrequent occurrence of native-born Asians marrying those who self-classified as bi-racial (less than 2%), only marriages with those who self-classified as mono-racial were included.[5]

Consistent with the overall growth of these ethnic populations, and the greater number of native-born Asians reaching marriageable age, the overall number of males and females in the sample that meet the selection criteria of age 20 to 45 increased from 1541 to 1801 for males and from 1840 to 2174 for females from 1980 to 2000.

[4] Although ideally we want to capture marriages occurring within each census period, for each ten-year age category, this is no longer possible with census data. As previously noted, beginning in 1990, the Census Bureau no longer asked the question of age at first marriage, a question necessary to determine when someone married.

[5] If levels of out-marriage keep growing, and more individuals begin to classify themselves as mixed race, this issue will become increasingly important in empirical studies examining racial/ethnic boundaries and assimilation.

Examining each of the three groups, we find that the number of native born who were married increased for Chinese and Filipinos, the two groups whose populations continue to be most affected by new immigration. For native-born Chinese we find that the number of married increased from 430 to 573 for males, and from 488 to 705 for females. For native-born Filipinos the respective growth was from 363 to 589 for males, and from 387 to 748 for females. Japanese-Americans, on the other-hand, saw a net decline in the number married over the twenty-year period, for males from 748 to 638, and for females from 965 to 721, as long periods of low immigration affected the replacement of native-born members.

Methods

I begin my analysis by examining if the marriage patterns of native-born Asians changed significantly from 1980 to 2000.[6] As part of this analysis, I examine if levels of ethnic endogamy and racial endogamy have increased from 1980 to 2000. In addition, I examine how these rates vary for those groups with high numbers of foreign-born co-ethnics and those without.

Next, I conduct a more in-depth analysis of the 2000 data to examine variation within ethnic groups by age and education levels. Specifically, I examine the role of gender, age, and education on marriage outcomes of native-born Chinese, Japanese and Filipinos. The dependent variable for this analysis is a polytomous variable that contrasts ethnic endogamy with a native-born co-ethnic and four other types of out-marriage. The joint probability distribution for marriage between native-born co-ethnics (P_0), and native-born with foreign-born co-ethnic (P_1), inter-ethnic co-racial (P_2), inter-racial white (P_3), and inter-racial minority (P_4), is modeled using multinomial logistic regression. For

[6] This analysis is conducted using the Pearson chi-square test for difference.

each category of marriage, I convert the log coefficients into odds to give a predicted value for each parameter controlling for other variables in the equation. Education is modeled as a categorical variable, with the following three categories: less than completed college education, college education, and post-college education, with less than college education serving as the omitted category for the analysis. In addition I control for the effects of age by creating two age cohorts (those born in 1965 or earlier, and those born post-1965), with the omitted category those born in 1965 and earlier. This allows me to compare those who grew up before the influx of large waves of new Asian immigrants due to the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act, with those who grew up mainly during a period where Asian communities were growing in both size and influence.

FINDINGS

Marriage Trends (1980 to 2000): Endogamy, Pan-ethnic Marriage, and Exogamy

From 1980 to 2000, there were significant changes in the marriage patterns of men and women for all three ethnic groups with the exception of Filipino women (see Table 3). However, the observed patterns offer mixed support for the idea that growth of Asian populations has either revitalized ethnic identities or strengthened pan-ethnic bonds.

Examining the two ethnic groups that have experienced growth in both native-born and immigrant populations, Chinese and Filipinos, we find dramatic variation both within and across the groups. If any group has begun to demonstrate a re-identification pattern with co-ethnics it is Filipinos. Between 1980 and 2000, levels of ethnic endogamy

nearly doubled from 30.7% of total marriages to 60.3% of total marriages for native-born Filipino males. However, despite increased numbers of native- and foreign-born co-ethnics, there was no significant change in the marriage patterns of native-born Filipinas, and levels of ethnic endogamy remained approximately the same at about 44.5% of total marriages. Turning to native-born Chinese, we find that despite growth in the overall size of the Chinese population levels of ethnic endogamy have not increased. In fact, levels of endogamous marriage declined slightly for native-born Chinese males, from 66.6% in 1980 to 65.5% in 2000. For native-born Chinese women, we find an even more pronounced decline in levels of ethnic endogamy, from 64.5% in 1980 to 48.8% in 2000.

