For Latinos of South American origin, Los Angeles County is the than any other metropolitan area, during the 1990s Mexican third most important center, following New York and Miami. 

immigrants became less likely to settle in Southern California origin than the second largest such metro area (Washington, DC). 

Latino center. 

than in the remainder of the United States. This suggests that in the future Southern California will become a less dominant Latino center.

Largest U.S. Latino population. Latinos in Southern California outnumber Latinos in the other leading CMSA concentrations—New York, Chicago, Miami, and Houston—combined. Southern California is clearly the preeminent Latino center of the United States.

Los Angeles County is easily the most important place in the United States for people whose heritage is Mexican and Central American. In fact, Los Angeles County has three times more people of Mexican origin than the next largest primary metropolitan area (Chicago) and three times more people of Central American origin than the second largest such metro area (Washington, DC). For Latinos of South American origin, Los Angeles County is the third most important center, following New York and Miami.

Although Southern California is home to more Latinos than any other metropolitan area, during the 1990s Mexican immigrants became less likely to settle in Southern California than in the remainder of the United States. This suggests that in the future Southern California will become a less dominant Latino center.

### Patterns of Latino Population Growth

Southern California’s Latino population grew by over a third during the 1990s to a total of about 6.6 million (Table 5.1). As of 2000, there were about 50,000 more Latinos than Whites in Southern California. In Los Angeles County, Latinos began outnumbering Whites about 1993.

The rapid growth rate of Latinos in California during the 1990s was more the result of natural increase than net migration. The birthrate among Latinos, particularly high among immigrants from Mexico, combined with a low death rate to explain two-thirds or more of Latino increase during the 1990s in Southern California.3

Due to data problems with the Census 2000 counts of specific Hispanic nationalities, the Southern California totals for Mexicans and Central Americans as estimated by the Pew Hispanic Center (Table 5.1) are probably superior to the Census 2000 figures.4 We derived county estimates from the Pew estimates, and we recommend our estimates as better county totals of Mexicans and Central Americans than the numbers provided by Census 2000.

The Pew estimates for 2000 indicate that 80 percent of all Hispanics in the five-county Los Angeles CMSA are Mexicans. The next largest Hispanic nationalities and their estimated totals are Salvadorans (340,229) and Guatemalans (186,496).

Latino numbers increased least in Los Angeles County and most in the four outlying counties. The highest rates of Latino growth were in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, the

### Table 5.1 Latino (Hispanic) Populations, 1990 and 2000:

#### Counties in Los Angeles CMSA

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Notes: Estimates for the Los Angeles CMSA are by the Pew Hispanic Center, as explained in chapter 2. “Changes in Census Procedures, Hispanic or Latino nationalities.” Estimates for counties are our apportioning of the Pew estimates to each county. Percent change 1990-2000 shows the rate of increase between the 1990 census and that 2000 estimate.
leading destinations for people looking for newer homes priced lower than in Los Angeles County. Central Americans were particularly likely to move to these same two counties, as well as to Ventura County.

Growth of existing barrios (enclaves). On the map of Latino change the densest clusters represent the growth of Latino ethnic concentrations (Figure 5.1). These develop both from continued Latino replacement of non-Latino residents in neighborhoods that are already partially Latino, and from geographical expansion of already existing Latino neighborhoods into adjacent areas.

The larger areas of intense Latino growth have low- or moderate-priced housing, either near city centers, in or near industrial areas, or in older suburbs. In some cases Latino families pool their finances to buy moderate-priced suburban homes rather than continue to pay rent.

The largest expanding barrio or enclave is south of Downtown L.A., roughly the area from the Harbor Freeway (Interstate 110) to the San Gabriel River Freeway (Interstate 605), including South Central L.A., Huntington Park, South Gate, Paramount, Downey, Norwalk, and Whittier. Most of this area is over 80 percent Latino, and some tracts are over 95 percent Latino. In some places the edge of this growing Latino enclave is sharply defined by industrial land use. Thus, there is little Latino growth in Vernon and the City of Commerce, Santa Fe Springs, and Carson although many Latinos are employed in manufacturing and other jobs in these places.

Similar patterns of growth occurred in the San Fernando Valley, where jobs in older industries are generally in the older eastern portion of the Valley. The large Mexican settlement in the East Valley, which originated over a century ago in the small city of San Fernando, expanded in all directions, as did the Canoga Park barrio in the West Valley. Throughout the Valley, in areas of low- and moderate-priced housing, Latinos moved into the homes and apartments of departing Whites.

Dispersal to more distant suburbs. Latino numbers have been growing rapidly in the outlying suburbs. In most cases this represents movement into housing vacated by Whites. This process has been occurring for two or three decades in central cities and older suburbs closer to Los Angeles, but during the 1990s it also characterized cities more peripheral to the metropolitan area.

