Segmented Assimilation, Local Context and Determinants of Drug Violence in Miami and San Diego: Does Ethnicity and Immigration Matter?[1]

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Does the ethnic and immigrant composition of a community and existence of immigrant enclaves or barrios influence community level drug violence? This study explores the relationship between these and other factors in Miami and San Diego census tracts. We employ data about the distribution of Cubans, Central Americans, Haitians, Mexicans and Southeast Asians, controlling for social and economic influences of drug versus non-drug violence. We also analyze the impact of various waves of immigration and immigrant communities to understand the circumstances under which drug violence occurs or is limited at the census tract level. The findings lend some support to the positive and negative aspects of Portes and Rumbaut's (2001) segmented assimilation hypothesis in Miami and San Diego neighborhoods. The strength of this conclusion varies and is contingent upon ethnic composition, new versus old immigration, and the all-encompassing effects of economic deprivation

In recent years, drug violence has been a source of anxiety in many communities across urban America (Baumer *et al.*, 1998; Blumstein, 1995). This anxiety centers on the fact that drug-related homicide reached record levels in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and many associated the rise in drug

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violence with ethnic minorities and immigrants (Blumstein, 1995; Inciardi, 1992; Lockwood, Pottieger and Inciardi, 1995; Lutton, 1996). However, although much of the nation experienced record high levels of homicide at a time when continuing immigration from Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia reshaped urban communities, rates of homicide and drug violence varied tremendously across the nation's major cities, suggesting that broad generalizations must be tempered by an understanding of local context. As but one example, throughout the 1985–1995 time frame, the homicide rate in Miami was usually one of the highest in the country, and the average drug homicide rate was four times as great as that in San Diego, even though both places served as leading entry points for foreign-born newcomers (Martinez, 2002).

Despite the national attention given to this issue, there is a large gap in the literature concerning the ethnic/immigrant influence on community violence and the determinants of drug violence at the neighborhood level. Few studies have examined ethnic/immigrant variation in drug homicides (*see* Jackall, 1997), and those that have typically focus on black versus white comparisons (Ousey and Augustine, 2001). More generally, researchers have neglected to study drug homicides at the community level or across all communities in a city (for exceptions, *see* Cohen *et al.*, 1998; Goldstein *et al.*, 1997). While some focus on intercity variation at the macro level across the United States or conduct ethnographic studies in specific neighborhoods, we are not aware of community level studies that directly examine the factors shaping drug homicides or that compare areas with drug violence to those without them. Moreover, although a tremendous amount of speculation has associated high drug violence rates throughout the "crack cocaine" epidemic with ethnic minority communities (Blumstein, 1995), with some exceptions this connection has not been systematically tested in prior research (*see* Ousey and Augustine, 2001).

Because the impact of ethnicity and immigration has been central to the debate over drug-related crime, we extend the existing literature by incorporating segmented assimilation perspectives in order to better understand the extent to which ethnic minority and immigrant neighborhoods contribute to drug violence. Our analysis overcomes the limitations of previous neighborhood-level studies in several ways. First, we examine a form of lethal violence that has been overlooked by researchers in previous community level studies: drug-related homicide as a proxy for drug violence/markets. Second, we assess a host of economic and instability factors that have been used in explaining homicide and other types of violence. Third,

we test the popular notion that drug violence was concentrated in neighborhoods with large numbers of ethnic minorities and immigrants (*i.e.*, Southeast Asians, Latinos, Haitians and African Americans) in the years of the crack-cocaine epidemic. Finally, drawing on recent theoretical models of segmented assimilation, we examine and compare neighborhood contextual factors that explain the presence of drug violence in two major multiethnic cities with distinct immigration settlement histories and structural contexts – Miami and San Diego.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Earlier in the last century, Thomas and Znaniecki (1918–1920) and Edith Abbott (1936:72–169) recognized the significant growth of Chicago immigrant neighborhoods (or enclaves) such as the Polish-American community in the St. Stanislaus district, the Bohemian community of Pilsen, and the Halsted Street Lithuanian community, among others. These areas were identified by their less desirable characteristics (closeness to industrial areas, proliferation of tenement housing, higher levels of crime, etc.) relative to mainstream society and by the characteristics of residents or concentration of immigrants who are typically poorer and have access to fewer resources than the native born (Logan, Alba and Zhang, 2002). By implication, the communities where immigrants resided – even temporarily – were not comprised of upwardly mobile groups and had fewer economic resources than places where older, more established Americans lived. In fact, when immigrants moved up in economic status, they often moved out of these neighborhoods located in the "zone in transition," so named because of the disorganizing social processes at work there (Shaw and McKay, 1969). Because they encountered deleterious social conditions relative to native-born groups, crime flourished in many communities with a large presence of immigrants (and southern black migrants).

The nature of immigration and ethnic neighborhoods has changed since the seminal work of the founders of the Chicago School of Sociology studied urban crime in immigrant European and black communities. In the past, European immigrants lived and worked close to downtown neighborhoods and resided in neighborhoods with co-ethnics. Many adapted to living in the United States and gradually discarded "Old World" behavior, eventually relocating to areas further away from the original center-city settlement points. Later generations continued the movement away from the language and identities of their predecessors and integrated steadily into mainstream society.

Now, contemporary Asian, Caribbean, Mexican and Central American newcomers are not as easily absorbed into society as were previous European immigrants. The loss of blue collar/manufacturing jobs associated with deindustrialization (Wilson, 1987) has also served to increase the employment and assimilation difficulties for immigrants, who often possess low job-skill levels and move into communities where the immigrant workforce services a low-paying work sector. As a result, some ethnic/immigrant groups now work and reside in places such as the "Little Havana" community of Miami, where a vibrant "immigrant enclave" exists and accommodates residents in the adjacent Central American (Nicaraguan) neighborhood known as the "Latin Quarter." Others live in "Little Haiti," a neighborhood adjacent to an older African-American community on the northern edge of town. Still others, as in the case of San Diego's Mexican settlers and Vietnamese refugees, moved into impoverished areas like "Barrio Logan" or locales settled by older ethnic minorities, including African Americans, in the southeast area of the city. In the past, destinations such as these served as starting points, as immigrants moved out of the "zone in transition" to the suburbs in successive waves (Shaw and McKay, 1969), but for many new immigrants these communities are preferred places of permanent residence grounded in symbols of ethnic identity.

