From multi-racial subjects to multi-cultural citizens: the multiple meanings of ethnoracial categories in the UK Census[1]

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Abstract. This study explores the relationship between "objective" immigrant ancestry and racial and ethnic self-identification in the United Kingdom, and how this relationship is mediated by socioeconomic factors. We identify the immigrant second generation in 1971 using information on parents' and grandparents' places of birth, and then examine how this second generation identifies in adulthood 30 years later. Findings suggest that one's own education, particularly higher education, has an "ethnicizing" effect for those whose parents originated in both European and non-European countries, but *parental* SES only affects identification among children of immigrants from outside of Europe, and in this case, high-SES origins are "de-ethnicizing." We argue based on these findings that well-to-do members of both groups use ethnicity as a symbolic identity, but inherited racial hierarchies are still prevalent among children of non-European immigrants.

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Social scientists often find ethnoracial statistics useful for understanding the patterns and processes of reproduction of ethnicized and racialized inequality. However, they often do so uncritically, taking racial and ethnic categories as unproblematic "attributes" of individuals to be plugged as independent variables into their models (Martin and Yeung 2003). Much has been written about how ethnoracial statistics and their use may reify and reproduce categorical differences. However, we know less about the more direct ways that the kinds of data we use, as well as *how* we use them, influence our ability to understand ethnicized and racialized stratification processes.

This paper calls attention to three crucial issues to which social scientists should pay attention when doing quantitative (especially census-based) research on racialized/ethnicized inequality. The first issue concerns the political and historical reasons that led to the inclusion of a particular set of categories in the data that we use, and the extent to which this constrains the choices that respondents have for expressing their ethnic or racial self-conceptions. The second issue concerns the use of ethnoracial categories versus alternative measures of "minority" status, such as parental birthplace (for children of immigrants) and surnames. The third issue concerns a more complicated examination of causal relationships between ethnoracial categories into which people are classified and the socioeconomic structures in which they live their lives, as opposed to simply using ethnoracial categories as independent variables and socioeconomic status as a dependent variable.

We examine the extent to which taking into account these three issues when analyzing censuses of the United Kingdom may help us illuminate the mechanisms of reproduction of racialized/ethnicized inequality among children of immigrants to that country. By reproduction of racialized/ethnicized inequality, we do not simply mean the distribution of resources among different racial or ethnic groups, but also the structural (socioeconomic, family-related, etc.) processes that lead to changes in or maintenance of ethnic and racial boundaries.

To grapple with the first issue mentioned above, we begin by taking into account the racialized history of Britain, as well as the evolving politics that have shaped UK census categories from the 1970s onwards. This will also give us a basis for understanding the data that we will analyze in the second part of the paper. Subsequently, we examine the second and third issues more closely by using a longitudinal dataset that links two generations in two British censuses. The data are drawn from linked decennial censuses from 1971 to 2001, in which a 1% sample of individuals residing in England and Wales are tracked over time. The 1971 Census contains information on parents' and grandparents' places of birth, allowing identification of the second generation in childhood. We have information from later censuses on ethnic self-identification in adulthood. In order to discuss the use of alternative measures of racial and ethnic status, we begin by examining the extent to which parental birthplace as measured in childhood in 1971 coincides with ethnoracial minority classification in adulthood in 2001. Next, to address the last issue above, we examine how children's and parents' SES, as well as other variables such as family structure and timing of migration, mediate the choices of "ethnic" labels by children of immigrants.

Britain is a good "case" for exploring the above questions, for the following reasons. First, Britain is unusual among European countries in collecting information on self-reported "ethnicity" in its census. Second, our longitudinal data allow for good

measurement of the characteristics of the parental (immigrant) generation, which may be a source of bias in datasets that rely on children's second-hand accounts. Third, the relationship between Britain's imperial history and contemporary immigration allow us to explore the implications of racial hierarchies that precede migration for our interpretation of statistics on race/ethnicity.

Our findings suggest that second generation adults who have attained higher socioeconomic status (SES) are more likely to "ethnically" identify than their low-SES counterparts, and this is true for children of both European and non-European immigrants. Based on this finding, we argue that high-SES members of both groups use ethnicity as a symbolic identity. The practical implication is that self-reports of ethnicity produce lower estimates of socioeconomic inequality across ethnic groups than do more "objective" measures such as parents' birthplace. This is particularly consequential for children of European immigrants, who are overall far less likely to maintain ethnic identities. Our second key finding is that SES in one's family of *origin* (i.e., among the immigrant parents' generation) only affects the ethnic identification of the non-European second generation, and the effect is negative. That is, the children of non-European immigrants of high SES origins identify as less "ethnic" than do otherwise similar children of low SES origins. Based on this finding, we argue that the racialized "mark" of socioeconomic disadvantage persists across generations for non-European migrants and their descendants.

What do ethnoracial statistics measure?