Eastern and southeastern Los Angeles County may contain the most important concentration of successful, middle-class Mexican Americans in Southern California and, possibly, the United States. These families live in the suburban cities of Whittier, Downey, Hacienda Heights, Covina, West Covina, and nearby places.

The shift in ethnic composition from White to Latino is clearly evident in more distant suburbs (Figures 5.1 and 4.1). The factors involved in the details of White-Latino residential separation are covered in the section on “Patterns of Black-White Change in Outer Suburbs” in chapter 4.

Some Latinos have also settled in the more expensive, mostly White residential developments in outer suburbs. These are exemplified by the Orange County cities of Mission Viejo, Laguna Hills, and San Juan Capistrano. A similar pattern is found in the many developments between Corona and Temecula in Riverside County.

Latino settlement in more distant suburbs symbolizes the upward mobility of the mostly U.S.-born Latinos. It represents significant economic success, particularly for those who become homeowners in the process of moving.

Areas of Latino Decline

Because Latino population growth has been so widespread, areas that experienced decline give indications of some less typical dynamics of ethnic neighborhood change. Latino numbers declined in certain places for four basic reasons: loss of low- or moderate-priced housing because of urban redevelopment, reduced crowding, the replacement of Latinos by other ethnic groups, and the closure of key military facilities.

Loss of housing. In the process of urban land-use change, housing is often eliminated, resulting in a decline of neighborhood population. Older apartment buildings or houses, many of whose tenants are Latino, are often replaced with shopping centers, office buildings, or newer and more expensive apartments or condos.

This has occurred in a zone around L.A.’s Downtown and near the coast in the Venice area. To the west of the Harbor Freeway (Interstate 110) and south of Downtown near Staples Center, buildings have been demolished or condemned for construction of office buildings and upscale apartment buildings. Other housing nearly was lost for construction of the Belmont Learning Complex. In Venice, a popular area with rising housing prices, many older apartment buildings have been remodeled to create larger apartments that can then command much higher rents. Such gentrification has displaced many Latinos and has resulted in a net loss of housing units. Similarly, in parts of Hollywood, Latino declines are probably explained by the renovation and upgrading of apartment buildings to be rented at higher prices, although there may also have been a net loss of apartment units in some neighborhoods.

A loss of older housing also occurred east of Downtown, in the “flats” between the Los Angeles River and Boyle Heights. In the late 1990s most residents of three large old public housing projects (Aliso Village, Pico Gardens, and Aliso Apartments) had to move elsewhere in anticipation of building demolition and planned rebuilding in more modern and attractive designs. Thus, Census 2000 showed major population losses in these tracts. As of early 2002, some low-income residents were moving into the completely new Pico Aliso and Pico Gardens complexes.

In Boyle Heights itself, the 1990s saw some housing demolition on various parcels, some of which occurred as land was cleared for a planned station for the projected extension of the Red Line subway.

Reduced crowding in some neighborhoods. Housing in Boyle Heights and Pico-Union, typically extremely crowded in 1990, became slightly less so during the 1990s. In five Boyle Heights tracts the population declined by an average of 11 percent compared to a one-percent average decline in housing units. Two tracts in Pico-Union averaged an 11-percent drop in population during the nineties but a 14-percent increase in housing units. Another indication of the lower level of crowding is that the average vacancy rate in those seven tracts was 8 percent in 2000 compared to 5 percent in 1990. Strongly Latino East Los Angeles also recorded a small decline (1.7 percent) in population during the 1990s.

The reduction in crowding in such low-rent areas resulted from a mix of influences affecting the relative supply and demand of low-cost housing, but one probable factor was the tendency in the 1990s for Mexican immigrants to settle in places other than Southern California.

Asian and Armenian in-movement. In Monterey Park, the East San Gabriel Valley, and Cerritos, residents who were Latino departed and were, in most cases, replaced by Asians, often Chinese. These localities have become increasingly attractive for Asian immigrants over the last twenty years, and many resident Latinos cashed in their equity in these areas so strongly favored by Asians. Latinos who had been living in apartments may have chosen to leave, but others may have seen rental prices increase or been otherwise pressured to leave by new Asian immigrant landlords and building managers, who preferred renting to members of their own ethnic group.

