Sociology 211
October 29 – November 1, 2004

Second midterm – November 8, 2004. For the midterm, be familiar with the following:

Isajiw, chapters 2-5.

Issues covered in class and notes, October 13 to November 5

Skip attitudes and opinions about multiculturalism (Oct. 4 and 8)

Format will be similar to the last midterm.

Review on Friday, November 5.

Annual Report on Immigration for 2004. Press release dated October 28, 2004.

The *Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration 2004* is now available from Citizenship and Immigration Canada. There is little change in trends or plans from 2003, with the same emphases as in earlier years. Immigration Minister Judy Sgro said "Our immigration plan for 2004 will help Canada's economy grow, while promoting family reunification and refugee protection." For 2003, there were 221,352 immigrants who became permanent residents, down slightly from the 229,091 for 2002.

The top ten source countries remained identical with 2002, although there was some change in order – China, India, Pakistan, Philippines, Korea, U.S., Iran, Romania, U.K. and colonies, and Sri Lanka, with these ten countries accounting for 54% of all immigrants. Asia accounted for 51.3%, African and Middle East 19.7%, Europe 17.0%, South and Central America 9.2%, United States 2.7%. Distribution by categories also remained much the same – 55% economic class, 31% family class, 12% protected class.

The immigration plan for 2005 calls for a similar distribution by class, with a small increase in protected persons from 29,000 to 33,000 to 31,000 to 34,000. However, the target was not reached in 2003, with only 25,981 persons being admitted under the protected class. The total number of immigrants being sought is between 220,000 and 245,000 – this represents a small increase in the planned numbers. The one problem area identified by CIC is the "overall decline in immigrant outcomes." (p. 27). Presumably this refers to problems related to settlement and integration into Canada, although the report does not indicate the exact nature of problems. The report states that "CIC will continue to work with domestic partners in 2005 on important initiatives to improve immigrant labour market integration, including language training and better recognition of foreign credentials and work experience." (p. 27). The report also states that "CIC and its partners will strive to implement the various strategies to eliminate the barriers that prevent immigrants from integrating economically" and "will continue to develop immigration policies and programs that comply with our international commitments and benefit all Canadians." (p. 32).

E. Immigrant adjustment and incorporation of ethnic groups – Isajiw, pp. 94-141.

Isajiw (p. 94) notes that migration means a major change in the life of an individual or family, leading to a change in life situation and experiences, as well as changes in friends and associates, cultures, institutions, and structures. In the last part of chapter 4 (pp. 94-107), he deals with the short-term or immediate problems faced by, and the adjustments that are necessary, for a migrant. In Chapter 5, he deals with some of the longer term adjustments and processes involved in integrating, or being incorporated, into the new society. For some, integration will never be complete, and there are various barriers faced by newcomers. Among these are prejudice and discrimination, issues examined in chapter 6 of Isajiw. At the same time, integration presumably is a two-way process, with changes in the host society occurring as newcomers integrate. While the newcomers may have to make more changes than the host society, the society as a whole does change as a result of immigration, although perhaps the changes are relatively slow or gradual.

In terms of the immediate problems, Isajiw divides these into the practical problems of finding housing, obtaining employment, learning a new language, and living on a day-to-day basis in the new society. The other aspect of the immediate problems faced for newcomers is more social-psychological, initial shock followed by personal adjustments as the immigrant deals with the practical problems of living in a new society.

Among the practical problems noted by Isajiw are work, poverty, and housing. Acquiring the language of the society is an additional, and perhaps more basic problem. Most of the other issues he mentions in this section are more social-psychological or cultural. A policy of multiculturalism would presumably attempt to address both sets of issues in an attempt to reduce these problems.

A. Practical adjustment

In terms of immediate problems, these differ considerably depending on the characteristics of the immigrant. For those who are highly educated professionals, with jobs arranged in Canada, and who are relatively fluent in English or French, the practical problems may be fairly minimal. A physician, professor, technician, or manager who immigrates to Canada with an assured job has a ready source of income and can negotiate the practical details without great difficulty. There may be cultural difficulties, but the practical problems are more associated with immigrants who are less familiar with the language and society and do not have an assured job. It is some of these problems that lead to frustration on the part of immigrants and to strained relations between the immigrants and those who are well established within Canada.

1. Language. While Isajiw does not address this issue in chapter 4, one immediate problem faced by immigrants unfamiliar with Canada, or any other new country, is that of being able to speak the language of the country. In previous years, this might not always have been a major issue, given that immigrants worked in jobs with minimal language requirements, often unskilled types of work. Alternatively, immigrants may have been part of a group migration, settling on the land or working in construction or

industrial jobs with other workers of the some origin. In these situations, language may not have been much of an issue, and immigrants continued to speak their original language, communicating with others through interpreters or intermediaries.