In new world countries such as Canada, Brazil, and the United States, racial statistics have historically been understood as indicators of "objective" individual attributes, as racist artifacts to be eliminated (particularly after World War II, given the horrors of the Holocaust), and in more recent years, as a basis for anti-racist and multiculturalist policies (Nobles 2000, Boyd et al. 2000). In Western Europe prior to the Nazi period, racial statistics were uncommon, though far more common in European colonies. Today, most Western European countries measure the status of "ethnic minorities" by respondents' or parents' places of birth. Alternatively, some countries make distinctions based on citizenship status. Britain is exceptional in collecting self-reports of "ethnicity," and this has come about only recently, after much debate (Simon, 2004, Stavo-Debauge 2005). In Britain and the Americas, governments have negotiated ethnic and racial categorization schemes with the populations to whom these categories are applied. Indeed, statistical agencies have become a locus of identity and multicultural politics (Stavo-Debauge 2005, Nobles 2000, Boyd et al. 2000). For social scientists, there is no "objective" measure of race or ethnicity; both are understood as social constructions. Nonetheless, many social scientists have advocated the collection of ethnoracial statistics, arguing that these categories are *socially consequential* and can be used to understand and address the causes of racialized and ethnicized inequality.

Below we briefly review political and social scientific debates on the meaning and uses of ethnoracial statistics, focusing on three themes. First, we discuss alternative measures of "minority status," including national origins, self-reported race/ethnicity, and

surnames. We then discuss whether statistical ethnoracial categories reflect identity and symbolic representation, experiences of discrimination, or something else. Finally, we argue that, instead of simply asking whether ethnicity or race affect SES, quantitative studies should consider how SES, ethnoracial status, and national origins interact to reproduce ethnoracial boundaries and ethnicized/racialized inequality.

Ancestors' birthplace, surnames or ethnoracial identification?

There has been some debate about whether to use parental birthplace or ethnoracial categories to identify and monitor the progress of the second generation, but often both are treated as a measure of "minority status," which in turn can be an independent variable for predicting socioeconomic outcomes. Using parents' or grandparents' birthplace as a measure of "ethnicity" is especially common in Western European countries that do not collect self-reported ethnoracial data. For example, Dutch and Scandinavian governments gather information from registries on parents' and grandparents' birthplace, and categorize as "ethnic minority" those with ancestors born elsewhere (Simon 2004). In some countries, such as France, there is staunch political opposition to ethnoracial categories. Opponents argue that these categories reify race and ethnicity and give the illusion of fixed, bounded, and unidimensional categories. The French data protection commission (Comission nationale de l'informatique et des libertés, CNIL) recommended in 2007 that surveys refrain from using ethnoracial categories, suggesting instead that surveys ask questions about nationality, birthplace of respondents, birthplace of parents, and also directly about whether people felt discriminated against. The commission further recommended using data on first and last names, provided this did not result in ethnoracial categories (Blum and Guérin-Pace 2008).

Patrick Simon, an advocate of ethnoracial statistics in the French academic debate, argues that descendants of immigrants identify more with their ethnic milieu in the host country than with their ancestors' country of origin, and that national origin becomes a poorer proxy for ethnicity among immigrants' descendants (Simon 2008). The second argument is well-known in the Americas, where immigration is older, and subordinate ethnoracial groups have often preceded more recent immigrants. In those cases, questions about "origins" often elicit responses that refer to the "host" country, such as "Brazilian" in Brazil (Schwartzman 1999) or "Canadian" in Canada (Boyd et al. 2000). When such questions elicit foreign ancestry, the exact choice is often simplified and fluid (Lieberson and Waters 1993). Even in Britain, the use of ethnonational categories such as Afro-Caribbean is problematic, as it suggests a contradiction between one's national identity (British) and one's ancestors' birthplace (Africa and the Caribbean) (Bonnett and Carrington 2000).

Surnames have often been used as proxies for "ethnicity" (e.g., for people of "Spanish" origin in the U.S.). However, surnames may be a bad proxy when discrimination is based on physical features and when minorities and majorities have the same surnames. Moreover, classifications based on surnames are often interpreted in ethnic terms, and therefore cannot escape the reification critique (Simon 2008). Nonetheless, surnames are themselves often a basis for discrimination, and are thus

informative in studies of social inequality (Blum and Guérin-Pace 2008).

Instead of weighing measures of "minority status" against one another, we suggest that ethnic identification, national origin, and surnames together provide a more complete understanding of ethnicized and racialized boundaries and inequality, as each provides unique information. The practice of equating national origin to race or ethnicity ignores imperial histories of racialization and ethnoracial hierarchies *within* immigrants' countries of origin. The practice also ignores *host societies'* differentiated treatment of immigrants based on within-origin differences in physical or cultural markers. National origins are nonetheless important, particularly for "minority" groups who disappear statistically into the host society's "mainstream." Despite a "mainstream" *identity*, the socioeconomic standing of such groups might still differ. We show that, for this reason, parents' national origin is particularly important for investigating the disadvantage of the European-origin second generation in Britain.