Hacienda Heights, Walnut, Diamond Bar, and Cerritos are upper-income suburbs composed mostly of modern single-family, detached houses. Asians have been especially eager to live in these areas. Whenever a Latino, Black, or White family leaves these places, it is usually an Asian family that moves in. In nearby parts of San Bernardino County, the small net out-movement of Latinos from some upscale, newly developed neighborhoods in Chino Hills near the Los Angeles County line may reflect the same process of Latino-Asian transfer.
Figure 5.1
Latino Population Change
1990 - 2000

- Major Road
- County Boundary

Latino
- Loss of 100 Persons
- Gain of 100 Persons
Latinos also left neighborhoods in west and south Glendale, where they were most likely replaced by Armenians. Glendale represents an unusually strong ethnic enclave that is attractive for Armenians. Many older Armenians, in particular, immigrated from Iran, Lebanon, Armenia, Russia, or other countries and wish to continue their lives in an American Armenian context. As with Latino departures from Monterey Park and Cerritos, this ethnic shift in Glendale probably involved some combination of housing price increases beyond the reach of the Latino renters, good opportunities for Latino homeowners to sell to eager Armenian buyers, and landlord preferences for renting to Armenians.

Military closures and prisons. Latino declines also occurred where major military installations were closed during the 1990s. Military and civilian personnel formerly at the bases often had to relocate. The three facilities that are no longer active are El Toro Marine Corps Air Station in central Orange County, March Air Force Base just west of Moreno Valley in Riverside County, and George Air Force Base northwest of Victorville in San Bernardino County. However, the noticeable Latino decline in one tract in Chino represents a drop in the number incarcerated in the state prison, officially known as the California Institution for Men.

The Eastside of Los Angeles. During the twentieth century the area east of Los Angeles’ Downtown and the L.A. River developed into a very large and intensely Mexican enclave or barrio. Sometimes this entire Eastside area is called East Los Angeles (Figure 5.2), but politically it is divided into two parts. The portion that is closer to L.A.’s Downtown and the river is called Boyle Heights; it is part of Los Angeles City. To the east lies East Los Angeles, which is an unincorporated county territory (Figure 5.3).

In the 1890s Boyle Heights was a new suburb of Los Angeles, but during the next half century it became an important reception area for newly arrived migrants and immigrants. From the 1920s through the 1940s it was strongly Jewish but Japanese, Mexicans, Russians, and Armenians were well represented. More recently, Jews and others tended to move to other parts of Los Angeles or to newer suburbs. Their former residences were typically occupied by Mexicans—either immigrants or the U.S.-born children and grandchildren of immigrants. Immigration from Mexico since about 1970 has meant that Boyle Heights has become more homogeneously Mexican.

East Los Angeles was built up somewhat later, especially after the street railway arrived in the neighborhood known as Belvedere in the 1920s. Mexicans began to construct homes here, where less restrictive regulations made it easier to build than in Los Angeles City.12 With a commercial section focused along Whittier Blvd. and continued population growth, Mexican settlement in East Los Angeles has coalesced with Boyle Heights into a very large barrio. Cities to the east like El Monte and Pico Rivera are also suburbs, but not as old. Because so many Whites have left Los Angeles County since 1960 and because the predominant direction of Mexican suburbanization over the last half century has been eastward, the high percentages of Mexicans found in these two cities and others is not surprising. The movement of Mexican families to homes in newer suburbs has continued to the east in the San Gabriel Valley, to Baldwin Park, La Puente, and other cities, and to the southeast, to La Mirada, Santa Fe Springs, Norwalk, and Whittier.

Southeastern cities and South Central Los Angeles. This very large Mexican settlement stretches over several municipalities. Most of the portion west of Alameda Street lies within Los Angeles City and is part of South Central Los Angeles. East of Alameda Street are seven cities founded around the 1920s as industrial suburbs, containing both manufacturing and homes for workers and their families. These cities (including Bell, Bell Gardens, Huntington Park, and South Gate) are referred to here as the southeastern cities (Figure 5.3). Until the 1960s these cities were almost all White, whereas the South Central area west of Alameda was strongly Black.

In more recent decades most of the Whites who had been living in the southeastern cities have moved away or died, partly in response to the loss of high-paying factory jobs associated with economic restructuring. Some Blacks moved into Lynwood and South Gate, but Latinos, especially immigrants from Mexico and their children, have been by far the largest group of newcomers replacing Whites in these industrial cities.

The relatively low cost of housing is one of its attractions to recent immigrants. Schools and homes are crowded. Immigrants with little education and no understanding of English are trying to survive and adjust as best they can. The older commercial district along Pacific Blvd. in Huntington Park has been strikingly revitalized by the great number of newcomers, and stores have adapted to their new Spanish-speaking clientele. On weekends the thousands of families and other shoppers make Pacific Blvd. busier than most enclosed malls in Southern California.

Mexicans have also moved in large numbers into the area west of Alameda Street (in South Central Los Angeles), occupying the homes left by departing Blacks. A third of Latino households in South Central Los Angeles in 2000 owned their own homes—an increase since 1990 and perhaps a reflection of lower housing prices in that area.13

In 2000, Mexicans outnumbered Blacks in nearly all tracts between the Harbor Freeway (Interstate 110) and Alameda Street that lie north of the Century Freeway (Interstate 105). Even Watts, long symbolic of Black poverty in Los Angeles, now has more Latinos than Blacks (Figure 5.3). Thus, in the forty years since 1960 areas east of Alameda changed from almost all White to almost all Latino and those west of Alameda changed from being strongly Black to mostly Latino.

