It’s Not Just Black and White: The Emergence of the Hispanic and Asian Communities in Northeast Florida

Prepared for the
Jacksonville Human Rights Commission

Northeast Florida Center for Community Initiatives
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
University of North Florida
Jacksonville, FL

Tracy A. Milligan, Coordinator, Research Programs and Services
Jeffry A. Will, Director and Associate Professor of Sociology
Kearney Hoover, Research Assistant
with
Charles E. Owens, Assistant Director and Professor of Criminal Justice
John Talmage, Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology
Timothy J. Cheney, Assistant Director of Research Programs

December 2005
Introduction

In conjunction with the Jacksonville Human Rights Commission (JHRC), the Northeast Florida Center for Community Initiatives (CCI) has conducted research regarding race relations in Jacksonville, Florida for the past several years. The primary focus of this research has been the relations between Blacks and Whites, with limited focus on other races or ethnicities. This limited focus has been driven by two primary reasons. First, this is partly due to the racial composition of the local residents. Over the past 40 years Jacksonville has had only a limited presence of non-Black minority groups (a situation that has changed dramatically over the past five to ten years).

Second, the examination of primarily Black-White relations has been driven by the history of the city. The original emphasis for examining race relations was in large part a response to several high-profile incidents in which Black and White relations made major headlines. Thus, a majority of the interviews conducted over the years have centered on race relations between these two racial groups. This experience may be reflective of the city as a whole as a Black male interviewed for the most recent race relations study stated that “the community does not recognize non-Black minorities—just Black and White.”

On the surface, the United States has often been seen in terms of Blacks and Whites: Whites representing the majority and power of the population and Blacks being the focus of battles over Civil Rights and opportunity. Beyond the surface, however, there is a significant history of racial relations between Whites and other racial groups, particularly those of Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian decent.

With the release of 2000 and other recent U.S. Census data, emerging trends with regard to the racial make-up of the national population have enticed researchers to look beyond the “Black and White” surface. It is important to understand these trends as well as their implications so that we, as a nation and community, can respond judiciously
to the changing world around us. To that end, this policy brief analyzes U.S. Census and other related data to better comprehend the complexity of Jacksonville’s changing non-Black minority population.

**National Trends**

Whites have represented the majority (in power if not in number) throughout the history of the United States. The release of the 2000 Census data, however, illustrated what many already knew, that the United States is becoming increasingly more racially and ethnically diverse. While at the start of the 20th century only one out of eight Americans was of a race other than White, the ratio was one out of four Americans by the end of the century (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002). The majority of these dramatic changes in racial composition occurred in the latter part of the century. In fact, the non-Hispanic minority population (races other than White) increased 88 percent between 1980 and 2000, while the White non-Hispanic population grew by less than eight percent during the same period. Additionally, the Hispanic population1 (of any race) more than doubled in the same twenty-years (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002).

According to 2000 U.S. Census numerations, non-Hispanics accounted for 87 percent of the national population, with a majority of the population (69 percent) being non-Hispanic Whites (see Chart 1). Hispanics and non-Hispanic Blacks made up the next largest racial/ethnic groups at 12.6 percent and 12.1 percent, respectively. The rest of the population consisted of Asians2 and other Pacific Islanders (3.7 percent) and individuals of other3 racial backgrounds (2.5 percent). By 2004, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that Hispanics had increased to over 14 percent of the U.S. population and Asians increased to almost 4.4 percent.

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1 While the research team acknowledges that there is diversity within the Hispanic, Asian, and Other races/ethnicities, this paper is designed to give a brief snapshot of these groups to facilitate discussion on the future of race relations in Jacksonville.