In the case of my ancestors, many group members spoke a type of German until around the first world war, even though their ancestors had come to America about two hundred years earlier. Around the time of the first world war (1914-1918), when Canada was at war with Germany, they abandoned German and spoke English exclusively. But these were farmers, living in rural areas, mostly associated with other members who were spoke the same language – there was no particular need to adapt to English, the language that surrounded them.

In Canada today, the situation has generally changed, with most jobs being in urban areas, often in the service sector, immigrants are expected to deal not only with English or French speaking Canadians, but with other immigrants with entirely different languages. As a result, there is greater emphasis on immigrants learning English or French in contemporary Canada.

During the revision of immigration legislation in the later 1990s, there was discussion of making knowledge of one of the two official languages of Canada a requirement for immigration. While this proposal was not incorporated in the new legislation that took effect in 2002, the number of points awarded for knowledge of English or French has been increased from that of the previous point system.

Those who have been admitted to Canada as government sponsored refugees have access to English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, through the federal government's Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) program. In Quebec, a program for French as a Second Language is available. Some of these are free language instruction, others must be paid for by immigrants. In Regina, ESL classes are given at the Regina Open Door Society (RODS), SIAST, and at the University of Regina.

The study of newcomers I conducted about ten years ago (RSIR) indicated that about one year of language instruction was often required to obtain a reasonable degree of fluency in English, especially for those with no ability in English. Access to ESL programs for immigrant seniors and immigrant women has sometimes been very restricted, but may have improved in recent years. The problem issues with respect to not knowing English sometimes relate to labour force participation or participation in social life more generally or to being a good citizen. For the newcomers in the Regina study though, the language problem was often the most serious with respect to health services and religion. Both of these are very personal areas of life and ones that where immigrants would prefer to address in their own language. In the case of immigrants to larger centres, these needs can likely be addressed, but it is more difficult in locations with limited numbers of immigrants. While religious services might be arranged, there are few physicians or health professionals in many of the languages of immigrants to Regina.

One of the major issues concerning language is language used in the schools. This is a somewhat different problem, in that it concerns issues of how children best learn a second language. In Regina, there are a number of English as a Second Language (ESL) programs in primary and secondary schools, aimed at teaching English to immigrant children who have little or no proficiency in English. This is a major issue in schools where there is a large number of children who speak a different language – in the United States this is usually centred on Spanish speaking children. The issue is how they best learn English, by being immersed in English and not speaking Spanish at all in the school system, or whether a combined Spanish and English program allows them to learn English better or be better adapted to life in the United States. While there are positives and negatives to both approaches, there may best be a variety of approaches. Research by the United States immigration researcher Alejandro Portes indicates that there can be great benefits to having some form of bilingual education, for both the student and the society.

An additional problem related to language is that of immigrants who may not be literate in their own language. Some immigrants, especially older immigrants and refugees, may not have had the opportunity to attend school, or have much schooling. In addition, at the Saskatoon meeting about immigration research, some community workers in Saskatoon stated that they have been working with refugee children who have not had the opportunity to attend school. These are children who were in refugee camps or moved from region to region, and were not in a situation where schooling was possible. These could be children of 10 to 12 years of age who have not had the opportunity to learn to read and write in any language. Problems related to adapting to a new language and becoming successful in school are compounded for these children.

2. Jobs. This is the major practical issue that Isajiw examines. He covers the issue well, so only a few comments are necessary, and I will give some data from Regina and from research on the Canadian labour force. These may provide a different perspective on some of the labour force related issues, but give an idea of some of the labour force outcomes for immigrants in Regina and in Canada as a whole.

One study is *Refugee Settlement and Immigration in Regina*, referred to at RSIR in these notes. This was a 1994-1995 study of fifty-five newcomers to Regina and Canada who arrived as refugees.

Another study, referred to as "Economic Integration" in these notes, was conducted in Regina in 1998-1999 and surveyed or interviewed seventy-five individuals who lived in Regina and who were immigrants to Canada. The information from this study is drawn from Liam Conway, Polo Diaz, and Paul Gingrich, "Economic Integration of Immigrants in Regina," a paper presented at the Sixth National Metropolis Conference, Edmonton, March 21, 2003. Figure 1 and the tables labelled Table 2 and Table 5, come from this paper.