According to the model of segmented assimilation, "social capital,"[2] not simply residence in a "barrio" or "zone in transition" (Shaw and McKay, 1969) has become the key variable in explaining the achievements or difficulties faced by immigrant groups, such as Cubans in Little Havana (Portes and Zhou, 1993). In this instance the co-ethnic community provides a dense network of social ties that serves as a resource for immigrant families and allows them to confront obstacles to successful adaptation to their new environment without fully assimilating into mainstream society. This network increases immigrant economic and educational opportunities and reinforces notions of traditional families, thus promoting intact units and preserving parental authority norms. In tightly knit immigrant communities with relatively limited financial means, the functions of social capital are vital in overcoming barriers to success, while simultaneously thwarting family disruption and other triggers of poverty.

So although immigrant enclaves have been portrayed as less desirable places to live, populated by recent arrivals with few economic resources or

[2]Social capital is defined as "the ability to gain access to resources by virtue of membership in social networks and social structure" (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001:353, n.47).

opportunities, we make a distinction between neighborhoods with a well-developed "enclave economy" and barrios without such economic institutions where dense network ties may be less helpful. Communities of Southeast Asians (Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians) in San Diego and Cubans in Miami might be higher in the kinds of social capital that assist in adapting to a new environment, as well as serving as a buffer to social forces associated with crime (*e.g.*, residential instability), than other immigrant enclaves (*e.g.*, Mexican barrios in San Diego or Haitian communities in Miami). This type of hypothesis is an open empirical question and one that the current study begins to address.

In contrast to the positive aspects of segmented assimilation, Portes and Rumbaut (2001:59) describe the "challenges confronting immigrant children in American schools and neighborhoods in a social context promoting dropping out of school, joining youth gangs, or participating in the drug subculture." This alternative path has been labeled downward assimilation because socialization into American society for some immigrants does not encourage a path toward upward mobility, but instead results in the emergence of an adversarial outlook and adopting deviant lifestyles in urban communities linked to the disappearance of well-paying blue collar jobs previously available to newcomers. Many immigrants settle in areas in or around urban ghettoes and assume the tough aggressive stances common when negotiating the streets (Anderson, 1999). The implication is that the "Americanization" experience of recent arrivals is at the hands of similarly situated African Americans or Latinos in their neighborhoods, schools, or places of work.

Thus, scholars have long argued that crime – especially drug violence – is one prominent characteristic of these communities. Residents are socialized by co-ethnics on how to navigate everyday life at the "bottom" of society, where they confront similar circumstances and barriers as those affecting native-born minorities (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001): extreme poverty, dilapidated housing conditions, drug markets and corresponding violence (Zimring and Hawkins, 1997). Therefore, conditions in immigrant communities and "ghetto poor" areas have much in common. Certainly some groups such as Haitians (and African Americans) in Miami and Mexicans in San Diego experience segregation, a history of discrimination, urban isolation, poverty, and high crime rates while residing in communities where they rarely interact with whites or middle-class co-ethnics (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001). Thus some immigrants, and especially their children, are socialized into the "oppositional identities of native racial minorities" rather

than the "immigrant ethos" prevalent in immigrant families (Portes and Zhou, 1993). We would expect these areas to have higher levels of drug homicides than other areas.

This study is the first to bring together two important substantive areas (segmented assimilation and drug-related crime) that have not been combined before, even though these are both "cutting edge topics" in the respective areas of immigration studies and criminology. While the issue of segmented assimilation has been a core focus of recent immigration scholarship, its linkage to homicide rates and illicit drug market activity is a relatively new phenomenon that criminologists are just beginning to understand (Ousey and Augustine, 2001). Interest in these issues developed in response to increases in the types of homicide that most concern the public: youth homicides and gang and drug-related killings, all with presumed connections to the crack-cocaine epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s. Concerns about the assimilation into mainstream society, or lack thereof, of recent immigrants also inflamed the public's imagination during this time period. The emergence of drug violence as a major social problem plaguing inner-city neighborhoods paralleled the rise of the latest wave of immigration in the public imagination, a connection that has been described both in the popular literature and recent research (*see* Martinez, 2002, for more on illicit drug activity and Latinos).

For example, Juan Gonzalez (2000:xii) astutely points out how the American public during this period, ". . . saw images of Mexican street gangs in Los Angeles and Phoenix, Puerto Rican unmarried mothers on welfare in New York and Boston, Columbian drug dealers in Miami, or illegal Central American laborers in Houston and San Francisco." Furthermore, recent work on the construction of "illegal alien" images in the San Diego area provides examples of linkages between immigrant violence and drug markets. Nevins (2002:76) writes how throughout the 1980s, "U.S. drug seizures in the San Diego area skyrocketed. Media efforts to highlight the trend only added to the image of a border 'out of control' and to anti-immigrant sentiment as migrant workers from Mexico became increasingly associated with drug trafficking." In particular, he suggests that the media perpetuated images of widespread illicit drug activity among the local immigrant Latino community.

Finally, Portes and Rumbaut (2001:204–205) reported in a series of surveys that immigrant children and their parents in Miami and San Diego were routinely exposed to gangs, violent fights, and drugs in school. Overall, many were concerned with the disruptive and dangerous educational con-

ditions, but those concerns also varied by ethnic origin, type of disruption, and location. Southeast Asians were more likely to report exposure to unsafe conditions but less likely to report drugs at San Diego schools than Cuban students in Miami. Although not linked to drug use, many Latino students in Miami reported some type of contact with the drug trade.

Immigrant youth exposure to drug violence reflects the fact that drug dealing is the central component of an urban illegitimate opportunity structure, and so we should expect newly arrived immigrants to move into those markets as the primary viable means to upward mobility. Consequently, we should anticipate that drug violence, as measured by drug homicide, should proliferate in poor, immigrant communities. However, there are competing incentives to drug market participation, as we discuss in the following section.

