

***History and the Web: Migration, Ethnicity,  
and Identity / L'Histoire et le web:  
migration, ethnicité et identité***

# Citystats and the History of Community and Segregation in Post-Second World War Urban Canada

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## **Abstract**

*This article introduces an open access website—citystats.uvic.ca—designed to facilitate historical scholarship on ethnicity in post-Second World War Canada. Citystats offers access to two sociological measures of urban residential patterns,  $D$  and  $P^*$ , applying the measures to the ethnic origins variables in the Canadian census for all urban areas since 1961.  $D$ , the index of dissimilarity, is the most common gauge of urban residential patterns, describing the extent to which ethnic groups are evenly (or unevenly) distributed across the city.  $P^*$ , a measurement of the exposure of groups to one another, provides historians with a summary of the everyday surroundings of urban residents. The article explains the measures and highlights some puzzling patterns in the history of urban Canada, especially the segregation of Jewish Canadians and the relative integration of Aboriginal people. Just as scholars might be expected to know (at least approximately) the number of people comprising the group that they intend to study, they should also, I argue, be aware of their distribution across urban space and their exposure to other urbanites.*

## **Résumé**

*Cet article présente un site Web en accès libre, citystats.uvic.ca, conçu pour faciliter l'étude historique portant sur l'ethnicité dans le Canada d'après la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Citystats permet de manipuler deux mesures sociologiques de schémas résidentiels urbains,  $D$  et  $P^*$ , mesures appliquées aux variables sur l'origine ethnique du recensement canadien pour toutes les régions urbaines depuis 1961. «  $D$  », l'indice de dissimilitude, est l'indicateur de schéma résidentiel urbain le plus courant pour décrire l'uniformité de la distribution des groupes ethniques dans une ville. «  $P^*$  », mesure de l'exposition des groupes les uns aux autres, brosse pour les historiens le portrait du milieu dans lequel les résidents urbains vivent. L'article explique ces mesures et met au jour des tendances surprenantes dans l'histoire de la vie urbaine au Canada, en particulier la ségrégation des juifs canadiens et l'intégration relative des peuples autochtones. De la même façon que les historiens doivent*

*connaître (du moins approximativement) le nombre de personnes dans le groupe qu'ils étudient, je postule qu'ils doivent aussi comprendre leur répartition dans l'espace urbain et leur proximité avec les autres citoyens.*

This article introduces an open access website — [citystats.uvic.ca](http://citystats.uvic.ca) — designed to facilitate historical scholarship on ethnicity in post-Second World War Canada. The reflections below, along with the website, draw on two sociological measures — one that describes the segregation of urban ethnic groups and another that summarizes the exposure of various groups to one another — to enrich the descriptive context within which historians frame research. Just as scholars might be expected to know (at least approximately) the number of people comprising the group that they intend to study, they should also, I argue, be aware of their distribution across urban space and their exposure to other urbanites. These measures will not provide historians with full answers to the questions that they pose. Summary statistics of residential patterns alone cannot tell a satisfying story of ethnic or immigrant experience. Nonetheless, an understanding of residential patterns provides a crucial context for the study of urban ethnicity. With immigrants and ethnic groups overwhelmingly located in cities, an understanding of how they have settled is essential to the study of postwar ethnicity.

Citystats grows out of my conviction that measures of residential patterns can appeal to a wide audience of historians, including those whose eyes glaze over at the sight of a statistical table. Measures of residential patterns communicate meaningful social experience. They evoke city life on a neighbourhood scale, detailing social surroundings in pockets comprised of a few thousand people. They point historians, even in our descriptions of cities, towards the role of ethnicity as a practice or social construction. Whereas citywide population totals suggest, for example, that “Italianness” has been an attribute of a large number of Torontonians since the Second World War, measures of residential patterns suggest how ethnicity was put into action.<sup>1</sup> As they settled together in census tracts,

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1 Historians, of course, have largely jettisoned the view of ethnicity as an attribute, preferring instead analysis of the social practice of ethnic ties. See Nancy Foner and George M. Fredrickson, “Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity in the United States: Social Constructions and Social Relations in Historical and Comparative Perspective,” in *Not Just Black and White: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity in the United States*, ed. Nancy Foner and George M. Fredrickson (New York: Russell Sage, 2004), 1–22; Rogers Brubaker, “Ethnicity without Groups,” *European Journal of Sociology* 43, no. 2 (August 2002): 163–89; Kathleen Neils Conzen, David A. Gerber, Ewa Morawska, George E. Pozzetta, and Rudolph J. Vecoli, “The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the United States,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12, no. 1 (1992): 3–41; William L. Yancey, Eugene P. Erickson, and Richard N. Juliani, “Emergent Ethnicity: A Review and Reformulation,” *American Sociological Review* 41, no. 3 (1976): 391–403.

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Italians exemplified the combination of preferences, prejudices, opportunities, and barriers that made ethnicity a social organizational force in postwar Canada.<sup>2</sup> Citystats provides historians with easy access to summary statistics that gauge the place of ethnicity in urban life, allowing them, I hope, to make new contributions to interdisciplinary research. Historians who begin with the census, but then move on to other sources as they examine the dynamic construction of ethnicity over time, can play a key role in the wider study of urban ethnicity in Canada.<sup>3</sup>

Citystats owes its origins to a question posed at the 2006 meeting of the Canadian Historical Association at York University. On the initial day of the conference, a Toronto Transit Commission strike, coupled with a suffocating heat wave, provided a suitable, if stifling, backdrop for a conference devoted to the past and present challenges of urban places. At a round table session entitled “New Directions in U.S. and Canadian Urban History,” David Churchill, Alison Isenberg, Lisa Levenstein, and Marc Stein described recent developments in the field, particularly in the United States where urban history has emerged as a major force.<sup>4</sup> The prominent urbanist Richard Harris, the keynote speaker for the conference that year, was seated to my left. After the presentations, he wondered aloud why Canadian urban history seemed to lack the vitality that characterized recent historiography in the United States. A lengthy and animated discussion ensued. Educated on both sides of the border, and in the midst of a project that explored Italian experience in Toronto and Philadelphia, I found myself preoccupied by Harris’s question for some time thereafter. A full answer would be multifaceted and complex, taking in institutional, historical, and political differences between the two contexts. While only vaguely contemplating the range of issues raised that afternoon, I took the session as an inspiration for creating a tool that would enable historians to consider the social geography of ethnicity in urban Canada after the Second World War.

