Ethnic enclosure, social networks, and leisure behaviour of immigrants from Korea, Mexico, and Poland

Monika Stodolska

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Monika Stodolska
University of Illinois

Abstract. The goal of this study was to provide an understanding of the concept of ethnic enclosure in leisure and the effect it has on the lives of immigrants after their settlement in the host country. This study explored the reasons that motivate ethnic minorities to associate predominantly with members of the same ethnic group and determined possible consequences of ethnic enclosure in leisure. Analysis presented in this study is based on semi-structured, in-depth interviews that were conducted in Chicago, Illinois, between April and October 2001 with 39 first-generation immigrants from Korea, Mexico, and Poland. The overwhelming majority of interviewees confirmed that members of their own ethnic group constituted their primary leisure companions. Commonly mentioned explanations for the ethnic enclosure in leisure included comfort level, similar experiences, common culture, lack of conversation topics with mainstream Americans, lack of English language skills, discrimination/exclusion by the mainstream, and fear of the unknown. Limiting leisure contacts to members of their own ethnic group provided psychological and emotional comfort to immigrants as well as certain tangible economic benefits. On the other hand, it delayed their assimilation, led to difficulties in securing employment, and hindered advancement in the workplace.

Keywords. social networks, ethnic enclosure, leisure, immigrants

Résumé. Le but de cette étude était d'examiner la clôture ethnique chez les nouveaux immigrés et les rôles du loisir. Une recherche qui inclut 39 entrevues semi-structurées, conduite à Chicago, dans l'état d'Illinois aux États-Unis, compare des immigrés coréens, mexicains, et polonais de première génération. La majorité d'interviewés ont confirmé que les membres de leurs propres groupes ethniques constituent leurs compagnons principaux du loisir. Les explications offertes pour le renforcement de la clôture ethnique dans les loisirs incluent un niveau de confort, expériences semblables, culture commune, le manque de thèmes semblables avec les Américains traditionnels, une diffi-

Address all correspondence to: Monika Stodolska, Associate Professor in the Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 104 Huff Hall, 1206 South Fourth Street, Champaign, IL 61820. Email: stodolsk@uiuc.edu.

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culté avec la langue anglaise, la discrimination/l'exclusion par les courants principaux, et la crainte de l'inconnu. Les loisirs offrent à ces membres ethniques un confort psychologique et émotif aussi bien que certains avantages économiques réels. D'autre part ce renforcement de la clôture ethnique peut ralentir l'assimilation, introduire des difficultés avec l'emploi, et entraver l'avancement dans les lieux de travail.

Mots-cléfs. réseaux sociaux, clôture ethnique, loisirs, immigrés

Research on leisure of racial and ethnic minorities has been gaining popularity in the field of leisure studies over the last two decades. The majority of studies published in North American leisure journals that focused on issues of ethnic and racial minority groups have discovered that members of ethnic minorities often participate in different leisure activities (Washburne, 1978), have different styles of participation (Irwin, Gartner, & Phelps, 1990; Tirone & Shaw, 1997) and exhibit different motivations and participation patterns than the "White mainstream" (Carr & Williams, 1993; Hutchison, 1987; Stodolska, 2000). The literature on ethnic and racial minorities also detected significant ethnic enclosure in leisure—the pattern that minority members tend to associate predominantly with people of their own ethnic group, spend their free time together, travel together, and use ethnic community resources to facilitate their leisure (Chavez, 1991, 1993; Johnson, Bowker, English, & Worthen, 1998; McDonald & McAvoy, 1997; Tirone & Shaw, 1997). While much of the existing research has confirmed that ethnic and racial minorities tend to associate with other ethnic minority members during leisure engagements, none of these studies has thoroughly explored the phenomenon. The existing literature has failed to analyze antecedents and possible consequences of ethnic enclosure in leisure, as well as to provide an in-depth analysis of the social networks of newcomers. At the same time, extensive literature in the fields of ethnic studies and sociology that examined social networks of immigrants, focused mostly on their effects on people's socio-economic advancement (Portes & Bach, 1985; Portes & Jensen, 1992; Wilson & Portes, 1980) and failed to examine the role of leisure-time associations in immigrants' everyday lives.

The significance of these issues cannot be underestimated given the increasing numbers of newcomers settling in the United States and Canada and the profound impact the composition of their social networks, including leisure-time associations, can have on their assimilation, economic advancement, and the quality of life. In fact, in 2004, 34.2 million people, or 12% of the total population of the United States were born abroad. Newcomers from Latin America and from Asia ac-

counted for more than one half (53%) and one quarter (25%) of total foreign born population, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau News, 2006). The most recent projections from the U.S. Census Bureau anticipate a net addition of 820,000 immigrants each year until 2050, which will bring the proportion of minorities in the U.S. population from 30.6% in 2000 to 49.9% in 2050 (U.S. Census, 2004). Similar trends can be observed in Canada, where in 2001, 5,448,480 of its citizens were foreign born, representing 18.4% of the total population (Statistics Canada, 2005). Once a country dominated by migration from Europe, today Canada accepts immigrants from every part of the globe, with the most significant flows coming from China, India, Pakistan, Philippines, and Korea (Statistics Canada, 2003). For instance, in 2001, 43.7% of Toronto's population, 37.5% of Vancouver's population, and 20.9% of Calgary's population was born abroad, making these cities some of the most important sites of immigrant settlement in North America (Statistics Canada, 2005). Large numbers of immigrants arriving over a short period of time have promoted the growth of immigrant communities in many cities of the U.S. and Canada. Cohesive immigrant communities can smooth out the process of adjustment to the new environment among the newcomers. However, they also isolate immigrants from other Americans and Canadians, slow down their acquisition of English skills and assimilation into the mainstream society.

The goal of this study was to provide an in-depth understanding of ethnic enclosure in leisure and the effect it has on the life of immigrants after their settlement in the host country. The objectives of this study were threefold. First, the study was designed to determine whether *patterns of ethnic enclosure* are present among interviewees from immigrant groups markedly distinct in terms of their cultural background. Second, it was designed to explore the reasons that might *motivate* ethnic minority members to associate solely or predominantly with members of the same ethnic group while engaging in leisure. Lastly, the study was designed to determine possible *consequences* of ethnic enclosure in leisure.

To allow for comparisons across ethnic groups, this project focuses on the experiences of immigrants from three ethnic groups—Korean, Mexican, and Polish, residing in Chicago, Illinois. These three ethnic groups were selected for several reasons. First, people of Mexican, Polish, and Korean descent are among the largest immigrant groups in the metro Chicago area. Second, groups markedly distinct from each other in terms of their culture were selected in order to allow for establishing

similarities and differences in ethnic enclosure between immigrant populations. Lastly, these groups were selected in order to represent three major geographic source areas of immigration to the United States— Latin America, Asia, and Europe.

Literature Review

Leisure of Ethnic/Racial Minorities & Ethnic Enclosure in Leisure

The literature on leisure behaviour of ethnic and racial minorities that has developed following the publication of the seminal paper by Washburne (1978) can be classified into several distinct groups. First, a significant number of studies in the field of ethnic leisure have been devoted to testing the ethnicity-marginality theory and evaluation of the effects of socio-economic status and ethnic traits on minorities' leisure behaviour (Edwards, 1981; Floyd, Shinew, McGuire, & Noe, 1994; Johnson et al., 1998; Shinew, Floyd, McGuire, & Noe, 1995; Stamps & Stamps, 1985). Second, a number of studies employed various theories of assimilation/ acculturation (Gordon, 1964; Keefe & Padilla, 1987; Padilla, 1980; Portes & Zhou, 1993) to examine the effects of adaptation level on minorities' leisure preferences and participation patterns. This group includes studies that focused on leisure participation of Hispanic Americans (Carr & Williams, 1993; Floyd & Gramann, 1993, 1995; Floyd, Gramann, & Saenz, 1993; Gramann, Shaull, & Saenz, 1995, Shaull & Gramann, 1998), Chinese Canadians and Chinese Americans (Walker, Deng, & Dieser, 2001; Yu & Berryman, 1996), Polish immigrants to Canada (Stodolska, 1998), Korean immigrants to the United States (Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004), and Muslim immigrants to the U.S. (Livengood & Stodolska, 2004). Environmental attitudes, perceptions of the natural environment, and the patterns of use of city parks by minority recreationists have also attracted sustained attention from leisure scholars (Arnold & Shinew, 1998; Baas, Ewert, & Chavez, 1993; Cordell, Betz, & Green, 2002; Floyd & Noe, 1993; Gobster, 1998, 2002; Gobster & Delgado, 1993; Outley & Floyd, 2002; Tinseley, Tinsley, & Croskeys, 2002; Virden & Walker, 1999). The last two groups of studies that can be identified in the subfield of ethnic/racial leisure include those that focused on constraints on leisure, with particular attention being paid to discrimination in leisure settings (Blahna & Black, 1993; Livengood & Stodolska, 2004; Shinew, Floyd, & Parry, 2004; West, 1989) and those that investigated the effects of distinct cultural backgrounds on the leisure lives of minority populations (Juniu, 2000; Tirone & Pedlar, 2000).

Social networks of immigrants and their ethnic enclosure in particular, have been addressed in passing in several research projects (Carr & Williams, 1993; Chavez, 1991, 1992, 1993; Hutchison, 1987; McDonald & McAvoy, 1997; Stodolska & Jackson, 1998). The majority of these studies have provided evidence that minorities participate in recreational activities in ethnically segregated groups, but have largely failed to offer in-depth explanations of the phenomenon and analyze its consequences. Based on the context of previous studies we may broadly divide reasons for the existence of ethnic enclosure in leisure into two categories: (1) the ones related to the discrimination and exclusion by the mainstream society, and; (2) the ones related to minorities' preferences due to their common cultural background and immigration experience.

One of the possible reasons for the existence of ethnic segregation in leisure settings is discrimination. Blahna and Black's (1993) study suggested that in order to discourage discrimination minorities recreated in large, ethnically homogenous groups. Hispanics interviewed by Blahna and Black (1993) indicated that they used to "hang out" at a particular area in the park where there was a lot of other Hispanics due to their expectation of discrimination from White recreationsists. Minorities not only participated in ethnically homogenous groups, but also utilized recreation resources that were within their well-defined social spaces. In fact, Blahna and Black (1993) quoted observations of Hirsch (1983), who stressed the important role of parks in racial "turf battles" in Chicago. Similarly, the results of the study by Johnson et al. (1998) indicated that there were "racially demarcated" spaces in the Apalachicola National Forest and that certain areas were to be avoided by Black recreationists. They commented that forests were not a neutral territory, but "racially and socially defined places much like the churches, social clubs, youth hang outs, and other places in the community" (p. 116).