Status marker vs. identity

Proponents of ethnoracial statistics often put forward arguments that, in some cases, may be contradictory. One argument is that such statistics facilitate the study of inequality, since racial and ethnic categories are socially imposed markers of advantage or disadvantage. For example, Simon (2008) argues that ethnoracial categories reveal "historically crystallized relationships of power," such as "slavery, colonization, xenophobia, exploitation, and domination." From comtemporary governments' perspective, ethnoracial statistics undergird policies that redistribute resources.

However, proponents also argue that ethnoracial statistics establish the symbolic presence of groups in the national imaginary. According to this view, self-identity becomes an important means of establishing ethnoracial categories. In Brazil, black activists have pushed the census office to recognize the category *negro* (black) to, among other reasons, highlight that Brazil has the largest number of blacks after Nigeria. In the U.S., the multi-racial movement has pressured the census office to recognize multi-racial identification (Nobles 2000). In Britain, the census office has been pressured by people of Irish descent seeking symbolic recognition (Howard 2004, Stavo-Debauge 2005). Simon (2008) defends the collection of ethnoracial data to measure discrimination and disadvantage, but argues that self-identification "makes room for the dynamics of representation, imposition and interiorization of labels to emerge," enabling "a kind of 'statistical dramaturgy', through which the conflicts and competition -- between majorities and minorities and within these groups -- characteristic of ethnic and racial relations in multicultural societies get reflected in the classification operations themselves." In Britain, Bonnett and Carrington (2000) advocate a "reflexive monitoring," recognizing that "self-definitions of collective identity tend to change over time."

Not all social scientists have agreed with this view. Telles (1995, 2004) has advocated categories that are not necessarily the ones preferred by interviewees. He has argued that identification by the interviewer may be a better proxy for discrimination and disadvantage in Brazilian society than self-identification, as ethnoracial *status markers* and ethnoracial *identities* often do not coincide.

Causal relationships with SES

Many studies assume that immigrants bring with them a fixed ethnoracial status from an assumed-to-be homogenous country of origin; the children of immigrants inherit this ethnoracial status, which may affect their socioeconomic position because of ongoing discrimination. In reality, this relationship is much more complex.

First, socioeconomic status can *mediate* the relationship between country of parental origin and ethnoracial classification. This could stem from a direct effect of socioeconomic status on racial or ethnic identification (Penner and Saperstein 2008). Alternatively, the socioeconomic status of an immigrant parent could indirectly affect the race or ethnicity of her children, since SES may affect the probability that this immigrant has a partner of a different racial or ethnic category. If socioeconomic status affects ethnoracial identification, then social scientists may inaccurately estimate the extent to which one's racial or ethnic status affects one's life chances (Schwartzman 2007).

Second, although the migration process itself produces national origins-based ethnoracial categories (Castles and Miller 2009), immigrants may come from contexts with existing ethnoracial hierarchies. Migrants may bring -- and pass on to their children -- socieoeconomic resources that vary according to ethnoracial status in the home country. In such cases, parental birthplace alone misses a major dimension of ethnoracial stratification.

Race and ethnicity in Britain

Much of the debate on "race" in Britain today centers around the relationship between Britain's imperial legacy and domestic "race relations." Although all residents of the British Empire were considered "British subjects," rights to movement across borders and political representation have been stratified by "race." British racialized systems varied widely across the Empire and over time, but power structures in the colonies were generally organized such that sub-Saharan Africans and their descendants were most disadvantaged, whites most advantaged, and Asians (especially Indians) and their descendants occupied an intermediate status. In Eastern and Southern Africa (especially Zimbabwe, Kenya, and South Africa), formally segregated systems emerged that mirrored this hierarchy (Goulbourne 1991). White-dominated colonies such as Canada and Australia received autonomy to govern themselves, and these colonies had restrictive immigration policies for nonwhite minorities (Anderson 1991, Stasiulis and Japphan 1995, Goulbourne 1991). In the British West Indies, voting rights were – until the 1940s – restricted on the basis of wealth and education, which enfranchised a few privileged nonwhites, but excluded the vast majority (Goulbourne 1991). White British citizens were encouraged to populate British colonies. Movement of nonwhites was more restrictive, but state-sponsored migration of forced or indentured labor within the Empire was common, including the transport of enslaved Africans to the Caribbean through the early 19th century and indentured labor from India to African and Caribbean colonies.

The nonwhite population in Britain and the white dominions was minimal until after World War II. According to Goulbourne (1991), true free movement within the Empire (later the Commonwealth) only existed between 1949 and 1962.

Economic growth following World War II spurred a period of unprecedented migration to Britain. Initially, much of this migration was from European countries, where political upheaval prompted many to flee (Conway 2007, Kay 1995). The largest group was Polish. There was also ongoing and increased Irish migration to Britain after World War II. Female labor migration was particularly important. In 1948, Irish migrants were granted British citizenship, often also retaining Irish citizenship.