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2 These statements are not meant to suggest that ethnicity is always, or only, experienced within small neighbourhoods. Rather, I have expended significant energy arguing the very opposite. On the notion of community outside the bounds of locality, see Wilbur Zelinsky, *The Enigma of Ethnicity: Another American Dilemma* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2001), as well as my own work, including, *The Choreography of Community: Italian Ethnicity in Postwar Toronto and Philadelphia* (forthcoming, University of Chicago Press); “Italian Markets: Real Estate and Ethnic Community in Toronto and Philadelphia, 1940–1990,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 26, no. 3 (2007): 23–51; “An Inviting Parish: Community without Locality in Postwar Italian Toronto,” *Canadian Historical Review* 87, no. 3 (2006): 381–407; “Neither Fight nor Flight: Urban Synagogues in Postwar Philadelphia,” *Journal of Urban History* 32, no. 6 (2006): 791–812.

3 Citystats will soon expand beyond its current form. While it currently ends with 2001 data and includes data on ethnicity alone, it will be updated over time and expanded in scope to include other kinds of data. Given the current structure of the site — and the theme of this special issue — I concentrate on the role of the website in the history of ethnicity in Canada.

4 Lisa Levenstein, “New Directions in US and Canadian Urban History (Round Table),” paper presented at the meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, 2006.

Part of the recent success of American urban history can be attributed to the engagement of urban scholarship with the social and political history of race. Lisa Levenstein's presentation focused on a historiography that includes Arnold Hirsch, Thomas Sugrue, Robert Self, Kevin Kruse, and others — scholars who have made it impossible to discuss race in twentieth century America without thinking seriously about urban environments. Similarly, American cities can now hardly be discussed without consideration of the question of race.<sup>5</sup> Urban historians reached a wide audience as they tied contemporary concerns to the sources and stories that they unearthed in the archives. Closer scrutiny of race and ethnicity in urban Canada promises comparable thematic entanglement.

While historians do not generally use measures of segregation, I hope that the field of Canadian ethnic history will prove fertile ground for the introduction of Citystats. Robert Harney, the seminal Canadian ethnic historian, brought a keen sense of urban space to his work. In his essay "Ethnicity and Neighbourhoods," Harney argues that the history of ethnic groups must be told through the varied urban sites where they gathered and that the history of cities cannot be understood apart from these gatherings. Other scholars, such as Kay Anderson and John Zucchi, have helped historians understand the role of neighbourhoods in the social and political development of ethnicity in Canada.<sup>6</sup> Further, in areas outside of the

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5 There is a massive and still growing literature on the racial dynamics of American cities after the Second World War. Some exemplary works include, Matthew J. Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2006); Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Kevin Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Amanda I. Seligman, *Block by Block: Neighborhoods and Public Policy on Chicago's West Side* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Douglass S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983, 1998). Scholars in the United States have also created websites that permit the use of statistics in social history. See, especially, <[www.ipums.org](http://www.ipums.org)> (for geographic data, see <[www.nhgis.org](http://www.nhgis.org)> and <<http://www.s4.brown.edu/S4/projects.htm>>). In Canada, the Canadian Century Research Infrastructure promises to make a tremendous contribution in this area; see <<http://www.canada.uottawa.ca/ccri/CCRI/index.htm>>.

6 Robert F. Harney, "Ethnicity and Neighborhoods," in *Gathering Place: Peoples and Neighborhoods of Toronto, 1834–1945*, ed. Robert Harney (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1985), 1–24; Kay Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875–1980* (Montréal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1991); John Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto: Development of a National Identity, 1875–1935* (Montréal: McGill-Queens

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study of ethnicity, Canadian urban history has long been an interdisciplinary field, with particularly strong contributions from geographers.<sup>7</sup> I envision Citystats, therefore, not as a departure from past practice, but rather as a continuation of the interdisciplinarity that has already enriched the field.

University Press, 1988). For histories of ethnicity in Canada that emphasize urban space, see also, the author, "Italian Markets" and "An Inviting Parish"; John Zucchi, *A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 2007); Etan Diamond, *And I will Dwell in their Midst: Orthodox Jews in Suburbia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Daniel Hiebert, "Immigration and the Changing Social Geography of Greater Vancouver," *BC Studies* 121 (Spring 1999): 35–82; Richard Bobier, "Africville: The Test of Urban Renewal and Race in Halifax, Nova Scotia," *Past Imperfect* 4 (1995): 163–80; Daniel Hiebert, "Class, Ethnicity, and Residential Structure: The Social Geography of Winnipeg, 1901–1921," *Journal of Historical Geography* 17, no. 1 (1991): 56–86; Richard Thompson, *Toronto's Chinatown: The Changing Social Organization of an Ethnic Community* (New York: AMS Press, 1988); David Lai, *Chinatowns: Towns within Canadian Cities* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1989); Robert Harney and J. Vincenza Scarpaci eds., *Little Italies in North America* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1981). Although Canadian historians have not made extensive use of measures of residential segregation, a large interdisciplinary literature uses indices to assess Canadian urban ethnic experience. See, for example, T.R. Balakrishnan and Stephen Gyimah, "Spatial Residential Patterns of Selected Ethnic Groups: Significance and Policy Implications," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 35, no. 1 (2003): 113–34; Eric Fong, "A Comparative Perspective on Racial Residential Segregation: American and Canadian Experiences," *The Sociological Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (Spring 1996): 199–226; Daniel Hiebert, "Immigration and the Changing Social Geography of Greater Vancouver"; Daniel Hiebert, "Class, Ethnicity, and Residential Structure"; Warren E. Kalbach, "Ethnic Residential Segregation and Its Significance for the Individual in an Urban Setting," in *Ethnic Identity and Equality: Varieties of Experience in a Canadian City*, eds. Raymond Breton, W.W. Isajiw, W.E. Kalbach, and J.G. Reitz (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 92–134; T.R. Balakrishnan, "Changing Patterns of Ethnic Residential Segregation in Metropolitan Areas of Canada," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 19, no. 1 (1982): 92–110; Leo Driedger, "Jewish Identity: The Maintenance of Urban Religious and Ethnic Boundaries," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 3, no. 1 (1980): 67–88; Leo Driedger and Glenn Church, "Residential Segregation and Institutional Completeness: A Comparison of Ethnic Minorities," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 11, no. 1 (1974): 30–52; Anthony H. Richmond, *Ethnic Residential Segregation in Metropolitan Toronto* (Toronto: Ethnic Research Programme, 1972); Gordon A. Darroch and Wilfred G. Marston, "The Social Class Basis of Ethnic Residential Segregation: The Canadian Case," *American Journal of Sociology* 77, no. 3 (1971): 491–510.