Perhaps most striking is the large and growing gender gap in levels of ethnic endogamy for both groups, with native-born Chinese and Filipino males having rates of ethnic endogamy nearly 15 percentage points higher than their female counterparts in 2000. Disaggregating ethnic endogamy into marriage with native-born co-ethnics and foreign-born co-ethnics explains in large part the gender gap in levels of ethnically endogamous marriages. From 1980 to 2000, both native-born Chinese and Filipino males were increasingly likely to marry a foreign-born co-ethnic, from 21.9% to 29.0% for Chinese-American males, and from 18.7% to 32.8% for Filipino-American males. Despite dramatic increases in the immigrant populations of these groups from 1980 to 2000, native-born Filipinas were only slightly more likely to marry foreign-born co-ethnics (17.3% to 21.0%), and native-born Chinese were less likely to marry foreign-born co-ethnics (16.8% to 15.6%).

For Japanese-Americans, the one group that has seen almost no new immigration, and thus allows little variation in ethnic endogamy by gender among the native-born, we

find that levels of ethnic endogamy decreased approximately the same for both males and females; from 64.3% to 39.4% of total marriages for males, and from 61.8% to 35.4% of total marriages for females. Hence, while increased immigration does not lead necessarily to higher levels of ethnic endogamy, it does permit native-born Asian males to maintain higher levels of ethnic endogamy than possible if they were strictly reliant on native-born Asian females, and in the case of native-born Filipino males has even allowed them to increase levels of ethnic endogamy.

At the same time, there is evidence that inter-ethnic marriage, that is, marriage between members of two different Asian groups increased during this period of growth for Asian ethnic populations. For native-born Chinese, marriage to members of other Asian groups increased slightly from 12.6% to 14.3% for males and from 7.8% to 13.5% for females. Similarly native-born Japanese experienced increased inter-ethnic marriage, although these increases varied to a great degree by gender. For Japanese-American females the likelihood of being married inter-ethnically increasing slightly from 8.6% to 11.4%, while for males the likelihood of being married inter-ethnically more than doubled, from 8.7% to 22.1%. Finally, both Filipino-American males and females saw increased percentages of inter-ethnic marriage, from 5.5% to 6.8% for males, and from 5.4% to 6.8% for females.

Interpreting the observed increases in pan-ethnic marriages as evidence of greater Asian consciousness as suggested by some researchers (Lee and Fernandez 1998; Rosenfeld 2001; Shinagawa and Pang 1996), however, may be misleading since inter-racial marriage with whites also increased for many of these same groups, particularly for females. For instance, rates of inter-racial marriage to whites increased from 25.0% to

35.5% for Chinese-American females, and from 26.7% to 49.1% for Japanese-American females. Even Japanese-American males, the group with the largest increase in inter-ethnic marriage, saw an increase in inter-racial marriage to whites, from 22.1% in 1980 to 34.0% in 2000.

Indeed, while Asian-Americans may be statistically more likely to be found in pan-Asian marriages than we would expect by chance (Rosenfeld 2001), and the number of these unions increased from 1980 to 2000, it is important to note that these unions have not increased greatly as a percentage of total marriages for native-born Asians (with the exception of Japanese-American males), and for Chinese-Americans females and both Japanese-American males and females do not compensate for the decreases associated with declines in ethnic endogamy. Even Filipino Americans, the one ethnic group that had dramatic declines in racially exogamy, both with whites and minorities, saw little increase in inter-ethnic marriage rates.

In fact, if we are to identify a dominant trend in out-marriage across these diverse ethnic groups, it is the growing gap between men and women in their propensity to be found in marriages to whites (see Table 4). For Chinese, increases in out-marriage to whites by native-born women led to a growing gender gap between male and female marriage rates to whites from 6.6% in 1980 to 17.9% in 2000. For Japanese, despite an increase in exogamy to whites by native-born males, even greater increases in white exogamy among native-born females led to a growth in the gender differential from 4.6% to 15.1%. Finally, although rates of out-marriage between native-born Filipino females and white males decreased slightly from 39.0% to 38.5%, a more marked decrease by males increased the gender gap from less than 3% in 1980 to 10.8% in 2000.