2 When possible, Asian and other Pacific Islanders have been combined.

3 For this report, Other racial groups refer to American Indians, those who identify with more than one race, and other racial groups. American Indians were combined with Other because, as a racial group, they only represent approximately one-third of a percent of the Duval County population.
The U.S. Census has projected population estimates by race to 2050 which illustrate the continuing diversity of America. While non-Hispanic Whites represented more than two-thirds of the national population in 2000, by 2050 the proportion will drop to barely more than half. The U.S. Census has estimated that by 2050 the percentage of non-Hispanic Whites will decrease to constitute 50.1 percent of the total U.S. population, while some minorities will double in percentage points between 2000 and 2050 (see Table 1). In particular, Asians are expected to double their percentage of the total population from less than four percent to eight percent and persons of other racial backgrounds will increase from 2.5 percent to 5.3 percent of the population. Additionally, Hispanics (of any race) will almost double from 12.6 percent to 24.4 percent of the total population. By 2050, Blacks are expected to represent nearly 15 percent of the national population.

The shifts in the racial patterns of the national demographics are due to a number of factors. Higher immigration rates, as well as birth rates, among Hispanics are primarily responsible for the changes in the Hispanic population (Brown, 2005; Files, 2005; Raymond, 2001). Other factors influence the demographics as well. For instance, the percentage of non-Hispanic Whites is expected by the U.S. Census to drop between the
years 2040 and 2050 partly due to a relatively large number of deaths of “baby boomers” (Armas, 2004).

Table 1: United States Population by Race, 2000 and 2010 – 2050 Projections (Percent Total Population)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>72.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic (of any race)</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>50.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

State Trends

Florida is often seen by outsiders as a state with a large proportion of Hispanics (particularly those of Cuban origin), with little Asian or Other minority group representation. The presence of Hispanics has been historically concentrated in one area of the state (the greater Miami area), with little representation in most of the Central, Northern, and Western areas of the state (see Map 1). Over the past two decades, however, many cities across the state of Florida have experienced the phenomenon of dramatically increased non-Black minorities, Hispanics in particular. In fact, the Hispanic population increased significantly in a great majority of counties in Florida during the past decade. A number of factors such as economic opportunity, family relationships, historical ties, and cultural comfort have attributed to the increase in the Hispanic population in Florida (Santiago, 2000).

At the last U.S. Census, 2000, White non-Hispanics accounted for a majority of the Florida population at approximately 65 percent (see Chart 2). Hispanics and Blacks
made up the next largest proportion at 17 and 14 percent, respectively. The remainder of the state population was comprised of Asians and other Pacific Islanders (1.7 percent) and other racial groups (1.9 percent).

![Chart 2: Florida Population by Race, 2000 (Percentage)](chart)

Although non-Hispanic Whites have historically been the majority racial group in Florida, as with the nation at large, this group is decreasing in proportion to other racial and ethnic groups, especially Hispanics. Table 2 presents the state population trends of Hispanics and Asian/other Pacific Islanders from 1990 to the projection of 2010. As can be seen, Asian and other Pacific Islanders are expected to increase by over 200 percent between 1990 and 2010. However, they will still only represent 2.6 percent of the overall state population in 2010. Hispanics, on the other hand, will increase 182 percent during the 20 year span and double in the proportion of the population, and will represent a significantly larger proportion of the total population. Hispanics are expected to increase from 12 to 25 percent of the population. In other words, approximately one in eight Florida residents were Hispanic in 1990, while one in four will be Hispanic in the year 2010.
Table 2: Florida Hispanic and Asian Populations, 1990, 2000, 2005 Estimate, and 2010 Projection, Totals and Percent of Population

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1,574,143 (12.2%)</td>
<td>2,682,715 (16.8%)</td>
<td>3,494,926 (19.5%)</td>
<td>4,433,486 (24.7%)</td>
<td>182%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Other Pacific Islanders</td>
<td>146,159 (1.1%)</td>
<td>268,580 (1.7%)</td>
<td>363,592 (2.0%)</td>
<td>469,696 (2.6%)</td>
<td>221%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Map 1: 2005 Percent Hispanic Population by County