- 7 See, for example, Richard Harris, *Creeping Conformity: How Canada Became Suburban* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) and *Unplanned Suburbs: Toronto's American Tragedy, 1900–1950* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Robert Lewis, *Manufacturing Montreal: The Making of and Industrial Landscape, 1850–1930* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000); Larry D. McCann and Peter J. Smith "Canada Becomes Urban: Cities and Urbanization in Historical Perspective," in *Canadian Cities in Transition*, eds. Trudi Bunting and Pierre Filion (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1991), 69–99. The interdisciplinary nature of Canadian urban history is also reflected in the collections compiled by Gilbert Stelter and Alan Artibise; see, for example, *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban and Social History* (Montréal: McGill-Queens Press, 1984) and *Shaping the Urban Landscape: Aspects of the Canadian City-Building Process* (Montréal: McGill-Queens Press, 1982).



*Map 1: Toronto (Metro) Census Tracts, 1971*

Source: University of Toronto Map Library

The measures provided on Cistats make use of data that describe the ethnic origins of Canadians according to their census tract of residence in every decennial census since 1961.<sup>8</sup> First introduced as “social areas” in the 1941 census, tracts are small geographic units within cities (Map 1). They are designed to follow permanent and recognizable urban features (usually larger streets) and contain several thousand inhabitants. Census officials have made relatively few changes to the tracts over time, providing a stable source of data that reflect small-scale, local experience.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The measures themselves do not require the use of census tracts as the geographic unit of measurement. Some researchers have preferred to use block groups, Dissemination Areas, and other smaller geographic units. However, tracts remain the most common basis for this kind of analysis. At the time of the writing of this article, Cistats includes only the “ethnic origins” census variable, which is therefore used throughout this article.

<sup>9</sup> As far as I am aware, little work has been done on the history of the census tract in Canada — a topic that offers an intriguing overlap of government policy and social experience. For information on the regulations guiding the drawing of tracts, see Statistics Canada, “Illustrated Glossary,” online at <[http://geodepot.statcan.ca/Diss/Reference/COGG/LongDescription\\_e.cfm?GEO\\_LEVEL=12&REFCODE=1&LANG=E](http://geodepot.statcan.ca/Diss/Reference/COGG/LongDescription_e.cfm?GEO_LEVEL=12&REFCODE=1&LANG=E)>, (viewed 24 July 2008). See also <<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Info/history.cfm>>, (viewed 20 March 2009). Examination of whether and how census officials fulfilled their aim to create “socially homogeneous” tracts might be especially important to the future use of this data.



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The two measures featured on Citystats use census tracts differently, but both summarize urban residential patterns. The measure of segregation, or the index of dissimilarity (referred to below as D), is the most common gauge of urban residential patterns. In the United States, D has been central to establishing that African Americans experienced “ghettoization” on a level that finds little parallel in the history of immigrant or ethnic groups in that country.<sup>10</sup> D produces a number, ranging from 0 to 1, indicating the degree to which a selected group is evenly (or unevenly) distributed within a given city. While the measure exists in several varieties — often comparing the relative distribution of two selected groups (for example white and non-white) — the version chosen for the website examines the distribution of one selected group against that of the entire urban population.<sup>11</sup> This version of D measures evenness by comparing a group’s representation within the total population of each census tract to its representation within the city as a whole. The number that it produces has typically been interpreted as the proportion of the group’s population that would need to change their area of residence to achieve an even distribution across all tracts. For example, people reporting German origins in Toronto in 1971 had a D score of 0.17, meaning that 17 percent of Germans would have had to relocate for the population to be spread evenly across the city. People of

10 See, for example, Karl E. Taeuber and Alma F. Taeuber, *Negroes in Cities: Residential Segregation and Neighborhood Change* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1965); Annemette Sørensen, Karl E. Taeuber, and Leslie J. Hollingsworth, Jr., “Indexes of Racial Residential Segregation for 109 Cities in the United States, 1940 to 1970,” *Sociological Focus* 8 (1975): 128–30. Scholars have also used this measure in conjunction with other measures (including the measure of exposure discussed below) to establish and analyze the distinctive history of African American segregation. See, for example, Stanley Lieberson, *A Piece of the Pie: Blacks and White Immigrants since 1880* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); Massey and Denton, *American Apartheid*. For a critique of the application of Massey and Denton’s dimensions of residential segregation in the Canadian context, see Oksana Starchenko and Evelyn Peters, “Aboriginal Settlement Patterns in Canadian Cities: Does the Classic Index-based Approach Apply?” *Environment and Planning A* 40 (2008): 676–95. While the authors raise important questions, they do not present compelling grounds for historians to avoid use of the two measures presented here for descriptive purposes.

11 There is some inconsistency within the sociological literature in the precise naming of this measure, as well as the formula used in its calculation. Throughout this article, I follow Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton, “The Dimensions of Residential Segregation,” *Social Forces* 67, no. 2 (December 1988): 281–315. Their formula for the index of dissimilarity is:

$$D = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n |t_i p_i - P|}{2TP(1-P)}$$

where  $t_i$  and  $p_i$  are the total population and minority proportion of areal unit (in this case census tract)  $i$ , and  $T$  and  $P$  are the population size and the minority proportion of the whole city, which is subdivided into  $n$  areal units (284). For contrasting terminology and calculations, see for example, Otis Duncan and Beverly Duncan, “Residential Distribution and Occupational Stratification,” *The American Journal of Sociology* 60, no. 5 (March 1955): 493–503.



Polish origins were more than twice as segregated. Their D score of 0.37 indicates that 37 percent of Poles would have had to relocate to achieve an even distribution.

The measure of segregation has notable strengths and weaknesses as a tool for understanding urban residence. Its advantages include simplicity and comparability. Its simplicity facilitates the use of the measure to provide a descriptive context for research questions. The numbers cited above, for example, demonstrate that Polish Torontonians were significantly more segregated in Toronto in 1971 than people of German origins. D thus allows straightforward comparisons among various groups. Further, because the measure has been widely used in other contexts, the figures for Toronto in 1971 can be readily incorporated into an existing frame of reference. The figures cited above suggest that neither Germans nor Poles experienced high levels of segregation in Toronto in 1971. In North America more broadly, and in Toronto specifically, other groups were significantly more segregated (a point to which I return below).