Discrimination also led to ethnic enclosure among Native Americans in McDonald and McAvoy's (1997) study. Being overtly watched by White recreationists and hassled by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff made Native Americans feel unwelcome even within the confines of their reservation. Native Americans chose to recreate in the remote sites as to avoid contact with non-Native Americans and spend time in the company of other members of their family and their Native American friends. Recreation in ethnically homogenous groups was also used as a strategy to avoid discrimination in Livengood and Stodolska's (2004) study that focused on the recreation behaviour of Muslim immigrants in the wake of the September 11th events. As the results of their

study indicated, fearing the backlash from White Americans, Muslims limited their interactions to members of their religious group and made sure to move around the city and travel in larger groups that consisted of at least several males. Similarly, in Ewert's (1989) study, expectation of discrimination made Hispanic minority members visit recreational sites in larger groups that could protect them from racial slurs and potential attacks. The young Sikhs in Tirone's (2000) study even mentioned minorities forming gangs, as they claimed, to provide protection for those Sikh teens who were harassed for wearing turbans.

Evidence of ethnic enclosure in leisure as a way to provide respite from discrimination also surfaced in Stodolska and Jackson's (1998) study of Polish immigrants to Canada. They argued that for minority members, ethnic enclosure in leisure serves as a means of distancing themselves from ethnically motivated unfair treatment they experienced at work, at school, or in public places. Stodolska and Jackson (1998) also explained a tendency among Polish Canadians to associate with other members of their group by their preferences due to cultural, historical, and background related similarities. They speculated that limiting social contacts with members of the mainstream society may prevent immigrants from finding suitable leisure partners and decrease their awareness of existing leisure opportunities.

Cultural preferences have also been shown to lead minorities, and Hispanic Americans in particular, to recreate in the company of other people from their own ethnic group. For instance, research conducted by Chavez (1991, 1992, 1993) on the use of California's National Forests by Hispanic recreationists indicated that while recreation sites were visited by groups of people of distinct backgrounds—Anglos, people born in Mexico, Hispanics born in the U.S., and people born in Central America—members of a certain ethnic group usually constituted the majority of recreationists at a given area. In his study on the use of parks by Hispanic, White, and African American recreationists, Hutchison (1987) observed that Hispanics participated in leisure in large, ethnically homogenous groups with a significant proportion of women, children, and the elderly. They engaged mostly in picnicking, relaxing, and playing with children. Similarly, Stodolska and Yi (2003) observed the social nature of leisure engagements among Mexican Americans and the importance of extended families as a carrier and container of leisure among members of this ethnic group. Irwin et al. (1990) recorded that Mexican American campground users did not mix with Anglos and that they participated in markedly larger groups with a significant proportion of children. They attributed these patterns to the important role of the extended family in the

Mexican American subculture. Irwin et al. also speculated that forest lands in the vicinity of cities with a large concentration of Hispanics may be considered by Hispanics as a form of communal property, and thus fulfill some of their subcultural needs. Carr and Williams (1993) also focused on outdoor recreation participation among Hispanic Americans. They modelled their study partly on the argument of Lee (1973), who observed that "Recreation sites are rarely perceived as free spaces without social definition. Rather individuals seek outdoor areas occupied by others they perceive as similar enough to themselves to feel at home" (Carr & Williams, p. 24). Results of Carr and Williams' study confirmed that supposition and showed that recreation sites were occupied predominantly by users of a certain ancestral group (Mexican Americans, Central Americans, or Anglos). They suggested that spending time with family-oriented groups is most typical to Hispanics of low acculturation level and that the likelihood of spending time with friends or alone increases with the longer generational tenure in the U.S. Carr and Williams' study showed that the most homogenous sites (in terms of ancestral background) had the highest proportion of immigrants, the lowest proportion of second generation immigrants, and the lowest acculturation levels. As Carr and Williams commented, "While it is not possible to directly measure the role of social definitions in individual's recreation decision-making, the results [...] seem to support the importance of seeking to recreate in areas where other recreationists have compatible social definitions" (p. 33).

Ethnically enclosed leisure participation due to cultural preferences has also been recorded in research on other minority groups. For instance, according to Stodolska and Livengood's (2006) study, Muslim immigrants in America showed a preference for recreating in ethnically homogenous, family oriented groups. Interestingly, Muslim participants noted that they were likely to spend their free time with people of other ancestral backgrounds and even mainstream Americans, provided that they were united by the same religious beliefs.

Social Networks of Immigrants

While social networks of immigrants have never been explicitly placed at the centre of leisure research, they have attracted the sustained attention of sociologists, anthropologists, and geographers over the last 40 years. The results of this research with respect to antecedents and possible consequences of ethnic enclosure can make a great contribution to leisure researchers, who examine the possible effects of social associations in leisure settings. For the most part, the interest of other social

scientists concentrated on the effect of social networks on immigrants' economic mobility in the country of settlement. For instance, Norbert Wiley (1967) in his ethnic mobility trap theory argued that ethnic communities might offer easy opportunities for short-term success for immigrants, but that long-run possibilities within such communities could be quite limited. He postulated that while the opportunities for success offered by the mainstream society were theoretically larger than those available within ethnic circles, pursuing them required some initial loss of status and involved a greater degree of uncertainty. Hence, ethnic communities constituted a safe haven for those who were willing to accept existing upper limits on their future advancement. Conversely, structural theories emphasize the importance of ethnic solidarity and ethnic networks in the socio-economic advancement of minorities. In the 1980s, Alejandro Portes and his associates formulated the enclave economy hypothesis that directly contradicted the thesis that ethnic enclosure may serve as a drawback to mobility and advancement of immigrants (Portes & Bach, 1985; Wilson & Portes, 1980). The theory proposed that a major advantage of enclave employment is that immigrants gain entry into ethnic networks that can help them in starting their own businesses. The hypothesis predicted that a concentrated network of ethnic firms offered immigrants an avenue for economic advancement by creating jobs and opportunities for entrepreneurship, as well as by providing access to capital and job training (Portes & Jensen, 1992; Portes & Zhou, 1992). Ethnic businesses also provided immigrant workers with a more culturally familiar work environment, more flexible business hours, and gave them opportunities for interacting in their native language and practicing their traditional customs. Most importantly, however, they helped more ambitious immigrants to accumulate capital and learn the trade that in the future could help them in establishing their own businesses. As such, immigrants created conditions for their own mobility sidestepping difficult processes of initial establishment within the mainstream society. Conversely to Wiley, the ethnic enclave hypothesis predicted that people who stay within the confines of their ethnic community and who establish strong networks with other immigrants do better than those who try their luck on the mainstream job market (Waters & Eschbach, 1995).

Interestingly, while studies conducted in the field of leisure research have failed to investigate the broader significance of leisure-related networks of immigrants, studies conducted in the fields of sociology, geography, anthropology, and ethnic studies have equally overlooked the importance of leisure associations in the socio-economic mobility of

immigrants. This study is intended to bridge this gap in our understanding of the social networks of immigrants, ethnic enclosure in particular, and the effect leisure-time associations have on people's lives after immigration.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative methodology—semi-structured in-depth interviews with first generation immigrants from Korea, Mexico, and Poland. Interviews were conducted with 39 immigrants (18 Korean American, 11 Mexican American, and 10 Polish American) between April and October 2001 in metro Chicago and Urbana-Champaign areas. The target population included first and one and a half generation immigrants (those who had immigrated to the U.S. as children). Purposive and theoretical sampling methods were used to select the participants. Initially, they had to meet the criterion of being adults born either in Korea, Mexico, or Poland, who have permanently settled in the U.S and who represented various socio-economic backgrounds. Subsequently, theoretical sampling was used to select the interviewees. As the new themes emerged, interviewees who were likely to improve the understanding of the topic were selected.

The participants included 23 males and 16 females between 16 and 68 years of age whose length of stay in the U.S. ranged from 5 months to 27 years. They represented a spectrum of occupations—restaurant owners; restaurant workers; truck drivers; factory workers; cashiers; mechanics; cleaning staff; nursing home workers; ESL teachers; housewives; students; a radio station employee; ministers; and upper level employees of a local chamber of commerce, local ethnic association and a major arts museum. The interviews with Polish American and Mexican American participants were conducted by the author of this paper. A research assistant of Latin American descent and, on some occasions, an outside interpreter assisted in conducting interviews with Mexican Americans. It has to be noted that the research assistant was of Peruvian descent, while the Hispanics interviewed in this study all came from Mexico. Thus, since his insight into the experiences of Mexican American interviewees was limited, his role was restricted to assisting in translation of the interview material. Interviews with Korean Americans were conducted by a Korean graduate assistant working on this project. The interviews were conducted in the homes of interviewees, at their places of work, in student lounges, parks, and coffee shops, or in the home of the author of this paper. Interviewees were offered a choice of questions being asked either in English or in their native language. The majority of

the interviews were conducted in the native language of the interviewee and only five were conducted in English. All interviewees have been given pseudonyms for the purpose of this study.

Interviews lasted between 25 minutes and 4.5 hours. Questions were sequenced according to a predetermined, but flexible interview schedule. Interviewees were queried about their immigration experience, social and economic adjustment problems, ethnic composition of their social networks, reasons behind their preference for associating with members of certain ethnic groups, as well as about their work and leisure patterns. Each question was followed by probes designed to provide additional insight into the experiences and characteristics of the interviewee. Issues and opinions that surfaced during the interviews were followed up in subsequent conversations with other study participants. Most interviews were tape recorded and subsequently transcribed. In 10 interviews tape recording was not possible, and detailed contemporaneous notes were taken. Constant comparison method was used to isolate common themes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Major themes regarding the leisure behaviour of immigrants, the composition of their leisure networks, reasons for spending free time with other members of their ethnic group, and consequences of ethnic enclosure in leisure were noted. During the following stage of analysis, the transcripts were re-read and common themes and categories were isolated. Finally, after all the relevant points had been synthesized from the data, the transcripts were re-read again to ensure that all of the important aspects of the phenomena had been accounted for.

Care was taken to maximize trustworthiness of the study. To increase credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), interview transcripts were sent back to the study participants to verify if they truly represented their thoughts and expressions. Moreover, member checking strategy was used in which themes that emerged from the study and interpretations of multiple interviews were presented to two informants from each of the ethnic communities that were asked to comment on the plausibility of the interpretations made by the researcher (Baxter & Eyles, 1997). External sources, such as books and printed material published by various ethnic organizations pertaining to the dynamics of Korean American, Mexican American, and Polish American communities, were also consulted and conversations with knowledgeable members of the communities were used to help assessing the trustworthiness of the qualitative data. All interviewers took detailed field notes that included narratives of behaviours, activities and events, and relied on audio recordings for verbatim transcription of the data. Field notes and audio recordings

were subsequently used to verify to what degree researcher's interpretations "agreed" with the data.