Legend
2005 Percent Hispanic Population by County
- 2% - 7%
- 8% - 18%
- 17% - 35%
- 36% - 52%

Produced by CCI at The University of North Florida
Source: ESRI Business Analyst
City/County Trends

As with many Florida counties that have witnessed exceptional increases in their Hispanic populations, Jacksonville too has experienced tremendous growth and change. In fact, Fannie Mae (2004) has identified the Jacksonville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which includes Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, and St. Johns counties, as a “new fast-growing hub.” “New Fast Growing Hubs are cities where the proportion of immigrants in 1990 was less than 11.1 percent [the average size of the foreign-born population in 1990] but experienced an average rate of immigrant population growth between 1990 and 2000 that exceeded 55 percent [the average growth rate between 1990 and 2000]” (Fannie Mae, 2004, p.5). Jacksonville MSA, indeed, experienced a 96 percent increase in the immigrant population between 1990 and 2000 (Fannie Mae, 2004).

In Duval County alone, some racial groups have experienced tremendous growth and are expected to continue to grow in the near future. For example, between 1990 and 2010, Asians/other Pacific Islanders are expected to increase by 211 percent. Likewise, Hispanics are projected to grow by almost 250 percent during the same time period. It is estimated that those of other racial backgrounds will explode by 938 percent. However, this significant increase is partly due to the U.S. Census allowing respondents to identify with more than one race beginning in 2000 (see Table 3).
Table 3: Duval County Hispanic, Asian, and Other Minorities Populations, 1990, 2000, 2005 Estimate, and 2010 Projection, Totals and Percent Change

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>17,333</td>
<td>31,946</td>
<td>44,521</td>
<td>60,516</td>
<td>249%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Other</td>
<td>12,123</td>
<td>21,302</td>
<td>28,836</td>
<td>37,710</td>
<td>211%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islanders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Minorities</td>
<td>2,114</td>
<td>16,411</td>
<td>19,053</td>
<td>21,939</td>
<td>938%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This significant increase is partly due to the U.S. Census allowing respondents to identify with more than one race beginning in 2000.


Even with the increases in the Hispanic population, Duval County ranked 39th of 67 Florida counties in terms of the percentage of Hispanic population according to the 2000 U.S. Census (Social Science Data Analysis Network). Thus, while it is interesting to note the tremendous growth these particular racial groups have experienced, it is important to examine the population trends within the context of the overall population growth in Duval County.

Indeed, minorities of various races have not only increased in numbers since 1990, but in proportion as well (see Table 4). Non-Hispanic Blacks have grown from less than one-quarter to 30 percent of Duval County’s population in 2005. It is estimated this racial group will contribute to almost one-third the county population in 2010. Additionally, Asians/other Pacific Islanders almost doubled in percentage between 1990 and 2005. Duval County ranked third in 2000 among Florida counties in terms of having the highest percentage of Asians (Social Science Data Analysis Network). However, Asians/other Pacific Islanders are estimated to represent only approximately four percent of the county population. Other minorities increased about two percent from 1990 to 2005 to represent 2.2 percent of the population in 2005. Even with the
increases, other minority racial groups are expected to only account for 2.3 percent of the population in 2010.

Compared to all other minorities, Hispanics are increasing at a faster rate in Duval County. In 1990, Hispanics constituted 2.6 percent of the population. In 2005, they represent more than five percent. By 2010, 6.3 percent of the Duval County population is expected to be Hispanic.