Its simplicity and comparability make D a useful starting-point. The numbers for Polish and German Torontonians suggest intriguing lines of inquiry. Why were Poles more likely to cluster together than people of German origins? How did the relative integration of both groups shape their understandings and experiences of the city? Did their spatial integration entail social integration? By pointing to the role of ethnicity in shaping the residential composition of the city, D suggests intriguing urban and ethnic research questions.

Despite the attractions of D, its interpretation in Canadian cities requires great care. The popularity of the measure in the United States reflects the conviction, largely derived from the study of race in American cities, that uneven residential distribution reflects social inequality. However, while the concentration of group members in particular areas of the city can coincide with social and economic marginalization, it can also reflect choice and privilege. The measure describes both obstacles and opportunities. Just as American historians discovered the meaning of African American segregation in the archives — where they unearthed redlining maps, racist neighbourhood associations, and black community responses — so too Canadian historians will gain better understanding of residential patterns as they turn to additional sources.<sup>12</sup>

Use of D for historical analysis also has disadvantages, some of which are general to analysis based on the census and some of which are specific to this particular measure.<sup>13</sup> Like other approaches that rely on the census, D depends upon

<sup>12</sup> See note 5.

<sup>13</sup> For the purposes of this article, I do not consider some of the technical concerns about measures of residential patterns. Instead, the website provides guidelines that are in keeping with the general practices of sociologists and geographers. For example, the website encourages use of the measure only in instances when the ethnic population meets a minimum threshold relative to

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imperfect categories. Regions of origin, religious persuasions, and ethnic divisions subdivide many of the national groups identified in the census. These divisions raise serious questions about the capacity of a single statistic to summarize the residential experiences of members of many ethnic groups. But these questions, I would argue, also reflect the value of the measure. As contexts for study, rather than final conclusions, the measures are intended to generate questions. Far more than population totals, measures of residential patterns point directly to research that would explore the social significance of national origins. Citation of the total number of people of Chinese origins in post-Second World War Vancouver, for example, might obscure the complexity and diversity of this origins category. However, the measure of segregation indicates that Chinese Vancouverites clustered together in postwar Vancouver (in 1971, for example, the D score was 0.54). With the measure in mind, historians can ask questions that the census cannot answer alone: Did Chinese residential patterns reflect regional divisions? How did Vancouver neighbourhoods shape the experience of Chinese ethnicity? For answers to these questions, historians will turn to other sources.

Perhaps more problematically, D provides a highly abstract summary of urban life. Its point of departure — the even distribution of groups among tracts — is a mathematical, rather than a social reality. Groups are never distributed perfectly across census tracts. Furthermore, the phenomenon evoked by the measure is an imaginary one. Urban residents never relocate *en masse* for the purpose of dispersing evenly across a cityscape. Finally, and most importantly, the evenness of a group's distribution among census tracts can misrepresent the social and spatial experiences of group members. Residents who are very unevenly distributed may nonetheless be surrounded by a great deal of diversity. Indeed, most ethnic groups comprise only a small portion of the urban population, so they can be highly segregated while simultaneously comprising only a small portion of their neighbourhoods. Large groups, by contrast, might comprise majorities in their census tracts, even in the absence of high segregation.<sup>14</sup> To capture the distinction between segregation and separation, Citystats suggests the simultaneous use of an additional, and very different, measure of residential patterns.

The measurement of exposure — in this case with a statistic called P\* (read P-star) — provides historians with a summary of the everyday surroundings of urban residents. P\* can be expressed either in terms of cross-group interaction

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the number of tracts (ten times). The decision is premised on the notion that historians, by and large, will not be engaged in the technical manipulation and development of measures, but rather in using the measures in a fashion that complies with general practice in the disciplines that are devoted to their development.

14 As has been well documented, African Americans in the United States have experienced both segregation and isolation. In 1970 some 15 million African Americans lived as a majority in their own census tracts (a majority of African Americans at that date).

or in terms of ethnic isolation.<sup>15</sup> It describes the social geographic surroundings of a randomly selected member of any given group (e.g., Chinese). When it is used to gauge the interaction of different ethnic groups, the  $P^*$  value (which like  $D$  ranges from 0 to 1) indicates the probability that someone else selected from the same residential area (census tract) will be a member of some other group (e.g. Italian). For example, the  $P^*$  score for the exposure of Chinese Vancouverites to Italian Vancouverites in 1971 is 0.06. This  $P^*$  score indicates that a randomly selected person living in the same census tract as a Chinese Vancouverite had a six percent chance of being Italian. We might think of this as a measure of strangers likely to be encountered at a local bus stop, waiting in line for groceries, or at a local post office. For Chinese Vancouverites in 1971, Italians were a small but notable percentage of everyday social surroundings. Unlike  $D$ , the  $P^*$  measure directly reflects population totals within the city. In 1971, for example, all Vancouverites had a high level of exposure to people of British origins, who were numerically dominant throughout the city. In addition, because  $P^*$  values are affected by the percentage of each group in the city, they are not symmetrical. For example, the exposure of Chinese Vancouverites to those from the British Isles in 1971 was 0.45, whereas the exposure of Vancouverites from the British Isles to people of Chinese origins was only 0.03. People of British origins were an overwhelming presence in the lives of Chinese city residents, while the Chinese comprised a small fraction of the daily encounters of British Vancouverites.

A group's exposure to itself can be understood as a measure of isolation. If a group's exposure to itself is high (close to 1), then randomly selected residents of their tracts are likely to report the same national origins. Lower results indicate that members of the group experience greater exposure to people of other origins. In 1981, individuals of Greek origins constituted less than two percent of the population of Montréal. However, the  $P^*$  score for the exposure of Greeks to other Greeks, or their isolation score, was 0.19. Greek residents were not highly isolated — 81 percent of their neighbours reported other origins — but daily life for the average Greek Montréaler included regular encounters with co-ethnics.<sup>16</sup>

15 As with  $D$ , my use of  $P^*$  follows Massey and Denton, "The Dimensions of Residential Segregation," 288. Their formula for the measure is:

$$xP^*_y = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n [x_i/X][y_i/t_i]}{\sum_{i=1}^n [x_i/X][y_i/t_i]} \quad \text{where } x_i, y_i, \text{ and } t_i \text{ are the numbers of } X \text{ members, } Y \text{ members, and} \\ \text{the total population of unit } i, \text{ respectively, and } X \text{ represents the number of } X \text{ members city-wide.}$$

16 In addition to the measures described here, the website also includes a manipulation of  $P^*$  (which we call adjusted  $P^*$ ) that divides the  $P^*$  figure by the proportion of group  $y$  in the total population. This manipulation produces an "odds ratio" indicating the extent to which being in group  $x$  increases or decreases the likelihood of residing near group  $y$ . In the case of Jewish isolation in 1971 in Toronto, the measure indicates that being Jewish increased the odds of residing near Jews by a factor of 8.8.