Settlement near industry. These very large barrios are not far from the largest industrial area in central Los Angeles, in which Mexicans constitute the main work force. Industry is focused in Vernon, a city which has few residents but many manufacturing and warehousing facilities, and in the City Commerce, just to the east of Vernon. The short commute of Latinos from both the Eastside and southeastern cities to jobs in Vernon and nearby industrial areas is evident (Figure 5.3).

While the San Gabriel Valley in general has become increasingly Mexican because of this suburbanization, a more intricate Mexican distribution pattern relates to proximity to lower-cost housing. Mexicans have tended to locate in more modest, older suburbs, many of which are near industrial cities (Figure 5.2). This is found, for example, in the Hawthorne-Lennox area near LAX, the eastern San Fernando Valley, in Wilmington near the harbor and oil refineries, the more industrial sections of the San Gabriel Valley, and the Casa Blanca neighborhood in the city of Riverside.

Mariachi Plaza, Boyle Heights

Patterns of Mexican Settlement

Because 80 percent of Latinos in Southern California are of Mexican origin, the Mexican distribution determines most features of the Latino or Hispanic distribution.11 Although there is some residential mixing of Mexicans with other Latino groups, the features most evident in the distribution are the areas which are over three-quarters Mexican (Figure 5.2).
Twenty-five percent of all Mexicans live in tracts that are over 67 percent Mexican.
Many barrios first appeared about a century ago as villages or colonias for Mexican farm workers and their families. During the last half of the twentieth century most houses in the colonias were completely rebuilt or substantially improved, and the agricultural landscape that once surrounded the villages was transformed as shopping centers and thousands of new suburban homes were built. The colonias became barrios embedded in an urban landscape. During this same period, these ethnic enclaves expanded geographically as the Mexican population grew but they remained in essentially the same locations. This was the case in the three largest Mexican enclaves outside the central locations discussed earlier (Figure 5.2).

One such enclave is in the east San Fernando Valley, where the original colonia was centered in the small city of San Fernando. Although there was a Spanish mission in this area, commercial agriculture with its labor needs best explains the location of the Mexican settlement here. The arrival of the railroad and relatives, have led to the continued growth and areal expansion of the Mexican settlement here. The arrival of the railroad in the mid-1870s stimulated farm and orchard development using local underground water supplies, and agriculture expanded again after 1913, when Sierra Nevada water began to be imported via the Los Angeles Aqueduct. By 1913 Mexicans were doing most of the farm work in Southern California, and in this area they grew and harvested a variety of field crops, as well as olives and oranges and lemons. Mexican women were a leading component of the workforce in the nearby canneries and packing houses. The Canoga Park barrio in the west San Fernando Valley also began as a colonia for sugar beet workers.

As agriculture diminished after World War II, local Mexicans shifted to more urban occupations, usually in manufacturing or other blue-collar positions. New generations of resident Mexican families plus new arrivals from Mexico, often friends and relatives, have led to the continued growth and areal expansion of the Mexican enclave in the east San Fernando Valley.

In 1898 the American Sugar Beet Company developed a large new operation on the rich flatlands near the coast of Ventura County. Surrounding the imposing beet-processing plant were sugar beet fields, housing for the workers, and the beginnings of a town—named Oxnard in honor of the head of the company. This entire operation employed several hundred workers, mostly Japanese and Chinese at first, but by 1920, mostly Mexicans, many of whom had been recruited by the company. Most workers and their families lived in a colonia next to the railroad tracks and somewhat separated from the rest of residential Oxnard. By 1960 Mexicans constituted 21 percent of Oxnard's population, but over half of the Mexicans in Oxnard
were beyond the bounds of the small, poor area of la colonia. With Mexican population growth since that time and some continued dispersal, a large area in Oxnard and vicinity is over 75 percent Mexican (Figure 5.2).

Farming has remained very important in the Oxnard area although sugar beets faded long ago and have been replaced by strawberries and a range of vegetables. Farm work is still a source of employment for Mexicans here compared to the more urbanized San Fernando Valley, but most Mexicans are employed in service-sector or manufacturing jobs.

A few miles to the northeast, the Santa Clarita Valley (adjacent to Route 126) is another agricultural area, best known for its lemon production, that is over half Mexican (Figure 5.2). Although Mexican settlement in the small Valley towns of Santa Paula, Fillmore, and Piru originated with farm work, in 1990 only 21 percent of Latinos in Santa Paula and Fillmore worked mainly in agriculture. Many Mexicans and Whites who work in Ventura or Santa Clarita have moved to the small towns of Santa Paula, Fillmore, and Piru.