The schematic diagram of Figure 1 provides a way of considering immigrant adjustment. As immigrant families come to Canada, they adopt particular strategies to help them

integrate into society. These may involved strategies such as taking the first jobs that become available or deciding to establish a business. Or there might be strategies related to obtaining education and training first, in order to improve chances of securing better jobs. Social capital refers to the variety of resources that the immigrant can use in attempting to integrate – resources such as family, friends, acquaintances, networks, community groups, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies. While these may lead to successful economic integration, there are often a number of barriers to be overcome, such as learning English or French, becoming familiar with local customs and practices, dealing with problems related to credentials, or discrimination.

Figure 1: The social and cultural determinants of economic integration

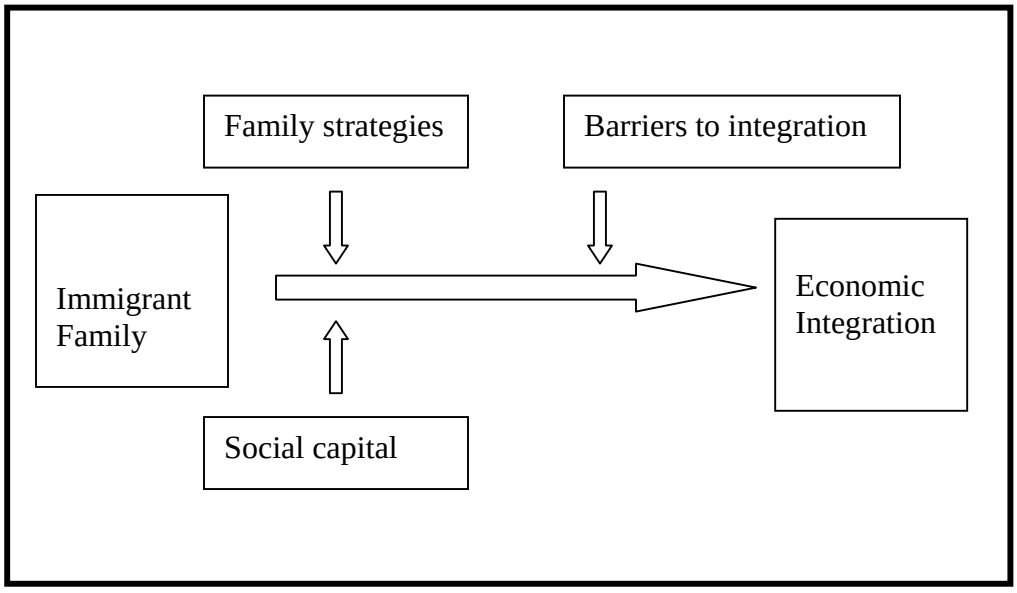

Table 2. Cross-classification of respondents by activity and number of years in Canada. Number of respondents and column percentages.

Activity	Years in Canada				Total
	Under 3	3-4	5-9	10 plus	
Employed	6 27.3%	10 83.3%	14 82.4%	16 84.2%	46
Unemployed	2 9.1%	1 8.3%	1 5.9%	0 0.0%	4
School	14 63.6%	1 8.3%	2 11.8%	2 10.5%	19
Total	22	12	17	18	69

The data in Table 2 shows that in the small sample of the Economic Integration study, considerable percentages of immigrants surveyed adopted a strategy of improving their educational qualifications first. Approximately two-thirds of all those who had been in Canada less than three years were involved in training or educational programs. The record for those who had been in Canada for more than three years indicates that most (80 per cent plus) had obtained jobs – this includes both men and women.

Table 5. Distribution of income gap by number of years respondent has been in Canada

Gap in thousands of dollars	Years respondent has been in Canada				Total
	Under 3	3-4	5-9	10 plus	
Minus 10 or more	15	4	3	3	25
Zero to minus 10	2	6	1	1	10
Zero to plus 10	0	1	5	3	9
10 plus	0	2	6	10	18
Total	17	13	15	17	62
Mean gap ($ '000s)	-14.7	-2.9	6.8	16.0	1.4
S.D. of gap ($ '000s)	7.4	14.0	14.1	22.1	19.2

The data in Table 5 is illustrate the point about labour force performance below – the longer the time spent in Canada, the greater the chances of an improved labour force outcome. The gap referred to in Table 5 is the gap between the family income of the immigrant family and the poverty line. During the first five years in Canada, the average gap is negative (-14.7 and –2.9 thousand dollars), meaning that these families had incomes below the poverty line. For those who had been in Canada for more than 5 years, the average gap is positive (6.8 and 16.0 thousand dollars), indicating that these families were more successful in terms of income – their incomes were above the poverty line, on average. While none of the immigrant families had really large incomes, Table 5 tends to show that the immigrant families improved their income situation after staying in Canada for several years. Apparently whatever strategies these families adopted, most were successful. Note though that there were 8 families (3, 1, 3, 1 in the upper right of the table) whose incomes remained below the poverty line, even after being in Canada for five or more years, so not all can be considered successful economically.

