

Study: Neighborhood natives move out when immigrants move in

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Native residents of a neighborhood are more likely to move out when immigrants move in, according to new research by three American sociologists.

"Neighborhood Immigration and Native Out-Migration" appears in the February issue of the [American Sociological Review](#). Study authors are Kyle Crowder of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Matthew Hall of the University of Illinois-Chicago and Stewart E. Tolnay of the University of Washington.

The authors note that for native whites the tendency to leave areas with large and growing immigrant populations appears to be rooted in reactions to the [racial composition](#) of a neighborhood. In contrast, decreasing homeownership rates and increasing costs of housing in the neighborhood appear to be the primary impetus for native blacks to leave neighborhoods with large and growing immigrant populations.

However, large concentrations of immigrants in areas surrounding a neighborhood reduce the likelihood that native black and white residents of that neighborhood will leave. The scholars propose that this may be because these surrounding areas, which normally would be the most likely destinations for native householders seeking to relocate, become less attractive to those native householders when they contain larger immigrant populations.

The authors used data from a longitudinal survey of U.S. residents called

the Panel Study of Income Dynamics linked to information on neighborhoods drawn from four U.S. Censuses. The research sample included 16,516 native-born, non-Latino white and non-Latino black heads of households from 1968 to 2005.

"While the settlement patterns of immigrants themselves are important, native-born residents' decisions to remain in diversifying [neighborhoods](#) or to flee in the face of growing immigrant concentrations are just as crucial in determining the trajectory of residential integration," said Crowder, the Howard W. Odum Distinguished Professor of Sociology in UNC's College of Arts and Sciences and a fellow of the Carolina Population Center.

"These findings have important implications for processes of immigrant incorporation, patterns of neighborhood change and broader systems of residential segregation," he said.

Crowder researches social demography, racial and ethnic stratification, residential mobility and migration, residential segregation, neighborhood dynamics and urban politics and development.

Hall is an assistant professor in the department of sociology and the Institute of Government and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois-Chicago. His central research interests are in urban sociology, social demography, migration/immigration and labor markets.

Tolnay is S. Frank Miyamoto Professor of Sociology at the University of Washington. His recent research and publications have focused on the Great Migration of African-Americans.

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