A similar process occurred in Orange County. The many smaller barrios in the northern part of that county originated as approximately a dozen separate colonias. These housed the families that worked in the orange groves and packing houses that gave the county its name. The very large Mexican barrio in Santa Ana formed from the growth and coalescing of three former farm-worker colonias.

**Reasons for continuity of traditional barrios.** The striking geographical stability of farm-worker and near-industry Mexican enclaves over many decades is due primarily to two key factors: (1) the continued demand for low-cost housing on the part of poor Mexicans and (2) the absence of any large group with such limited financial resources that it, too, must seek out the cheapest housing available.

**Central Americans**

Central Americans include those people of Hispanic origin who listed Salvadoran, Guatemalan, Honduran, Costa Rican, and Panamanian ancestors. In Southern California the largest Central American nationalities are Salvadoran and Guatemalan, and the influence of these nationalities dominates the distribution of Central Americans.

There has been concern over less-than-expected totals of specific Hispanic nationalities such as Salvadoran and Guatemalan. We explained this situation earlier in this chapter and in the “Changes in Census Procedures” section of chapter 2.

**Residential distribution.** Many Central Americans, particularly Salvadorans, came to Los Angeles in the late 1970s and 1980s to escape persecution and fighting in their countries. The majority of them arrived here without much education and lacking skills needed in a modern economy. Because of their low incomes, most Central Americans have had to live in relatively low-cost housing that is, ideally, not too far from work.

However, Central American proportions are generally highest in areas different from those dominated by Mexicans (Figures 5.2 and 5.4). Although the strongest Mexican areas are east of Downtown and in former agricultural-based enclaves, Central Americans are not an important component of the population of any of these areas. In the area south of Downtown Los Angeles, Mexicans are strongest in proportions east of the Harbor Freeway (Interstate 110), but Central Americans have tended to settle to the west of that freeway. In the San Fernando Valley, few Central Americans live in the large Mexican barrio of San Fernando and vicinity. Rather, they have tended to locate in Van Nuys and North Hollywood, where Mexican proportions are much lower. These major differences in distributions reflect the importance of the differing identities and social networks of Central Americans and Mexicans.

**Pico-Union.** Just west of Downtown and the Harbor Freeway (Interstate 110), is a vaguely defined neighborhood called Pico-Union, derived from the intersection of Pico Blvd. and Union Street (Figure 5.4). The area—sometimes called Westlake for the lake in MacArthur Park—has its main commercial corridor along Alvarado Street near MacArthur Park.

Homes in this area were originally built in the first decade of the twentieth century. Like other older, centrally located residential areas in American cities, decisions by most homeowners and potential buyers over the last half century to move to the suburbs led to lowered demand for properties in this area and thus declining real estate investment. As property values fell and houses and apartment buildings deteriorated, this housing came within the reach of poorer people who, since about 1970, were mostly Latino immigrants and their families.

This area contains both Mexicans and Central Americans, but for Central Americans this has been an especially important destination. The location of the area is convenient for some people’s employment. Many Central Americans work in Downtown as janitors cleaning high-rise office buildings or dressmakers in sweatshops of the Garment District or in other jobs. For others it is less convenient. Many neighborhood women who are maids and nannies in places like Beverly Hills, Brentwood, and Santa Monica must take buses for a long ride to and from work.

As the number of Central Americans in Pico-Union grew, especially during the 1980s, restaurants, markets, health clinics, and a range of retail or service businesses opened. Soccer clubs are popular; and several churches, including charismatic Catholic and Evangelical Protestant, minister particularly to Central Americans. The enclave has become large enough to satisfy most needs of residents.

Central Americans who live some distance away from the Pico-Union area do not go to there to shop, visit, or obtain services. It is a poor area and not attractive. Moreover, because rental units and apartment buildings are often poorly maintained and because crime, drugs, and gangs make life difficult, many residents would prefer to be living in better neighborhoods—but simply can’t afford rents in those places.

Central Americans have expanded their Pico-Union enclave—both to the northwest into the less expensive, eastern parts of Hollywood and southward into South Central, particularly the area along Vermont and Western Avenues and near the campus of the University of Southern California (Figure 5.4). Central Americans are replacing Blacks who are departing that part of South Central north of the Santa Monica Freeway (Interstate 10). In the poorer parts of Hollywood, Central Americans are a component in an ethnically varied population including elderly Whites and Thai, Filipino, and Armenian immigrants. The westward expansion of Central American settlement appears to have been blocked by Koreatown.

