Article

Latinos Need to Stay in Their Place: Differential Segregation in a Multi-Ethnic Suburb

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Abstract: While Latinos face high levels of segregation, there is scant research specifically addressing whites' attitudes towards Latinos regarding their preferences. This study draws from 40 in-depth interviews with whites in Orange County California, an area with a large Latino and Asian population. I demonstrate that white respondents choose to segregate themselves from Latinos. Most studies have used Blumer's group position theory to explain white attitudes and neighborhood preference towards Blacks. My findings supports Blumer's group position theory by revealing why white respondents feel threatened by an increase in the Latino population. Yet, the Asian population has also grown, but white respondents convey positive sentiments towards Asians, and express they feel comfortable living and interacting with them. I argue that white respondents' preferences with regards to integration are not solely based on the size of a group, but rather whether they characterize the group as inferior. Integration has been touted as an American principle. Yet, as the country becomes more diverse, this case study illustrates that white respondents prefer to share space with those they feel similar to, and consequently contribute to Latino segregation.

Keywords: Latinos; segregation; race and ethnicity; group position theory

1. Introduction

Ongoing and projected future demographic changes in the United States receive much attention and coverage in media and academia [1,2]. The narratives center on how "minority groups" have and will continue to eclipse the white population. Many of these demographic changes have been driven specifically by an increase in the Latino population [3]. In particular areas of the country, the Asian population has also experienced a significant growth. Increasing diversity in the United States has not naturally ushered in racial equality. There is ample data that confirms that racial inequalities continue to exist [4–6]. One means of measuring racial inequality empirically and normatively is by examining levels of segregation.

Many academics and policy makers continue to advocate integration because they understand that high levels of segregation lead to high levels of racial inequality. Integration as a valued principle in America that comes out of the Civil Rights Movement, which fought against segregation because separate, is not equal:

> Racial integration has served as a benchmark for social progress since racial equality entered the social policy agenda. The degree to which society accepts racial and ethnic diversity depends on the degree to which people of different races and ethnic groups live in harmony over time [7] (p. 93).

Historically, segregation was used as a social mechanism to keep perceived subordinate groups apart from whites and maintain a racial hierarchy with non-whites at the bottom. The Civil Rights

Movement, along with changing attitudes among the public, led to the Brown v. Board of Education ruling of 1954, which rendered segregation illegal. Yet, segregation remains an unresolved problem in the United States; it has even increased in some areas, and continues to result in racial inequalities.

Most of the literature on the subject has centered on white/Black segregation. More recent data and scholarship, however, has begun to explore segregation for Latinos and Asians, reflecting the significant demographic changes in urban and suburban areas across the country [8–15]. Much of the broader literature on the subject has considered the critical role of white attitudes and preferences and its effects on their choices regarding integration. Since the Latino and Asian population have grown exponentially over the last four decades, there is an urgent need to understand whites' views on Latinos and Asians specifically so as to account for emerging patterns of segregation.

This study examines white respondents' attitudes and choices regarding integration, and whether these beliefs and practices differ according to racial group. The research questions for this study include: What are the white respondents' attitudes towards Latinos and Asians? How do their attitudes towards different minority groups inform their preferences regarding integration in housing, education and public space?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Contemporary Residential Segregation

The current trends in ethnic and racial residential segregation include a slow decline of Black-white segregation with Blacks experiencing hyper segregation in many metropolitan areas, Asians experiencing the lowest rates of segregation, and Latinos experiencing increasingly high levels of segregation in many places in the country; and hypersegregation in cities like New York and Los Angeles [16–18]. The Latino population has grown and dispersed throughout the country and has a large presence in the suburbs [8,11]. Segregation has increased not only in urban areas but suburbs as well. Thus, an examination of suburban segregation is especially critical because most Americans now live in increasingly segregated suburbs [19]:

> Most suburbs are now multicultural and home to immigrants from other nations. The day of a solid white middle-class suburbia is history, and some of the classic postwar suburbs that set the mold for a new suburban society are now deeply affected by the kind of poverty and resegregation that occurred long ago in the central city [20] (p. 2).

This is important because for Latinos specifically, segregation has produced isolated ethnic enclaves or "barrios" similar to those where African-Americans reside. These areas are populated by residents belonging to a low-skill, low-wage economic niche, and are likewise plagued with poverty and inequality in homeownership [21].

The few scholars who have examined Latino segregation illustrate how and why the increasing levels of Latino segregation matter. Scholars like Fischer and have long mapped the changes in the Latino population and shown how the increase in the Latino population and its dispersal has led to an increase in ethnic isolation [11]. The national literature on Latinos residential segregation has taken into account that since Latinos are disproportionately of lower socio-economic standing they often use ethnic enclaves to assist them in upward mobility [11]. While much of the literature has foregrounded spatial assimilation, less have focused specifically on spatial stratification (specifically Latino racialization) that also accounts for Latino segregation [22]. Furthermore, some scholars have challenged the benefits of Latino ethnic enclaves, because they argue that ethnic enclaves frequently become barrios where Latinos experience racial disparities [21]. For example, there are an increasing number of studies that demonstrate the harm that segregation inflicts on Latinos specifically in regards to educational attainment and labor market success [9]. These inequalities are further exacerbated by "snob zoning". In this exclusionary housing policy, apartments are zoned out which affect poor households and disproportionately affect Latinos [23]. These types of policies raise levels

of Latino-white segregation and inequality where there is Anti-Latino sentiment [10]. Ultimately, increasing patterns of Latino segregation are detrimental to Latinos' mobility and integration.

Causes of segregation include structural policies and practices, economic forces, income disparity, and choice. There is extensive and vast quantitative research that debate the levels in which these factors pertain to ethnic and racial residential segregation. Much of the literature has posited that whites whether historically through white flight or through white avoidance today, continue to choose to live amongst themselves particularly in areas (Los Angeles, Houston, New York City, and Chicago) that have a large Latino population [12]. While some scholars characterize whites' preferences and choices simply as a function of choice and the right to choose, much of the literature has shown that the preferences of whites are rooted in prejudice [24]. Most people prefer to live near other members of their racial/ethnic group, yet whites have the lowest threshold when it comes to staying in an area that is changing demographically [25]. Moreover, since whites generally have more economic resources, they also have a greater freedom to decide where they want to live, and in effect heavily and directly contribute to racial segregation. While some scholars argue that the increase in Latinos and Asians particularly in "global neighborhoods" create a buffer and may lead to integration, they continue to observe high levels of white avoidance [13].