While non-Hispanic Whites remain the largest proportion of Duval County’s population, the percentages have decreased over the past several years. In 1990, Whites accounted for more than 70 percent of the county population, but less than 60 percent fifteen years later in 2005. Furthermore, it is estimated that only 55.4 percent of the population will be non-Hispanic Whites in 2010. These shifts in percentages of racial groups are clearly depicted in Chart 3.
**Table 4: Duval County Population, 1990, 2000, and 2005 Estimate, and 2010 Projection**  
*(Percentage of total population and percentage of total Hispanic population)*

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total population</strong></td>
<td>672,971</td>
<td>778,879</td>
<td>863,588</td>
<td>958,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Hispanic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Other Pacific Islanders</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Minorities</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispanic</strong></td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Hispanic population</strong></td>
<td>17,333</td>
<td>31,946</td>
<td>44,521</td>
<td>60,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Other Pacific Islanders</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Minorities</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding*

**Chart 3: Duval County Population by Race, 1990, 2000, 2005, and 2010 Estimate**  
*(Percentage)*

Responses to the Changing Demographics

It is possible to see not only the changes in the actual numbers of racial groups, but in our culture as well. The increase in the number of Hispanics, in particular, has resulted in responses from the government as well as the private sector. For instance, Spanish media, in the form of radio, TV, and print, has increased over the past several years. In June 2005 Hola News, the only Spanish newspaper in Jacksonville, premiered (First Coast Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, 2005). The free newspaper is distributed monthly in Clay, Duval, Nassau, and St. Johns Counties. Hola has established partnerships with other media, such as First Coast News, in order to increase exposure.

Florida schools have also responded to the changing demographics. For example, some county school districts require teachers to be trained in how to instruct non-English speaking students. Additionally, handouts distributed by some schools are printed in both English and Spanish, translators are provided, and news releases are provided to Spanish media outlets (Lane, 2005).

The business sector has also been transformed over the past several years as more businesses are owned, operated, and cater to persons of different cultural backgrounds. More specifically, Hispanic businesses have experienced an exceptional increase in certain areas of the state. As one Southern Florida reporter noted, the increased populations in Hispanics has given “birth to a whole new culture of businesses aimed at serving the lucrative Latino market” (Lane, 2005). In addition to Hispanic-owned businesses, companies, in general, are targeting the Hispanic community (Raymond, 2001).

Partly in response to the increased Hispanic businesses, Chambers of Commerce specific to Hispanics have also been established across the state. In addition to the state’s Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, there are localized Chambers such as the Florida First Coast Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando, Treasure Coast Latin Chamber of Commerce, and Broward County
Chamber of Commerce. While not as common, Chambers of Commerce specific to other racial groups are in operation as well. For example, there is the Asian-American Chamber of Commerce of South Florida and Korean-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Miami.

Due to the increase in Spanish-speaking residents, businesses and organizations are in need of employees that can communicate with their clients. Recently, the University of Puerto Rico and an Orlando hospital established a partnership in which University medical students will serve as interns. It is believed that these interns will better serve the population with their knowledge of the Spanish language and culture. The director of Florida Hospital's family-medicine residency program stated, “We need people who understand our population” (The Associated Press, 2005).

Businesses in Northeast Florida are also recruiting bilingual employees. Locally, Eco Latino, a Spanish magazine, has sponsored five bilingual job fairs for such recruitment (Eco Latino, 2005).

**Issues**

With the diversifying population comes challenges to overcome, faced both by the community at large and by the individual racial groups. Such issues include socioeconomic disparities, segregation, and racial tension. While there are other significant issues at hand, these appear to be some of the most prominent.

**Socioeconomic**

Socioeconomic status has been shown repeatedly to be closely related to race and ethnicity. Persons are typically more likely to be classified within one certain class over another based upon their race. Although some racial groups, particularly those of the majority, experience the higher end of the socioeconomic continuum, others, typically of the minority races, do not experience such success. Whites have been known to
historically have higher levels of income than minority races, such as Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians, and other minorities. In fact, the median household income for White non-Hispanics residing in Duval County was $44,893 in 1999, while it was only $37,497 for Hispanic households and $29,919 for Blacks (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). Likewise, 7.3 percent of White non-Hispanics in the county had incomes below the poverty level in 1999. However, Hispanics and Blacks experienced much higher percentages at 13.9 percent and 22.4 percent respectively.