Findings

Examples of Ethnic Enclosure in Leisure and Factors Affecting the Extent of Ethnic Enclosure

Almost all Korean American, Mexican American, and Polish American interviewees indicated that members of their own ethnic group constituted their primary leisure companions. Ethnic enclosure in leisure went hand in hand and was furthered by the spatial enclosure of minority members who settled in inner-city ethnic neighbourhoods. Social networks of less assimilated immigrants residing in the Chicago's "inner-city" ethnic communities of Pilsen/Little Village [Mexican American community], Korea Town, and Jackowo [Polish American community], were comprised exclusively or almost exclusively of people of the same ethnic background. The ease of obtaining employment in ethnic firms, housing from landlords of the same ethnic background, as well as availability of stores and services offered in their native language were the most commonly mentioned reasons for recent immigrants to settle in inner-city ethnic enclaves. Interestingly, patterns of spatial and social ethnic enclosure were, to a large extent, recreated even among the more upwardly mobile and successful minority members who resided in suburban, ethnically integrated neighbourhoods. When asked about their reasons for settling near other people from the same ethnic group, middle-class immigrants mentioned the "community feeling," access to friends of the same ethnicity and to ethnic stores and services. In the words of a Mexican American in his late twenties:

> Miguel: The food seems to be the most important. You would be surprised how important it is for people to go to the Mexican store and be able to buy what they like.... And so, if there is a good neighbourhood where there are Mexican stores, people will be more likely to move there. Besides, it is important to have friends and family nearby. Why would you travel through the whole town to be able to see your friends if you could live close to them? Work is one thing, but people need to feel good about the place they live.... People like to see others like them on the street....

Two other important reasons for recreating ethnic communities in the suburban neighbourhoods surfaced in this study. While Mexican American interviewees mentioned that it was easier to obtain jobs in factories located in the suburbs of Chicago, Korean Americans indicated that their choice of residence close to other, more assimilated, people from their

own ethnic group was dictated by the availability of good schools and tutoring services for their children.

The interviewees provided numerous examples of ethnic enclosure in leisure. For instance, young participants mentioned that students were segregated along ethnic lines during their lunch hour activities. As Magda, an 18-year-old Polish American high school student commented, "You can see it at lunch in our school. There is a Polish table, an Indian table, a Korean table, and a Japanese table, you can clearly see it." Ethnic enclosure among adolescents went even as far as maintaining contacts only with people from the same immigration wave or of the same assimilation level. More assimilated adolescents often preferred to distance themselves from less assimilated teens from the same ethnic group who spoke poor English. A 21-year-old Korean American woman who had lived in the U.S. for 13 years recalled her high school years this way:

> Heejun: When I was in high school, there was a complete separation among Korean students between those who spoke primarily Korean and those who spoke primarily English. My brother was in the former group and I was in the latter. His friends were completely different from mine.... At his graduation ceremony, my friends were surprised when they found out he was my brother and they laughed at his awkward English. My friends and I did not want to hang out with those Koreans who just arrived [to the U.S.] When we heard they spoke Korean loudly at the hallway, we were so embarrassed and said, "Why don't they speak Korean in a low tone? Why don't they speak English?"

Although reasons for ethnic enclosure will be explored in more detail later in this manuscript, this quote provides a good illustration of the exclusion recent immigrants faced after arrival—a factor strongly contributing to the development of ethnic enclosure in many life situations, including the leisure sphere of life. It was not only the mainstream American society that acted to exclude the recent newcomers, but also the members of their own ethnic community such as the more assimilated teenagers, who chose to isolate themselves from their less assimilated counterparts. Such divisions seem to run deep—in case of Heejun, they even created divisions within her own family. This finding is quite unexpected, even considering the importance that adolescents place on the peer-group acceptance, their perceived image, and their position within the social group.

Some of the adult interviewees indicated that even when compelled to interact with people of other ethnicities during company-sponsored leisure outings (picnics, BBQs, Christmas parties), they tried to devise

ways to limit their conversations to co-workers of the same ethnic descent. Respondents who could not associate with people of the same ethnic background showed a preference for interacting with other immigrants from the same geographic region or even with immigrants in general. This was true for members of all three interviewed ethnic populations. While Korean Americans commented that in an absence of people from the same ethnic group they would likely associate with "other Asians," Mexican Americans expressed a preference for interacting with "other Latinos," while Polish Americans gave examples of Eastern Europeans, such as Czechs or Slovaks, as their preferred companions. Interestingly, immigration made individuals seek commonalities with people from the same region and to identify with their broader cultural reference group, something many of them did not experience prior to immigrating to the U.S. Immigrants from elsewhere constituted the third choice, following people from the same country and of the same cultural origin. Native-born mainstream Americans, including African Americans, were considered less desirable leisure companions.

Other examples of ethnically enclosed free time activities discussed in the interviews included frequent all-Mexican American soccer games for Mexican American males and chatting on the phone with their ethnic friends and visiting with others for Mexican American women. Polish American interviewees mentioned visiting with their Polish American friends, organizing parties and frequent out of town trips with other Polish American immigrants, visits to Polish American community centres, attending events organized by Polish American ethnic organizations (performances of visiting Polish theatres and musical groups), participating in Polish American cultural, leisure and sports clubs, and attending Polish American discos. For instance, a 44-year-old Polish American woman from a wealthy family, but still working as a cleaning lady described the ethnically enclosed leisure of Polish Americans in Chicago in such words:

> Krystyna: When it comes to weekends, you know, people meet, go to Polish parties ... there are many Polish theatres that come for guest performances, there are many events organized by the Copernicus Centre. For example, last year they invited Old Theatre from Krakow, National Theatre, different theatres come from Poland for guest performances, there was also "Gala Piosenki Biesiadnej" [popular Polish singers] not so long ago, 34 artists came! Either entire theatres come or single artists. There are concerts of different Polish bands. And, you know, you can't get tickets months in advance!

When compared with Mexican Americans, Polish Americans seemed to show much more frequent attendance at cultural events organized by their ethnic community centres such as theatres, concerts, picnics, and book fairs. Leisure of the interviewed Mexican Americans seemed to be more focused on informal social activities with other family members or friends from the same ethnic community. It is likely that such differences can be attributed to the fact that the sample of interviewed Polish Americans constituted a cross-section of all socio-economic groups, including people of middle and upper middle class, while the sample of Mexican American participants was significantly skewed toward people of a working-class background.

When queried about the leisure time they spent with their ethnic friends, Korean American interviewees stressed the importance of leisure activities organized by ethnic churches, celebrating Korean holidays, attending Korean American parades, sharing traditional Korean food, travelling, playing golf and tennis with other Korean Americans, and out of town group trips organized by community travel agencies. They also mentioned soccer games organized by their own community. In the words of Hyang-Soon, a 31-year-old Korean American male: "Here, it is not easy to find a soccer team and play with American people. But, Korean people love it, so there are several Morning Soccer Meetings among Korean men and they have games every Sunday morning." While soccer did not seem to be a preferred activity among other interviewees from this ethnic group, playing tennis and golf were extremely popular within the Korean American community. As it will be described in more detail later in this paper, these activities were perceived as symbols of prestige and social status. They allowed people to strengthen ties with other Korean Americans, and in particular with the alumni of the same Korean schools, and to build networks helpful in conducting businesses ventures within the ethnic community. For instance, a 68-year-old male Korean American coffee shop owner remarked:

> Seong-Kim: After people become stable, many people begin to play golf. Golf is a kind of symbol of success here among Korean immigrants. As you know, in Korea, only rich and powerful people can play golf. Many people want to play golf, but they cannot. So, for immigrants, playing golf is a kind of reward, [a sign] of their social and economic success in the U.S. Here, most Koreans are crazy about playing golf.

Interviews revealed that the degree or the extent of ethnic enclosure was influenced by the immigrants' age at arrival, their socio-economic status, and the area of residence (large, inner-city ethnic communities vs.

suburbs). While social networks of adult Mexican American intervie-wees, who settled in the inner-city Chicago neighbourhoods of Little Village and Pilsen, seemed to be the most ethnically homogenous, friend-ship circles of young Polish American residents of suburbs appeared to be the most ethnically mixed. People who arrived to the U.S. as chil-dren or young teenagers were also more likely to have heterogeneous so-cial networks than adult immigrants or those who arrived to the U.S. in their late teens. Although both people residing in the inner-city ethnic communities and those who lived in the suburbs showed high levels of ethnic enclosure, there existed pronounced intra-group variations in the degree of enclosure based on the place of residence. These were partic-ularly visible among Mexican Americans and Polish Americans, with those residing in the suburbs showing much more openness to estab-lishing contacts with out-group members than those who resided in inner-city ethnic enclaves. Several of the Mexican American interviewees commented that it was only after they had moved to the suburbs from the down-town areas of Pilsen and Little Village that they met and established friendships with people of non-Hispanic descent. The same was true for upwardly mobile Polish immigrants, who moved from the central city eth-nic enclave, often referred to as the "Milwaukee-Belmont triangle," to the suburban communities of Shamburg, Elk Grove, or Palatine.

As the findings of the study showed, ethnic enclosure in leisure was fostered by the existence of ethnic churches, ethnic schools, ethnic clubs and organizations, as well as, among young immigrants, by their less assimilated parents. Attending activities organized by ethnic churches seemed to be very important for Korean, Mexican, and Polish immi-grants. As respondents from all three ethnic groups remarked, ethnic churches constituted important community cultural hubs and were respon-sible for a large portion of community leisure events. Moreover, they facilitated retention of traditional customs, holiday celebrations and tra-ditional ethnic leisure activities. For instance, a 40-year-old man, and a prominent member of the Mexican community commented,

> Carlos: Church is extremely important for us as a focal point for the en-tire community, for community's leisure. It allows people to retain their cul-ture. There is also a social component to it. Cinco de Mayo, Christmas, New Years Day celebrations—they are all church events. Even social ac-tivities such as Quincenera are all related to church.

Similarly, Choon-Yei, a Korean American female in her mid thirties commented on the important role of Protestant churches in organizing leisure life among Korean immigrants: "Among Korean immigrants,

church is a kind of mind-centre because it helps people adjust to life in the U.S., get a job and socialize with each other. There is a big picnic on special holidays such as Choo-Suk [Full Moon in August]." Traditionally, Catholic churches played a similar role in the lives of Polish immigrants. Churches united Polish Americans for political causes and in opposition to the communist regime in Poland; collected donations for poor families, orphanages, and hospitals back home; ran Polish American libraries; and served as meeting centres for various cultural and leisure-related ethnic organizations.