Some of the factors mentioned by Isajiw (pp. 94-100) are as follows, with information from the two studies added.

- **Finding work**. Long time initially taken to find work, so unemployment rates may be high for immigrants for a period of time after they arrive. Lack of familiarity with local conditions, language problems, lack of proper credentials, no experience in the Canadian labour market. (p. 94) See Table 2 of Economic Integration study. Some of this relates to strategies of improving educational qualifications first.

- **Labour market performance**. Poorer for those with less education or credentials. (p. 95). Increased income with time spent in Canada – Table 5 of Economic Integration study. Data from Li.
- **Labour force participation**. Lower participation in labour force during first few years but higher participation later (p. 95). See Table 2 of Economic Integration study. Some of this relates to strategies.
- **Means of finding work** (p. 96). Ethnic contacts may assist initial finding of employment, but restrict later opportunities. May become locked into the job or sector in which initial employment occurs. That is, finding employment early provides a means of support, but can mean limited career opportunities. In the RSIR study, relatively few (only 5) of the 41 respondents with jobs found their first job through federal government's employment services. The more common ways of finding jobs were through friends (9), SIAST (9), RODS (6), church (2), University (3), host family (1), or by themselves (5). Two examples from the RSIR study:

  Contacts in Training Programs Ms. D was a secretary before coming from Central America in the late 1980s. She took two English classes at Open Door, and job training placement was a part of one of these classes. As a result, Ms. D was placed as a cleaner at a nursing home. Through the contacts she made at the home, she was then able to obbtain work there one day a week as a secretary. Ms. D now has a full-time employment as a secretary and is very happy with her job. She found this second job as a result of the contacts she made while taking an English for professionals class at the University of Regina.

  Very Lucky Mr. P came from Southeast Asia in 1980 and considers himself "very lucky" to have found employment as an orderly at a Regina nursing home. An English speaking friend helped him with the application and he was soon employed. He has been employed for over 12 years, and this along with his wife's income has provided the family with sufficient income to purchase a home.

  In the Economic Integration study, of the 45 employed, 20 found jobs through friends, church, former employer, or personal connections; 14 found jobs through training programs at RODS or other organizations; 11 found jobs on their own, but all but one of these were individuals who had been in Canada for more than five years. From this, in the paper we noted that "social capital in the form of connections with friends, acquaintances, associations, and organizations is a key factor in helping new immigrants with economic integration." (p. 14).
- **Discrimination** (p. 96). Since it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of race or national origin, this may take subtle forms. One of the most common is related to denying the applicability of immigrant credentials or stating that the individual must have Canadian labour force experience. It is often very difficult to prove that discrimination exists, but some newcomers feel they are discriminated against in

various ways. One of them is in terms of initial hiring, although that is often less of a problem than the discrimination that may occur in terms of promotion or advancing to a better job. In the Economic Integration study, the individuals we interviewed pointed to problems of promotion as the key area of discrimination – see following statements from Carl, John, and Sally in the Economic Ingegratino study.

> When the boss goes, I became the most senior, next in line, the boss there. The head guys requested me, said just don't bother aiming for that job 'cause I'll give it to somebody, a white guy. He just didn't seem to have all confidence in me so I said O.K. Deep inside I didn't like it anyway. But I was next in line, that's why he had to talk to me.

> John – When I came to Regina in '89 I got employment in an export company in grains. Also, I became to be the manager of the plant, where they cleaned and they left the peas.
> Interviewer – And why did you leave that work?
> John – Because I had problems with a worker, that he didn't accept that a person of another colour was his boss. The bad luck for me, that the manager that was there, he…well, they put other manager there that was totally different, and then I saw the situation very difficult.