Unclear from this analysis is whether these differences between native-born Asian males and females is due to gender differences in preference to marry endogamously, or represents preference patterns among whites that make Asian females more preferred to Asian males for whites. In the following section I address this question by examining the role of educational status on marriage outcomes among native-born Asians.

The Surprising Role of Education for Patterns of Endogamy and Exogamy

From a theoretical point of view, a particularly important question for both the immigration/assimilation and the race/ethnicity literatures is the role of ascribed versus achieved status in determining the social outcomes for members of minority groups. In the following analysis, I examine in detail the relationship between education and marriage outcomes for native-born Asians, and how this relationship holds for males and females. Table 5 presents a cross-tabulation of marital outcomes by education level of native-born Asian husbands and wives.

Contrary to the general expectation of most assimilation models that postulate higher levels of education decreasing the significance of ethnic identity for marriage outcomes, levels of marriage to co-ethnics did not differ greatly by educational category. This was true of marriage to both native-born and foreign-born co-ethnics and for males and females. For out-marriage to whites, however, we find a major difference in the role of education for males and females. Asian males with higher levels of education were less likely to marry whites than those with lower levels of education. Both males with college (21.4%) and post-college levels of education (26.3%) were less likely to be married to whites than those who had not completed college (31.7%). On the other hand, the higher the education level of native-born Asian women the more likely they were to

be married to whites. Those with college (41.1%) and post-college education (42.5%) were more likely than those who had not completed college (40.4%) to be married to a white male.

However, consistent with Espiritu's (1992) notions about the significance of pan-ethnicity among the college educated, I find a very strong positive relationship between education level and marriage to members of other Asian groups for both males and females. For males with college (18.2%) and post-college (19.8%) education the likelihood of being married to an Asian outside their own ethnic group was nearly twice as high as those who had not completed college (8.9%). For females the pattern was similar, with those who had completed college (12.1%) or had post-college level education (15.1%) more likely to be married to an Asian of another ethnic group than those who had not completed college (6.8%).

Not surprisingly, increased education levels for Asian males and females also meant lower rates of marriage with members of minority groups. For males, rates of marriage to minorities declined from 6.7% for those with less than college education, to 2.6% and 1.7% for those with college or greater than college education respectively. Similarly, for females, rates of marriage to minorities declined from 9.4% for those with less than college education to 3.3% and 2.5% for those with college or greater than college education.

Assessing the Impact of Age and Education on Patterns of Intermarriage for Native-Born Chinese, Japanese and Filipinos

While cross-tabular analysis gives a picture of the role of education on the likelihood of native-born Asians to be found in different types of marital unions, it does

not allow us to simultaneously control for other factors beyond an individual's education level. In addition, the aggregation of Asians into one category could hide important similarities and differences across the three groups. Therefore, in the following section I use multinomial logistic regression analysis[7] to examine the respective role of gender, age, and education, on marriage outcomes for native-born Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos. Education level and age cohort of males and females for each group are displayed in Table 6.

In Table 7, I present the results of the multinomial logistic regression analysis for each of the three groups. The intercept is interpreted as the odds of an individual marrying someone other than a native-born co-ethnic if all other characteristics are set to the omitted categories (someone with less than completed college education, and born in 1965 or earlier). In the following section, I analyze sequentially each type of marriage for male and female members of each ethnic group.