**The San Fernando Valley and other areas.** The San Fernando Valley probably represents the most important residential area for the more economically successful Central Americans and the development of Central American institutions. Van Nuys, Panorama City, and North Hollywood are particularly significant locations. Not surprisingly, the portions of the Valley where over 10 percent of the total population is Central American are relatively low-income areas that have higher proportions of apartment buildings. A great range of available jobs in the San Fernando Valley is also, of course, a necessary factor in people’s decision to locate there.
Forty-two percent of all Central Americans live in tracts that are over 7 percent Central American.
The importance of the San Fernando Valley for Central Americans is reflected in the recent establishment of a Central American Studies Program at California State University, Northridge. The program focuses on understanding Central America and its growing linkages with Southern California and the rest of the world.

Individual census tracts with high percentages of Central Americans result from the fact that fellow Central Americans often provide helpful directions to specific apartment buildings, neighborhoods, and jobs to people they know. Because their networks are usually different from those of Mexicans, the net geographical effect is to concentrate nationality groups in certain neighborhoods, such as in the city of Cudahy, in Lennox just east of LAX, and in Anaheim and Fontana (Figure 5.4). Some localized ethnic concentrations would sometimes be more evident if maps showed varying ethnic percentages by blocks rather than census tracts. This can be the case where neighborhood character and housing prices vary substantially within a census tract. In the generally affluent city of Thousand Oaks in Ventura County is a tract with a percentage of Central Americans between 4 and 7 percent (Figure 5.4). They are actually highly concentrated in a few blocks, one of which is 76-percent Latino. The neighborhood contains small but attractive and well landscaped apartment buildings, but the price of housing is low for that city. It is probable that word of this housing opportunity spread among many Central Americans and others who may work nearby.

### Latino Enclaves

When Central Americans, Cubans, and South Americans are included with Mexicans, some strongly Latino neighborhoods become particularly evident (Figure 5.3). As Whites and, in some cases Blacks, have been leaving many of these poorer areas for two or more decades, some sections of Southern California are over 80 percent Latino. There are also neighborhoods in which over 95 percent of the people are Latino.

Latinos during the 1990s became more likely to be living in census tracts that were 40 percent Latino or higher (Table 5.2). This is a clear demonstration of the increase in enclave settlement among Latinos. Because the percentage of Latinos in Southern California grew during the 1990s, a small increase in the percentage of Latinos in all categories should be expected. The fact of a higher proportion living in enclaves is clearly demonstrated by the decline in the percentage of Latinos living in tracts less than 40 percent Latino.

These findings are consistent with the slightly increased White-Latino residential separation observed in 2000 compared to 1990 when measured by the index of dissimilarity (Table 7.2). The growing Latino enclaves in Southern California are also clearly related to the 38-percent growth in numbers of foreign-born from Latin America and the 35-percent growth in numbers of Spanish speakers who could not speak English very well.

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**Table 5.3. Enclave Settlement of Latino Groups, 1990 and 2000: Los Angeles CMSA**

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census STF1; Census 2000 Hispanic tables.

Notes: According to Census 2000 figures, Central Americans constituted 3.5% of the total five-county population in 1990 and 2.7% in 2000. These values were multiplied by 3 to define the threshold for an ethnic enclave, as explained in chapter 1.

Because Mexicans comprise about 80 percent of Latinos in Southern California, Table 5.2 reflects primarily trends among Mexicans. When Mexican enclave settlement is measured directly (Table 5.3), the proportion of Mexicans living in enclaves grew from about 72 to about 74 percent. This small increase in enclave settlement implies that the processes of residential concentration and deconcentration were almost balanced during the 1990s. Nevertheless, processes leading toward increased concentration were more powerful than opposing tendencies toward dispersal. This was presumably because the enclave settlement of recent Mexican immigrants more than balanced the dispersal associated with the assimilation of earlier immigrants and U.S.-born Mexicans.

On the other hand Central Americans deconcentrated residentially during the 1990s. This dispersal from enclaves has been very strong, as is evident by the fact that the percentage of Central Americans living in enclaves declined substantially even though the threshold for enclave settlement also declined. This residential dispersal could have been mostly into Mexican areas, considering the somewhat shared culture including the use of “Spanish”. However, the distinct distributions of Mexicans and Central Americans (Figures 5.2 and 5.4) suggest this was less common than dispersal into mostly White or more ethnically diverse neighborhoods. To the extent that the latter is true, the shift implies cultural and/or economic assimilation into the mainstream society.

### American Indians

Because there are so few Eskimos, Aleuts, and Alaskan Indians in Southern California, we do not treat those Alaska Natives in our interpretation. Southern California contains a much larger urban Indian population than any other metropolitan area, and since 1970 Los Angeles County has had more Indians than any other county in the United States. The next largest Indian center is New York, but the five-county Los Angeles metropolitan area (CMSA) contains 70 percent more Indians than the comparable New York CMSA.

**Difficulties in defining and counting Indians.** The numbers that we and the Census Bureau provide may give an erroneous impression of precision that isn’t justified by the mixed backgrounds and identities of most urban Indians. Usually Indians establish their identities and are accepted as Indians by other Indians more on the basis of active participation in Indian community affairs than through some blood quantum or genealogy-derived percentage measure.