> Sometimes you feel you are being discriminated even some people are nice, you still have the feeling that they are preferring other white people than you, you still feel that you talk to them and they are nice, (but) you still feel that they are pretending to be nice. Some people are like that but it doesn't give me much problem…I'm used to it

- **Status dislocation** (p. 97). This may be more psychological, but also has an fairly objective way of being determined. The issue here is what is the type of job that an newcomer obtains, in comparison with what he or she had in the country of origin. For the most part, initial incomes of newcomers are low, but they improve with time. Many are not able to practice the same occupation as they had in their country of origin because of the credential requirements in Canada. As a result, some newcomers are forced to take jobs with less income and social status than what they expect. The result is that the newcomers expectations are not met and the economic opportunities may be considerably less than anticipated. Career opportunities may also be limited. See table 4.4 of RSIR study. Immigrants who were professionals in country of origin generally found jobs in Regina, but only about one-third found professional jobs here – others went to service sector jobs that might not be such high status or income. It was these individuals who were least satisfied with their jobs in Regina (see Table 4.9) and the dissatisfaction was partly working conditions but a feeling that the job was inappropriate to the skill of the individual. This was the case even though the pay levels of these immigrants who were professionals was greater than the skilled, semi-skilled, or unskilled. that is, the less skilled had lower incomes but were more satisfied with their jobs, the professionals had greater incomes but expressed greater dissatisfaction.

Earnings and labour force experience of immigrants. Since finding a job, ensuring success in that job, and comparing the incomes and opportunities of the job are such an essential aspect of immigrant integration, it is worthwhile examining outcomes of the labour force experience of immigrants. One way of doing this is to examine the incomes of immigrant workers and compare those with the incomes of non-immigrants. Incomes are often taken as a measure of integration – if immigrants have the same distribution of incomes as non-immigrants, then integration could be considered to have occurred. Where there are gaps between the incomes of immigrants and non-immigrants, then some consider this as indicating integration is not complete, and the possibility of there being barriers to full participation (one of the basic principles of multiculturalism) have occurred.

- Incomes of immigrant and non-immigrant workers have been extensively examined by Peter Li of the University of Saskatchewan, and the following conclusions come from his analysis. Some of his findings are as follows.
- Education and credentials of immigrants have risen dramatically in the last few years, with 44% of all immigrants in 2000 having a university degree. (Li, 2003, Table 6.1).
- Higher levels of education are generally associated with higher incomes, and the high education levels point toward high incomes for immigrants. One of the aims of the selection process for skilled workers has been to emphasize education and experience, with the expectation that these immigrants will make a major contribution to Canadian society and economy.
- Some have argued that recent immigrant cohorts have not improved their economic position as rapidly as earlier immigrant cohorts. This has been taken by some to indicate that recent immigrants are not integrating so well and immigration may be of less benefit to Canada than in earlier years.
- Overall averages indicated that "immigrant men earned annually more than their native-born counterparts at all CMA levels, whereas immigrant women made about the same as their native-born counterparts" (Li, 2003, p. 107). CMA means Census Metropolitan Area, that is size of urban area – incomes in larger urban areas are generally higher than in smaller cities or rural areas, so it is important to measure incomes in comparable areas. These figures show that, on average, using 1996 Census data, "immigrants do not earn less than native-born Canadians." (Li, 2003, p. 107). For example, in the largest urban areas, the mean earnings in 1996 were $29,374. White immigrant men earned $7,661 more than this and native-born men $1,601 more, a gap of $6,060 in favour of immigrant men. Visible minority immigrant men earned $3,406 more than the average. Female workers generally earned less than the overall average, but again immigrant women generally earned more than their native-born counterparts.
- Earnings are affected by a combination of age, sex, industry, occupation, full- or part-time work, years of schooling, years of experience, number of weeks worked, and other factors. As a result, to determine whether immigrants or non-immigrants earn more, it is necessary to take all of these factors into account in an economic model.

- "When variations in individual human capital and other individual and work-related variations are taken into account …, all immigrant groups earned substantially less than their native-born counterparts of the same gender, racial origin and CMA level." (Li, 2003, p. 107). For large urban areas, the gap was from $3,000 to $6,000 in favour of native-born workers. For example, after taking into account all these factors, Canadian-born white females earned $2,901 below average, but white immigrant females earned $8,645 less than average. Immigrant women, both white and visible minority, had the lowest earnings.
- What Li concludes is that human capital models, or education and experience, do not operate the same for immigrant and Canadian-born. Being immigrant appears to mean the human capital is not worth as much. This is especially the case for female visible minority immigrant women, who "suffer the most income disadvantage as compared with other immigrant groups" (Li, 2003, p. 111).

From the above, Li's findings are that Canada does gain by accepting immigrants with high level of education. But there are also barriers for immigrant integration – these may be devaluation of the credentials of immigrants, negative treatment of some immigrant workers based on gender, race, or place of origin, or outright discrimination. In any case, there is some form of structured inequality in the labour force that affects the economic opportunities of immigrants (Li, 2003, p. 123).

References

Peter S. Li. 2003. *Destination Canada: Immigration Debates and Issues*, Don Mills, Ontario, Oxford University Press.

Last edited November 2, 2004