A key debate centers on whether neighborhood preferences are based on racial/ethnic prejudice or if race is a proxy for socio-economic factors. One main way scholars have measured the differences between racial or socio-economic factors is to obtain whites' attitudes of different ethnic/racial groups and test if that affects their choices on where they chose to live [15]. In their study Bobo and Zubrinsky (1996), found a connection between racial stereotypes and segregation: "Stereotypes are usually correlated with racial residential integration attitudes. As stereotypes become more negative, opposition to residential integration tends to increase. This pattern is strongest and most consistent among white respondents" [26] (p. 894). There is less data on whites' attitudes and preferences with regards to residing alongside Asians and Latinos [27]. A recent article shows whites' neighborhood preferences revealed whites were comfortable with Asians but not Latinos or Blacks. The authors also provide evidence that preferences were not a proxy for race since they controlled for crime rates, school quality, and housing values [15]. In essence this shows strong evidence that whites' preferences are solely and independently about race and not socio-economic factors.

Scholars have argued that disregarding Latinos as a racial group has obscured the historical and contemporary segregation that Latinos have endured [21,28]. Furthermore, Tienda and Fuentes call to investigate Latino segregation further and to, "consider the new counters of racialization in the context of multi-ethnic places" [8]. While the breadth of the quantitative literature on segregation has contributed greatly to understanding racial inequalities, there is a need for more qualitative research. One such article specifically compared whites' preferences in Ogden, Utah and Buffalo, New York. Meyerhoffer found whites had negative preferences for African-Americans, but preferred them to Latino neighbors because they believed they had more in common with African-Americans than Latinos, who they often perceived as "illegal" [29]. Thus, there is clearly a need to examine racial residential preferences and choices qualitatively that may affect segregation when it comes to Latinos.

2.2. Contemporary Educational Segregation

Along with residential segregation there has also been an increase in school segregation: schools are, in fact, even more racially and ethnically segregated than neighborhoods [30]. Yet there is insufficient research on Latino segregation, which scholars argue denies both the historical and contemporary segregation Latinos endure [21,28,31,32]. Latinos in particular are facing high levels of school segregation [28]. Orfield and Lee note, "Latino students, who have been excluded from serious desegregation efforts, are becoming even more segregated than black students in the Southern and Western regions" [33] (p. 1).

The UCLA Civil Rights Project has extensive reports regarding school segregation. They find that Blacks and Latinos face high levels of educational segregation from whites and Asians. In the western

United States, Latinos attend schools with 10% or fewer white classmates. While both Asian and Latino student populations in the west grew at the same rate between 1980 and 2009, Latinos endured more extreme segregation from whites than Asians [34]. Latinos are most segregated in California. Southern California in particular has witnessed major demographic shifts with the increase of immigration from Asia and Latin America, but the settlement patterns of these groups diverge. While over 40% of Latinos are enrolled in schools with 90% to 100% underrepresented minorities, this was only the case for 5% of Asians [34]. Furthermore, deep-seated segregation is present not only in urban areas but in suburbs as well. While Black and Latino students make up a large portion of the suburban student population, they are not attending integrated schools. A comparison of these two groups reveals that Latinos experience higher levels of school segregation than Blacks in the suburbs. This segregation results in Latinos being insufficiently prepared for college and creates severe obstacles to equal opportunity [34]. Since the mechanism of segregation is vital to understanding Latino mobility, it is important to explore how whites contribute to Latino segregation.

2.3. Public Space

Along with the vast literature pertaining to macro-level residential and educational segregation, more work on micro-ecology segregation has also arisen. These studies investigate the important role of public space: how it is constructed, used and maintained [35]. Studies of public space are based on the principle of integration, the belief that public spaces provide opportunities for communication between groups and, by extension, racial harmony. While public space is seen as a neutral ground where everyone has equal accessibility, this is not always the case. The word "public" implies that it belongs to everyone and that everyone has the right to use it. "Space" also conjures up ideals of freedom and interaction. Yet, many have questioned if in fact public space provides equal accessibility and interaction, particularly between different ethnic/racial groups. For example, public spaces like beaches and parks can provide opportunities for people from different backgrounds to come together and share the space. However, these public spaces can be sites of conflict as well as cooperation: "Unequal power dynamics, positive and negative interactions, and division and cohesion, can all be features of public space" [36] (p. 32). Again, the attitudes of whites towards different ethnic/racial groups are revealed by the extent to which they are willing to share public spaces or feel apprehensive about such coexistence, if their feelings are negative. Whites may even find ways to zone space in order to limit its accessibility to subordinate groups. Some scholars have explored how minorities have managed to claim their own space in public areas. Many argue that space is always political, and plays a key role in the racialization process [37]. Others have documented how "Latinos who encounter whites on the highway or on city streets, in places of business, or on the frontier with Mexico often are treated with some suspicion, disdain, or fear" [38] (p. 74). They point to recent incidents like the one in Pennsylvania, where whites attacked and beat a Mexican-American almost to death after shouting, "This is Shenandoah. This is America. Go back to Mexico" [38] (p. 73). As the Latino population increases and expands into new areas, the racial attitudes of whites and their use of public space indicate their disparaging views towards Latinos. It is another means of policing space to reinforce segregation and their power. These attitudes and behaviors raise the question of whether white Americans truly value and desire racial integration with all minority groups.