Migrant streams from New Commonwealth countries also began to arrive. Initially, such flows resulted from explicit labor recruitment in Caribbean Commonwealth countries, particularly by public sector employers such as the newly created National Health Service (Conway 2007, Anwar 1995). Soon thereafter, substantial migration from South Asia commenced, which was generally not a result of explicit employer recruitment. This migration was unintentionally prompted by the independence of former colonies; former subjects moved in advance of increasingly restrictive migration policies.

Migration from Commonwealth countries remained legally unrestricted until 1962, when the Commonwealth Immigrants Act made migration extremely difficult for those without family ties. This change followed major "race riots" in Nottingham and in Notting Hill, London in 1958. Policymakers hoped that imposing legal restrictions would limit migration and prevent further racial unrest (Hansen 2000). Migration statistics illustrate the unintended consequence of the policy change. The law was passed in 1961 and went into effect in 1962; migration from India jumped from 5,900 in 1960 to 23,750 in 1961, and similar increases are observable for Pakistan and to a lesser extent the Caribbean (Layton-Henry 1992). Further restrictions were implemented throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, until, by 1971, there was no longer any significant *primary* migration from New Commonwealth countries. Thus, though our analysis begins in 1971 for pragmatic reasons, this cutoff is historically meaningful.

Some scholars argue that the imperial experience shaped contemporary British conceptions of both race and class (Stoler and Cooper 1997, Thorne 1997, Goulbourne 1991, Hall 2002, Back 1996). Others argue that direct connections between imperial experiences and race relations in Britain today are difficult to defend, given 1) the decentralization and inconsistency of imperial racial hierarchies; 2) the post-war influence of the United States on British race policies; and 3) the discontinuity between colonial institutions and those designed to incorporate immigrants (Bleich 2005). Critique of the thesis of imperial continuity has focused on political and institutional realms, while defenders have generally focused on culture. Few studies have attempted to understand how immigrants and their children have transported racial hierarchies from colony to metropolis. Those that have done so (e.g., Back 1996) have tended to focus on small, possibly unrepresentative subsets of immigrants.

Ethnoracial categories are not entirely distinct from national identity in the British context. For example, the majority category in the 2001 Census is labelled "White British." Choosing "White Irish" or "White Other" precludes the choice of "British." "Britishness" is, however, not a historically stable category. The boundaries have variably included the Irish, Commonwealth subjects, the British diaspora, and

descendants of immigrants to Britain (Cohen 1995, Killingray 2008). After World War II, attempts to restrict British citizenship to the British Isles accompanied migration from former colonies (Goulbourne 1991). Nationalist movements in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales have further challenged the boundaries of Britishness, as has the European Union (Cohen 1995, Hickman et al. 2005).

Finally, the relationship between ethnicity and socioeconomic status stems in part from ethnic hierarchies *within* Europe. McDowell (2008) describes a hierarchy among European immigrants who came to Britain as domestic workers after World War II. At that time, Irish and Polish women had lower status than Baltic women. She notes that, for domestic employment, Polish immigrants are now considered more desirable than Bulgarians and Romanians, highlighting the mutability of status hierarchies among European groups.

Research on Britain has documented inequality between whites and nonwhites, though more recent research has focused more on inequality *among* nonwhite groups by national origin and religious affiliation (Berthoud et al. 1997, Khattab 2009). Researchers have emphasized immigrants' varying socioeconomic backgrounds. Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, and Caribbeans, for example, tend to arrive with lower levels of education than Chinese, Indians, and African Asians, and this may "explain away" some inequality among the second generation (Khattab 2009). Nonetheless, nonwhite minority groups of the immigrant and the second generations are more likely to suffer unemployment, even when education is controlled (Platt 2007). Returns to education in terms of occupational attainment are also lower for minority groups, especially for Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, and Caribbeans (Platt 2007, Khattab 2009). These differences have been attributed to differential social and cultural capital and discrimination in the labor market.

On the other hand, there is evidence of increased integration into white British society, with growing rates of intermarriage and an increasing number of individuals who identify as mixed-race. Berthoud and Beishon (1997) found that, among Caribbean-identified men born in Britain, 50% are married to whites, and among Caribbean-identified children under 16, 40% had a white parent. The Chinese have similarly high rates of intermarriage, but Chinese women marry white men more often than Chinese men marry white women. High rates of intermarriage do not mean that whites are highly willing to inter-marry; very few British whites actually marry minorities. However, minorities of Caribbean and Chinese background are very exposed to whites in their family relationships. Among South Asians, especially women, intermarriage rates are lower (less than 5%) but rise for generations born in the UK.