Drug Homicide Incentives and Disincentives in the Context of Immigration

The Conventional Wisdom. Elliott Currie (1993) and a host of other writers (Wilson, 1987; Gans, 1992) discuss why recent immigrants might be expected to experience drug violence, given that they tend to settle in or near ethnic minority neighborhoods where the illicit drug economy has thrived for decades and has become even more entrenched as a result of recent developments (*i.e.*, deindustrialization and the advent of crack cocaine). The underground economy built around the crack markets that appeared in urban centers in the late 1980s wreaked havoc on minority neighborhoods; at the same time these markets provided a means of economic advancement for workers in the post-industrial service economy (Anderson, 1999; Blumstein, 1995).

Because the absence of jobs is a feature of pervasive economic deprivation, we should expect continuing connections between extreme poverty, high joblessness, family problems, and an illicit drug industry that lead to high rates of violent crime in specific neighborhoods. The absence of legitimate work shapes the drug market, and this feature is evident in some research on contemporary immigrant communities. In this case, local institutions (*e.g.*, schools, churches, and community groups) that might have thwarted the negative influences of the streets were weakened by social disorganization (*e.g.*, immigration influxes) and poverty.

We should also expect that ethnic groups who move into American cities and are exposed to everyday life in center cities would become vul-

nerable to drugs, street life and socialization to urban life. Currie (1993:99) notes: "As immigrants become more American, in short, they become more likely to abuse drugs." The implication is the longer immigrants were exposed to city life the more acculturated they became and thus the more they used drugs, engaged in the illicit drug industry and remained mired in neighborhoods with few opportunities for advancement.

The Counter Claim. Notwithstanding the images presented in the previous section, there are good reasons to dispute the conventional wisdom on immigration and drug violence, although empirical research on the issue is virtually nonexistent at the neighborhood level. First, immigrants residing in an enclave (e.g., Cubans in Miami's Little Havana) might have economic opportunities that reduce the attractiveness of the drug trade, and they may therefore experience less drug-related violence than native groups with fewer legitimate opportunities. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) contend that for some newcomers the strength of social capital buffers them from the negative consequences (which could include drugs and drug violence) of living in poor urban areas.

This recent research is consistent with the segmented assimilation model, which states that social capital provides a buffer to crime. Alejandro Portes and Alex Stepick (1993) highlighted the positive effects of recent immigration in stabilizing and reenergizing many of Miami's cultural and economic institutions. Rather than contributing to chaos in local communities or destabilized neighborhoods, immigrants strengthened community social control, an influence that runs counter to traditional notions of criminological theory. In this instance, the existence of enclaves facilitated social and economic stability, which may have suppressed crime, and drug crime in particular, in areas where immigrants resided. Overall, communities that display high degrees of social capital may not experience the deleterious consequences of poverty to the same extent as other ethnic minority groups.

Only a handful of studies to date have systematically examined the neighborhood context of drug markets and violence – and none have considered the effects of recent immigration. Although these studies have answered some basic questions, we advance this emerging research agenda by exploring the drug/homicide linkages among a wide array of ethnic minority communities in an attempt to determine whether the data better support the conventional wisdom or the counterclaim that we have described. Most studies have not examined drug violence within multiethnic cities, and many continue to test black versus white relationships, ignoring the

growth of Latinos and other immigrant groups. We compare and contrast neighborhoods (as measured by census tracts), providing detailed information in specific locales where racial dichotomies of black or white no longer exist.

RESEARCH SETTINGS

In this study, we focus on drug homicides in Miami and San Diego, including examining the largest and most identifiable ethnic/immigrant groups in each city at the census tract level. We analyze where homicides occur and compare these neighborhoods along a variety of social and economic dimensions, paying attention to year of entry to disentangle the influence of particular waves of immigration as well as proxies for enclave economies (*i.e.*, low-skill jobs). We predict that these two cities will be similar in many respects and recognize that Miami and San Diego share many traits beyond their Sunbelt location. We therefore expect to find similarities with regard to the nature of local drug markets, with main differences associated with Miami's greater "Latinoization" and San Diego's suburbanization. Miami is known for its vibrant enclaves, and while San Diego has more structurally disadvantaged barrios, their effect on drug crime might be mitigated by the fact that San Diego is much more suburban than is heavily urbanized Miami.

These immigrant destination points are not identical in terms of racial histories and settlement patterns. Each city is distinct and reflects the geographic and historical particularities that shaped each immigrant flow – Mexican and Vietnamese in San Diego, Cuban and Haitian in Miami – and the manner in which they were received in each respective city. Miami and San Diego are similar in that they represent places where the "new immigrant America" is most pronounced and where immigrants are most concentrated (Waldinger, 2001a:4–5). However, the unique characteristics of each city and the differences in their respective immigrant settlement patterns, including whether the federal government provided refugee benefits, highlight the ways in which urban and neighborhood context matters.

We begin with Miami, since it initially attracted a large population of African Americans who served rich tourists from the northeastern part of the United States. In many ways, Miami was a sleepy southern tourist town at least through World War II. But a large exodus from Cuba in the early 1960s, most of whom were middle class and all of whom were fleeing a communist regime, changed the dynamics of race relations. Miami had a

long history of singling out African Americans for discrimination but had little history of anti-Latina/o racism. To a large extent, this experience was influenced by federal policy. On the one hand, Cubans benefited from the largesse of the U.S. government in the form of the 1961 Cuban Refugee Program that provided funds for resettlement assistance, including monthly checks, job and educational training, among other benefits (Garcia, 1996: 22–24). On the other hand, Cubans profited from the skills and capital of the early migrants, even though later arrivals such as those on the 1980 Mariel boatlift and more recent 1995 Balsero crisis were far from well off (Waldinger and Lee, 2001:54–55).

Even though many view the Miami metropolitan area as a Cuban enclave, the city of Miami has actually evolved into an immigrant Caribbean and Central American diaspora (Navarro, 1997). When the Cuban migration temporarily slowed in the early 1970s, the Haitian stream began and eventually expanded substantially in the late 1970s, until they constituted the second largest immigrant group by the mid-1990s (Dunn, 1997). Given the disturbances in the home country – political violence and economic turmoil to name just a few – and lacking social capital, ethnic ties and support provided by the federal government to early Cuban exiles, Haitians found an unsympathetic reception. To make matters worse, Haitians landed in Miami "illegally" and they soon encountered racial discrimination and immigrant stigmatization. In contrast, Nicaraguans were far more sympathetically received in the early 1980s than were Haitians, but still came to Miami with less support and fewer resources than the initial Cuban exile wave, even though they fled a country led by communist sympathizers (Waldinger and Lee, 2001). To be sure, Cubans dominate the economic and political landscape of the city of Miami, but the growth of non-Cuban Latinos continues, and fractions of these two Latino groups are in rough parity with each other.