The majority of Polish American interviewees also commented on the important role of Polish American schools in the preservation of ethnic identity, as well as a venue to meet other people of the same ethnic background in leisure settings. Although Polish American schools were designed mostly for young immigrants or for second generation people to learn the language, history, and geography of their home country, they also served as meeting places for adult immigrants who established social contacts while being involved in the school matters of their children. Such leisure-related interactions in the company of people from the same ethnic group were particularly important for recent immigrants who felt alienated in the new environment and who were reluctant to venture outside of their ethnic community. As a 44-year-old Polish American female remarked,

> Krystyna: You don't feel lonely here. Because here people can do everything in the Polish language. Yes, you will have to pay more, but you can do everything in Polish. And here if you only go to Polish school or to Polish church, you will always find some people you can be friends with. For example, me myself I have a lot of friends from the Polish school.

Similar questions about the importance of "ethnic schools" were asked of Mexican American and Korean American interviewees. Unlike Polish Americans, however, none of the participants from these two ethnic groups indicated that "ethnic schools" were an important hub for their community. Korean Americans commented that their children were taught the Korean language in classes affiliated with Korean protestant churches, while Mexican Americans stressed the important role of families in passing ethnic heritage to the younger generations.

Interestingly, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, besides introducing people to the new culture and language, also served as places where people of the same ethnic group met and established new friendships. In fact, a large part of the social life of immigrants seemed to revolve around English language courses. In the words of Carlos, a 40-year-old Mexican American man and a former ESL teacher:

I was an ESL teacher myself, so I could see what was going on. You should've seen how dressed up young people would come. I was the only one dressed in "normal" clothes. Why would they dress up like this for school? Yes, people came to learn English, but there was also a very important social component to it.

To a significant extent, ethnic clubs and organizations also allowed for establishing and preserving ties between ethnic community members. The interviewees mentioned numerous activities organized in the Mexican American communities of Pilsen/Little Village (e.g., Fiesta del Sol), or Korean American parades and Polish American picnics organized by Korean American and Polish American ethnic organizations in the City of Chicago. For instance, a 38-year-old Polish American woman remarked,

Anna: Polish groups organize picnics, for instance there are picnics organized by the Warsaw Club, Club of the Jagiellonian University, Physicians Association. I was on one of their picnics once. It was organized by Owsiak's Orchestra. They organized picnic in Niles, they were collecting money for the children, different artist were performing there. We also went to the picnic organized by the Polish Radio—they sell Polish books there, it is a fair in the park, they have food, different Polish restaurants sell their food—pierogi, kielbasa, beer. You can buy Polish books, Polish herbs, Polish kids are dancing on a stage.

Interestingly, association with people of the same ethnic background among Korean American adolescents seemed to be strongly promoted by their parents. As some of the young interviewees reported, their parents even went as far as forcibly removing them from schools in which they established too many personal contacts with mainstream American children. A 21-year-old Korean American woman recalled,

Yoo-Me: When I was in junior high school, I had only American friends and no Korean friends. At that time, my mother was very worried about me. She said, "Your American friends cannot understand you. Korean friends can understand you much better. Korean friends are from the similar culture as yours, their parents have similar jobs to us, they eat Korean food as you do." So, my parents moved to a neighbourhood where lots of Korean people lived and I enrolled in high school where there were many Korean students. As a result, since high school I made more Korean than American friends.

Such actions were intended to prevent Korean American teenagers from establishing close friendships with their American counterparts that could alienate Korean American teens from their ethnic community and potentially lead to intermarriage—an act disapproved of by most first

generation Korean Americans. Such incidents were not recalled by either Polish American or Mexican American interviewees.

Reasons for the Existence of Ethnic Enclosure in Leisure

Common Culture

The interviews with Korean American, Mexican American, and Polish American respondents helped to identify numerous reasons for the presence of ethnic enclosure in leisure. Many of the interviewees from all the three ethnic groups attributed ethnic enclosure in leisure to their common culture. Immigrants stressed that their sense of humour, history, interests, values, and outlook on life differed markedly from those typical to mainstream Americans. They commented that they felt better in the company of people from their own ethnic group, that they could understand their sense of humour and references to historical events and political life in the home country. For instance, a Korean American man in his thirties commented,

> Tae-Song: Even second generation Koreans ... they were socialized by their parents to the Korean culture. They don't seem to have the same sense of humour, wit, as Americans. This is one of the reasons why they don't "fit" into American social groups.

Feelings of comfort in the presence of other Mexican Americans were also mentioned as reasons for ethnic enclosure by the retired Mexican American teacher in his late sixties:

> Pablo: Have you noticed that you have Black tables and Latino tables and White tables [in American schools and universities]? Why do you think they do it? Because they feel comfortable in their own company. In our church, people have a social after Sunday mass. Until last year they [the Mexicans] had their own Thanksgiving dinners.

Krystyna, a 44-year-old Polish American female commented on the common culture that Polish Americans shared:

> You see, we understand each other better. Would they [the Americans] understand if I told them about the Martial Law? Would they understand if I told them stories from the Communist times? How it was back then? People like you would, but people like them would not.

Similar Immigration Experiences

Commonly mentioned explanations for the ethnic homogeneity of immigrants' social networks also included the comfort level brought in by similar immigration-related experiences. Less assimilated young Polish

American and Mexican American interviewees indicated that they were "drawn to each other" and "always spent their time together" because they had "common immigration experiences," "experienced the same problems," and "were able to understand each other better." For instance, as Rafał, an 18-year-old Polish American teenager remarked, "Because they [other Polish immigrants] are going through the same experiences as you do, people who were born here would not be able to understand what we are going through." His comments echoed those of Clara, a 28-year-old Mexican American. Asked why she showed a preference for spending time with other immigrants rather than with the U.S.-born mainstream Americans, she replied, "Because they also speak poor English so you don't pay attention to your [poor] English. Because they are going through what you are going through."

Lack of Knowledge of the Local Culture

As the direct opposite of the theme related to the common culture shared by the immigrants, interviewees from all three ethnic groups mentioned that they lacked the knowledge of the local American culture and that it affected their levels of interaction with people from outside of their ethnic group. This lack of familiarity with the local culture resulted in frequent feelings of alienation during leisure engagements in the company of their mainstream friends and co-workers. One of the Korean American interviewees mentioned that she felt alienated during the "Happy Hour" meetings with her co-workers as she was not familiar with the American movies, sports, and TV programs and, as such, lacked conversation topics and was unable to follow the dialog of other people in the group. Her feelings were echoed in a number of interviews with Mexican and Polish participants. Similar theme also surfaced in conversations with younger interviewees. Asked why he spent time solely in the company of other Poles, a young Polish American interviewee replied that he was "not into hanging out with the local kids." After further questioning of "what do the *local kids* do for fun?" and why he did not want to join them, he replied,

> Marek: I don't know, they just hang out. I see them at the corner of [location removed]. I don't know what they do and what they talk about. They might be doing drugs, I don't know. I see those kids at school. They talk about local staff, music, movies, people they know. I don't know those things and I don't care about those things. I have people I know here [other Polish teenagers] whom I hung out with.

Different Life Experiences

Several young Mexican and Polish interviewees also pointed out that, for a number of reasons including the immigration experience, they were different from mainstream Americans, which created a barrier difficult to overcome. They perceived themselves as more mature than Americans of the same age, as having to leave their country, friends and families abroad, and later struggle in America made them grow up faster than adolescents raised in peace, security, and affluence. An 18-year-old, male high school student of Polish descent saw this through the prism of his young age.

> Hubert: From my perspective speaking in English doesn't make any sense, for instance with Americans, talking with them doesn't make any sense. I'd rather sit with other Poles and talk about serious things than talk with Americans about their silly stuff.

When queried what he meant by "silly stuff" and if conversation topics between young Polish immigrants differed from those of their American colleagues, he replied that conversations about sport and music that American teenagers were engaging in were not serious enough and thus he preferred to keep the company of other Poles. Asked what he and his Polish friends were talking about, he said, "We talk about everything, relations between people, history, politics, about New York [the interview was conducted on September 14, 2001], about what happened there." Clara, a 28-year-old Mexican American commented that immigration experience made immigrants like herself "unique" and that mainstream Americans would not be able to understand what people like her went through. "A person who was born here doesn't know how it is to move to another country. Because they [the Americans] don't understand that when you come here you have to start your life all over again." Other interviewees commented that life in their home country was "totally different" than in the U.S. For example, Adam, a 21-year-old Polish interviewee remarked, "Because in Poland life and growing up is totally different than here. For instance, you can't get a job until you are 16. Here it is completely different. It is difficult for people brought up here to relate to our life."

Lack of English Language Skills

Lack of English language skills on the part of interviewed immigrants appeared to be one of the most important reasons for the existence of ethnic enclosure in leisure. Some participants mentioned that they wanted to establish contacts with mainstream Americans, but that they "didn't

know how to communicate with them." Others observed that the majority of Americans were very open and understanding about their lack of language skills, but conversations in broken English were tiresome for both parties. As Maria, a 42-year-old Mexican American female employed in one of the manufacturing plants in central Chicago commented,

> Maria: At the beginning I felt more comfortable when I was in our own company 'cause I could communicate better. Now, I can be in the company of Americans, but I can't talk with them about things I want to. When I speak Spanish I can express my thoughts, my feelings, I have a larger vocabulary and I can say more.... When I talk with Americans, however, I can only talk about general things. It's a language barrier, this is the most important thing—a language barrier.

Lack of language skills seemed to constitute a powerful constraint on the lives of recent immigrants. As poignantly described by a 38-year-old Polish American female cashier:

> Anna: When I was watching television I was able to understand selected words, but when I was on the street, it was terrible—NOTHING! And how afraid I was of a phone call!! It was a nightmare because we didn't have caller ID at that time yet. And one time they called me and they made me subscribe to some newspapers for 2 or 3 years. I didn't know what they wanted and what was going on so I just kept saying "yes." And in an hour, somebody is at the door; they are signing an agreement, saying something to me. I could understand maybe half of it.... And in half an hour Andrzej [her husband] is coming home and saying "What the hell did you do? What did you buy?" He got mad at me, he called these people and cancelled the subscription. And later, after that, I would not pick up the phone.

Interestingly, Mariola, a 45-year-old Polish American female lab technician, seemed to divide leisure activities into the less personal ones that were organized by her employer and that she was obligated to attend and the more intimate ones with her American friends. She commented that it was quite common for her and for her Polish American friends to attend official parties organized by their employer, where she could simply "blend in." Conversely, she was very reluctant to attend informal get-togethers that required more personal interactions, and thus the use of language, with her mainstream American friends.

Discrimination

Discrimination and/or exclusion by the mainstream as a reason for ethnic enclosure surfaced in several interviews with Mexican American

and Polish American immigrants, but not with Korean Americans. Young interviewees explained that constant harassment by other students made them "stick together," at least during the initial period after arrival. In the words of a 19-year-old Mexican American:

> Manuel: It will happen from time to time that they [American students] will approach you and say that you are such and such because you can't speak English well. I know they were talking behind my back one time and they were saying bad things about me because they thought I wouldn't understand, but I did understand and ... damn, I felt so hurt, so hurt....