3. Group Position Theory

While many scholars have documented the inequality experienced by racial minorities, some have sought to reconcile the persistence of segregation in the United States with most Americans' belief in racial equality. In other words, while Americans agree with integration in principle, they do not practice it [39]. More specifically, while explicitly racist attitudes have declined over time, support for policies that would increase racial equality have not [40]. Many scholars have used Herbert Blumer's group position theory to explain the ostensible discrepancy between whites' attitudes and continuing

levels of racial inequality [41]. Blumer argued that the behaviors of whites are fueled by their feelings of vulnerability regarding their position as a group. As Bobo further explains:

> A central claim of the group position approach is that prejudice involves more than negative stereotypes and negative feelings that involve most centrally a commitment to a relative status positioning of groups in a racialized social order. Instead of placing analytical primacy on affect and stereotyping, or individual feelings and resentment, Blumer's analysis places perceptions of competition and threat in a racially stratified social setting at the core of the racial prejudice [42] (p. 447).

Blumer thus shifted the focus from individual feelings to the powerful position of whites as a group and how they maintain it. This approach has proven useful when analyzing race relations between African-Americans and whites, but has been examined less with Latinos.

Scholars have posited a variety of positions regarding the relative position of Latinos with in racial hierarchy. There is a particular ongoing debate as to whether Latinos are "becoming white". Scholars like Yancey argue that since a portion of Latinos identify as white on surveys and in the United States census, the defining color line is Black/non-Black [43]. Yet there is a significant amount of literature demonstrating that Latinos continue to be racialized [44–47]. Moreover, scholars such as Lee and Fiske have found that Asians are considered competent while Latinos are not [48]. Furthermore, Ochoa has found that the education achievement gap is worsened by the fact that Asians benefit from positive associations while Latinos are labeled negatively [49]. Likewise, a recent study found that whites subscribe to negative stereotypes of African-Americans and Latinos, but that they think very highly of Asians [50]. Thus, most of the literature indicates that Latinos are considered and treated as non-whites and occupy a low rung on the racial hierarchy.

Many of the attitudinal differences are driven by the differing narratives between Latinos and Asians. In particular, the model minority frame explains why many whites have overwhelming positive views of Asians. In that the:

> Model minority success have served as rebukes to less well performing minority populations by implying that their failure to attain equal standing does note result from past and ongoing discrimination but is somehow attributable to a lack of the kind of cultural values that would produce upward mobility. The model minority image has become pervasive, pernicious trope that attached higher standards of academic and employment expectations to ethnic Asians, while blaming other communities of color for failing to attain equitable status [51] (p. 21).

However, in fact, much of Asians' success is due to selective migration and favorable immigration policy (62). Furthermore, the model minority frame obscures the income and educational heterogeneity of the Asian-American population (62). Although the model minority frame has created advantages for Asian Americans it is costly for those who do not fit that frame [52]. While both Latinos and Asians have historically faced racialization and exclusionary immigration policies, unlike Asians, Latino narratives continue to be negative. One of the most salient frames is the Latino Threat narrative, where Chavez [53] argues Latino immigrants are not seen like proto-typical European immigrants, but as invaders unwillingly to assimilate and present a problematic group. This negative trope has been disbursed in public discourse and affected immigration policies [53]. Furthermore, Chavez and many other scholars have further connected that "illegal" aliens are mostly seen as Latinos [54]. Unlike, Asians who also have large numbers of undocumented immigrants, Latinos and "illegal" are seen as synonymous. Scholars have further argued that the negative constructions of Latinos have led to anti-immigrant policies that specifically target and affect all Latinos [55,56]. Moreover, scholars like Massey and Pren [57] provide socio-economic statistics they argue are leading to the beginning of a Latino underclass. Inherent in these frames is the assumption that the Asian culture is superior to the Latino culture, which helps explain how whites differentiate between these two groups. Thus,

while both of these groups are heterogeneous the generalization is that Asians are seen as the "good immigrant", or the "good minority", and Latinos are seen as a threat and Un-American. These different racial tropes influence whites' racial attitudes and their choices [58].

As demographics continue to change in the U.S.—with the percentage of whites declining and that of other racial and ethnic groups rising—the respective sizes of particular groups, and whites' perceptions of them, need to be assessed in relation to Blumer's group position theory. Most of the literature demonstrates that size matters, because whites become anxious and hostile when they perceive white demographics declining [59]: "a superordinate group (e.g., whites) becomes more racially hostile as the size of a proximate subordinate group increases, which putatively threatens the former's economic and social privilege" [60] (p. 568). Moreover, scholars have specifically addressed issues of language, culture and immigration status, arguing, "the perception of threat to cultural and national homogeneity may give rise, for example, to discriminatory attitudes and anti-immigrant sentiments" [61] (pp. 784–785). Specifically, in regards to Latinos, Rocha and Espino have found that "increasing both the size of the Latino population and the level of residential segregation result in Anglos possessing less 'Latino-friendly' policy preferences" [62] (p. 423). Thus, two main components that scholars have used to measure perceived threat are group size and racial prejudice. While there is substantial research on how group size matters to the group position model, there is insufficient research on how whites' differing perceptions of particular groups affect their choices.

This study examines why white respondents prefer to integrate with Asians but not with Latinos and Blacks. Group position theory predicts that the size of the targeted group and the amount of prejudice toward that group (i.e., stereotypes of a group's inferiority and inability to assimilate) affects whites' perception of threat. Although Asians are a smaller group (19.6%) than Latinos (34.4%) in the region studied here (Orange County, CA, USA), both groups have grown at a similar rate [63]. Yet, white respondents in this sample, express positive views of Asians and perpetuate negative stereotypes of Blacks and Latinos when asked to explain why they prefer to integrate with some groups and not others. Thus, I argue that in terms of group position, size matters—but what matters most is white respondents' perceptions of the group and where they assign the groups' position on the racial hierarchy which influences who they decide to integrate with.

4. Methods

4.1. Sample

This study draws on in-depth interviews conducted in 2010 with 40 self-identified white residents of Orange County, California. I employed a public relations agency with a large database of whites to acquire a random sample from Orange County. The recruiter from the public agency was asked to recruit whites to answer general questions about their views on local issues they believed were important. The interviews took place in a private office in Orange County, California.