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By taking tracts, rather than just a few blocks or block faces, as the unit of measurement, the index on Citystats may underestimate the extent of spatial isolation. Greek Montréalers in mixed tracts may have concentrated together on a small number of blocks, increasing their daily exposure to one-another. Nonetheless, in their broader experiences of their local environments — on commercial strips, at schools, and in local parks — people of Greek origins were likely to interact with non-Greeks.

P\* communicates experiences of direct interest to historians. While it produces an abstraction of urban experience — representing the daily surroundings of the “average” member of a group rather than the daily experience of any real individual — it nonetheless offers a powerful tool for summarizing the social surroundings of immigrant and ethnic groups in postwar cities. P\* provides highly specific accounts of Canadian urban diversity, evoking social encounters within cosmopolitan environments. It challenges historians to abandon the insularity of many ethnic case studies (my own studies of Italians included) and encourages histories of relations that cross ethnic boundaries. The meaning of these relations, the tone and content of exposure, remain open to research.

The measurement of exposure has notable limitations. It is, of course, constrained by census categories in just the same way as the measurement of segregation. In addition, the intricacy of the measurement — which details the exposure of each ethnic group to all others individually, rather than as a single summary statistic — carries benefits and drawbacks. It permits the exposure index to convey some of the complexity of urban experience, but makes analysis, even with merely descriptive aims, more demanding. Most important, in my view, the attempt to measure social exposure from the perspective of residence alone should leave historians dissatisfied. After all, urbanites not only wait at bus-stops, they board buses and move about the city, encountering people who do not reside in their census tracts. Daily social life is not necessarily, and perhaps decreasingly, dominated by neighbours.<sup>17</sup> There are statistical methods (for example the measurement of diversity in workplaces and industries) that compensate for the limits of measures rooted in residence. However, for most historians a different research approach, rather than a battery of measures, will likely prove most satisfying. For historians, measures of residential exposure will provide an important starting point, a platform from which to launch questions about, for example, the shifting relations among neighbourhood, work, and social life.

Although Citystats encourages historians to use the measures however they wish, the remainder of this paper suggests some substantive findings that emerge from my own explorations. In the pages below I hope to communicate the potential of the measures to provoke new questions in case studies of indi-

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17 See Zelinsky, *Enigma of Ethnicity*.

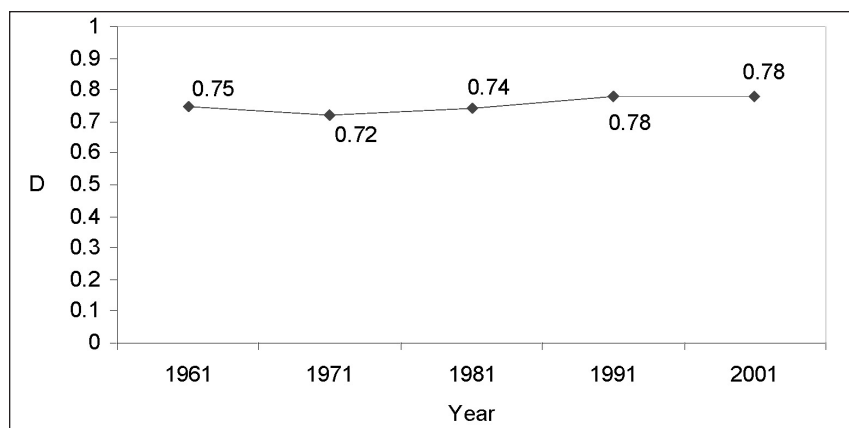


Figure 1: Segregation of Jews in Toronto (D), 1961-2001

Source: citystats.uvic.ca

vidual ethnic groups, as well as their capacity to encourage broader comparative analyses of the place of ethnicity in urban space.

As has already been suggested, historians might use the website in case studies of individual ethnic groups. Consider, for example, the Jewish population of Toronto, which superseded Montréal as the largest Jewish community in postwar Canada. Use of D provides concrete evidence that Jews in Toronto (and elsewhere) have been remarkably segregated. The measure of segregation for Jews in Toronto exceeds 0.70 in every census since 1961 (Figure 1). Throughout the postwar era, therefore, more than 70 percent of Jews would have had to relocate to produce an even distribution across the city. Every decennial census found that they were the most segregated Torontonians. D suggests that Jews have had a distinctive history in Toronto. Indeed, until 2001, when the D score for Torontonians of Punjabi origins reached 0.73, no other group reached the 0.70 threshold in any year. In 1961 and 1971 the next closest groups in terms of segregation, Chinese and Italians respectively, had D scores of less than 0.55. Further, Jewish segregation may have increased slightly over time. Shifting definitions of ethnic origins make this conclusion somewhat tenuous. However, in 1991 and 2001, some 100,000 Torontonians reporting exclusive (single) Jewish origins were more segregated than those identified decades prior.<sup>18</sup> Just as contemporary study of African American urban life begins with some knowledge of the history of segregation, any history of Jews in postwar Toronto, or indeed Canada, should begin with a

18 At the present time, the website includes only individuals who listed single ethnic origins. We are still exploring the possibility, and technical difficulties, of including the growing number of Canadians who indicate multiple ethnic origins. For figures on the other groups mentioned here, see Citystats.

# CITYSTATS AND THE HISTORY OF COMMUNITY AND SEGREGATION IN POST-SECOND WORLD WAR URBAN CANADA

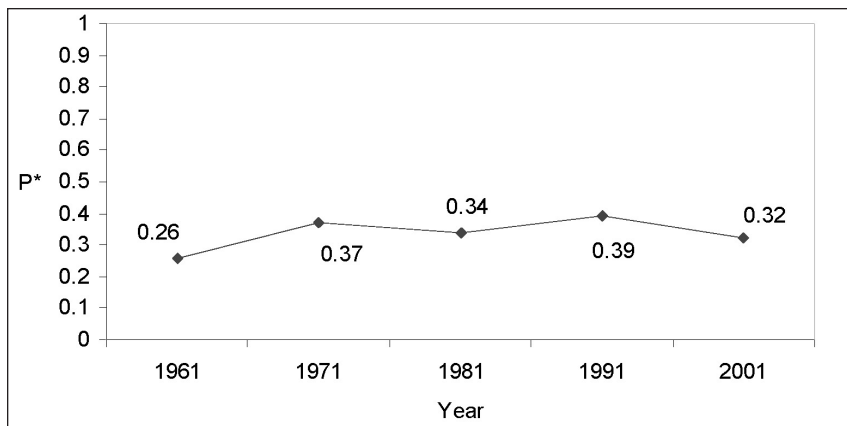


Figure 2: Isolation of Jews in Toronto ( $xP^*x$ ), 1961-2001

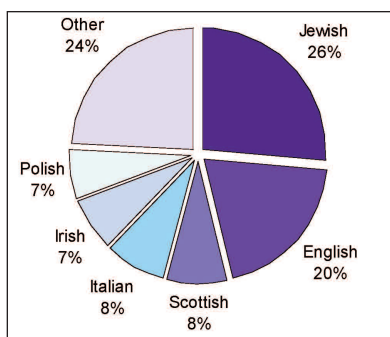
Source: citystats.uvic.ca

cognizance of this distinctive and persistent dimension of community life.