Participation in free and reduced school lunch programs is another economic indicator in which to gauge the financial health of groups. In the fall of 2003, 32 percent of White students enrolled in Duval County public school were receiving free or reduced lunch due to their family’s financial need (Florida Department of Education, 2005). The percentages for other races were much higher; 68 percent of Black students, 64 percent of Hispanic students, and 63 percent of other minority students received free or reduced lunch the same year. While these figures indicate rather high percentages of students in financial need, it is important to keep in mind that they are not representative of the entire community as students coming from more affluent families are more likely to attend private schools.

In addition to these economic indicators, minorities also tend to experience lower homeowner rates than Whites. For instance, Whites have a homeowner rate of 73 percent in the Jacksonville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) compared to only 50 percent for Hispanics and Blacks (Fannie Mae, 2004).

In addition to accessing adequate housing, lower income individuals experience problems accessing adequate healthcare services. Data from the National Health Interview Survey, 2003, found that “persons in the lowest income group were five times as likely as persons in the highest income group to delay medical care due to cost and about nine times as likely to not get needed medical care (Schiller, Adams, & Nelson,
Additionally, Hispanics under the age of 65 years were more than two and one-half times as likely as non-Hispanics in the same age group to be medically uninsured (Schiller, Adams, & Nelson, 2005).

Not all minorities fare worse than Whites socio-economically, however. For instance, Asians tend to actually have a higher socioeconomic status than Whites. In fact, Asians have a higher median household income, higher homeowner rate, and lower poverty rate than Whites in Duval County. The median household income for Asians in 1999 was more than $50,000 and approximately $45,000 for Whites the same year. The homeowner rate for Asians in the Jacksonville MSA is 65 percent. As a result of these socioeconomic advantages, Asians, as a group, do not experience much of the economic hardships that other minority races do.

**Education**

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, “Since 1972, status dropout rates for Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics ages 16–24 have declined; nonetheless, rates for Hispanics have remained higher than those for other racial/ethnic groups.” It is suggested that the high dropout rates among Hispanic students are partly due to the “transient nature” of the Hispanic population (Santiago, 2000). In addition to Hispanics, Blacks and American Indians typically suffer from higher dropout rates than other racial groups.

Despite the national dropout rate trends, however, these minorities are not over represented in the dropout rates locally. In the Duval County public school system, 84 Hispanic students dropped out of school during the 2002-2003 school year (Florida Department of Education, 2005). This represented five percent of the total students who dropped out that year. This is only slightly higher than the percentage of Hispanic students enrolled in Duval County schools (four percent). Likewise, there was only a somewhat higher percentage of non-Hispanic Black students who dropped out (47
percent) than the percentage of overall non-Hispanic Black students (43 percent). Conversely, the percentage of Asian/Pacific Islander and American Indian students who dropped out was slightly lower at two and .06 percent respectively than the percentage of these racial groups in the Duval County school system (three and .16 percent respectively).

Other educational measures are not as bright for minority racial groups, however. According to the 2000 Census, in Duval County only 14 percent of non-Hispanic White residents 25 and older lacked a high school diploma. On the other hand, more than one-quarter of Blacks had never graduated from high school, and more than one-fifth of Hispanics lacked a diploma.

Language barriers are another concern within the education system for many immigrants. Students speaking a language other than English typically experience more learning problems in American schools than those who speak English fluently. In the fall of 2003, approximately two percent of the non-Hispanic White and non-Hispanic Black students in Duval County public schools spoke a language other than English (Florida Department of Education, 2005). That same year, twenty-one percent of the Hispanics students and fifteen percent of the Asian/Pacific Islander students in Duval County spoke a foreign language.

**Victimization**

Immigrants and persons of lower socioeconomic status are often victimized because of their lack of resources and power in the society. Hispanics, in particular, have been recruited for physically demanding jobs at low wages as migrant workers. Such workers “toil…for meager wages and lack adequate housing and healthcare” (Santiago, 2000).