This recruitment strategy resulted in a sample of 26 men and 14 women, who ranged in age from 25 to 61. Most (36 out of 40) interviewees were middle to upper class, college-educated, and professionally employed. Typical respondents' professions included law, real estate, self-employment, and sales and marketing. Moreover, respondents (27 out of 40) self-identified as politically conservative. Further, most (38 out of 40) lived in predominantly white neighborhoods, often in gated communities [64].

4.2. Interviews

The questionnaire was semi-structured, and each of the interviews was audio recorded and lasted on average one to two hours. Respondents were asked a series of questions ranging from personal background, employment, local issues, policies and immigration. After all of the interviews were transcribed I formally analyzed the data. I employed a theme analysis to determine the most common attitudes of respondents towards Latinos. I listened intently to the respondents' language and characterizations about Latinos, and while they were not asked about any other group, I also

notated how whites spoke about Blacks and Asians in comparison to Latinos. This enabled me to get a sense of the respondents' shared narratives. I read through each of the interviews several times and then began coding and tabulating for themes. I then decided to focus this article around the specific questions of residential preferences and busing, since there were few studies exploring white attitudes towards Latinos with regards to segregation.

I hired and trained two white graduate students to administer the interviews. Because the white respondents self-identified as white and frequently made statements such as, "us whites . . . " and referenced whites homogeneously they exercised a sense of solidarity amongst themselves. This conveys that white respondents form a boundary around themselves to mark and differentiate themselves. The white interviewers stated that the respondents assumed they shared their views because respondents would routinely state, "For us white people like you and me . . . ", and "you know what I mean". Such statements indicated that the respondents felt comfortable expressing their beliefs and feelings about Latinos with someone they presumed was of the same mindset based on the fact that they were also white. This assumption allowed the respondents to articulate their views on Latinos in an explicit manner. This supports the literature on interviewer effects that demonstrates that respondents tend to be more candid, especially when discussing race, if they are interviewed by a member of their own racial or ethnic group [65]. I was in continuous contact with the interviewers about their observations regarding the respondents and took notes after each of our conversations. At the end of the data collection, I debriefed both interviewers, once separately and then a second time with both of them together.

4.3. Case Study: Orange County, California

Understanding Orange County's landscape of gated communities and highly segregated schools is fundamental in the analysis of the relationship between whites and Latinos. A comparison between the city of Santa Ana, where many of the Latinos of Orange County reside, and the largely white, affluent cities that surround it, reveals the extreme segregation and inequality that persist. This inequality is supported by the 2000 Rockefeller Report that deemed Santa Ana the city with the highest misery index [66]. Santa Ana which was once a predominately a white city, experienced white flight (with in the last thirty years) and has now transitioned into becoming one of the most "Mexican" cities in the United States [67]. The Latino population has grown tremendously in Orange County but still experiences high levels of segregation.

Historically, Mexicans in Orange County, as in much of the southwestern U.S., have endured segregation and exploitative labor. Mexicans came between 1900 and 1930 to work in the citrus fields, and lived in Mexican villages that later turned into urban barrios [68]. Gonzalez explains that while Mexicans were an indispensable workforce, they lived in segregated *colonias* and received substandard wages and substandard housing [68]. Another barrier for Mexicans' upward mobility was school segregation: Orange County was the site of the well-known Mendez v. Westminster court case of 1947, when Mexicans successfully fought to desegregate local schools [31].

Nevertheless, de facto segregation continues today in Orange County. While white-Latino segregation index is slightly higher in Orange County than the national average, it is similar to the segregation averages for large metropolitan areas [69]. With regards to Latino segregation, while Latinos make up 46% of the county's public school enrollment, most attend a school with 69% Latinos. By contrast, only 2% of Asian students attend similarly segregated schools, and most Asians attend schools with whites [70]. Residential segregation is also an issue in other cities in Orange County, such as Irvine, where residents work hard to maintain their property values by successfully using their homeowner's associations to keep Latinos out. One way homeowner's groups do this is by using zoning laws to restrict the number of people per household [71]. Whites have also been known to police public space in Orange County: they may, for instance, challenge the existence of day laborer sites in their neighborhoods, claiming that they create too much noise and decrease property values [72]. As a result of these types of actions by whites Latinos are less integrated.

Thus, the actual spatial relationships inscribe white racial attitudes onto the physical landscape. Segregation is not unique to Orange County: the entire country remains significantly racially segregated. Suburbs that were once mainly homogenously white are now becoming multi-ethnic. The demographics of Orange County are currently as follows: 42% white, 34.4% Latino, 19.6% Asian and 2.1% Black. In the twenty-year period between 1990 and 2010, Orange County lost about 15% of its white population, while the Latino population grew about 80%, and the Asian population grew more than 120%. Orange County is thus reflective of the extensive and rapid demographic changes taking place across the country, and the increases segregation that has come with it.

5. Findings

My main findings center on white respondents' conceptualization of minority groups in relationship to one another as well as in relationship to whites, and how that informs their choices regarding integration. In my study, white respondents overwhelmingly characterized Latinos and African-Americans as culturally deficient, problematic and inferior. By contrast, white respondents characterized Asians with tremendously positive ascriptions and deemed them to be assimilated, beneficial contributors to society and similar to whites. White respondents opposed residential housing and busing only with regards to Latinos and Blacks. When respondents spoke about their frustrations with integrating public space, they only spoke about Latinos. White respondents' attitudes in Orange County uphold the group position theory in that they feel that Latinos in particular posed a cultural threat to the "American" way of life. The reasons respondents gave for feeling threatened were related to the size and growth of the Latino population, and more importantly they perceive this group to be inferior and problematic, unlike Asians. These negative associations strongly influenced white respondents' preferences when it came to their choice of residence and their opinions and behavior with regards to busing and school integration, as well as practicing white avoidance of areas heavily populated with Latinos. The findings also demonstrate how the white respondents practices may contribute to Latino segregation and help explain one factor that prevents Latinos to integrate equally into society.