Although segregated, Jews have not lived apart from other Torontonians. Rather, Jews, who never exceeded five percent of the city's population, had ongoing exposure to members of other ethnic groups. In its simplest terms, this dynamic can be expressed as a measure of isolation (Figure 2). In the postwar period Jewish isolation never reached a  $P^*$  score of 0.40. While Jews comprised a majority of some tracts, most Jewish Torontonians lived within predominantly non-Jewish neighbourhoods. By contrast, the average isolation of African Americans in 30 cities in the United States in 1970 stood above 0.70. In some cities — notably Chicago, Washington, and Atlanta — the average African American lived in a tract where the black population comprised some 90 percent of the total population. Measurement of exposure provides a systematic accounting of the difference between the segregation of large and small urban groups. Jews, a small group, were segregated but not isolated.<sup>19</sup>

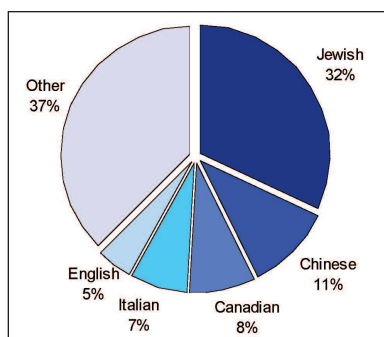
Using  $P^*$  from a broader perspective — with an eye to interaction as well as isolation — adds considerable detail to this portrait. For illustrative purposes, consider the groups who comprised at least five percent of the population in the tract surrounding the “average” Jewish resident of Toronto in 1961 and 2001 (Figures 3 and 4). At both dates, the significant Jewish presence within their own tracts left other groups under-represented. In 1961, 34 percent of city residents reported English origins, but only 20 percent of those living in proximity to Jews did so. Scottish and Irish origins residents were similarly under-represented in Jewish neighbourhoods. People reporting Polish origins

19 Massey and Denton, *American Apartheid*, 48. A contrast similar to the one suggested here is developed in Eric Fong, “A Comparative Perspective on Racial Residential Segregation.”



*Figure 3: Major groups residing in proximity to Jews in Toronto, 1961 (as percentages)*

Source: citystats.uvic.ca



*Figure 4: Major groups residing in proximity to Jews in Toronto, 2001 (as percentages)*

Source: citystats.uvic.ca

were significantly over-represented, most likely because many self-identified Poles were also Jewish, and vice versa. By 2001, the social surroundings of the average Jewish resident had changed significantly, even as Jewish segregation remained steady. The Jewish percentage of the local environment had increased notably, as had the presence of myriad other groups that each comprised less than five percent of the local population (represented on the graph as “other”). Thus, even as their isolation (exposure to other Jews) increased, Jewish residents experienced the diversification of Toronto as the immigrant pool broadened. In contrast to 1961, Poles no longer concentrated alongside Jewish Torontonians.

In the case of Jewish Torontonians, measures of segregation and exposure promise to frame new lines of historical research. Historians might consider these results as both effects and causes, exploring the dynamics that created and perpetuated peculiar Jewish residential patterns, while also asking how residential patterns shaped social, political, and cultural life within the city’s Jewish community. How did Jewish exposure to other Jews shape their perceptions and experiences of the city? How did non-Jews perceive and respond to Jewish residential concentration? How did Jews respond to the new immigrant groups, most notably the Chinese, who came to occupy an increasing share of their local surroundings? The residential patterns of Jewish Torontonians suggest the enduring importance of ethnic and religious ties to residential choice, but they also prompt questions about relationships that crossed ethno-cultural lines.

The finding that Jews were the most segregated group in the largest and most diverse Canadian city (and elsewhere) should also prompt broader questions about urban spatial patterns in Canada. In the United States (religion is absent from the census in the United States, so Jewish segregation cannot be



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reliably gauged) African American segregation has overlapped with social and economic marginalization. Indeed, while the scholarship in the United States has acknowledged that some ethnic and immigrant groups choose to cluster together, African American ghettoization has encouraged a conceptual linkage between residential segregation and socio-economic marginalization. The data from Canadian cities will challenge this linkage. If spatial and socio-economic marginalization are coincidental in the United States, they seem far less entangled north of the border. Canada may have its own peculiar history of urban inequality, for which concepts borrowed from the United States, such as ghettoization, have little utility. Canadian cities have been both unequal and divided along ethnic lines, but these two dynamics are not interwoven in the fashion of post-Second World War America.

Aboriginal residential patterns also underline the distinctiveness of Canadian urban spatial and social dynamics. Although the history of Canada's urban Aboriginal people demands significant further attention, the existing literature and social scientific analysis confirms that First Nations urbanites have faced pervasive racism and economic marginalization.<sup>20</sup> Some observers have assumed that Aboriginal people were also segregated. Noted political scientist and long-time student of Aboriginal affairs, Alain Cairns, suggests that Aboriginal people in Canadian cities represent a Canadian equivalent to African American ghettoization in the United States.<sup>21</sup> As historians devote greater attention to this topic, we will be able to assess the utility of such comparisons. However, figures on the segregation of Aboriginal people in Winnipeg (and elsewhere) caution against an approach that assumes that Aboriginal people represent a Canadian instance of urban ghettoization. Consider, for example, the results from 1971, 1981, and 1991 (Figure 5). With their D scores hovering around 0.50, Aboriginal people in Winnipeg have experienced notable levels of segregation. However, in contrast to the experiences of African Americans in many cities in the United States during the same period, Aboriginal people were neither exceptional nor extreme in this regard. In 1981, seven other ethnic groups were more segregated. Jewish Winnipeggers, like their co-religionists in Toronto, experienced significantly higher levels of segregation in every census. The Aboriginal population, far more marginalized than Jews in other regards, has been significantly more spatially integrated. Further historical research will shed more light on both the

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20 For my extended reflections on these topics, see "Municipal Colonialism in Vancouver: City Planning and the Conflict over Indian Reserves, 1928–1950s," *Canadian Historical Review* 89, no. 4 (December 2008): 541–80.