Ethnoracial data collection in the UK censuses since 1971

Since 1841, the UK Census has contained information on birthplace, nationality, and, until 1971, one's parents' birthplace (Sillitoe and White 1992). The persistence of ethnoracial inequality has, in recent decades, prompted a movement to collect ethnoracial data more directly. In response to race riots, hate discourse from the political right, and studies showing continued discrimination, British officials created, in the 1970s, an apparatus to address the "race relations problem." This included stricter immigration

controls but also institutions, such as the Commission on Racial Equality (CRE, established in 1972), to promote equal opportunity, modeled on U.S. civil rights legislation. The Race Relations Act (1976) mandated ethnic monitoring and encouraged "positive action" (a mild form of affirmative action focused on training and outreach) to increase minority representation (Bleich 2003, Stavo-Debaughe 2005). Since 1990, institutions of higher education have also monitored ethnoracial composition (Osler 1999).

Ethnic monitoring is based on the premise that systematic institutional bias should be addressed, regardless of whether individuals intend to discriminate. Identifying systematic underrepresentation is an important step in documenting discrimination. The census becomes important because ethnic representation in companies is judged relative to ethnic representation in local labor markets. The 1991 Census ethnicity question was justified as important for monitoring discrimination and informing anti-discrimination policies (Stavo-Debaughe 2005).

Initially, monitoring was based on birthplace and nationality data, but this presented two problems. First, the birthplace criterion categorized immigrants of colonial British descent as nonwhite, when they were in fact treated as white in British society. Second, descendants of immigrants could not be identified if they had been born in Britain (Sillitoe and White 1992, Howard 2004). Government officials were concerned about the term "race" because of its potential for perpetuating racist thought. Therefore, the statistical office decided that, although its objective was to collect data to monitor racial inequality, it would call the categories "ethnic" (Stavo-Debaughe 2005, Sillitoe and White 1992). Thus, the 1991 Census ostensibly asks about "ethnic group" but has a "racial" framework with, for example, no ethnic differentiation among whites. A note elaborates the question on "racial or ethnic group." The 2001 questionnaire eliminates the word "race" altogether.

The Office of Population and Censuses and Surveys had intended to include an ethnic question in the 1981 Census, but the question was eventually dropped due to widespread opposition. Opponents argued that the question would reify race and that statistics would be used against minorities' interests. This fear was reinforced by the National Front's enthusiasm for the collection of ethnoracial data, with aims such as repatriation, and by the conservative government's introduction of more restrictive citizenship legislation. Jewish organizations, drawing on memories of the Holocaust, opposed the idea of the state racially classifying the population (Howard 2004, Ballard 1996). In the end, the 1981 Census, like the 1971 Census, asked only about birthplace. However, questions about parental birthplace were dropped.

Field trials of the "ethnicity" question in the 1970s and 1980s found that response rates could be high if questions were asked appropriately (Sillitoe and White 1992). Repeatedly, researchers discovered that descendants of immigrants from Asia found it acceptable to classify themselves according to their ancestors' national origin, but those of Afro-Caribbean descent did not. The main objection was that a "Caribbean" classification denied British nationality. A term such as "Black British," which referred to skin color without denying British nationality, seemed more acceptable, but a purely "racial" classification was not acceptable either (Demaine 1989, Sillitoe and White 1992, Ballard 1996). Those of Asian and recent African descent did not always want to share a single "Black" category with Afro-Caribbeans. In a sense, minorities resisted

racialization which overlooked internal ethnic diversity (Ballard 1996). Other social pressures also led toward categories that were more "ethnic." Legislation on racial discrimination changed with the 1983 court case Mandla v. Dowell Lee. The court decided that a school could not require a Sikh schoolboy to take off his turban and that *ethnic* discrimination included cultural or religious discrimination and could not be reduced to *racial* discrimination (Stavo-Debaughe 2005, Howard 2004).

These forces affected the 1991 Census, which was the first to ask about "ethnic group." Ethnoracial categories are listed under the heading "ethnic group." One finds further explanation: "Please tick the appropriate box," with a note: "If the person is descended from more than one ethnic or racial group, please tick the group to which the person considers he/she belongs, or tick the 'Any other ethnic group' box and describe the person's ancestry in the space provided." The options given are White, Black-Caribbean, Black-African, Black-Other, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, and "any other ethnic group." If a person is "Black-Other" or "any other ethnic group," there is write-in space for the respondent to "please describe."

Figure 1 shows the wording of the "ethnicity" question in the 2001 Census. Three important changes occurred between 1991 and 2001. First, consistent with Afro-Caribbean-British preferences, minority categories are made more consistent with British nationality, in that overarching categories are labeled "Black British" and "Asian British." Second, several "mixed" categories appear. Third, the "White" category is subdivided into British, Irish, and other.

Though the "mixed" category was first included in 2001, almost a third of "others" in 1991 wrote in a mixed term or several ancestries, or marked more than one box. The census office distributed these responses across the main categories in ways that were difficult for researchers to understand, which hindered ethnic monitoring. The census office did cognitive tests in 1996-97, establishing the category "mixed" as acceptable to respondents (Aspinall 2003).