For native-born Chinese males, the main finding is the significantly lower likelihood for those with higher levels of education to be found married to a foreign-born co-ethnic or white female compared to a native-born co-ethnic. Controlling for age cohort, native-born Chinese males who had completed college or post-college education are 50% less likely than those who had not completed a college education to marry foreign-born co-ethnics, and those with college and post-college levels of education are 0.48 times and 0.39 times as likely as those with less than completed college to be married to whites. If we see education as a resource that can be used in the marriage market, this suggests native-born Chinese males prefer native-born co-ethnics to either foreign-born co-ethnics

[7] This analysis is conducted using the Multinomial Logistic Regression function for categorical variables in STATA.

or whites. Not surprisingly, given the relatively recent growth of immigrant populations and the overall growth of Asian populations, younger native-born Chinese males are significantly more likely than those born in 1965 and earlier to marry foreign-born co-ethnics and other Asians. For native-born Chinese women, however, there is no statistically significant finding by age or education with respect to marriage to foreign-born co-ethnics, members of other Asian groups or whites.

Education level seems to play a far more pronounced role in the marriage patterns of both native-born male and female Filipinos, and one at odds with that observed for Chinese Americans. Controlling for age cohort, we find that more educated Filipino-American males and females are far more likely to marry foreign-born co-ethnics and whites than those with lower levels of education. For instance, college educated males are 1.68 times as likely and college educated females 2.10 times as likely as those who have not completed college to marry a foreign-born co-ethnic. Similarly we find that college and post-college educated males and females are more likely to be married to whites. These findings were statistically significant for college educated females who are 1.86 times as likely and post-college educated males who are 4.76 times as likely as their less educated counterparts to be married to white spouses. Perhaps the most striking finding is that Filipino males with post-college levels of education are over 10 times as likely as those without a college degree to be found married to an Asian of another ethnic group. Well-educated Filipinos thus seem to represent revitalized co-ethnic and pan-ethnic patterns, alongside main-stream assimilation.

Turning to native-born Japanese we find greater divergence between males and females. More educated Japanese-American males are less likely than those who have not

completed college to be found married to whites, although this finding was statistically significant only for college educated men. For females there is no significant relationship between education levels and out-marriage to whites. The effect of age-cohort also seems to be more pronounced for males. Controlling for education, younger Japanese-American males are 2.25 times as likely to be found married to foreign-born co-ethnics than those born in 1965 or earlier, and 1.67 times as likely to be found married to members of other Asian groups. However, the post-1965 cohort was also 1.67 times as likely to be married to whites as well, suggesting the general lack of potential native-born co-ethnics for younger Japanese males. For native-born Japanese females, the main statistically significant finding is that those with higher than college education are 3.25 times as likely as those with less than completed college education to be married to an Asian of another group. One consistent finding for Japanese-American males and females, and in fact for all the groups observed, is that the more highly educated are dramatically less likely than their less educated counterparts to be married to members of minority groups.

DISCUSSION

If we view marriage decisions as reflecting the strength of ethnic and racial boundaries, the marriage trends presented here show a complex pattern for the three different groups. Among the three ethnic groups, Japanese-Americans show the strongest sign of classical assimilation and mainstream receptivity. Historical conditions similar to that faced by earlier European groups, that is, high immigration followed by a long period of low immigration; seem to have weakened ethnic boundaries for Japanese-Americans. From 1980 to 2000, levels of ethnic endogamy dropped from over 60% of marriages for

both males and females to less than 40%. For both males and females, this has been accompanied by greater out-marriage to whites, such that by 2000 over one third of native-born Japanese males and nearly half the females are found married to white spouses. These trends seem likely to continue as those born after 1965 are even more likely than their older counterparts to marry whites.

On the other hand, Filipinos, or more specifically Filipino males, offer support for the idea of revitalized ethnic identities. From 1980 to 2000 levels of ethnic endogamy for Filipino-American males increased from 36.9% to 60.3%. Consistent with the notion that larger populations of foreign-born Asians increases the likelihood of native-foreign born co-ethnic marriage, we find that much of the increase in ethnic endogamy among native-born Filipino males is due to higher levels of marriage to foreign-born Filipina women. In fact, in 2000 Filipino-American males were more likely to marry a foreign-born co-ethnic than a native-born co-ethnic. This finding must be tempered by the fact that despite similar increases in potential co-ethnic spouses, Filipino-American women show no significant changes in their overall marriage patterns.