Low income, migrant workers are also victimized in other ways. In fact, there was a rash of robberies in the fall of 2005. The perpetrators targeted Hispanic day workers,
invaded their homes and robbed them. Some victims were beaten and others were shot, with two resulting in death. “…these people make excellent victims. If they rob them, they [the victims] won’t report it because they are afraid [that their immigration status may be questioned]…I think they’ve been getting robbed for a long time, but they haven’t been reporting it,” explained Jacksonville Sheriff John Rutherford in a news report (Weathersbee, 2004).

Persons are also victimized solely based on their race or ethnicity, as well. According to Hate Crime Statistics 2004 compiled by the FBI and law enforcement agencies, 7,649 criminal incidents motivated by a bias against a race, religion, disability, ethnicity, or sexual orientation were reported in the U.S. More than 5,000 of those incidents were based on race or ethnicity/national origin. In Jacksonville, three hate crime incidents were reported for 2004, two motivated by race and one based on religion (Department of Justice & Federal Bureau of Investigation). While this figure appears to be relatively small for such a large city, it is important to note that these figures only represent crimes that have been reported and that other sources have arrived at higher numbers. For instance, using the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that only 44 percent of hate crimes are actually reported to law enforcement (Wolf Harlow, 2005).

Hate groups are sometimes an agent of hate crimes and at the very least promote negative attitudes toward others. While hate groups have traditionally targeted Blacks, such groups have also been known to target people based on their ethnicity or national origin, religion, disability, and sexual orientation. In 2004, Jacksonville was home to at least seven active hate groups, including racist skinheads, neo-confederates, neo-Nazis, and others (Southern Poverty Law Center).
Residential Patterns and Segregation

Immigrants have typically settled in cities in which they entered the United States such as New York, Miami, Las Angeles, and Houston, cities known as gateway cities. Hispanics and Asians, in particular, tend to be concentrated in certain areas, creating several “mini-melting pots” (Frey, 2001). However, immigrants are beginning to take up residence in cities that have experienced very little racial or ethnic diversity in the past. In fact, according to Fannie Mae (2004), the “last decade of the twentieth century was perhaps most remarkable for the dispersion of immigrants to states and, more precisely cities, where few migrants have settled since World War II.”

Although Hispanics and Asians have typically lived in enclaves, they have historically been less residentially segregated from Whites than Blacks (Logan, Stults, & Farely, 2004). An analysis of U.S. Census data of 13 Florida cities with populations over 100,000 found that Hispanics have been more successful at integrating with non-Hispanic Whites in Florida than Blacks have been (Veiga, 2001).

The dissimilarity index is one of a number of measures used to gauge segregation among racial groups. Although using a single index cannot completely capture the level of integration, the dissimilarity index can be used to make comparisons across racial groups and Census years. The index ranges from zero to 100, with zero indicating perfect integration and 100 indicating perfect segregation. Depending on the source, Jacksonville has a White/Black dissimilarity index of 50.4 to 55.8 based on the 2000 U.S. Census (Frey & Myers & Social Science Data Analysis Network; Lewis Mumford Center). The index is interpreted to read the percentage of individuals of a particular race needed to move to achieve perfect integration. For instance, according to Frey and Myers and the Social Science Data Analysis Network, the White/Black 2000 dissimilarity index for Jacksonville is 55.8, indicating that approximately 56 percent of Black residents would need to move to a different neighborhood in order for Jacksonville to be perfectly integrated. While Frey and Myers and the Social Science Data Analysis
Network and the Lewis Mumford Center have calculated slightly different indices, they are both considered to be in the moderate range. Using the index from the Lewis Mumford Center, White/Black integration has increased over the past two decades. The index decreased from 72.1 in 1980 to 59.9 in 1990 and 50.4 in 2000 (Lewis Mumford Center).