In Census 2000 the determination of any single total for American Indians is particularly complicated by the large proportion that reported themselves as both American Indian and another race. In the five counties of Southern California a total of 142,083 people considered themselves only American Indian, but another 116,906 marked both Indian and another one or more races.

In the “New mixed-race data” section of chapter 2 we explain why fractionally assigning multiracial people into their appropriate single-race groups is a fair, straightforward, and reasonable way to arrive at a total that can be compared to the 1990 count. In the case of mixed-race Indians, we assigned them in equal fractions into the single-race groups that they marked on the census questionnaire. This means that persons who identified themselves as both Indian and White would be apportioned one-
Figure 5.5
American Indian Percent of Population 2000

Percent American Indian
- 2.4 - 5.0
- 2.1 - 2.3
- 1.1 - 2.0
- 0.0 - 1.0
Indigenous California Indians. Indians native to Southern California were devastated by the conquering Spanish, Mexican, and United States governments and by in-migrating White residents. We do not attempt to treat this tortured history. 28 By the 1970s, Southern California had many small numbers of indigenous Indians and tiny, scattered reservations (rancherias).

Within the five counties examined here, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties have the most important settlements and reservations. The two in the area mapped (Figure 5.5) are the one-square-mile San Manuel Reservation east of San Bernardino and the approximately six-square-mile Pechanga Reservation southeast of Temecula. Both of the census tracts that contain these are less than 5-percent Indian in population. To the east, however, in the tract that includes the Soboba Reservation about 17 percent of the people reported themselves as Indian in 2000.

The low Indian percentages in rural areas is partly due to the small Indian populations on or near reservations. 29 For example, about 85 Serrano Indians live on the San Manuel Reservation, but Serranos also live on or near the Morongo and Soboba Reservations. Luiseño Indians associated with reservations in Riverside and San Diego Counties totaled about 1,800 in 1990, but they were separated geographically into smaller groups including the Pala, Pechanga, Pauma, Rincon, and Soboba tribes. Similarly, in 1990 a total of almost 1,300 Cahuilla Indians lived on several separate reservations: Agua Caliente, Cabazon, Cahuilla, Morongo, Ramona, Santa Rosa, Torres-Martinez, and others. Some Chumash are in Ventura and Los Angeles Counties although their only reservation is in northern Santa Barbara County. Indians from these indigenous tribes are likely to be living within the urban area of greater Los Angeles, but they are rarely noticed by non-Indians. 30

Indians from elsewhere in the United States. In the 1950s the federal government instituted a Job Relocation Program that persuaded many Indians to leave their reservations and move to cities where jobs were more plentiful. 32 Although the program failed, partly because adequate job training was not provided, it prompted thousands of Indians to move into large urban areas like Los Angeles.

The net effect has been that indigenous Southern California groups are now greatly outnumbered by Indians such as Apache, Cherokee, Choctaw, Navajo, Sioux and others. 33 Contemporary Indian life in urban Southern California includes traditional elements from many Indian cultures and is mostly pan-Indian or intertribal. It is best known for the frequent Saturday powwows—public social gatherings, with dancers and participants from many different tribes and booths from which Indian handicrafts and food are sold. 34

Distribution in Southern California. Thus, the distribution (Figure 5.5) reflects primarily the locations of a wide range of Indian groups from across the United States rather than the settlements of indigenous tribes. What is striking about this distribution is the lack of Indian settlement clusters or enclaves. No census tract on the map has a population that is more than five-percent American Indian, and Indian percentages vary only slightly across the map.

Indians comprise a slightly higher percentage of local residents in rural, low-density areas where housing costs are not high—in Piru, Saticoy, and El Rio in Ventura County; and a variety of places in northern Los Angeles County and in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties (Figure 5.5). City neighborhoods with lower-priced housing (Irwindale, City of Industry, Ontario) also sometimes show Indian proportions that are greater than 2.4 percent. It appears that Indians are mixed residentially with Latinos in many such neighborhoods. In contrast, fewer Indians live in very affluent areas such as the Santa Monica Mountains, the Palos Verdes Peninsula, and southern Orange County.

Indian enclaves have always been weak in urban Los Angeles. As of 1970 there was a slight Indian concentration in the Bell Gardens-Huntington Park area, partly a function of earlier Cherokee settlement among Whites from Oklahoma in this area. In the 1980s Indians tended to disperse slightly from older, more central city locations such as these and from Lynwood and Anaheim. Indians moved into both older suburban cities like Bellflower, San Gabriel and Alhambra and more distant places like the eastern San Gabriel Valley, Lancaster, Palmdale, and Dana Point. 35 Such a centrifugal shift seemed to reflect a slight improvement in economic circumstances.