Similar comments and examples were given by most of the interviewed Mexican Americans and Polish Americans who recalled frequent instances of harassment in schools and workplaces. Some of the younger interviewees commented that their initial attempts at establishing contact with mainstream teenagers had failed due to the reluctance of their American colleagues. Two of the participants, who seemed to be particularly bitter, attributed discrimination to the broader socio-cultural trends in the American society. An 18-year-old Polish interviewee commented,

> Marek: Because Americans are taught since they are young children that they are the best, that everything is for them and [that's why] they laugh at everybody else. And when they see that somebody is smarter than them, they try to destroy him. That's how it is. And it starts at school, and later it is the same at the workplace.

Magda, another 18-year-old Polish American student echoed his comments: "They are the best. It is always the same—*they* are the best and nothing and nobody else matters." A Mexican-American interviewee who was a prominent member of the community commented on inter-ethnic tensions in his neighbourhood:

> Miguel: Jobs that are supposed to go to Mexican Americans go to Blacks. Only two people in the Employment Office in Pilsen [a predominantly Mexican community] speak Spanish. Mexican American youth goes to the City office to get employment in summer programs paid by the City but is usually sent to other neighborhoods. It is the Blacks who get jobs in Pilsen and Little Village....

While many Polish American and Mexican American interviewees recalled experiences with discrimination, there were also others who praised Americans for their openness and blamed immigrants for their rude behaviour and cliquishness. In the words of a 38-year-old Polish American woman:

Anna: When we have our company picnic sometimes we [Polish employees] talk with each other, but whenever an American comes we immediately start speaking English. But, you know, there is this group of Polish women, and this really makes me angry, sometimes when somebody comes I start speaking English, but they keep replying to me in Polish. And I say "Listen, we can't act like that, these people don't understand our language, regardless of whether our English is better or worse, but they feel bad when we speak Polish when they are there. How would you feel if they were speaking Spanish and you would not understand a thing?"

Interestingly, discrimination did not surface in interviews with Korean American participants. As others have argued (Yi, 2005), low incidence of *reported* discrimination among this group can be attributed to several factors. First, recent Korean immigrants have very low levels of contact with other ethnic groups or, as we would argue, are ethnically enclosed to such a degree that it minimizes the incidence of discrimination. Second, they attribute any negative treatment they receive to their lower socio-economic status ("they are not treating me badly because I'm Asian, but because I'm a shopkeeper"). Third, they have a tendency to attribute discriminatory treatment to "bad personalities" of perpetrators, rather than to any prejudices operating at the societal or institutional level. Lastly, they perceive America as a land of opportunity and acknowledge that Koreans in Korea are far more prejudiced against ethnic minorities than Americans are in the United States (Yi). Findings of Yi's study also showed that the perception of discrimination among second generation Korean Americans was markedly higher, as they increased their levels of contact with other ethnic groups and as they became more aware of their disfranchised position within the American society. Such arguments are supported by Portes (1984), who argued that perceptions of discrimination tend to be higher among second generation and more assimilated immigrants who are aware of inequalities ingrained in the American society.

Fear of the Unknown

Fear of the unknown was also a powerful factor that prevented immigrants from establishing friendship networks beyond the confines of their ethnic communities. This reason was particularly pronounced among the least assimilated immigrants from Mexico and Poland, semi-temporary migrants, and those who were in the United States illegally. Lack of English language skills and fear of unknown surroundings made them spend their entire lives within the confines of their ethnic communities. They were too afraid of getting lost in a hostile environment and being

"discovered" and deported to their home country to establish any contacts with outsiders. In the words of Isabela, a 29-year-old immigrant from Mexico holding a secretary job:

> Isabela: This is an entirely different world. People are afraid they will fall, they will get lost. And how is he supposed to ask for directions? How can he use the phone if all the instructions are in English? You asked me why they don't go to a park ... and if there is no park in their neighbourhood, how are they going to get there? They won't take a bus.... They are afraid to go outside, they are afraid to ask, they are afraid they will get lost, they will be picked up from the street [by the Immigration officials].

Similar observations were echoed in interviews with Polish American respondents who commented that the life of less assimilated immigrants from Jackowo—Chicago's inner-city Polish American neighbourhood revolved around their community, which lacked amenities such as big supermarkets and parks. As some of the interviewees commented, Polish Americans who resided in the U.S. illegally, did not speak English and did not have driver's licenses, were virtually prisoners inside their ethnic ghetto. They had to rely on small stores, which inflated the prices knowing the constraints of the captive market that they served, and were unable to travel to distant recreation areas due to their lack of knowledge of the local geography, lack of cars, fear of being discovered by immigration officials or lost in the big city. It caused their social lives to revolve around friendship networks established within their ethnic communities, and to frequent bars, restaurants and cafeterias only within the confines of their immediate neighbourhood. Since significant proportions of Polish American and Mexican American communities reside in the United States illegally, fear of deportation might be a powerful factor leading to ethnic enclosure among these groups. Conversely, legal status of the majority of Korean immigrants may shield them from similar experiences. Legality of status can also lead to significant differences *within* Mexican American and Polish American communities, with citizens and permanent residents enjoying privileges, opportunities, and the perception of safety unavailable to their undocumented counterparts.

Consequences of Ethnic Enclosure in Leisure

Interviews with Korean, Mexican, and Polish immigrants also helped to identify possible consequences of limiting one's leisure contacts to members of his or her own close-knit ethnic community. While some of these were positive in nature as they provided psychological and emotional comfort, a respite from the new environment, a way to avoid discrimina-

tion, or certain tangible economic benefits, enclosure also affected immigrants in a negative way.

Psychological and Emotional Comfort and a Respite from the New Environment

Psychological and emotional comfort immigrants derived from associating with other members of their ethnic group was mentioned by members of all three ethnic communities. For instance, a 60-year-old Korean American man commented,

> Kyo-Moon: I heard from several Korean people that during the Chicago Korean Street Festival they felt as if they were in their backyard in their old house, in their home country ... because they could feel really relaxed and meet and chat with other Korean people. I think this festival is especially good for senior Korean immigrants because they feel so isolated in the U.S.

As it can be seen from this quote, leisure-time associations with people from the same ethnic group seemed to be particularly important for elderly immigrants who felt most alienated in the American environment. They provided them with feelings of comfort and maintained their connection with their former ways of life.

  Leisure time spent with friends who spoke the same language and were of similar culture also allowed immigrants to recuperate from stressful events at work, from the necessity to speak a foreign language, and from being immersed in the American culture they did not fully understand or accept. For instance, a 38-year-old Polish American woman who worked as a cashier remarked,

> Anna: You know, after a whole day [of work] I'm tired. I'm just tired. Not of work, but of trying to speak English, trying to fit in, trying not to make a mistake. People who work in [name of the company removed] are generally nice, but many of them, you know, they are trying to make a small talk and you have to make an effort, constant effort. And then there's the boss, and people you work with ... I'm just drained ... although the work that I do is not demanding at all. Being with Andrzej [her husband] and spending time with Mariola and Marek [her Polish friends] just gives me comfort. They understand me, I feel relaxed with them. [I can] just totally let it go.

Economic Benefits

Leisure-time associations with members of the same ethnic group also proved to have certain economic benefits for immigrants. This theme surfaced very clearly in interviews with Korean American and Polish

American respondents, but not with the Mexican American participants in this study. Korean Americans and Polish Americans commented that friendships established with other members of their own community that were facilitated by their leisure interactions helped them find jobs within the ethnic labour market, as well as promoted business contacts. For instance, Korean American interviewees stressed the significant role that high school and university alumni associations played in helping immigrants establish in the new country, find jobs, obtain credit, and establish businesses. The alumni relations were usually cemented during rounds of golf or tennis—two sports immensely popular among the Korean immigrant community in the United States. As one of the Korean American female interviewees, a software designer and an accountant in her mid-thirties commented:

> MinJung: The alumni connection is really strong. When my father came to the U.S., alumni were the first people that he got in touch with. He looked at the newspaper and went to the meeting. You know, in Korea, almost every relationship is based on family relatives or alumni, or the next is the same hometown people.... All immigrant people experience a kind of loneliness sometime. They don't have a lot of relatives [in the U.S.], so naturally they [the alumni groups] get together, help each other and they feel pity on each other too.... My father borrowed a credit card from one of them. At first, he did not have money, but he had to spend. So, one of them rented him a credit card with a $5,000 limit on it. Of course, my father had to pay for what he spent.... I think it is possible for Korean people to rent a credit card to alumni friends because if the person loses the trust in that relationship, he cannot survive. Because every alumni member knows that he did that. [If] he failed to keep the trust, he could not survive in any society, even in Korea and in the United States.

Korean American interviewees consciously reinforced these ties through playing sports in the company of their alumni friends, attending parties, as well as dining and travelling together. The same 35-year-old Korean American woman described the way in which her father maintained strong ties with his alumni friends:

> MinJung: Even now, they [the alumni friends] have regular meetings. They are all pretty wealthy, just kind of regular meet, travel, come back, and plan retirement together. My father is addicted to golfing.... Now, he feels "OK, I am finally successful," because golf is a symbolic activity in Korea. Wives and kids also get together. Sometimes they invite people from Korea to play [golf] too. Once they invited like 10 families from Korea. Actually, the people who were invited, they were quite wealthy too. They travelled, they played golf together. Even like Christmas, believe it or

not, I am the only one who stays at home. My dad and my brother, they just all went out for Christmas Eve and Fourth of July with their [alumni] friends.

Several other Korean American immigrants commented on the economic significance of another leisure activity that was based on the existence of strong social networks within their ethnic community. The so-called *kye* meetings were group parties organized usually in the home (or sometimes in the restaurant) of one of the members of the community. Each month the meeting would be organized by another person from the group. The person in charge of the meeting would receive financial donations from all attending participants. The significant amount of the donations was often enough to pay for their or their children's yearly university tuition, international travel, or some other expenses. Only well-known and trusted members of the group were allowed to participate in the meetings, as by allowing the stranger in, the attendees risk significant financial losses if the person decided to break the chain of donations and failed to participate in the meetings in which he or she would have to pay his/her way in.