Dissimilarity indices for other races compared with Whites in Jacksonville have fared much better. For instance, the dissimilarity index for Whites/Asians has decreased from 37.2 in 1980 to 29.6 in 2000. During the same time period, the dissimilarity index for Whites/Hispanics decreased from 23.4 to 22.0 (Lewis Mumford Center).

Maps 2 and 3 present the residential patterns for the Hispanic and Asian populations in Duval County in 2005. As can be seen in Map 2, it appears that the majority of Hispanics live South and East of the St. Johns River and in the Southwest area of the city, where a number of tracts have between ten and 14 percent of the population of Hispanic origin. These percentages are higher than that of the city in general, which is estimated to be 5.2 percent in 2005. A very small percentage (zero to three percent) of Hispanics live in the extreme North and West areas of town, as well as the city core and Northwest quadrant. It is also interesting to note that there appears to be greater percentages of Hispanics in the census tracts where NS Mayport and NAS Jacksonville are located.

The residential patterns of Asians is similar to that of Hispanics in that a very small percentage (zero to three percent) reside in the extreme North and West areas of the city, as well as the city core and Northwest quadrant (see Map 3). However, the tracts with zero to three percent Asian population cover larger areas than those in the Hispanic map, partly because there is a smaller percentage of Asians in the city than Hispanics. Furthermore, these areas may be more representative of the Asian population of the city as it is estimated that Asians represent 3.3 percent of the city’s
entire population in 2005. Like Hispanics, Asians also appear to be more concentrated in the Southeastern part of town than other areas.

Map 2: 2005 Percent Hispanic Population by Tract for Duval County, Florida
Recommendations and Conclusion

There is no question that Duval County’s population is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. The percentage of non-Hispanic Whites has continually decreased over the past decades, while the percentage of minorities, especially non-Black minorities, has risen.

With the ever increasing diversity of our city comes potential conflicts and problems. In fact, concern has been raised recently by some regarding what is perceived to be increasing tension between Blacks and non-Black minorities (sometimes referred to as
Browns). It has been reported that the presumed alliance between these two groups has become increasingly strained in recent years. It is believed that “many Blacks resent what is seen as Hispanics leapfrogging them up the socioeconomic ladder, and some complain of the skin-color prejudices that are particularly strong in some Hispanic countries, notably Mexico” (Buchanan, 2005). This conflict continues to mount as legal and illegal Hispanic immigrants take up residence in U.S. neighborhoods, many times predominately Black neighborhoods. Some communities have begun to experience problems in the form of violence, such as fights on school campuses between Blacks and non-Black minorities (Buchanan, 2005).

Consequently, it is imperative that we, as a community, understand the changing population around us and preclude any potential problems. While Jacksonville does not appear to have the apparent problems to the extent that other cities are experiencing, it is vital that city officials are cognizant of the potential issues that can arise. One way to thwart such problems is to give a voice to all groups of people and to keep such communication lines open.

Frustrations can run high when it is perceived that a particular group is not getting their voice heard. For instance, a Black woman participating in a forum for the most recent race relations study voiced such frustration stating, “The mayor has a Hispanic American advisory board, wanting to make sure that as the influx of Hispanic Americans comes to Jacksonville that we’re prepared that the needs of that population of people are met. I’m not mad at them. Of all these years, how come there was never…any concern with creating the same environment for the African American population? How come there’s never been…a Mayor’s African American advisory board?”

The population is a complex and dynamic entity, constantly changing in a growing city. While this paper has examined the composition of non-Black minorities in Duval County and some of the issues surrounding the changing population, it merely offers a glance at such issues. Even the racial and ethnic concepts change with time. For
example, the U.S. Census began allowing individuals to identify with more than one race. Additionally, as a demographer for the Pew Hispanic Center has pointed out, “The concept of what it means to be Hispanic in America will change as the population matures, and a greater percentage of American-born Hispanics increases” (Files, 2005, p. A12). Consequently, extensive research is required to completely understand the complexity of the changing population. In the mean time, open communication is vital.
References