21 Alan Cairns, "Aboriginal Peoples' Two Roads to the Future," *Policy Options* (January–February 2000): 31–3. The tendency to draw parallels between African American urban experience and that of Aboriginal people in Canada is noted in Starchenko and Peters, "Aboriginal Settlement Patterns in Canadian Cities," 681.

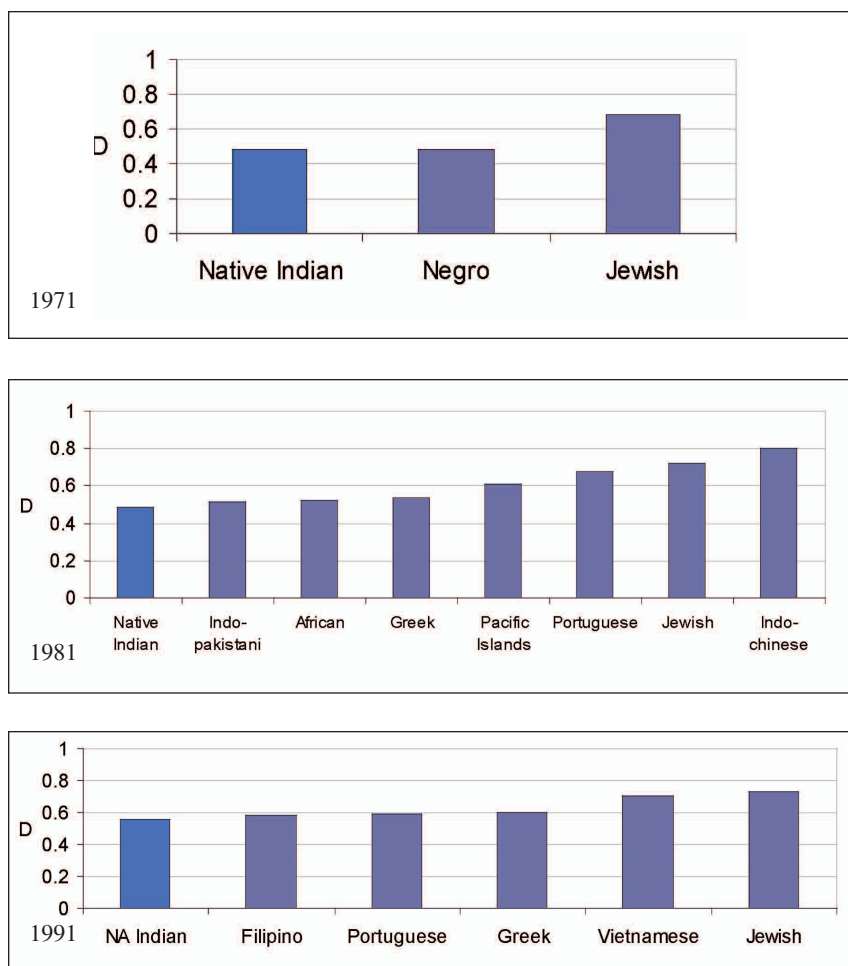


Figure 5: D scores for Aboriginal people\* and more segregated groups in Winnipeg, 1971-1991 (using census category names)

Source: citystats.uvic.ca

history of inequality and spatial division in Canadian cities, but the two will not — these figures suggest — be paired in the fashion observed in American cities.<sup>22</sup>

\* For this analysis I use the census categories “Native Indian” in 1971 and 1981 and “North American Indian” in 1991. In 1991, the census category “Metis” had lower levels of segregation in Winnipeg than “North American Indians.”

22 On Aboriginal segregation in Canada, see Starchenko and Peters, “Aboriginal Settlement Patterns in Canadian Cities”; Harald Bauder and Bob Sharpe, “Residential Segregation of Visible Minorities in Canada’s Gateway Cities,” *The Canadian Geographer* 46 (2002),

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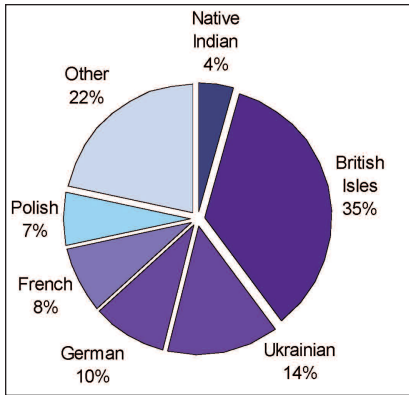


Figure 6: Major groups residing in proximity to Aboriginal people in Winnipeg, 1971 (as percentages)

Source: citystats.uvic.ca

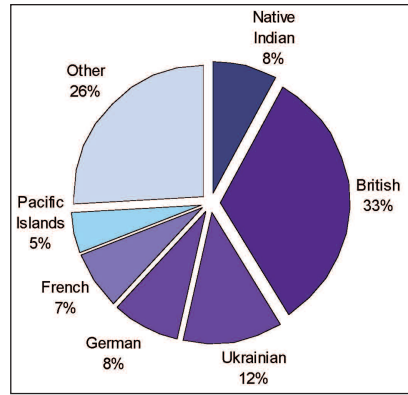


Figure 7: Major groups residing in proximity to Aboriginal people in Winnipeg, 1981 (as percentages)

Source: citystats.uvic.ca

The P\* statistic suggests further problems with a presumption of Aboriginal ghettoization. With the exception of “Pacific Islanders” in 1981, the groups surrounding Aboriginal people reflected the wider composition of the city (Figures 6 and 7). In contrast to Jews in Toronto (or African Americans in the United States), the daily surroundings of the average Aboriginal person in Winnipeg differed little, on ethnic terms, from those of other Winnipeggers. Notably, however, the presence of Aboriginal people within the tracts where they resided doubled in the 1970s. Although Aboriginal people comprised less than three percent of the city in 1981, the average Aboriginal Winnipegger could expect eight percent of his or her neighbours to have similar origins. This shift — imperceptible with the use of D alone — likely changed Aboriginal experience in the city. Historians might also research topics related to the disproportionate presence of Pacific Islanders (one of the city’s most segregated groups) alongside Aboriginal people. Analysis of social exposure, rather than analogies to ghettoization, will be central to explaining urban Aboriginal lives in Winnipeg and elsewhere.