San Diego typically attracted native-born whites for most of its history, even though it is in an area that was once part of Mexico and is on the Mexican border. Yet it has always had a Mexican-origin population that ebbed and flowed, in part because of cyclical fluctuations in federal policy towards immigrants (Camarillo, 1979). As the Great Depression took hold and a virulent anti-Mexican attitude intensified, federal policy became hostile towards Mexican immigrants, which resulted in the deportation of native and foreign-born Mexican residents (Gutierrez, 1995). As the economy boomed in the post-World War II years, the population of African Americans grew and eventually Mexican migrants returned en masse. Some were

reestablishing cut ties to the earlier migrants who had remained in San Diego. However, many were drawn to the area by the Bracero program, a World War II policy initiative that solicited labor for local agricultural interests. As the need for farm work dampened, migrant workers moved to the city in search of work, and the heavily-immigrant Mexican population started to grow throughout the southern California region (Gutierrez, 1995).

Like Miami, San Diego also drew a refugee population fleeing harsh communist rule (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001). The immigrant wave in this case was notably different since the exodus was from Southeast Asia. Some were successful professionals in South Vietnam and moved into a pseudo middle-class lifestyle upon relocation to the United States. A less-accommodating fate awaited later Vietnamese arrivals, especially those less educated than the initial wave. Refugees from Cambodia and Laos (Lao and Hmong), who were more likely to be rural peasants from that region, also faced adjustment difficulties. For both Mexican and Southeast Asian immigrants, settling in San Diego might have proved to be a double-edged sword. San Diego (like Miami) accommodated many newcomers in its low-skill job market. Unlike Miami, however, the San Diego defense sector, especially the military (aerospace) industry, experienced growth and even turned into a high-technology sector after a hard-hitting recession (Waldinger, 2001b). Thus, low-skilled immigrants were poorly suited to the job market during the period covered by our study.

The economic environment differed greatly in Miami and San Diego, as did the manner in which these cities accommodated immigrants and ethnic minorities. We suspect that the racial and economic histories of immigrants influenced varying degrees of social capital, which in turn, were shaped by federal policy and government support. The important issue for the current study is to what extent these differences impacted local crime and drug violence. Although we do not explicitly model all of the complex factors and processes described above, as this is not possible in a single study, our focus on similarities and differences in two cities allows us to link our results to previous research on the ways in which "milieu effects" contribute to differential violent crime patterns (*see also* Crutchfield, Glusker and Bridges, 1999). Importantly, we do assess the impact of variables such as economic structures, ethnic distinctions that move beyond the black/white dichotomy, the year of entry of immigrant groups, and the presence of enclaves or barrios on the presence of drug homicide at the tract level in two unique immigrant destinations. We now turn to a discussion of the method by which this analysis was accomplished.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Our study relies on police and 1990 census data. Previous studies of drug violence/markets have largely been the province of ethnographers who are familiar with the character of a specific community or area. We extend this research by utilizing primarily quantitative methods based on collecting, reading, and coding thousands of homicide reports archived in the respective police departments. However, in order to supplement these data and aid in our identification and understanding of drug areas, immigrant enclaves and barrios, and therefore in the construction of our independent and dependent variables, we drew on many qualitative sources: reading old newspaper reports, books, interviews with local homicide detectives, drug researchers, and spending time in various neighborhoods.

Researchers have only rarely directly accessed and coded the richly detailed data contained in archived homicide reports. Most use national level data and rely on homicide categories (*e.g.*, domestics, fights, and gangs) forwarded by police departments to federal government agencies. We manually retrieved every homicide file for the years 1985 through 1995 stored in the homicide investigation units of the Miami and San Diego Police Departments. Those files offer very detailed information, including a narrative written by the lead detective describing the circumstances surrounding the killing. The account draws from a host of sources, including admissions of guilt from the offender, interviews with bystanders and other crime scene witnesses, use of physical evidence gathered by forensic experts, discussions with family members, and other types of information.

As a neighborhood proxy for drug market involvement, we examine drug violence, as violence is an inherent element in illicit drug markets (Goldstein, 1985). In the absence of well-defined and established criteria on how to operationalize drug violence, our coding scheme emphasized the primary motivation in each homicide. To identify such incidents, rather than relying on police codes we read the summaries and coded them into our own set of motives. Applied first to Miami and later to San Diego, we adopted the operationalization used by Rosenfeld *et al.* (1999) in St. Louis and Cohen *et al.* (1998) in Pittsburgh in coding the homicide motivation. Specifically, the homicide was coded as drug-related if any aspect of the homicide involved drugs: fights over drug use, quarrels over a drug deal and in some cases the quality of drugs, skirmishes over drug turf, robberies of drug dealers or drug users that turned deadly, or any other drug-related influence or combination.

We begin by broadly defining those census tracts with at least two drug homicides as drug violence areas and compare the characteristics of those neighborhoods to those without at least two drug homicides (non-drug areas). We selected two homicides as the level to determine drug violence areas. We did so based on our knowledge of local communities and drug market areas in the cities and because arguably many tracts may have a random drug-related homicide, but multiple incidents are suggestive of a more serious or extensive drug market. Furthermore, the results that follow in Table 1 demonstrate that the characteristics of drug versus non-drug areas display statistically significant variations, which provide empirical support for our strategy.