5.1. Residential Segregation

During the in-depth interviews, respondents were asked about the racial makeup of the area where they currently live and why they chose to reside there. Most of the respondents (37 out of 40) expressed that they chose to live in a predominantly white area. Respondents frequently expressed that they felt most comfortable in homogenous white areas. Lola, a 25-year-old director of marketing, stated:

> Obviously, I wouldn't feel comfortable living in a neighborhood that was mostly Hispanic.
> I would feel completely out of place. I would much rather live in a neighborhood that was
> predominantly white. I think . . . being around people that kind of look like each other . . .
> I mean, it goes back to having the same type of background.

Lola, like many of the respondents, was explicit and honest regarding her residential choices. She expresses no qualms about her choice, and goes on to explain that she does not feel comfortable unless she is living in a mostly white area [73]. She makes it clear how she draws her boundaries when she refers to "people that kind of look like each other". More importantly, she implies that people who don't look like one another are fundamentally different from each other when she states that she would not "feel comfortable living in a neighborhood that was mostly Hispanic". These types of candid comments show how white respondents perceive Latinos to be racially different and actively choose to live in areas where they have minimal contact and interaction with Latinos. Thus, they create real barriers that separate the two groups. Chrissy, a 43-year-old hair stylist, stated that "people are very cautious when they reach the boundaries of their comfort zone". This implies that the boundaries are real—both physically and spatially—and that everyone knows where they lie. In fact, many residents have split the county between the more diverse "North Orange County" and the

whiter "South Orange County", with the freeways functioning as a "Mason-Dixon line" separating the northeast and southwest. This does not just happen; people have made intentional decisions in order to maintain this order. Most respondents admit that they made a conscious choice to live in overwhelmingly white neighborhoods, and far away specifically from Latinos [74].

Respondents were also asked if there were any places in Orange County they stay away from [75]. Thirty-four out of the 40 respondents said Santa Ana, which is predominantly Latino. When asked why, Bobby, a 27-year-old athletic coach, stated: "It's a little more crime there, a littler trashier spot." Chrissy responded that "Hispanics can be dirty in their neighborhoods and gangy as well as Blacks". Others, like Lola, launched into stories about Santa Ana: "I ended up in Santa Ana. I was on the phone with my friend crying because I had no idea where I was. I couldn't find the freeway. I was freaking out. In that kind of neighborhood at midnight you can't stop for directions." When explaining why they stayed away, they spoke at length of how they regarded people in that area as culturally deficient and how they perceive Latino areas as unsafe due to crime and gangs. Even though Santa Ana is filled with many Latinos who are middle-class and are homeowners [76], most respondents characterized it as an unfavorable area. Yet, Santa Ana was once predominantly white. Carl, a 64-year-old city planner, explained why he and other whites left.

All the people—the parents of the people that I grew up with—moved their business out of town, like McQueen, Cadillac moved out. I moved out . . . Most of all the people I grew up with, basically all their parents moved out of town because it was turning into a third-world country.

Carl and other respondents explained that as the number of Latinos began to increase and "take over", whites made choices to leave and reside in predominantly white areas. Respondents were also explicit that they did so because places like Santa Ana in Orange County were "turning into a third-world country". Many respondents regarded Latinos as "third world", yet never characterized Asians as such. Thus, because respondents thought of Latinos as inferior and undesirable neighbors, they chose to move. This is an example of how whites continue to leave and avoid Latinos, thus contributing to residential segregation.

While most (38 out of 40) of the respondents live in predominantly white areas, they often expressed a welcoming attitude towards Asians. Respondents (32 out of 40) routinely expressed that Asians assimilated to white American norms and values, specifically those concerning education and business. They also frequently compared Latinos to Asians. For example, Todd a 30 year-old real estate agent stated: "But we definitely could see the difference if you drive just through Santa Ana and Irvine. Irvine is more of an Asian population. The streets are cleaner. It just tends to be well maintained. Santa Ana, parts of Garden Grove, it's not maintained." Respondents were very explicit about their choice of where to live, which was heavily based on their negative sentiments towards Latinos. They also admitted to making residential choices based on their perception that Asians, in contrast to Latinos, were acculturated and more similar to whites.

5.2. Educational Segregation

Respondents were also asked for their opinions about educational integration through questions regarding busing. They were also asked about their thoughts and desires in general regarding integration. When asked about busing as a means to uphold the importance of school integration, only one of the 40 respondents was sympathetic to the idea of busing, and even she was a bit skeptical. The negative opinions regarding busing are exemplified by the response of Camil, a 40-year-old family therapist:

Moderator:	So do you think that the government should continue busing?
Respondent:	No.
Moderator:	And why so?
Respondent:	Why mix the two (Latinos and Whites)?

Many of the respondents addressed this issue in a manner as straightforward as that of Camil, who also expressed that the reason she chose to live in a homogenous gated community was to avoid issues such as busing. Her response of "Why mix the two?" reflects how white respondents see inherent differences between themselves and Latinos, and furthermore they do not recognize the benefits of school integration. In fact, they see the mixing of these two groups as problematic. Unlike the general questions regarding integration posed in most survey research concerning this topic, residents in Orange County had personal experience with and/or knowledge of busing. They knew that in the case of Orange County, this practice would involve transporting Latino students to their own predominantly white neighborhoods/schools, and they repeatedly expressed their opposition to this scenario. This position was articulated in by Howard, a 36-year-old lawyer.

At Anaheim Hills Canyon High School, they were busing Blacks and Hispanics in and it's an all-white school. Are these kids tearing up the school? Have you ever seen? Watch *Lean on Me*—ever seen *Lean on Me* with Morgan Freeman? See how those kids ripped that school apart? No. If kids want to tear a school apart, do I say perpetuate the problem and bring them into a school that's succeeding and doing well? No. I'm not going to bring those, I'm going to kick them out, throw them on the goddamn street, and they'll get arrested.

I just want the kids to be comfortable. I don't want them to feel like a Black kid or a Mexican kid goes to Harbor and feel all intimidated and weird. I just want the kid to be comfortable and be comfortable in its environment. So that might not be good you know. And it's hard for kids. You're uncomfortable at that age anyway (Nicole 48 years-old, self-employed).