Avoidance of Discrimination and Inter-ethnic/Racial Conflict

While discouragement from their mainstream colleagues and general disillusionment with the "system" were some of the reasons why immigrants preferred to keep the company of people from the same ethnic group, ethnic enclosure also helped them to avoid inter-ethnic/racial conflict and discrimination. For instance, in the case of Chicago high schools located in inner-city communities such as Pilsen, Little Village, or Belmont-Cragin, one of the additional advantages of spending time with other Mexican Americans or Polish Americans was establishing power groups to discourage attacks by gangs comprised of Whites, African Americans, and other ethnic minorities. Manuel, a Mexican American interviewee in his late twenties described the gang activity and various ethnic conflicts in his neighbourhood in these words:

During the mid—late 80s there was a lot of gang activity in Pilsen/Little Village. Lawndale [Ave.] was the dividing line between various Mexican gangs. There still is some gang violence in the area but not as much as 10 years ago. [Asked "why?"] In the late 1980s and early 1990s alternative "youth groups" emerged. They called themselves "party crews." These were usually groups of young people hanging out after parties, wearing baggy jeans. They took up British names. They wanted to differentiate themselves from "gangbangers," although there was also some significant violence between those groups as well. Chinese, Polish kids who

went with them to high school started emulating them. [...] Also, there is a conflict between Mexican and Black communities. Blacks are jealous that Mexicans were able to establish themselves faster. Mexicans established community support. Among Mexicans there is the perception that Blacks are lazy. In high schools Mexicans would be jumped by Blacks, there would be after school fights between groups of Mexicans and Blacks. At one time riots almost broke out.

He later added,

It just makes sense. They'll think twice if there are many people [in the group]. [Laughing] There was always police at the end of the day when we got out [of school]. We [Mexican Americans] would always come out in a group. And Blacks would be sitting there, on both sides of the steps and watching us. And sometimes they would follow us and we would get into a fight. But it wasn't often. Most of the time they'd would just watch.

His comments were echoed in several interviews with young Polish participants. One of them recalled the time when he and his parents lived in the inner city Polish neighbourhood. He described the heavy police presence at the end of the day after the classes ended that was meant to prevent Polish, Hispanic, and African American youth from getting into fights.

Delayed Assimilation and Acquisitions of English Language Skills
Besides the positive effects of maintaining strong associations with other members of the same ethnic group, ethnic enclosure in leisure also brought about certain negative consequences. For instance, a significant number of immigrants mentioned that limiting one's social contacts solely or predominantly to other members of the same ethnic group delayed their assimilation to the new society and acquisition of English language skills. For instance, Anna, a 38-year-old Polish American female commented, "Because if you sink in the Polish community it is more and more difficult to learn, to get out. Then even if you go to work, but you still speak Polish with your friends ... the language is constantly behind." Another Polish American woman, 30-year-old Justyna commented on the life of her young cousin employed in sweatshop-like conditions in suburban Chicago: "She doesn't go out, she doesn't meet anybody, she's been here for three years and she knows nothing beyond her immediate neighbourhood." Similar concerns were echoed in interviews with Korean American participants.

Difficulties in Securing Employment and Hindered Advancement in the Mainstream Workplace

Korean American interviewees mentioned on several occasions that limiting one's social contacts solely to members of the Korean American community led to difficulties finding employment in the U.S. and hindered their advancement in the workplace. One of the Korean American male interviewees in his thirties attributed the fact that he had been repeatedly passed over for promotion to the fact that he did not socialize with his mainstream co-workers:

> Tae-Song: Professional Korean Americans are often passed over when it comes for promotions. They do not socialize with their mainstream co-workers, they do not spend their leisure time with them, they do not participate in social events. Thus ... they lack networking, they do not belong ... thus they are left over when it comes to advancement.
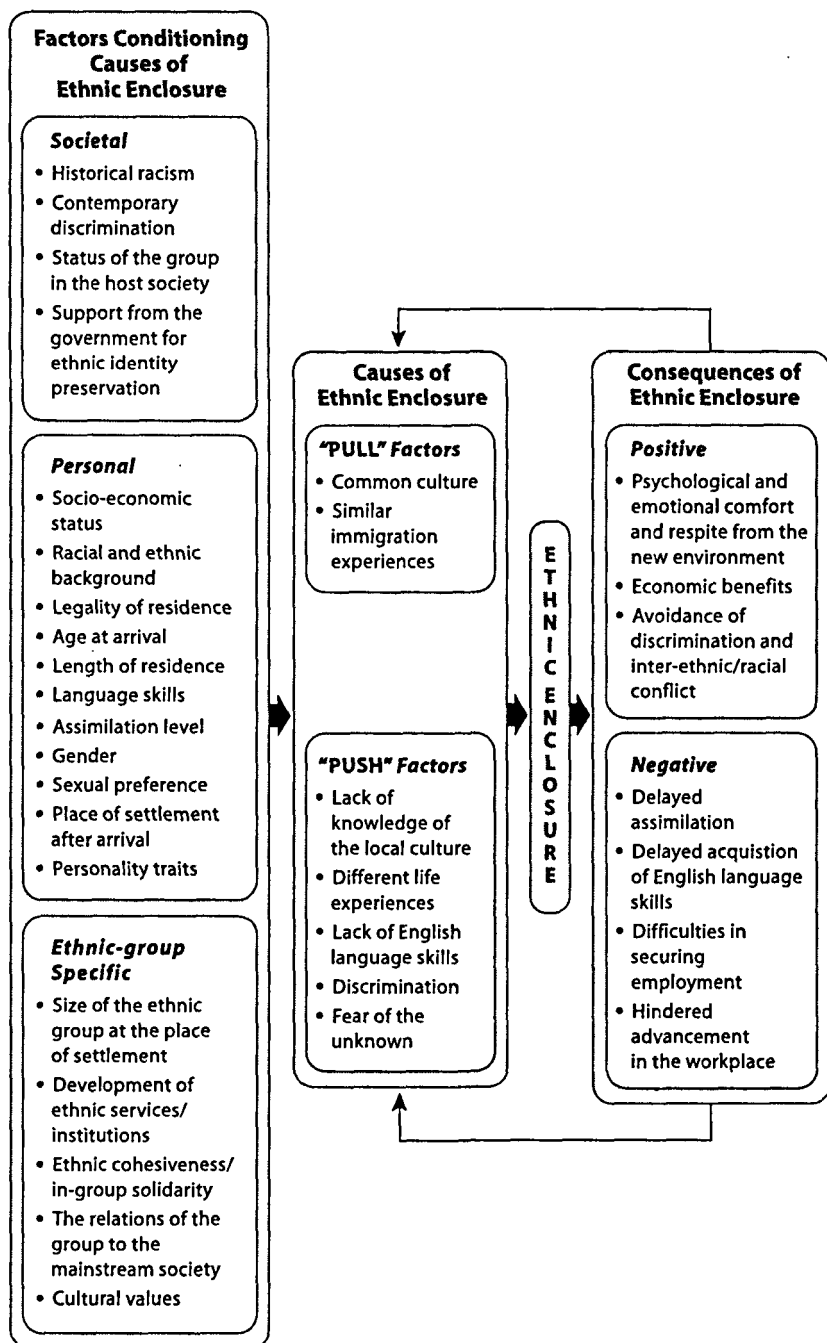
Later he also recalled the fate of his second generation lawyer friend who had graduated from an American university and secured an employment in one of the mainstream legal firms. According to the interviewee, even though he was highly successful at his job, his distinct culture made him reluctant to socialize with his mainstream co-workers. It led to his being repeatedly passed over for promotions and finally his leaving the firm. Interestingly, his career in the Korean American firm serving predominantly minority clients proved to be highly taxing as well, as the second generation Korean American did not speak the Korean language and felt ill-at-ease among native members of his own ethnic group.

Discussion

One of the objectives of this study was to determine the degree of ethnic enclosure among ethnically dissimilar immigrant populations. The study also explored the reasons for the existence of ethnic enclosure in leisure and its consequences for the lives of immigrants. The findings indicated that regardless of the ethnic or racial background, newcomers displayed a strong preference for associating with members of their own ethnic group, thus confirming the trends observed in other studies on leisure behaviour of ethnic and racial minorities (Chavez, 1991, 1993; Hutchison, 1987; Irvin et al., 1990; McDonald & McAvoy, 1993). Moreover, certain patterns of enclosure common to all three ethnic communities were identified.

Factors that made immigrants spend time in ethnically enclosed groups can be divided into those of "push" and "pull" nature (see Figure 1). "Push" factors, such as the lack of knowledge of the local culture,

Figure 1
"Ethnic Bubble" Model

Factors Conditioning Causes of Ethnic Enclosure

Societal
- Historical racism
- Contemporary discrimination
- Status of the group in the host society
- Support from the government for ethnic identity preservation

Personal
- Socio-economic status
- Racial and ethnic background
- Legality of residence
- Age at arrival
- Length of residence
- Language skills
- Assimilation level
- Gender
- Sexual preference
- Place of settlement after arrival
- Personality traits

Ethnic-group Specific
- Size of the ethnic group at the place of settlement
- Development of ethnic services/ institutions
- Ethnic cohesiveness/ in-group solidarity
- The relations of the group to the mainstream society
- Cultural values

Causes of Ethnic Enclosure

"PULL" Factors
- Common culture
- Similar immigration experiences

"PUSH" Factors
- Lack of knowledge of the local culture
- Different life experiences
- Lack of English language skills
- Discrimination
- Fear of the unknown

ETHNIC ENCLOSURE

Consequences of Ethnic Enclosure

Positive
- Psychological and emotional comfort and respite from the new environment
- Economic benefits
- Avoidance of discrimination and inter-ethnic/racial conflict

Negative
- Delayed assimilation
- Delayed acquistion of English language skills
- Difficulties in securing employment
- Hindered advancement in the workplace

different life experiences, lack of English language skills, discrimination, and fear of unknown surroundings made immigrants more likely to spend their free time with other members of their own group. The existence of these factors can be attributed to overt rejection of immigrants by the mainstream society as well as to the immigrants' cultural distinctiveness and to the "absence of assimilation" (Breton, Isajiw, Kalbach, & Reitz, 1990). It was not only that the mainstream society "pushed away" the newcomers, but also the newcomers acknowledged and adapted to their distinctiveness and, in some cases, rejected efforts made by members of the mainstream to help them integrate better with the broader society. These findings lend support to results of previous research that found that exclusion, discrimination, and lack of comfort made ethnic and racial minority members separate themselves from members of the White mainstream and recreate in ethnically homogenous groups (Blahna & Black, 1993; Johnson et al., 1998; McDonald & McAvoy, 1997). Similarly as in other studies on the topic, enclosure was also caused by "pull" factors that made immigrants drawn to their own ethnic group. They included commonality of culture and similar immigration-related experiences. Such factors have also been previously identified in studies by Carr and Williams (1993), Stodolska and Livengood (2006), Li and Stodolska (2006), and Portes and Zhou (1992, 1993).