Marriage patterns for Chinese-Americans fall somewhere between the patterns observed for Japanese-Americans and Filipino Americans. Unlike Japanese-American males who have become less likely and Filipino-American males who are more likely to be found in ethnically endogamous marriages there is very little change in the overall rates of ethnic endogamy for Chinese-American males. Disaggregating ethnic endogamy, however, reveals an important shift towards greater levels of marriage with foreign-born co-ethnics, suggesting that immigration provides an important function in the maintenance of ethnic endogamy for Chinese-American males. This is an important

dynamic within the Chinese-American community given the increasing likelihood of Chinese-American women to out-marry and particularly to out-marry to whites.

Demographically speaking, there also appears to be mixed evidence that inter-ethnic marriages are likely to play a large role in shaping social identification for the next generation of Asians. Despite slight increases in the number of pan-ethnic marriages, these marriages remain a small percentage of total marriages among native-born Asians compared to marriages within the ethnic group or to whites. Lending support to Espiritu's (1992) ideas of pan-ethnicity, inter-ethnic marriages remains pre-dominantly a pattern among the most educated Asians, perhaps reflecting the strong influence of pan-ethnic organizations and pan-ethnic contact that occurs on college campuses.

Perhaps the most important findings of this study are the continued need to examine the important differences that still exist between Asian groups and how the preference patterns of males and females of different racial groups interact in creating different marriage constraints for native-born Asian males and females. Native-born Asian women have become increasingly more likely than native-born Asian men to have white spouses, and much less likely to be married co-ethnically. For women, neither education level nor age cohort seems to significantly affect patterns of ethnic endogamy or marriage to whites. In fact, the main effects of increased education for native-born Asian women is increasing the likelihood of marriage pan-ethnic marriage and decreasing the likelihood of marriage to racial minorities.

Given the constraints of a reduced supply of native-born co-ethnic women, it is not too surprising that education has more of an effect on marriage patterns of native-born Asian males. Highly educated Asian males are more likely than their less educated

peers to marry native-born co-ethnics. Less clear is the variation in the role of education for other forms of marriage. For Chinese-American and Japanese-American males we find that higher levels of education are linked to lower likelihood of marriage to whites, while for Filipinos higher education significantly and dramatically increases the likelihood of marriage to a white spouse. Similarly, while more educated Chinese and Japanese-Americans are less likely than those who have not finished college to marry a foreign-born co-ethnic, more educated native-born Filipinos are more likely to marry a foreign-born co-ethnic.

The complexities of the marriage patterns presented here reveal the difficulties of applying any single model of assimilation to a group as diverse as Asian Americans. Each of the three ethnic groups has been influenced by very different patterns of immigration. The classic assimilation pattern of increased assimilation over time seems to apply most directly for Japanese-Americans - the one group with little new immigration. On the other hand, increased Chinese and Filipino immigration has had somewhat different effects for both groups. For Chinese-Americans, immigration seems to have contributed to some slowing of assimilation tendencies among the group, particularly for males. For Filipino-Americans, and particularly Filipino males, the propensity to marry foreign-born co-ethnics perhaps reflects the importance of trans-national communities maintained by frequent visits of native-born members to their home countries.

Newer Asian groups will add further complexity to the Asian-American experience. These groups will not only differ by immigration history (i.e. refugee status), but they are also likely to vary by the amount of human capital they bring to the United States, and even by perceptions of their Asian-ness (i.e. Indians, Pakistanis, etc…).

Researchers have also noted that while the economic status of Asians in the United States is higher than most other racial minorities, the social status of Asians varies greatly by gender. Future work will need to examine to what extent the differences in native-born Asian males and females reflect preference differences by Asian males to marry endogamously or constraints due to differential perceptions of Asian males and females by whites.