My daughter went to Newport Harbor High for a while. I thought this is going to be a good school. It ended up being counterproductive for her. Both races were there. There was 50% Hispanic, 50% white from completely different neighborhoods—they bused them in basically. I think you do better when you're raised in a culture that lifts you up, but it was so much tension and I pulled her out (Molly 44 year-old sales person).

Respondents lumped all the Latino kids together as "troublemakers", simultaneously categorizing all white children as model students. The statements of Howard, Nicole and Molly make it clear that their opposition to busing stems from how they categorize Latino children in diametric opposition to white children. Nicole couches the issue in terms of her own supposed concern for the well-being of the Latino students. Yet, she foregrounds her responses by stereotyping Latinos as different and problematic. This shows how her anxiety about busing stems from her belief that these groups have little in common and thus should not be integrated.

Molly uses first-hand experience to make her case, describing how she believes her daughter was negatively affected by busing in Latino students. She not only explicitly refers to race to differentiate the two groups of students ("Both races were there"), but further states, "I think you do better when you're raised in a culture that lifts you up, but it was so much tension and I pulled her out". Molly was typical of the respondents who had experience with Latinos being bused to their children's school: they drew clear boundaries between the Latino students and their own children. Molly also differentiated between the cultural upbringing of Latinos versus whites, and suggests that whites parent better. While the Civil Rights Movement strove to promote racial integration, Molly, like many other respondents, did not desire nor see the benefits of integration. Like many other respondents, she removed her children from a school because she perceived Latinos to be a bad influence on her children. Whites respondents' opposition to busing and their willingness to pull their children from integrated schools illustrate how their racial attitudes towards Latinos affect their behavior. It also demonstrates how whites' choices contribute to Latino segregation.

As indicated by the responses above, the white respondents were very opinionated about the subject of busing—or as many called it, "forced integration"—and felt passionately that it was a bad idea. While they would initially agree that school integration was an important American ideal, when specifically asked about busing kids from Santa Ana (a predominantly Mexican city) to a city like Newport Beach (a predominantly white city), they came up with various excuses and rationales as

to why they felt it was a very bad idea. When the moderator asked about alternatives to busing as a means of integrating students, respondents would back-pedal further from their initial response that integration was a valuable ideal, and would frequently talk about the negative influence that Mexican children would have on white children. Respondents often told personal stories as to why "mixing" the children was a bad idea. Respondents easily conjured racial stereotypes about Latinos and Blacks in order to explain why integration would be a problem. They did not discuss white privilege in critical terms, but as natural or justified.

The respondents never applied these sorts of negative racial stereotypes to Asians. Their opinions of Asians were overwhelmingly positive, and they expressed a desire to integrate with them, unlike Latinos. Simon, a 50-year-old yachtsman, stated: "I do find that whites will fight harder than anybody else, to work hard two incomes, killing themselves to try and find the right school for their children—but so will Asians." Respondents did not feel threatened by Asians because they thought of them as better assimilated and more similar to them than other minorities. Furthermore, they welcomed Asians in their schools because they perceive them to have similar educational values to those of whites. Respondents would regularly speak about Latinos in stark contrast to whites and Asians, making comments such as, "The Asians come in and they're freaking motivated. Hispanics aren't". Others believe that "Asians seem to be more proper, cleaner and conservative". Here respondents chose to ascribe positive stereotypes to Asians and negative ones to Latinos. They spoke at length as to how they believe Latinos don't value education but Asians do. For example, Todd stated: "I know just from statistically that the Hispanic community is not in general focused on education as it is 'Just get a job', as opposed to American values." Isabel a 59-year old crafts person states, "My husband and I have some friends who are Vietnamese. He came over here. He was thrown out of Vietnam in 1975. His wife came by boat . . . They both went to college. He's a chemist... he works so hard." Even when respondents could identify similarities in the challenges of migrating for Latinos and Asians, they would point out that once here, Asians unlike Latinos would adhere to Anglo-American values and succeed. They made these distinctions by characterizing Latino culture as naturally deficient and Asian culture as naturally proficient and talented-regardless of class. In essence the white respondents' comparison between Latinos and Asians led them to reason and determine that the Latino culture was inferior. These views in turn informed their behavior and choices concerning those minorities, specifically with regards to residential and educational segregation.

5.3. Public Space

Respondents were not asked direct questions about public space. The quotes in this section were responses to open-ended questions. Respondents only found Latinos problematic when it came to sharing public space. For example, Mark, a 42-year-old owner of a repo company, stated:

> Hispanics, they just don't fit in. The Mexicans go to the beach, and I don't know why they always swim in their clothes. That's always pondered me; but they'll walk on the sand, they'll stay on the boardwalk, and they'll stop right in the middle of the boardwalk and they'll drag their boogie board or their cooler. They have a wet dirty blanket and they'll drag it; and they'll stop on the boardwalk. They'll just stop there. And it's like get out of the way. How stupid are you? It's like you're a nuisance. Get out of here.

Mark, like other respondents, justified segregation as having to do with cultural differences. He expresses anger because he believes Latinos misuse public space. Mark's visceral reaction to Latinos on the beach, and his feelings of frustration because he has to share this space exemplify how white respondents mentally police public space. He further makes a case that the cultural differences between whites and Latinos are so deep that segregation is logical. Paul, a 51-year-old broker, expressed a similar position:

> And when we first bought these properties on parks, it was a neat thing to be a Caucasian [living in park area]. It was fun to—it's very changed in the last 15 years. The illegal

immigrants, Mexicans ... They like the open space on (in) the parks, and they want to come on the weekends come in there and rip it up. No; a city community park. It's not fun. Oh boy. It used to be nice little community, neighborhood park, and the illegal immigrants came in here really changed the landscape.