Interestingly, ethnic enclosure in leisure was found to be prevalent not only among less assimilated newcomers residing in inner-city ethnic enclaves, but also among people farther along the assimilation continuum, residing in middle-class, suburban communities. Well-established immigrants in this study spoke the English language, they predominantly worked for mainstream employers and did maintain a certain degree of contacts with mainstream Americans and members of other ethnic groups. They still showed a preference, however, for having other members of their minority group as their primary leisure companions. We may speculate that ethnic enclosure among the well-established immigrants was more a matter of personal choice rather than the necessity. Thus, the "pull" factors were causing ethnic enclosure even in the absence of, or given a decreased intensity of, "push" factors. While the lack of language ability, discrimination, and fear of the unknown (i.e., the "push" factors) prevented less assimilated immigrants from broadening their social networks, for their more assimilated counterparts ethnic enclosure was more a matter of cultural preference and a comfort level. Thus, one can postulate that while for recent immigrants both "push" and "pull" factors are important determinants of enclosure, with the increased length

of stay in the host country and with the higher adaptation levels, some of the "push" factors may relatively quickly decrease in intensity. However, it may take significantly longer, even up to several generations, for the "pull" factors to lose their relevance. This argument, however, needs to be considered with caution as it dismisses the importance of societal factors conditioning ethnic enclosure and does not take into account the discrimination some minority groups face even after several generations in America.

In order to effectively address the factors that condition ethnic enclosure by mediating the role of "push" and "pull" factors, I classified them into societal, personal, and ethnic-group specific (Figure 1). First, *societal issues* can have a significant effect on the relative importance of "push" and "pull" factors that are responsible for enclosure. Historical racism, discrimination, neglect, and unequal status of some minority groups in American society have been well-documented in the fields of sociology, anthropology, law, political science, and ethnic studies alike (e.g., Bell, 1993; Blauner, 1989; Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2003; Massey & Denton, 1993; Yosso, 2005). As some authors have argued (Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2003; Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay & Hough, 1976), racism still plays a role in American society. Although in a changed form during the post-Civil Rights era, discrimination in the United States has not disappeared, but rather has been moved underground. According to Bonilla-Silva (2003), "Contemporary racial inequality is reproduced through "new racism" practices that are subtle, institutional, and apparently nonracial" (p. 3). They cause minorities to continually lag behind Whites in all aspects of life, make them more likely to be poor, receive inferior education, impolite treatment in public establishments, pay more for goods, and be a target of racial profiling by the police and the court system. Bonilla-Silva explained this "apparent contradiction between their ['Whites'] professed color blindness and United States' color-coded inequality" (p. 2) with the new racial ideology he called "color blind racism." The "new," "color-blind" racists avoid racially charged terminology and espouse race-neutral concepts. They have "developed powerful explanations that exculpate them from any responsibility for the status of people of color [....] Whites rationalize minorities' contemporary status as the product of market dynamics, naturally occurring phenomenon, and blacks' imputed cultural limitations" (p. 2). As findings of previous studies have indicated, members of some, especially racially distinct groups, may experience such discrimination far more strongly than White minorities who do not have a history of subjugated position in the U.S.

or Canada (Stodolska & Jackson, 1998). Thus, it is likely that "push" factors in the form of discrimination are more responsible for ethnic enclosure among Mexican Americans and African Americans, than among members of White ethnic groups, such as Polish Americans, for whom cultural similarity and other "pull" factors may play a more prominent role.

Overt discrimination of individual members of minority groups may be only one of the indicators of the general status in the society held by the group as a whole. While some ethnic minorities may enjoy relatively high status, manifested through its member holding prominent positions and prestigious occupations, others may continue to occupy lower echelons of the racial/ethnic hierarchy for generations (Porter, 1965). In such a scenario, it may seem beneficial to some minority members to associate themselves with those who are seen as being in the position of power, even to the extent of inventing their own ethnic pedigree and joining ethnic associations they would otherwise steer clear of. On the other hand, it may also be advantageous to some people who are members of lower-status groups to stay close to others of the same heritage, as in-group cohesiveness may provide them with mobility ladders that would be unavailable in the broader society (Portes & Zhou, 1992, 1993).

Differences in how the society at large and the government structures respond to the issue of adaptation of minority groups are also likely to affect the degree to which minorities may feel entitled to assert their ethnic distinctiveness versus being encouraged to assimilate values of the mainstream society. While at some points in time and in some countries ethnic minority groups were faced with Anglo-conformity pressures (Canada prior to the introduction of multicultural policies), in others they were encouraged to give up their ethnic distinctiveness for the sake of creation of national identity (the melting pot policy of the United States or the republican model in France) (Gordon, 1964). In the third scenario, ethnic distinctiveness was actively supported and promoted by the official structures of the host country (post-1971 Canadian policy of multiculturalism) (Berry, 1984; Bissoondath, 2002; Breton, 1986; Esses & Gardner, 1996; Pal, 1995; Reitz & Breton, 1994; Satzewich, 1992). Such conformity pressures, as opposed to the encouragement to retain ethnic traits, may play a significant role in the degree to which minority members feel free to create ethnic enclaves or, conversely, are obligated to attempt to accelerate their immersion into the mainstream society. It is not to say, however, that government or societal pro-assimilationist pressures will always result in members of minority groups giving up their

ethnic traits. The French-Muslim riots of 2005 and Chicano movement of the 1960s and 1970s are good examples of minorities resisting the assimilationist model, asserting their ethnic distinctiveness, and fighting to create a cultural space for themselves (Gutierrez, 1995; Meier & Ribera, 1994; Rosales & Rosales, 1997). Unequal treatment, overt discrimination, denial of rights, religious intolerance, socio-economic deprivation, and growing numbers that allow for obtaining some political leverage are likely to fuel such opposite reactions.

The broader societal-level factors that condition the "push" and "pull" factors are likely to intersect with *personal variables* such as one's socio-economic status, race or ethnic origin, gender, legality of residence, age at arrival, length of stay in the host country, language skills, assimilation level, gender, sexual preference, place of settlement after arrival, or even certain personality traits (Figure 1). As Gloria Anzaldúa (1999) in her acclaimed book "Borderlands/La frontera" argued, the borderlands are present whenever people of different races, classes, or cultures occupy the same territory. Referring to Mexican migrants, she asserted that when trying to negotiate their place in the broader society migrants are full of contradictions and ambiguities similar to the border region where they reside. We may argue that migrants of all ethnicities are in the constant process of negotiation of their place in reference to their host society, their ethnic group, and the home country. Although they share certain important traits, each one of them is a distinct entity characterized by a unique combination of these personal-level characteristics. Thus, it is likely that the relative importance of "push" versus "pull" factors may vary not only *between* ethnic or racial groups, but also *within* minority communities divided along the lines of social class, color, gender, or other traits.

As previous studies have shown (Floyd et al., 1994; Juniu, 2000; Shinew et al., 1995; Woodard, 1988), socio-economic status may be responsible for the socialization patterns, for treatment by the broader society and by the respective ethnic/racial group, and for the variations in recreation patterns within minority populations. It also has been well-established that differences in the relative position of minority members may be determined by their racial or ethnic background, the degree of "ethnic distinctiveness," or even by their skin tone, with darker-skinned African Americans and Hispanics occupying lower tier positions than members of the same ethnic group with lighter skin colors (Bonilla-Silva, 2002; Shinew et al., 2006; Waters, 1992). As some have postulated, not only the socio-economic position and skin color, but also the

legality of residence in the host country may constitute a major factor responsible for class stratification in the 21st century (Hiemstra, 2005). American or Canadian citizens and permanent residents, due to the rights and privileges they enjoy, are likely to occupy the upper echelons of the society, while the illegal immigrants of various ethnic origins will place toward the bottom of the social hierarchy. Thus, it is likely that "push" factors, such as discrimination, may be far more pronounced among temporary, blue collar, dark skinned, and undocumented Mexican American workers, than among members of the same ethnic group who are of middle or upper class, of a lighter skin color, and who are citizens or permanent residents of this country.

Similarly, it is likely that those who immigrated as children or young teenagers, have resided in the host country longer, have better English language skills, and present higher assimilation levels will experience "push" factors, such as lack of knowledge of the local culture, fear of the unknown, and even discrimination, with a decreased intensity. The results of this study showed that people who arrived to the U.S. as children or young teenagers were less likely to be ethnically enclosed than those who settled in this country as adults. Interestingly, as some studies have demonstrated, gender may be tightly related to the speed and completeness of assimilation and the degree of comfort in the host society as well. The literature on Asian immigrants suggests that women tend to assimilate faster and adapt to the host culture with more ease than their male counterparts (Jo, 1999; Tang & Dijon, 1999). On the other hand, women may experience more stresses related to raising children in an alien environment and to perceived sole responsibility for the cohesiveness and successful adaptation of their families (Rublee & Shaw, 1991; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004; Waters, 2002). One's sexual preference may add another dimension to this equation, with gays and lesbians experiencing double marginality status and having to assert their own space within their respective ethnic communities and the mainstream society (Anzaldúa, 1999).

The degree of ethnic enclosure may also depend on the place where the immigrants settle after their arrival. In large metropolitan centres with well-established ethnic populations, immigrants could rely on other members of their ethnic group in all stages of their adaptation process. Composition of social networks might be different among immigrants who settle in small towns and in rural communities, where the newcomers lack the support of their ethnic community and, to a certain degree, are more compelled to establish contacts with the members of the Amer-

ican mainstream. It has to be noted, however, that this study focused on urban residents only and thus the commentary regarding factors affecting ethnic enclosure in rural versus urban populations needs to be treated with caution. Studies on this topic would constitute an interesting future area of inquiry. The results of this research project, however, provide evidence of immigrants' migration to the suburban areas of large metropolitan centres and of re-creation of ethnic enclaves in formerly "White" communities (Paral, 2000). Both the findings of this study and the existing literature on the topic (Erdmans, 1998; Paral) suggest that while previous immigrants used traditional, inner-city ethnic enclaves as gateways to America, the new immigrants arriving to the U.S. increasingly use suburban communities as the first stops in their immigration journey. Many of these new immigrants rely on the social networks of their friends and family members who already reside in the suburbs to find them a place to live, a job, and provide support in the immediate period after arrival (Paral, 2000). This trend is accelerated by the increasing numbers of educated professionals from countries such as Korea, India, Pakistan, or Poland who tend to avoid traditional ethnic enclaves altogether and show a preference for settling in the middle class suburban communities immediately after arrival. As Pollard and O'Hare (1999) indicated, the minority share of suburban populations in the U.S. increased from 13% in 1980 to 22% in 1998. In 1998, 31% of Blacks, 43% of Hispanics, and 53% of Asians lived in the suburbs. This trend goes hand in hand with the emergence of ethnic leisure services, such as restaurants, clubs, video-rental centres, and tourist agencies provided by members of the minority groups. While these services previously used to be located solely in the central-city ethnic enclaves, they are now increasingly a part of the landscape of the suburban neighbourhoods.

