

# Judging Not Only by Color: Ethnicity, Nativity, and Neighborhood Attainment\*

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*Objective.* We examine hypotheses derived from theories of structural assimilation and spatial mobility to study the residential attainment of white ethnics, blacks, Asians, and Hispanics in the United States. We examine how immigrant status, ethnicity, and individual and family characteristics predict socioeconomic neighborhood outcome. *Methods.* We extend previous studies in several ways. First, we develop the concept and measurement of residential attainment as a neighborhood or tract-based outcome, and we examine this in a regression-based framework. Second, we expand ethnicity to twenty-eight distinct groups. Third, we measure directly the impact of intermarriage on residential outcomes. *Results.* Our empirical findings show that immigrant status and ethnicity, often implicated but not always kept conceptually distinct in discussions of assimilation, exert different effects across ethnic groups. We find that intermarriage does matter, as minority group householders with Anglo spouses gain access to higher-status neighborhoods, net of their personal socioeconomic status. Finally and notably, ethnic groups differ in the returns to personal socioeconomic traits in this process of neighborhood attainment. *Conclusions.* Ethnic background dominates immigrant status in predicting residential outcomes. Furthermore, the process of assimilation varies noticeably within ethnic groups.

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