The fact that the respondents were candid about feeling happy to be Caucasian and easily spoke about whites as superior, indicates that they use racial and ethnic ascriptions to categorize groups in a hierarchical way. Furthermore, respondents were explicit about how the increase in "illegal" Mexicans "changed the landscape", in a negative way. Here as in other places, respondents conflated "illegal" immigrants with Mexicans. Moreover, Paul and many other respondents enjoyed recounting their nostalgia for areas that were not tainted with Latinos. The way whites spoke about public space also indicated how whites would prefer to keep these areas off limits to Latinos, and imply that because they are part of the dominant class they can. They clearly perceived Latinos as a cultural threat, and openly expressed a preference not to integrate with them even in public areas.

Respondents established clear boundaries when it came to the public areas when they expressed their wish to keep Latinos from "contaminating" it. For example, Lola stated, "my dad, my dad's friends, a lot of friends that I have, they are moving out of California. They go and they buy property out where predominantly there are white people ... I live in Newport Beach—it is mostly white, and we're just like 'we are on the beach having a great time'. I think coastal cities will remain predominantly white. I mean, it's beautiful. I hope it never changes". Respondents not only expressed a desire to keep public areas white, but also that when they or their family and friends felt uncomfortable with the increase in Latino population, they move out. The fact that respondents characterized certain beautiful public areas such as the beach synonymous with white shows how white respondents consider themselves superior to Latinos and exert their position and power.

Similarly, Wilbur stated: "I'll give you an example at the beach: like right here in front of the mark, on a long weekend, it is heavily migrated to the beach from a lot of Hispanics, many times you'll find diapers all over the ground and you'll find trash and stuff. That's not unnormal to see that in a Hispanic community." Respondents connected the supposed impurity and contamination of the beach areas to Latinos, and spoke at length of how Latinos were eroding public spaces. Like many respondents Wilbur stated, "Hispanic community" as whole and respondents never differentiated Latinos by class. Howard stated: "But, I think there's so much animosity between us and Mexico ... are being rubbed out because this is a numbers game. There's more numbers coming over here from other races. Newport Beach is still a haven for whites and still decent." Respondents thus expressed that the increase in Latinos was part of the problem in "contaminating" an area that was once predominately white. They were also explicit that they wished to maintain public areas such as parks and the beach rid of Latinos. This comes from their ideas that the Latino culture is inherently deficient and inferior.

In summary, while segregation is no longer legal, it is still a reality, because many whites make a choice not to live alongside Blacks and Latinos. These quotes give insight as to how and why residential segregation continues to be maintained. Many respondents tried to excuse segregation by stating that most groups feel more comfortable with "their own", but as they told stories to illustrate their point, they inevitably spoke about how and why they chose and prefer to live amongst whites. These stories distinctly pointed out that they disapproved when Latinos encroached upon "their" space. Many of the white respondents that defended segregation articulated that they perceived clear differences between groups, and formulated a racial hierarchy with Latinos at the bottom and themselves at the top. Respondents demonstrated that who they chose to integrate with is intentional and racially motivated. In the case of Orange County, California, white respondents' decisions on where to live have major implications for Latinos. The conscious choice not to challenge residential and educational segregation suggests that they do not care if separate is unequal, because their main concern is maintaining their own areas as white in order to maintain power. Their actions further limit possibilities and opportunities for Latinos.

Thus, overall, the respondents spoke at length about Latinos as a threat to the area. They frequently expressed that Latinos were eroding white culture because they did not assimilate and engaged in deficient cultural practices. Although the interviewers' questions were solely about Latinos, white respondents frequently spoke about Latinos in relationship to themselves, African-Americans and Asians. How whites construct groups in relationship to each other underscores the relational nature of racial formation [77]. For example, respondents regularly referred to African-Americans in their responses, though they make up less than 3% of Orange County's population. Yet, as mentioned above, Orange County has experienced a significant increase in Asians and Latinos, who are seen in stark contrast to one another. While many respondents made a case for segregation based on their construction of particular groups as subordinate and inferior, they never spoke disparagingly about Asians. Since they did not construct Asians as inferior, they did not express animosity towards them or a desire to segregate from them. For the white respondents in Orange County the group they felt most threatened by was Latinos. Latinos were their primary targets when expressing their position against integration.

White respondents' attitudes and their preferences regarding integration in Orange County supports Blumer's *group position* theory. The size of the group matters but I find that what matters most in the formation of whites' preferences and integration is racial assignment. The white respondents similarly situated Latinos along with Blacks at the bottom of the racial hierarchy and Asians closer to whites at the top, influencing their choices regarding who they interact and integrate with.

6. Discussion and Conclusions

This study from Orange County California, contributes to literature on segregation by obtaining a better understanding of the obstructions in fostering cross-race group relations. For one, it begins to shed light on Latino segregation and race relations, specifically between a declining white population and a growing Latino population. This is important because we know that high levels of segregation lead to high levels of inequality. Secondly, my work examines a multiethnic suburb that is reflective of where many Americans reside today. The case study specifically interrogates the white respondents' attitudes and their preferences regarding Latino and Asians. Thirdly, unlike the rich quantitative studies on segregation, the in-depth interviews allow whites to explain various opinions on particular groups as well as their choices about segregation.

Most of the responses centered on their negative and stereotypical views of Latinos. The respondents frequently characterized them as criminals, and expressed many narratives of how Latinos possess a "deficient" culture that undervalues education. These sentiments and stories about the white respondents' observations led them to reject the possibility of residentially and educationally integrating with Latinos, and even to object to sharing public space with them. Each of these sites are critical for integration in order for Latinos to be upwardly mobile and gain equal integration into the larger society [9]. While there is research that demonstrates high levels of Latino segregation, there is scant scholarship that examines the role of whites' attitudes and preferences with regards to integrating with Latinos. This study illustrates how white respondents' negative and even visceral reactions towards Latinos has led them to prefer mostly white spaces where they do not need to interact and integrate with Latinos. This data supports many quantitative studies that demonstrate on going white avoidance [12–14]. These results suggest that white respondents do not value the principle of integration, at least when it comes to Latinos.