204–22; Joe T. Darden and Sameh M. Kamel, “The Spatial and Socioeconomic Analysis of First Nation People in Toronto CMA,” *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 22, no. 2 (2002): 239–67; Paul S. Maxim, Carl Keane, and Jerry White, “Urban Residential Patterns of Aboriginal People in Canada,” in *Not Strangers in These Parts: Urban Aboriginal Peoples*, eds. David Newhouse and Evelyn Peters (Ottawa: Policy Research Initiative, 2003), 79–91. Geographers and sociologists have noted the distinctive dynamic of Canadian residential segregation. For a summary of their findings, see: Daniel Hiebert, “The Social Geography of Immigration and Urbanization in Canada: A Review and Interpretation,” RIIM Working Paper Series #00-12 (Vancouver: Centre for Excellence, Simon Fraser University). See also Fong, “A Comparative Perspective on Racial Residential Segregation.”

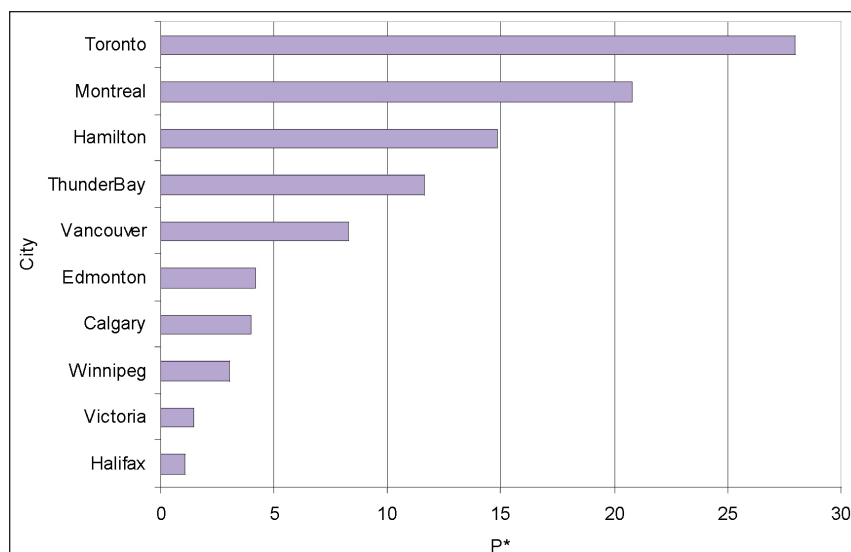


Figure 8: Italian Isolation in selected cities, 1981

Source: citystats.uvic.ca

Citystats also facilitates comparisons with wider perspectives. Historians can use the website to explore the residential patterns of a single group in a wide range of locations, or, indeed, a wide variety of groups in various locales. The isolation index for Italians in various cities in 1981, for example, suggests the very different contexts of ethnic life in postwar Canada (Figure 8). While Italian immigrants to Halifax and Victoria shared national origins with those in Montréal and Toronto, their experiences of ethnicity in Canada differed. Historians, of course, already know that Victoria and Toronto are not the same place. But measurement of isolation provides a specific description of how they differed in social geographic terms. The “average” Italian resident of Toronto lived in a local context that was highly Italian — almost a third of residents in his or her census tract were likely to report Italian origins. In Victoria, by contrast, less than two percent of people surrounding the “average” Italian traced origins to Italy. These figures go further than citywide percentages (11 percent versus one percent, respectively) towards describing the differences between experiences of ethnicity in the two locales.

Comparison of multiple groups in multiple cities is still more likely to prompt broad historical questions. Measurement of the segregation of various groups in Toronto, Montréal, and Vancouver in 1981 suggests an intriguing and provocative pattern (Figure 9). Ethnic groups in Montréal, it would seem, were significantly more segregated than those in Toronto, which, in turn, were more segregated than those in Vancouver. Here, perhaps, the measures promise the

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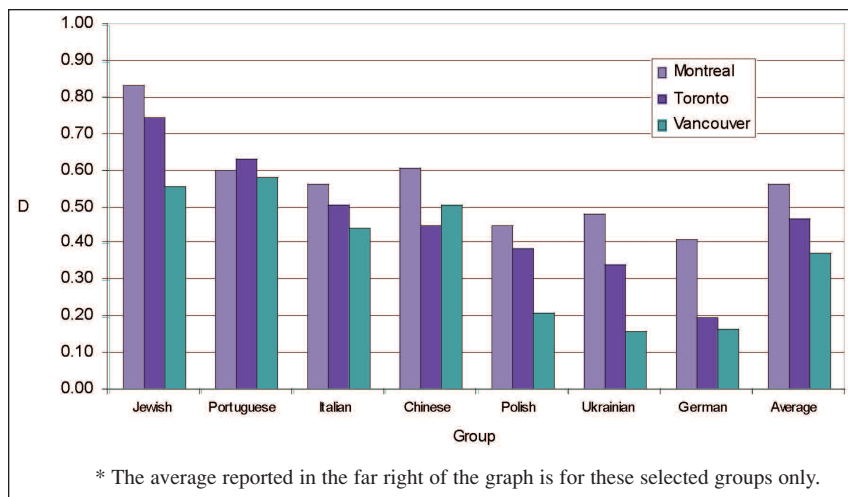


Figure 9: Segregation of selected ethnic groups\* in Vancouver, Montreal, and Toronto, 1981

Source: citystats.uvic.ca

most thorough integration of urban history with the history of race and ethnicity. The timing of urban development, local “host” cultures, and immigrant communities play some role in shaping these distinctive urban geographies. The varied arrangements of ethnicity in Canadian cities suggest the need for research that explores the relations between wider urban dynamics and experiences of urban community.

Citystats will appeal to a wide audience of historians if its users approach the site with their own research questions. If the site is to succeed, historians interested in family and gender relations, labour force experience and political activism, “gatekeepers” and the liberal state, patterns of consumption and leisure activities, and other topics, will have to find the social geography of ethnicity an intriguing descriptive framework for their research. Rather than speculate on the myriad forms that such connections might take — how, for example, gender norms and performances in ethnic communities might be shaped by the social geography of settlement — I leave these questions to those better trained and disposed to answer them. I hope, however, to have provided a tool that will enable historians to see a new context for their own questions. The stunning diversity of Canadian cities — and the varied arrangements of ethnicity within them — promises a flourishing scholarship that, I hope, may speak to urbanists and historians both in Canada and elsewhere.

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