Besides societal and personal issues conditioning the "push" and "pull" factors leading to ethnic enclosure, there are certain *ethnic group-specific variables* that may affect the process (Figure 1). First, as has already been mentioned, the existence of a large ethnic group in the place of settlement may offer opportunities for immigrants to satisfy their economic, social, and cultural needs by relying on the ethnic community alone. Almost self-sustaining Little Italies, Chinatowns, Polish, Cuban, Haitian, and Mexican neighbourhoods have been a part of the landscape of cities such as Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Toronto, or Montreal for decades. The existence of such ethnic communities is a prerequisite for the development of ethnic schools, churches, grocery stores, travel agencies, restaurants, and sports clubs that constitute hubs

of social and cultural life among immigrants, are vital to the preservation of their ethnic identity, and can contribute to promoting ethnic enclosure (Bolla, Dawson, & Karlis, 1991; Gems, 1992; Mosely, 1997; Pooley, 1976; Wilcox, 1994). Members of all three ethnic groups interviewed in this study have indicated the important role played by ethnic churches, organizations, and services such as food stores in the preservation of their heritage. In a large urban centre such as Chicago, Mexican American, Korean American, and Polish American communities have all reached the critical mass necessary for sustaining such ethnic hubs that allow for enclosure among individuals who desire or are forced to retain strong links to their ethnic communities.

Ethnic cohesiveness or in-group solidarity are also likely to play a role in determining the degree to which immigrants will feel emotionally attached to their group and to which they seek its support in promoting their socio-economic interests. It has been documented, for instance, that there are significant factions in the Polish diaspora in the U.S. and Canada that divide this ethnic group and weaken its political, social, and economic power (Erdmans, 1998). Claims that "Jewish immigration is much better organized ," that "Jews help each other more," and that "Poles would be much better off in Canada if they were as organized as Ukrainians" have often surfaced in memoirs of Polish immigrants (Heydenkorn, 1990). The results of this particular study, on the other hand, are a clear testimony to the fact that ethnic cohesiveness among Korean immigrants brought them significant economic benefits such as providing access to easy credit and supporting economic transactions. Korean American interviewees mentioned that they were able to rely on their ethnic enclave to further their economic interests far more often that Polish American or Mexican American participants. Strong ties among this particular ethnic group have been well-documented in the previous literature on the topic (Jo, 1999; Light & Bonacich, 1988; Min, 2000).

One should also not discount the role of the relations of an ethnic group as a whole to the host society and to the cultural values that govern associations with out-group members. For instance, there is a number of ethnic groups in Canada, the U.S., and in Western, Southern, and Eastern Europe that had gone through or are still undergoing periods of political activism, asserting their ethnic distinctiveness and demanding political, cultural, and economic sovereignty. They involve stressing in-group loyalty among its members and, at the same time, emphasizing the distinctiveness from the out-group (or the oppressing, colonial power) (Barth, 1969). Actions toward preservation, revival, or even invention of

ethnic customs, traditions, language, and leisure and sport patterns have often accompanied such periods of ethnic revitalization (Sugden & Bairner, 1992). Black Power and Brown Power movements of the 1960s and 1970s in the U.S., Quebec separation movements in Canada, and Gaelic movements in Northern Ireland are good examples of the phenomenon (Meier & Ribera, 1994; Rosales & Rosales, 1997; Sugden & Bairner; Young, 1997).

At the same time, cultural norms of certain ethnic groups may disapprove of intermarriage and eschew people who willingly associate with members of the out-group. One does not have to look as far as Amish colonies in the United States to find examples of ethnic minority groups actively promoting ethnic enclosure among their members (Egenes, 2000). Korean Americans interviewed in this study who removed their children from integrated schools to prevent their "Americanization" or those who forbade their teenage children from dating Whites or African Americans (Stodolska & Yi, 2003) are good illustrations of this trend. Restrictions placed by Black peer groups on African Americans who willingly associate with Whites in their leisure can serve as another example (Woodard, 1988). Although Mexican American interviewees in this study did not provide any information regarding pressures from their ethnic community to limit contacts with out-group members, Polish American interviewees clearly indicated that they have never been placed in situations when they felt they were sacrificing loyalty to their group by associating with people of non-Polish descent.

As the findings of this study revealed, ethnic enclosure in leisure had some negative consequences for the immigrant populations (Figure 1). It slowed down their assimilation process, hindered acquisition of English language skills, and made immigrants less likely to succeed in integrated, mainstream workplaces. While Korean American interviewees were more likely to stress the negative outcomes of their lack of free-time associations with mainstream Americans, Mexican Americans tended to focus more on the positive aspects of the phenomenon—being close to their families, community feeling, and preservation of traditional culture. Consequences of ethnic enclosure in leisure identified in this study are in line with some of the theories of ethnic group relations. The findings related to positive effect of enclosure in leisure are consistent with Portes and Jensen's (1992) and Portes and Zhou's (1992) assertion that social contacts with other members of the ethnic group provide immigrants with feelings of comfort, allow them to recuperate from their stressful lives, and offer some tangible economic benefits. As predicted

by Portes and Bach's (1985) and by Wilson and Portes' (1980) enclave economy hypothesis, immigrants interviewed in this study used their leisure contacts with other members of their group to further their business deals, to obtain credit, and to secure employment within the confines of their ethnic community. On the other hand, as stressed by the interviewed Korean Americans, and consistently with the opposing theory by Wiley (1967), limiting their contacts solely or predominantly to people of their own ethnic background hindered immigrants' socio-economic advancement. It made them unaware of the mainstream job opportunities, caused them to be passed over for promotions, and slowed down acquisition of English language skills.

It has to be noted that the "ethnic bubble" model presented in Figure 1 includes feedback loops that show a reverse impact positive and negative consequences of ethnic enclosure can have on the "push" and "pull" factors leading to enclosure in the first place. Psychological and emotional comfort provided by the ethnic group may constitute an additional motivation (i.e., the "pull" factor) for immigrants to stay connected to their ethnic community. As Wiley (1967) would argue, it may even create a difficulty to overcome dependency on an ethnic group that will constitute a "mobility trap" for the newcomers. After all, it is easier and more comfortable to stay entrenched in the familiar environment of the ethnic ghetto than to try to make it in the unfamiliar and sometimes frightening world of the American or Canadian mainstream. Lack of English language fluency, partly caused by the lack of contact with people from beyond the ethnic group, and the delayed assimilation will likely feed right back into the "push" factors that led to the enclosure in the first place. Lack of success in securing mainstream employment or advancement in the mainstream workplace, caused by the lack of English fluency, insufficient experience on the mainstream job market, or lack of social networks beyond the confines of the ethnic community, are likely to secure immigrants in their beliefs that they "won't be able to make it on the outside," and so they should not even try. Insufficient opportunities for positive contacts with the outside world will fuel the perceptions of discrimination from the mainstream. It is also quite likely that such lack of contacts will, indeed, increase the levels of discrimination minorities experience, as mainstream Americans or Canadians will develop or validate their negative beliefs about newcomers who fail to assimilate, learn the English language, and appreciate the cultural heritage of their new, adopted country. Thus, some of the enclosed immigrants are bound to remain in the insulated "ethnic bubble," unaware of the opportunities that the main-

stream society has to offer, unable to accurately evaluate risks and benefits of connecting with the mainstream world, and dependant on the microcosm of a society created by their ethnic enclave.

Conclusions

The findings of this study allow to fill a gap in the ethnic leisure literature by investigating leisure-time associations of immigrants. While the existing studies provided evidence of ethnic enclosure in leisure, this study explored this concept in-depth, isolated reasons for the existence of ethnic enclosure, and identified its possible consequences on other aspects of immigrants' lives. The findings of this study also provided a useful contribution to the ethnic studies literature focusing on social networks of minority members. They showed the important role free-time associations play in the lives of immigrants and the potential effect they may have on their socio-economic advancement. The study has also showed the reciprocal relationships between factors affecting ethnic enclosure and its outcomes. As it has been noted, not only the individual level factors motivate people to seek refuge within their ethnic communities, but also societal factors and the influence of their own ethnic communities are responsible for making immigrants restrict their contacts with the mainstream society. It is also important to note that societal factors, such as discrimination, may lead to immigrants' isolating themselves within the ethnic community, and thus reduce the level of contact mainstream individuals have with the newcomers. Such isolation may further the misconceptions and stereotypes on both sides and lead to increased levels of both real and perceived discrimination against ethnic and racial minority members (for an in-depth discussion of contact theory see Allport, 1958 and Pettigrew, 1998). Similarly, lack of language fluency can be one of the causes of ethnic enclosure, but concurrently the lack of associations with out-group members may prevent minorities from acquiring language skills. Thus, ethnic enclosure can act as a mechanism that will keep immigrants restricted to their ethnic bubble and make them both enjoy the benefits and pay the costs of such a way of life.

Although this study had provided some interesting results, it also had several important limitations. First, by focusing on members of three ethnic communities, significant heterogeneity was introduced into the sample population, not only in terms of its ethnic background, but also socio-economic status and assimilation level. Second, assimilation level of participants was not directly measured, but simply inferred based on their length of stay in the host country. Lastly, while Korean American and

Polish American interviewees represented a spectrum of occupations, a significant portion of Mexican American participants was of working-class background, which might have introduced a certain bias to the sample.

While this study focused on ethnic communities in large metropolitan centres, we may speculate that social networks of immigrants and patterns of their ethnic enclosure in leisure may show significant variations in rural communities that lack significant numbers of newcomers. Since the trend of minorities moving to non-traditionally immigrant states and settling in small towns has been detected in the recent, 2000 U.S. Census, it would be worthwhile in the future research to focus on free-time associations of people residing outside of the large metropolitan centres. Moreover, this study focused on first generation immigrants only and thus social networks of ethnic minority members and their leisure patterns in subsequent generations need to be examined.

As the results of this study showed, it would be difficult to argue that ethnic enclosure is a totally undesirable phenomenon and, as such, should be completely eliminated. After all, immigrants do derive significant benefits from associating predominantly with members of their own ethnic group, including the psychological comfort and retention of certain ethnic traits. What on would consider more desirable, however, is for immigrants not to be restricted or forced to maintain contacts with members of their own group only, but to be able to enjoy the benefits of both worlds—i.e., to be able to successfully function within the mainstream environment, but also to maintain the desired level of contact with their own ethnic group. For this to happen, however, the role of "push" factors such as discrimination, lack of knowledge of the mainstream culture, fear of the unknown, or lack of language skills would have to be reduced. While some of these factors, such as discrimination, would have to be addressed by members of the mainstream society, others such as fear of the unknown, lack of familiarity with the mainstream culture, or language skills could be tackled by joint efforts of the mainstream society, ethnic organizations, and immigrants themselves.

Acknowledgments

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