Few studies have looked at areas with multiethnic groups, and the relational nature of whites' attitudes towards those groups qualitatively [27]. The findings of this study demonstrate that white respondents make distinctions between groups. In general, the respondents placed Latinos closely to African-Americans, spoke of Asians in stark contrast to Latinos, and perceived Asians as most similar to themselves. White respondents characterized these groups in relation to white American culture, but also in relation to one another. This supports Omi and Winant's (1994) racial formation model by demonstrating how race is relational [77]. My study aligns itself with recent studies [48–50,59]

showing that white respondents think of Latinos and Blacks similarly, and subscribe to the "model minority" myth when it comes to Asians [50]. The present study helps explain some of the reasons the white respondents in this case study arrive at those conclusions. Since they perceive Latinos, like African-Americans, as having a "deficient" culture [78], they regard both these groups as inferior to whites and purposefully stay away from them. Yet, white respondents have much more favorable reactions to Asians and support integrating with them. These findings support much of the literature on segregation that posits that prejudice is a factor in how whites determine their residential preferences and choices [9,10,15,26,29].

While the socio-economic profile of Latinos and Asians in Orange County in general is different, with most Latinos being working class and Asians being middle to upper class (due to selective migration), there is a sizable Latino middle-class and there are also working class Asians [76]. Yet, the findings show that white respondents generalize these heterogeneous groups based on the negative frame of Latino threat and positive frame of model minority. This supports the literature on how Latinos and Asians are perceived differently [51,53,79]. White respondents engage with these frames to make choices regarding with whom they will share space. The findings also demonstrate that white respondents frequently lump Latinos and Blacks [50]. Thus, Latinos face a unique racialization. Unique in the sense that, unlike Blacks, Latinos are assumed to be "illegal" and, unlike Asians, they are seen as inferior. In other words, white respondents differentiate between minority groups, where they perceive Asians to be smart and successful, unlike Latinos. They attribute this to culture/race not class. This further supports recent studies that take into account Anti-Latino sentiments and white preferences to show that racial prejudice is not a proxy for class, but that it can independently account for whites' choices to maintain distance from Latinos [10,15,29].

While some scholars [13] assume that "global neighborhoods" will create buffers for segregation, since there is not much research examining segregation in multi-ethnic areas, that global neighborhoods will create a buffer has not been sufficiently tested. In the case of Orange County the "global neighborhoods" constituted by an increase in the Latinos and Asian population is not leading to stable integration, for Latinos [13]. My case study is more consistent with emerging research that show Latinos are experiencing high levels of segregation, in part due to white choices, and that it is in fact harming them. [5,9,10,15,21,29,34,57]. This case study also illustrates that whites in the sample have differing views and preferences between Asians and Latinos with regards to integration. Thus the case study suggests that Asians may provide a buffer but not Latinos.

With regards to the group position theory [41], my data supports the theory that group size does matter, but what matters most for the white respondents is the formation of their preferences concerning integration in how they characterize the group. In Orange County, while both the Latino and Asian populations are sizeable and have grown quickly in a short period, white respondents prefer to integrate with Asians and not Latinos. This is because white respondents feel threatened by Latinos in terms of a cultural rather than economic threat: "The logical connection between assimilation and cultural threat is apparent: immigrants are perceived to threaten the American culture because they are believed to fail or refuse to learn English, adopt an American identity, and embrace key American values and customs" [80] (p. 42). Yet, white respondents do not employ cultural threat to all immigrants, just those coming from Latin America, explaining why they prefer to integrate with Asians and not Latinos.

There are many factors that contribute to Latino segregation, spatial assimilation being one of them. Yet, because there have been few studies that measure whites' attitudes and preferences toward Latinos spatial stratification had been less accounted for. White respondents' differential views between Latinos and Asians in regards to preferences accounts for spatial stratification and illustrates the need to further examine white attitudes and preferences of different groups. The findings in this case study reveal that prejudice is a major reason for white avoidance that plays a role in Latino segregation. Yet, this case study has its limitations. Some of the limitations of my work include that the respondents' views and preferences are not shared by all whites. Another limitation includes that

while white respondents reside in a diverse county, most live in highly segregated neighborhoods. New studies should examine whites that live in more integrated areas and explore their attitudes towards different racial and ethnic groups and their views on integration. Future research on Latino segregation should also address any possible differences between regions.

The UCLA Civil Rights Project provides extensive and critical data indicating that Latinos experience segregation at significantly higher levels than Asians. This study examines the role of white attitudes and behavior to account for segregation in Orange County, California. My findings show that the white respondents are explicit about their sentiments towards different ethnic/racial groups, and how those sentiments shape their behavior and choices when it comes to integration in education, residential space and public space. The attitudes and choices of the respondents create and reinforce segregation, creating barriers for Latino mobility and integration. Theoretically, this case study supports Blumer's group position theory because the white respondents express cultural fear of Latinos but not Asians. And while both populations have grown in the last two decades at similar rates, whites have diverging feelings towards them. My work implies some whites may value integration with some groups more than others. I conclude that since the white respondents construct Latinos as inferior [81], and Asians as comparatively similar to them [81], they are willing to accommodate Asians. Thus, whites in this sample, find ways to separate themselves from Latinos and keep them in their place-socially and spatially segregated.

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73. Most respondents would initially state they wanted to live in a predominately white area. While most respondents were explicit they did not want to live in the same neighborhood with Latinos and Blacks, none of the respondents stated they did not want to live with Asians. Many respondents stated that since Asians were similar to whites, white respondents did not have a problem with that group.

74. The respondents only spoke of racial categories not class. When asked about Latinos their reference groups was whites as different from, similar to Blacks and different from Asians. Moreover, when respondents used whites as a reference group they also did not differentiate between poor, middle-class or upper class whites. This seems to indicate that race was a stronger organizing concept more so than class.

75. This was an open-ended question that did not include a racial/ethnic group, in order for respondents not to be primed. The fact that most of them said Santa Ana (the most Latino city in Orange County), illustrates how the white respondents perceive Latinos negatively. Even though many middle-class Latinos reside in Santa Ana, the white respondents conflate race and class, and thus trump race as the more significant category.

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