Determinants of Drug and Non-drug Communities

We begin by estimating models predicting the likelihood that a given tract had at least two drug-related homicides. The dependent variable in our analysis is dichotomous: tracts that experienced two or more such homicides are coded 1 and others are coded 0. We examine or include the following variables derived from the 1990 census data, whose effects are anticipated by the segmented assimilation model:

1) Ethnicity. Latino group members (Cuban and primarily Nicaraguan Central Americans) in Miami are expected to be less likely to reside in drug than in non-drug violence areas. Many reside in and around the Little Havana or Latin Quarter neighborhoods, places associated with large scale "social capital" in the city. In contrast, we predict Haitians in Miami are more exposed to drug areas than to non-drug spots because they do not participate in Miami's enclave economy to the same extent as Latinos. Latino group members (Mexican) in San Diego are more likely to live in downtown and border "barrios" and are therefore more likely to encounter drug violence. Asians, in keeping with expectations, will also tend to live in drug areas. Thus, in the analyses for Miami, we examine measures of the percentage of tract residents who are Cuban, Central American or Haitian, respectively. Similarly, for San Diego we include measures of the percentages of tract residents who are Mexican, non-Latino black, and Southeast Asian (Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian and Hmong) respectively.[3]

[3]We do not attempt to account for every ethnic or immigrant group that resides in the two cities. Rather, we focus on larger groups of substantive and theoretic interest in each city. Further, and illustrating the importance of context, in Miami but not in San Diego, percent African Americans and deprivation are almost perfectly correlated. As a result, percent African Americans is excluded from the multivariate analysis for Miami.

2) Immigration. We expect immigrant group members to be more exposed to drug violence than most native-born Americans. Among immigrants, the most recent arrivals are expected to be most likely to live in drug violence areas. We expect more recent immigrants to live in more disorganized areas and to be less likely to be assimilated or incorporated in networks while longer tenure residents are likely to live in more stable and organized areas and to be assimilated. Thus, more recent immigrants should be more likely to live in drug violence areas. For both cities, we examine the percentage of recent immigrants (arrived 1980–89), percentage of immigrants who arrived in the United States between 1970 and 1979, and those who immigrated between 1960 and 1969.
3) Neighborhoods. In response to the literature on segmented assimilation, we include neighborhood indicators of enclaves or barrios. Enclaves in Miami are distinguished from other communities by three dummy variables indicating whether or not a census tract is in Little Havana, Little Haiti or the Latin Quarter. Barrios in San Diego are defined as tracts in Barrio Logan or the border barrios of Otay Mesa and San Ysidro. Again, we expect higher levels of drug homicides in the San Diego barrios and Little Haiti. In line with the tenets of segmented assimilation, it is more likely that the Miami Latino enclaves will be non-drug areas since they exhibit more social capital than the more disadvantaged immigrant and native-born black areas and are able to resist the growth of drug markets. Each enclave measure is dummy coded, with 1 representing belonging to the particular enclave and coded 0 otherwise.
4) Demographic. Young males are disproportionately engaged in crime and likely to be victims of criminal activity. In keeping with prior research, we include a measure of the percentage of the population that is young (18 to 24 years) and male.
5) Employment. The literature on immigrant work or ethnic economies suggests that immigrants and ethnic minorities are overrepresented in low-skill jobs and work in sectors, such as the service industry or for small businesses, that serve co-ethnics, not typically associated with professional occupations. According to this model, ethnic minority group members incorporated into an enclave economy will be more likely to work in low-skill jobs than will minorities excluded from the enclave system, who are more likely to seek opportunities in the informal economy or drug markets. A higher level of employment in low-skill jobs, rather than a lower level of low-skill employment, will correspond to fewer drug homicides (*see* Waldinger, 2001b for more on the nuances of low-skill employment and local contexts). To ex-

amine this hypothesis, we include a measure of the percentage of tract residents employed in low-skill jobs.

6) Economic Deprivation. Economic deprivation is a standard predictor of crime and has been measured by such variables as percent poor, female-headed families, and male joblessness. Following procedures defined elsewhere (Ousey and Augustine, 2001), we incorporate these highly correlated variables into an index measuring local economic deprivation. For each city, the deprivation index is an additive measure comprised of z-scores for percent poverty, percent female-headed households, and male joblessness. The values on these measures were summed.

7) Neighborhood Stability. The number of vacant houses is divided the total number of housing units to create a measure of the vacancy rate or percent of houses that are not occupied. This measure is typically incorporated into community level violence research because vacant houses provide a possible location for drug dealing activities away from the gaze of capable guardians and suggests a breakdown in social control more generally.

ANALYSES

In the multivariate analyses, we utilize logistic regression to examine community predictors of drug violence, focusing on the roles of race/ethnicity, immigration, and immigrant enclaves. We first present results with the ethnic composition measures in the models, followed by analyses examining the role of recency of immigration and then the effects of tract location in particularly relevant enclaves and barrios. Due to collinearity concerns, we analyze the effects of ethnicity and immigration recency measures in separate models. In all analyses, the measures for young males, low-skill job employment, vacancy rates, and economic deprivation are included. We also examine the cities in separate models, as this allows comparison of heavily immigrant contexts while acknowledging the differences between the two cities discussed above.

RESULTS

This section summarizes the mean distributions for ethnicity, demographic, economic and stability variables in Miami and San Diego census tracts. In doing so, we continue the strategy used elsewhere (*see* Cohen *et al.*, 1998) and focus on drug versus non-drug instead of the proportion of drug homicide to all other homicide motivations. Focusing on the absolute level of

drug violence or number of drug homicides in each tract, rather than the level relative to other types of homicide motivations, is the most straightforward way of examining the likelihood of drug homicides across tracts (*cf.* Cohen *et al.*, 1998).[4]

Characteristics of Miami and San Diego Communities

To begin examining whether there are differences between neighborhoods with and without drug violence, Table 1 shows the means on the independent variables for drug and non-drug areas in Miami and San Diego. For Miami, the results suggest that drug areas (39%) are comprised of larger percentages of African-American residents than are non-drug areas (10%) and that the percentage of Haitian residents is higher in drug (11.8%) than non-drug tracts. The opposite is true for Cubans, with drug areas having a smaller percentage (19%) of Cubans than do non-drug areas (47.1%). However, there are no significant differences in the Central American populations found in non-drug and drug communities. Further, while the percentage of recent immigrants does not significantly differ across communities, the percentage of residents who immigrated in the 1960s and 1970s is higher in non-drug than in drug areas. For Miami, there are no significant differences found for the enclave tracts in terms of whether they are located in or outside of drug areas. With regard to the control variables, only economic deprivation is significant, with deprivation levels higher in drug than in non-drug neighborhoods.