Irish-British activists mobilized against the 1991 categorization schema, and were largely responsible for the subdivision of the "White" category. They argued that the Irish should be included in Britain's multicultural framework because those of Irish ancestry 1) were ethnically distinct; 2) suffered socioeconomic disadvantage; and 3) were forced to assimilate because of discrimination. An "Irish" option in the census would make visible this large ethnic community, facilitate the monitoring of discrimination, and encourage pride in an Irish-British identity. The Irish government, in its effort to establish a relationship with the Irish diaspora, also supported Britain's collection of such statistics. In 1994, activists convinced the CRE to support the "Irish" category. Although the CRE recommended the inclusion of "English," "Scottish," "Irish," etc., the Office of National Statistics distinguished only three categories: "British," "Irish" and "other White." Note that British citizens of Irish descent were forced to choose between British national identity and Irish ethnicity. This may explain why very few people (less than the number of Irish-born immigrants) chose this option (Howard, 2004).

The changes between 1991 and 2001 reflect a shift toward identity and group recognition. The recognition of British citizenship of Blacks and Asians, the recognition of mixed-race identities, and the recognition of "ethnic" whites all reflect this. At the same time, the statistics are still used and understood to measure "race" as social status, on the basis of which individuals may experience discrimination. As such, they can

document inequality across "groups." In other words, the census may be capturing both "optional" (Waters 1990) and not-so-optional ethnoracial identities. The rest of this paper will explore this question in more depth.

Analyzing UK census data

Building on this discussion of the context of racialization in Britain and the processes that generated and changed ethnoracial and national categories in the British census, we begin to explore how these categories can be used to understand the reproduction of racialized/ethnicized inequality. We take up this issue empirically using the case of Britain's immigrant second generation.

We focus first on differences between "objective" ancestry (as measured by a person's parents' birthplace) and self-reported "ethnicity." To which extent do the two categorization schemas identify the same groups? We thus begin by examining the extent to which parents' birthplace and self-ascribed ethnicity overlap among a cohort of immigrants' children. We show that the two measures are far from identical. Next, we examine factors that account for these differences. We find that one's family composition (especially whether both parents are immigrants) is a particularly important predictor of "ethnic" identification, which suggests respondents in our data often have a primordial interpretation of ethnoracial identities. Although actual primordialist interpretations of ethnicity have been rejected by social scientists, many social scientists argue for a *constructed* primordialism, where social actors who use racial and ethnic categories see them as natural and rooted in biological ancestry and kinship ties (Cornell and Hartmann 1998).

However, social scientists are interested in other ways that family characteristics--such as social status, resources, cultural practices, and social context--are transmitted across generations. We thus examine to what extent ethnoracial categories can be considered an inherited status, shaped by social class and immigration experiences.

We are also interested in how immigrants' own experiences affect understandings of race and ethnicity. Changes in ethnoracial self-identification over the life course can be externally determined by changes in social context that redefine ethnoracial boundaries, but we also recognize that individuals may exercise some -- though far from absolute -- control over their ethnoracial status.

Finally, we are interested in how race and ethnicity are associated with other dimensions of status. For example, do those of higher or lower SES attach greater importance to minority ethnoracial identities? Two hypotheses could explain such an association. One is that, for those of higher SES, ethnicity becomes a matter of identity and self-actualization. In this case, we would expect those with high SES to be more likely to choose minority identities. Another is a glass ceiling hypothesis, where ethnoracial status is most disadvantageous at higher socioeconomic levels. Empirically, this could have various consequences. There might be greater pressure among those in high SES positions to relinquish minority identities, if such identities are indeed "optional." Alternatively, there might be a greater awareness of and identification with minority status among higher SES individuals. Our data do not allow us to adjudicate

among these explanations, but we do examine whether higher SES -- in childhood and adulthood -- leads one to self-identify as more or less "ethnic."

We use descriptive results and logistic regression analysis to uncover the complex relationships that link immigrant parents' responses to the birthplace question in 1971 to their children's choice of ethnoracial categories 30 years later. We consider parental characteristics including SES, timing of migration, and intermarriage, and children's characteristics, including age, gender, and educational attainment.

Data and Sample Criteria

We use the Longitudinal Study (LS) of England and Wales, a one percent sample of everyone residing in England and Wales, updated for births and immigration. The LS contains information from four consecutive decennial censuses (1971-2001) for sampled LS members and all co-residents. This means that parental information is available whenever the LS member lives with parents. For Britain, this dataset is unique because of its large sample size and longitudinal design, facilitating the study of over-time dynamics among small sub-populations.