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Table 1: Percent Exogamous Marriage by Nativity and Ethnic Group (United States)

Ethnic Group	1980	1990	% Foreign Born 1980	% Foreign Born 1990
Asian Total	**25.4**	**21.2**	58.6%	65.6%
Native-Born	34.7	40.1		
Foreign-Born	22.3	17.4		
Chinese Total	**15.7**	**14.2**	63.3%	69.9%
Native-Born	37.2	46.4		
Foreign-Born	10.3	9.1		
Filipino Total	**30.0**	**29.1**	62.2%	64.4%
Native-Born	58.5	64.8		
Foreign-Born	24.0	24.8		
Japanese Total	**34.2**	**35.7**	26.0%	32.4%
Native-Born	24.0	31.2		
Foreign-Born	50.9	42.3		
Korean Total	**31.8**	**22.3**	81.9%	72.7%
Native-Born	68.0	71.7		
Foreign-Born	31.8	20.9		

Sources:
1) Data for Exogamous Rates of Asian ancestry groups for 1980 and 1990 were taken from Lee and Fernandez (1998), Table 4.
2) Percentage foreign-born was calculated from the 1980 & 1990 Census of Population: Asian and Pacific Islander Population in the US.

Table 2: California's Asian Population (1980 & 2000)

	US Population	CA Population	CA as % of US Population
1980 [1]	3,466,874	1,246,802	36.0
2000 [2]	10,242,998	3,697,513	36.1
% Growth (1980 to 2000)	195%	197%	

Notes:

[1] Data compiled from 1980 Census of Population: Asian and Pacific Islander Population in the United States.

[2] Data compiled from US Bureau of the Census (2002).

Table 3: Marriage Patterns by Ethnic Group and Gender Ages 20-45 by Percentage (California 1980 & 2000)

MALES

Ethnic Group	Racial Endogamy				Racial Exogamy		Total [1]	Pearson Chi-Square
	Ethnic Endogamy			Other Asian	White	Minority		
	NB	FB	Total					
Chinese								
1980	44.7	21.9	(66.6)	12.6	18.4	2.6	100.2 N=430	
2000	36.5	29.0	(65.5)	14.3	17.6	2.6	100 N=573	**9.53*** **df=4**
Japanese								
1980	55.7	8.6	(64.3)	8.7	22.1	4.9	100.0 N=748	
2000	31.7	7.7	(39.4)	22.1	34.0	4.5	100 N=638	**104.68*** ** df=4**
Filipinos								
1980	18.2	18.7	(36.9)	5.5	36.4	21.2	100.0 N=363	
2000	27.5	32.8	(60.3)	6.8	27.7	5.3	100.1 N=589	**80.70*** ** df=4**

FEMALES

Ethnic Group	Racial Endogamy				Racial Exogamy		Total	Pearson Chi-Square
	Ethnic Endogamy			Other Asian	White	Minority		
	NB	FB	Total					
Chinese								
1980	47.7	16.8	(64.5)	7.8	25.0	2.7	100.0 N=488	
2000	33.2	15.6	(48.8)	13.5	35.5	2.3	100.1 N=705	**34.54*** ** df=4**
Japanese								
1980	56.1	5.7	(61.8)	8.6	26.7	2.9	100.0 N=965	
2000	34.0	1.4	(35.4)	11.4	49.1	4.2	100.1 N=721	**125.06*** ** df=4**
Filipinas								
1980	27.1	17.3	(44.4)	5.4	39.0	11.1	99.9 N=387	
2000	23.4	21.0	(44.5)	6.8	38.5	10.3	100.1 N=748	**4.15 df=4**

Notes:

[1] Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding error.

* Significant at the .05 level

** Significant at the .01 level,

*** Significant at the .001 level

Table 4: Gender Gap in Out-Marriage to Whites
(Native-born Females to Native-born Males in Percentage)

Ethnic Group	Difference 1980	Difference 2000	Change 1980 to 2000
Chinese	6.6%	17.9%	11.3%
Japanese	4.6%	15.1%	10.5%
Filipinos	2.6%	10.8%	8.2%

Table 5: Marriage Patterns by Educational Status and Race/Ethnicity of Spouse for Native-Born Asians by Percentage (2000)