The results for San Diego are somewhat different from those found in Miami, illustrating the importance of local context. For this city, as in Miami, the percentage of African Americans is higher in drug (17.5%) than in non-drug areas (5.9%). This is also the case for Mexican Latinos, with larger percentages residing in drug (38.6%) than in non-drug (16.1%) communities. Further, the percentage of Southeast Asians is significantly higher in drug (34.9%) than in non-drug (13.9%) tracts. Unlike for Miami, in San Diego the percentages of recent immigrants, as well as the 1970s immigrants, are significantly different across areas, with larger populations of immigrants found in drug than in non-drug communities. Further, almost all of the Barrio Logan tracts suffered drug violence while none of the Border Barrios

[4]These "drug" neighborhoods represent a qualitatively different type of area than other neighborhoods, which may have a great deal of homicide activity (*e.g.*, domestic) but no drug homicides.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF DRUG HOMICIDES ACROSS MIAMI AND SAN DIEGO NEIGHBORHOODS: 1985–1995

	Miami		San Diego	
Tract Attributes	Non-Drug	Drug	Non-Drug	Drug
Ethnicity				
% African-American	10.0	39.0[a]	5.9	17.5[a]
% Haitian	4.1	11.8[a]	na	
% Cuban	47.1	19.0[a]	na	
% Central American	13.6	10.4	na	
% Mexican	na		16.1	38.6[a]
% Southeast Asian	na		13.9	34.9[a]
Immigration				
% Immigrated in 1980s	29.1	23.3	7.6	19.5[a]
% Immigrated in 1970s	11.7	8.5[a]	4.9	7.1[a]
% Immigrated in 1960s	20.7	8.1[a]	2.6	2.3
Enclave Neighborhood				
Little Havana	.20	.07	na	
Latin Quarter	.05	.07	na	
Little Haiti	.05	.17	na	
Barrio Logan	na		.01	.24[a]
Border Enclaves	na		.07	.00
Control Variables				
% Young and Male	10.9	9.4	10.0	14.2[a]
% Low Skill Workers	62.5	63.6	51.3	61.3[a]
Economic Deprivation	.64	3.1[a]	-.94	1.3[a]
% Vacant Housing	8.0	12.0	5.2	6.9[a]
Tract N	40	30	162	34

Note: [a]Significant at .05 level or lower in t test of differences between means.

did. There are also mean differences for the control variables found across areas in San Diego, with drug areas having larger percentages of young males, low skill workers, vacant housing units and higher levels of deprivation than do non-drug communities.

The Impact of Ethnicity in Predicting Drug Homicides

The previous findings demonstrate that neighborhoods in multi-ethnic cities exhibit wide variation in their social and demographic characteristics. The important question is, then, which factors are driving whether communities experience drug violence? To address this issue we use logistic regression to analyze the characteristics of tracts inside and outside drug violence/market areas. Table 2 presents results for ethnicity and Table 3 displays immigration findings. The potential effects of ethnic enclaves are examined in Table 4.

As Table 2 shows, without exception, the ethnic composition of Miami neighborhoods had no significant influence on determining drug market

TABLE 2
LOGISTIC COEFFICIENTS PREDICTING DRUG-RELATED HOMICIDES IN MIAMI AND SAN DIEGO BY ETHNICITY

	Miami				San Diego		
Ethnicity							
% Haitian	.005	—	—	—	—	—	—
	(.029)						
% Cuban	—	-.029	—	—	—	—	—
		(.016)					
% Central American	—	—	.009	—	—	—	—
			(.041)				
% Mexican	—	—	—	—	-.008	—	.166[a]
					(.017)		(.076)
% SE Asian	—	—	—	—	—	.028[a]	—
						(.010)	
% African American	—	—	—	.060[a]	—	—	—
				(.019)			
Control Variables							
% Young Male	-.191	-.108	-.232	-.026	-.011	-.004	.006
	(.180)	(.147)	(.167)	(.056)	(.047)	(.049)	(.050)
% Low Skill Workers	.041	.046	.042	.106[a]	.090[a]	.081[a]	.187[a]
	(.060)	(.050)	(.052)	(.040)	(.045)	(.035)	(.067)
% Vacant	-.048	-.061	-.048	.060	-.008	.039	.032
	(.044)	(.043)	(.043)	(.070)	(.073)	(.071)	(.071)
Economic Deprivation	.697[a]	.539[a]	.701[a]	.579[a]	.845[a]	.706[a]	.737[a]
	(.225)	(.231)	(.224)	(.199)	(.206)	(.194)	(.202)
Interaction Term							
Mexican[a] Low Skill	—	—	—	—	—	—	-.003[a]
							(.001)
Constant	-1.688	-1.481	-1.444	-8.253[a]	-6.283[a]	-7.014[a]	-12.433[a]
	(2.671)	(2.541)	(3.070)	(2.179)	(2.265)	(1.938)	(3.822)
Model χ^2	26.334[a]	29.792[a]	26.353[a]	72.992[a]	63.573[a]	72.597[a]	69.246[a]

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses.
[a]$p < .05$

activity. That is, net of the effects of the social and economic variables, the percent of the population that was Haitian, Cuban or Central American did not affect the likelihood of drug homicides. These results provide indirect evidence that the influence of social capital might carry over to ethnic communities beyond the enclave issue mentioned by segmented assimilation proponents, at least in high-crime, highly impoverished, immigrant-majority Miami.

Ethnicity did, however, have the expected effects in San Diego, as shown in Table 2. Among the population composition findings, we discovered that the percent African American and Southeast Asian in each tract were important predictors of drug homicides. We found that higher percentages of African Americans and Southeast Asians, respectively, increased

the likelihood of an area experiencing more than one drug homicide. This suggests that a multi-ethnic city with a large number of native and foreign-born immigrants, but in the numerical minority unlike in Miami, will not benefit from local conditions to the same extent as one where social capital and enclave economies reign. Instead the influence of the barrio could have more of a concentrated effect than suspected in San Diego – a finding that is very much in accord with segmented assimilation models. Further, while the percentage of Mexican Latinos is not significantly related to drug violence in the main effects models, in this model the interaction term indicates that in neighborhoods with high percentages of Mexican Latinos and low-skill workers, the likelihood that they are drug areas is reduced, perhaps suggesting a stabilizing effect for communities with such compositions.

The results for both cities also demonstrate the importance of the larger contexts in which racial/ethnic/immigrant groups reside. For both Miami and San Diego, economic deprivation is a positive and significant predictor, indicating that in each city areas with higher levels of deprivation are more likely to be drug areas. While the other control variables are not significant in Miami, in San Diego the concentration of low-skill workers also has positive and significant effects on the likelihood that a community experienced drug violence.