We select LS members who, in 1971, are present (i.e., born and residing in Britain); are 15 or younger and living with one or both parents; and have at least one parent born outside the UK whose parents (the LS member's grandparents) are in turn both born outside the UK. These criteria allow us to gather parental information in 1971, and to better ascertain whether our subsample has an immigrant as opposed to British background. It is possible that LS members' more distant ancestors had originated in Britain. We do not see this as "problem" per se but as an inherent feature of post-colonial societies, which are characterized by racialized hierarchies based on descent. For some countries of origin, we have information about whether an LS member is likely to be of British origin, based on an analysis of surnames in the 1971 Census. (Among those born in South Asian countries, surnames distinguish those of British origin; in other cases this is less straightforward.) In order to better adjudicate between different explanations for ethnic identification in adulthood we look at the issue of last names separately from other explanatory variables. First, we briefly explore whether selecting on the surname variable affects our results. In the rest of our analysis, except where we specify otherwise, we exclude individuals whose surnames are likely to indicate British ancestry.

Information on ethnic self-identification is first available in 1991, when our subsample is in young adulthood (aged 20 to 35), and a revised "ethnicity" question is asked in 2001. We have conducted preliminary work combining ethnic information from both census years, as well as examining how 1991 and 2001 responses are related to each other, but for the analysis here, we focus primarily on responses to the 2001 ethnicity question.[2] One key variable in our analysis is education, and as we show below, higher education is particularly critical in mediating the relationship between ancestry and identification. By focusing on 2001 responses, we ensure that the vast majority of LS

[2] In the appendix, interested readers can find cross-tabulations of ethnicity responses in 1991 by 2001, made roughly comparable across the two censuses.

members have completed their education when ethnically identifying themselves.

Our empirical focus is thus how members of the immigrant second generation who were children in 1971 ethnically identify themselves 30 years later. The final sample size is 8,385.

Variables

[TABLES 1 & 2 ABOUT HERE]

Table 1 contains an overview of all variables included in our analysis.

The variable indicating the ethnic identification of the children of immigrants in adulthood is constructed from responses to the 2001 Census ethnicity question. The breakdown of responses to the original ethnicity questions can be seen in Table 2. Among those of non-European origin, responses are divided roughly in thirds into Black Caribbean, Indian, and all other responses. A not insignificant number of responses are in the "White British" category (the fourth most common response after Black Caribbean, Indian, and Pakistani), and a sizeable group chooses one of the mixed categories. Among those of European origin, responses are overwhelmingly for the "White British" category, and almost no responses are in nonwhite categories.

We create different variables for respondents whose immigrant parent(s) came from other European countries (including Ireland) versus respondents whose immigrant parent(s) came from non-European countries (primarily former colonies in the Caribbean, Asia, and Africa), because the range of responses is quite different in the two groups. For those with non-European origins, we create a variable with three categories: white, nonwhite, and mixed. Among respondents with European origins, there are only two common responses to the ethnic identification question, so our variable has two categories: white British and any other response (predominantly other white responses).

As we describe above, all individuals in the sample have at least one immigrant parent. Our main indicator of ancestry pertains to the national or regional origins of immigrant parents. We are able to distinguish ten countries/regions: the Caribbean Commonwealth, India, Pakistan/Bangladesh,[3] Ireland, Germany, Italy, Poland, Africa, other Asian countries, and other European countries. Though small in numbers, we include immigrants from North America and the Antipodes with those from Europe, under the assumption (born out when looking at adult identification of the second generation) that these immigrants would identify overwhelmingly as white.

The second key variable indicates the status of the respondent's second parent, and has three categories: (1) respondent's second parent is also an immigrant and has the same origin as the first parent; (2) respondent's second parent is British born; (3) respondent's second parent is absent or falls into some other category. We use this third

[3] Bangladesh (previously East Pakistan) declared independence from Pakistan in 1971. Since the immigrant parents of the respondents in our analysis were already living in Britain in 1971, the variable for their birthplace does not distinguish between Pakistan and Bangladesh.

category if the second parent is from a different country than the first parent (in which case the mother's birthplace is used for the origins variable) or if the second parent's parents were born in the UK, even though the parent was born abroad. When sample size permits, we distinguish absent second parents from second parents in these other categories.

We also include a variable pertaining to the life course timing of parents' migration. Around 13% of our subsample was born abroad but migrated to Britain before the 1971 Census and their fifteenth birthday. Among the majority of subsample members born in Britain, some *parents* migrated to Britain when they themselves were children (aged 15 and younger), while others migrated as adults. We include a variable that taps these various scenarios: the child/LS member was born abroad, the parent(s) migrated as adults, and the parent(s) migrated as children.[4] We believe this captures an important dimension of the family's degree of being settled in Britain during the LS member's childhood, which could affect adult ethnic identification.

Another major focus of our analysis is socioeconomic. We include, first, occupational status in the immigrant/parental generation, which is coded according to the higher value of the two parents or the value for one parent if occupational information for the other is missing. The five categories of this variable are professionals, managers, skilled non-manual occupations, skilled manual occupations, and semi-skilled/unskilled occupations. For some descriptive statistics, we use a simple manual/non-manual distinction, because cell sizes are otherwise too small. Although parents' educational attainment might provide a better measure of parents' (especially non-working parents') resources and orientations, educational information in the 1971 Census is of poor quality.