Asian American Males

	Intra-racial Marriage			Inter-racial Marriage		
	Co-ethnic Native	Co-ethnic Foreign	Other Asian	White	Minority	**Total** [1]
Education Level						
High School or Some College	28.4	24.2	8.9	31.7	6.7	99.9 (N=760)
College	34.7	23.1	18.2	21.4	2.6	100 (N=688)
Post-College	33.4	18.7	19.8	26.3	1.7	99.9 (N=353)

Asian American Females

	Intra-racial Marriage			Inter-racial Marriage		
	Co-ethnic Native	Co-ethnic Foreign	Other Asian	White	Minority	**Total** [1]
Education Level						
High School or Some College	30.4	13.0	6.8	40.4	9.4	100 (N=869)
College	29.7	13.7	12.1	41.1	3.3	99.9 (N=948)
Post-College	30.2	9.8	15.1	42.5	2.5	100.1 (N=358)

Notes:
[1] Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding error.

Table 6: Characteristics of the Sample (2000)

	Chinese		Japanese		Filipinos	
	Male	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
Education Level (%)						
Less than completed college	25.1	25.9	35.0	34.4	66.7	58.4
College	45.3	46.7	42.1	48.8	27.0	35.7
Post-College	29.6	27.4	22.9	16.8	6.3	5.9
Age Cohort						
Pre-1965 (35-45)	69.8	63.4	78.2	76.3	50.4	45.7
Post-1965 (20-34)	30.2	36.6	21.8	23.7	49.6	54.3

Table 7: Multinomial Regression Analysis of Intermarriage among Native-born Asians for 2000 (Converted to Odds)

Chinese

	Male				Female			
	Co-ethnic Foreign Born[1]	**Other Asian**	**White**	**Minority**	**Co-ethnic Foreign Born**[1]	**Other Asian**	**White**	**Minority**
Intercept	1.13	0.31	0.88	0.11*	0.38*	0.32*	1.05	0.10*
Respondent's Education[2]								
College	0.54*	1.00	0.48*	0.64	1.20	1.58	0.90	0.39
Post College	0.50*	0.89	0.39*	0.30	0.79	1.62	1.16	0.14*
Age Cohort[3]								
Post-1965	1.62*	2.25*	0.97	1.26	1.57	0.68	1.07	2.34
	Wald Chi-Square		24.05*		Wald Chi-Square		21.96*	
	DF = 12				DF = 12			
	N = 573				N = 705			

Japanese

	Male				Female			
	Co-ethnic Foreign Born[1]	**Other Asian**	**White**	**Minority**	**Co-ethnic Foreign Born**[1]	**Other Asian**	**White**	**Minority**
Intercept	0.25*	0.52*	1.43*	0.31*	0.06*	0.19	1.52*	0.18
Respondent's Education[2]								
College	0.68	1.19	0.47*	0.11*	0.90	1.52	0.85	0.30*
Post College	0.84	1.54	0.75	0.24*	0.26	3.25*	0.97	0.33
Age Cohort[3]								
Post-1965	2.25*	1.67*	1.67*	2.18	0.34	1.49	1.16	2.25*
	Wald Chi-Square		38.34*		Wald Chi-Square		30.42*	
	DF = 12				DF = 12			
	N = 581				N = 721			

Table 7: continued

Filipino

	Male				Female			
	Co-ethnic Foreign Born[1]	**Other Asian**	**White**	**Minority**	**Co-ethnic Foreign Born**[1]	**Other Asian**	**White**	**Minority**
Intercept	1.11	0.14*	1.13*	0.18*	0.68*	0.16*	1.45	0.39*
Respondent's Education[2]								
College	1.68*	2.12	1.30	0.75	2.10*	2.77*	1.86*	0.77
Post College	2.46	10.59*	4.76*	n.a.	1.99	0.44	1.62	1.34
Age Cohort[3]								
Post-1965	0.79	1.28	0.74	1.23	0.99	1.55	0.84	1.31
	Wald Chi-Square 21.84* DF = 8 N = 381				Wald Chi-Square 32.00* DF=12 N = 748			

Notes:
[1]Reference Category-Native-born Ethnic endogamy
[2]Omitted Category-Less than completed college education
[3]Omitted Category-Born in 1965 or earlier
*Statistically significant at the .05 level