We should not be surprised to find some differences in results across the different city contexts. Miami is the poorest major city in the country and attracts relatively low-skilled immigrants (Waldinger, 2001a). The local economy itself, enclave or not, is in a low-wage region with limited potential for higher wages in the manufacturing, professional and advanced services sectors (Waldinger, 2001b). While the Miami enclave benefits from low-paying but relatively widespread and stable jobs, even if the jobs do not allow economic advancement in the professional sector, San Diego has more economic opportunities but as an immigrant center lacks allure since there is no dominant Mexican or Southeast Asian presence. Although it offers a wider range of economic opportunities than does Miami, it also offers a limited immigrant opportunity to move up the economic ladder. One potential result is that immigrants and ethnic minorities are concentrated in areas where exposure to drugs is more routine. This is because low-skill work and accompanying wages barely maintain subsistence housing and living standards in a city with a high cost of living. In other words, it is possible that most of these residents are poor but working, and the small fraction that are not may contribute to the higher level of drug violence in the barrio.

The Role of Immigrants and Year of Entry

To examine more directly the effects of immigration, the immigrant composition measures were included in the logistic regression analyses. These findings are presented in Table 3. For Miami, the results indicate that the tract population that immigrated in the 1980s and 1970s is not a significant predictor of community drug violence. However, 1960s immigrants have negative and significant effects, indicating that areas with higher percentages of residents who immigrated between these years are less likely to be drug areas, suggesting that such communities are more stable and established and residents are more assimilated.

TABLE 3
LOGISTIC COEFFICIENTS PREDICTING DRUG-RELATED HOMICIDES IN MIAMI AND SAN DIEGO BY YEAR OF IMMIGRATION

	Miami			San Diego		
Year of Entry						
% Immigrated 1980s	-.033 (.038)	—	—	.088[a] (.036)	—	—
% Immigrated 1970s	—	-.183 (.103)	—	—	-.122 (.082)	—
% Immigrated 1960s	—	—	-.083[a] (.039)	—	—	-.348[a] (.165)
Control Variables						
% Young Male	-.178 (.140)	-.243 (.143)	-.109 (.145)	-.061 (.062)	-.004 (.041)	-.010 (.041)
% Low Skill Workers	.083 (.064)	.117 (.065)	.044 (.051)	.033 (.039)	.115[a] (.042)	.112[a] (.038)
% Vacant	-.046 (.045)	-.043 (.044)	-.059 (.043)	.000 (.072)	-.023 (.074)	-.034 (.076)
Economic Deprivation	.651[a] (.233)	.517[a] (.241)	.499[a] (.232)	.737[a] (.194)	.860[a] (.206)	.804[a] (.204)
Constant	-3.475 (3.223)	-3.756 (2.806)	-1.073 (2.577)	-3.785 (1.950)	-7.210[a] (2.129)	-6.734[a] (2.004)
Model χ^2	27.079[a]	29.668[a]	31.363[a]	69.772[a]	65.732[a]	69.433[a]

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses.
[a]$p < .05$

The San Diego findings for immigrant composition are consistent with downward assimilation, in that areas with higher levels of recent immigrants were more likely to have at least two drug homicides. Neighborhoods with more new immigrants are more likely to be in San Diego drug locations. The downward assimilation perspective thus fares well overall – at least in San Diego, where recent immigrants, heavily young male and Mexican, with fewer options than counterparts in Miami, tend to live in drug areas.

The importance of economic and social characteristics is again evident in the results with immigrant concentration in the models. Economic deprivation is significantly and positively associated with the likelihood of a community being a drug violence area in both Miami and San Diego, respectively. In San Diego, the percentage of low skill workers is also significant, with one notable exception. In the model with recent immigrants included, the effect of low-skill workers is not significant, suggesting that the positive effects of the latter measure in other results reflect areas of recent immigrants rather than low-skill workers per se.

Barrios and Enclaves

In reply to the questions noted at the beginning of this section, we again use logistic regression to analyze the characteristics of five high profile ethnic/immigrant communities and present these results in Table 4. Without exception, those residing in barrios or enclaves did not live in areas with

TABLE 4
LOGISTIC COEFFICIENTS PREDICTING DRUG-RELATED HOMICIDES IN MIAMI AND SAN DIEGO BY ETHNIC NEIGHBORHOOD

	Miami	San Diego
Ethnic Area		
Latin Quarter	.340	—
	(1.269)	
Little Havana	-.722	—
	(.964)	
Little Haiti	-.927	—
	(1.285)	
Barrio Logan	—	.171
		(1.304)
Border Barrios	—	-9.573
		(25.055)
Control Variables		
% Young Male	-.290	-.010
	(.179)	(.045)
% Low Skill Workers	.073	.107[a]
	(.061)	(.042)
% Vacant	-.050	-.046
	(.044)	(.081)
Economic Deprivation	.693[a]	.878[a]
	(.229)	(.223)
Constant	-2.461	-7.004[a]
	(2.833)	(2.326)
Model χ^2	27.557[a]	77.073[a]

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses.
[a]$p < .05$

significant levels of drug violence. Instead, in these analyses the control measures were the only significant predictors. These findings provide evidence that some aspects of segmented assimilation are associated with living in non-drug areas, even in high-crime Miami. Latinos, including those living in a city with the highest poverty rate in the country, do not tend to live in drug neighborhoods.

Overall, although the immigration/ethnicity effects varied between Miami and San Diego, economic deprivation exhibited a strong and consistent effect. We emphasize that economic deprivation is an important predictor in every model and has positive effects for drug homicide, suggesting that social structure is more important than ethnic or immigrant composition. The percentage of low-skill workers also has positive effects on drug violence in San Diego; however, the one exception to this finding (with percent 1980s immigrants in the analysis) suggests that this variable may reflect the effect of recent immigrants rather than low-skill workers per se.