Hispanic Indians. In addition to their identity as American Indians and, for many, some other race as well, 60 percent of Indians in Southern California in 2000 reported themselves as Hispanic or Latino. 36 Because in 1990 only 32 percent of Southern California Indians were of Hispanic origin, some significant change occurred during the 1990s. It seems likely that this increasing Hispanic proportion had two major causes. First, there has been an increasing immigration of Indians from Mexico and Central America. 37 This immigration of Central American (mostly Guatemalan) and Mexican Indians has been taking place since the mid-1970s but may well have grown during the 1990s. Second, the larger number of Hispanic Indians results partly from the increasing identification of Californians of Mexican heritage—including many university students—with their indigenous Indian roots. 38
**Notes**

1. The White-Mexican gap in median income has clearly grown wider since 1960 (Allen and Turner 1997, 173, 195-198; Allen 2002). However, some Latinos have found paths toward socioeconomic progress. Clark (2001) found evidence in California of both increasing income inequality among Latinos and growing numbers of Latinos in the middle-class. Others are having great difficulty. As assessed by López and Stanton-Salazar (2001, 58), “The socioeconomic disadvantages and dismal school performance of the Mexican-origin second generation are particularly striking in California, where other contemporary immigrant groups are notable for just the opposite.”

2. The Current Population Survey of March 2000, in comparison to 1990 census figures, showed that the Mexican foreign-born population of the United States increased by 82 percent during the 1990s. In contrast, the Mexican foreign-born population in the five counties of Southern California increased by only 23 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2001d; U.S. Census Bureau 1993c). Such very different growth rates could have resulted from either increased migration of foreign-born Mexicans out of Southern California to other parts of the United States or a reduced attractiveness of Southern California as a destination for newly arriving Mexican immigrants or some combination of these factors.


4. These problems and the superior Pew estimates (Suro 2002) are explained in the “Changes in Census Procedures” section of chapter 2. The Pew Hispanic Center’s report “Counting the “Other Hispanics” also contains estimates for most Hispanic nationalities (e.g., Guatemalans and Chileans) for the U.S. and for the Los Angeles CMSA.

5. Rodríguez (1996); Clark (2001).

6. Virginia Parks, resident of Venice and Ph.D. student in Geography at UCLA, explained the recent gentrification in detail, April 2002.

7. William Davis of the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles explained this development, April 2002. See also Johnson (2002).

8. The five tracts in Boyle Heights are 2031, 2032, 2042, 2044, and 2051; the Pico-Union tracts are 2094.03 and 2098.02.

9. See footnote 2.

10. Such pressures on apartment residents who are ethnically different from the building’s owners have been widely reported at Fair Housing Council offices. See also Fox (2001).

11. We include here only maps of Mexicans and Central Americans because these are by far the largest Latino groups in Southern California. However, 1980 maps showing Cuban, Puerto Rican, and South American distributions can be found in Allen and Turner (1997).


17. U.S. Census Bureau (1993c), Table 185.

18. For details on the Orange County census see Gonzales (1994).


20. Roberto Lovato, former director of the Central American Refugee Center in Pico-Union, made this observation.

21. Roberto Lovato of CSU Northridge stressed the importance of the San Fernando Valley for Central Americans.


23. U.S. Census Bureau (1993b), Tables 27, 28; U.S. Census Bureau (2002c), Table DIP-2.


25. For further information on fractional assignment of mixed-race populations beyond that explained in chapter 2, see our methodologically detailed article (Allen and Turner 2001).


30. Fascinating life histories of three Cupeño Indian women in a family living in Huntington Park are presented by an anthropologist in Bahr (1993).


34. The most thorough analysis of powwows can be found in Weibel-Orlando (1999), 132-152. That book also covers many additional features of Indian culture and politics in Los Angeles.


36. This figure is based on those who marked only the race category “American Indian”. The 60 percent figure would be even higher if Hispanic Indians who reported two or more races were included. U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder, Detailed Tables, P8, http://factfinder.census.gov.

37. We suspect also that some partial acculturation of the children of Indians who immigrated in the 1980s resulted in a higher rate of response to Census 2000 than to that of 1990. In addition, a Census Bureau analysis indicates that a change in the wording of the questionnaires in 2000 was a likely factor in eliciting more Hispanic Indian responses than in 1990. In 1990 the questionnaire showed “Indian (American)” as the racial category, but in 2000 the clearer phrase “American Indian” was used. See Martin (2002). Although United States residents sometimes assume the word “American” applies just to the United States, people in Latin America also consider themselves American. Considering this, it should not be surprising to find Indians from Latin America identifying as “American Indian”.

38. Karren Baird-Olson of CSU Northridge pointed out this important identity development among our students.


44. Quinones (2001), 119-120.