CONCLUSIONS

This article provides an account of race/ethnicity and violent crime as measured by drug homicide in two primary destination points for immigrants. It is no surprise that economic deprivation emerges as a key factor in shaping violence, even in relatively well-off San Diego, where ethnic minorities encounter fewer resources and limited access to life outside the center city than the native-born white majority. Immigrants tend to converge in a limited number of places where co-ethnics reside and low-skill jobs are available. Later immigrants follow the paths taken by earlier arrivals and engage in low-skilled and poor-wage activities in settlements that require working and living in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Thus, economic deprivation is an important and consistent influence in both cities, despite the different contexts and immigration histories.

Although it is important to acknowledge that this study supports the well-established deprivation literature, we sought to move beyond this expected finding by setting up a contextual comparison between Miami, as representative of emerging immigrant or majority minority cities, and San Diego, as an alternative multiethnic Sunbelt city. We found greater evidence of exposure to drugs in all ethnic minority communities, foreign and native-born, in San Diego. As a result, San Diego ethnic minority and immigrant neighborhoods provide a stark contrast to those in Miami, reminding us that local conditions eclipse broad theoretical predictions. One perspective can-

not fully account for outcomes in diverse cities and contexts, as illustrated by the important differences we found in two ethnically diverse urban centers. How then does local context determine the manner in which the segmented assimilation thesis influences drug violence?

Turning to Miami first, we suggest that Cubans have done well in part because of the federal government assistance they received and the benefits of social capital deriving from the resources possessed by the initial group of Cuban immigrants. This has contributed to the Cuban domination of economic, cultural, and political institutions in Miami that provided advantages to later waves of Cuban and some non-Cuban Latino immigrants. Central Americans, for example, may profit from social networks facilitated by the presence of Cuban enclaves. The effect is that our counterclaim explanation proceeded more or less as expected for Cubans and Central Americans: they are not living in high drug-homicide neighborhoods.

This study also partially supports aspects of the conventional wisdom through the finding that drugs are disproportionately present in African-American neighborhoods in Miami. This makes sense given that "race" was so highly correlated with deprivation that the African-American population variable could not be included in the logistic regression models. After all, African Americans have faced a long history of discrimination in this historic part of the Confederate South when compared to other places. That is, to a large extent deprivation represents predominately African-American (segregated) tracts because this group does not participate in the enclave economy. So ethnicity turns out to be an important variable shaping drug homicide, at least for African Americans in Miami, despite the fact that the individual ethnicity variables that we included were not significant in the statistical analysis. This finding reminds us that quantitative results must be interpreted with an understanding of the local context, or milieu effects, operating in specific neighborhoods and cities.

Although African Americans fare poorly in the enclave economy in Miami, we have not seen the explicit and fatal consequences anticipated by downward assimilation in Little Haiti. For Haitians, perceptions of poverty in Miami might produce less strain than expected given even worse conditions on the Caribbean island, and this could translate to less crime in the United States. For some Little Haiti residents, exposure to life beyond their community, even in the form of poor- paying service sector jobs, could serve as a buffer to crime. From our perspective, the most interesting finding is the lack of strong support or significant effects in Little Haiti, which does not fit the pattern predicted by the negative aspects of segmented assimilation. The

Haitian experience in Miami suggests that immigrant communities may possess forms of social capital that inhibit crime, but they are difficult to measure directly with census data (*e.g.*, strong informal networks of social control).

Recall that the conventional wisdom is that immigration increases crimes such as drug violence, while the recently emerging counterclaim that we identified suggests the opposite. We found little support for the conventional wisdom in Miami, but a comparison with San Diego reveals divergent findings that derive from differences in local context. We hypothesized that the segmented assimilation model, especially the downward assimilation aspects, would be associated with crime in San Diego when investigating ethnicity proxies or immigration waves. The results mostly support this expectation, as recent immigration did predict drug homicide, in contrast to Miami, although economic deprivation was the strongest predictor of drug violence in both cities. Yet the immigration effect in San Diego must be interpreted in the context of the interaction effect between the percent Mexican and the percent of low-skill jobs on drug homicides at the neighborhood level. Areas with Mexican origin residents and a high level of low-skill jobs have lower levels of drug homicide, while the positive effect on homicide of low-skill jobs disappears when the latest wave of immigrants is included. We speculate that established Mexicans are in a better position to take advantage of network ties to get low-skill jobs than more recent arrivals, again highlighting the importance of social capital. Our comparison of Miami and San Diego suggests that inattention to structural variables that are difficult to measure, such as social capital, can lead scholars to incorrectly attribute causes of crime to types of people (*e.g.*, immigrants and minorities) rather than social conditions which vary by local context.

This preliminary study has demonstrated the importance of segmented assimilation in understanding neighborhood levels of drug violence. Although the findings did vary by city, and more research is needed to fully understand the role of variables such as low-skill work and year of entry, it is clear that future research cannot ignore the assimilation patterns of the diverse groups of immigrants that have settled in large numbers in urban neighborhoods. National-level studies assume that local context matters little, while also masking the empirical reality that immigration is concentrated in urban areas like the two cities that we compared in this article. We suggest that future investigations build on the research we have reported here and use the work of Portes and Rumbaut (2001) as a guide in crafting a research agenda that focuses on the relationship between immigrant inte-

gration/adaptation and crime. Such an agenda would explore the following four factors: 1) the history of the immigrant first generation, 2) the pace of acculturation among parents and children, 3) cultural and economic barriers to adaptation for second-generation youth, and 4) family and community resources for confronting these barriers. It is also important to develop better measures of social capital and use finer population distinctions than "immigrants" or "Asians." As one example, our results demonstrate the limited utility of discussing "Latino" drug violence because of the very different experiences of Cubans in Miami as compared to Mexicans in San Diego – experiences that are tied to local and national immigration policies.

This research agenda should carefully consider the conventional wisdom and counterclaim, discussed earlier, on the immigration and drug homicide relationship, as our findings provide some support for each perspective. The conventional wisdom was more evident among immigrant groups in San Diego and native-born African Americans in Miami – those with low levels of social capital – while the counterclaim was better reflected for high social capital groups such as Cubans in Miami. This suggests that the adaptation of immigrants is shaped to a large extent by the local conditions a given group faces in the host country, such as whether there is a well-developed enclave economy and whether the city is majority minority. The policy implication seems to be that strengthening the social capital of immigrant groups will help insure that they are not over-involved in drug markets and drug violence and possibly other types of crime (Lee, Martinez and Rosenfeld, 2001).

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