We also consider socioeconomic characteristics of the second generation (LS members) in adulthood, as recorded in the 2001 Census. In 2001, we have good information on educational and occupational attainment, but we choose to focus on education, because the top occupational category (professionals) is too large to provide discriminating power. Our preliminary analyses revealed an important role of higher education, and so finer categories at the higher end of the socioeconomic spectrum are crucial. The five values of the education variable are no qualifications; 1-4 GCSEs/O levels; 5+ GCSEs/O levels or 1 A level; 2+ A levels; and higher education.

In predicting LS members' adult ethnic identification, additional controls include age (in 1971) and sex.

Parents' birthplace and self-reported ethnicity as alternative measures

In the following discussion, Tables 3 through 5 present descriptive statistics on the relationship between ethnoracial self-identification and other variables, while Tables 6 and 7 show multivariate regression analyses that confirm the robustness of our findings.

The first two rows of Table 3 give much insight into the correspondence between different measures of ethnoracial minority status. We see first, that the majority (80%) of

[4] We code this variable as "parents migrated as children" if either or both parents migrated as children.

children of immigrants from non-European countries classify themselves as nonwhite or mixed. Nevertheless, a substantial minority (20%) chooses a white identity. Thus, for this 20%, parents' origins correspond imperfectly to adult ethnic identification. If one were interested in the situation of those whose parents were born oustide of Europe and asked only about "ethnicity," one would miss a significant proportion of the target population.

[TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

Most of this discrepancy can be explained, however, by the fact that many immigrants from outside of Europe in fact had British origins several generations back. If we exclude individuals of identifiably British descent (based on surnames), only 5% of the second generation chooses white responses. There is still, however, a non-negligible proportion marking "mixed." Such comparisons make it possible to see how racial categories, established in the colonies and based on descent over many generations, endure and are brought to the former metropolis by descendants of colonists and the colonized.

Ethnoracial identification varies considerably across different origin groups, with those of Indian ancestry most likely to identify as nonwhite, and those of "other Asian" (i.e., not South Asian former colonies) origins least likely to do so. Regression analyses we present below show that South Asian/Caribbean differences in the likelihood of identifying as white are significant. Although Indians and Pakistanis/Bangladeshis are also more likely than Caribbeans to choose "pure" nonwhite over "mixed" categories, this difference becomes insignificant when parental birthplace and parental SES are taken into account (see Table 6).

For those with European immigrant parents, the first two rows in Table 3 are the same, because we have no data on whether or not they have English surnames. Because 99% of this group classifies as white, we focus on differences between "ethnic" (Irish or Other) and "British" responses. We find that choice of "ethnicity" corresponds very poorly to parents' birthplace. Only 16% of European immigrants' children identify themselves as white ethnics. Thus, researchers who wish to study the descendants of European immigrants would grossly misrepresent this population by relying on self-reports of ethnicity alone, since most members of the second generation "disappear" statistically into the white British mainstream.

Among those with immigrant parents from Europe, we see again that ethnic identification varies somewhat across groups, with Italians most likely and Germans least likely to adopt a minority ethnic identification. Regression results (Table 7) confirm that group differences are in some cases robust to the inclusion of other variables. For example, those of German descent are significantly more likely than those of Irish descent (our reference category in the models) to identify as white British. On the other hand, those of Italian and Polish parentage are not significantly different from the children of the Irish in their identification patterns once other variables are controlled.

Table 4 highlights the consequences of disparities between parental birthplace and ethnoracial self-identification for researchers of social inequality. We see occupational distributions within our simplified ethnoracial categories, separately for children of European and of non-European immigrants. The "total" columns tells us what the

distributions would look like if we classified solely by parents' birthplace.

For the second generation of non-European origin, we see that ethnoracial and parental birthplace classifications result in very similar conclusions about group occupational standing. Those who classify as "mixed" and "white" are in general more disadvantaged than the average children of non-European immigrants, but these are small subgroups. For the children of European immigrants, the situation is different: if classified based on self-reported "ethnicity," European-origin "ethnics" are much more likely be in prestigious occupations than if classified based on parents' birthplace. This means that researchers who rely solely on ethnic self-identification underestimate the disadvantage of the children of European immigrants. Parents' birthplace thus provides crucial complementary information. For the second generation in both origin groups, Table 4 provides initial evidence that *high* SES is associated with ethnic distinction from the (white) British mainstream, and indeed, for those of non-European origin, even distinction from the "mixed" population. We investigate this in more detail below.

[TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE]

Intergenerational mechanisms of ethnoracial self-identification

We investigate here the mechanisms that link parental birthplace to the adult ethnoracial identification of children of immigrants. Table 6 predicts the likelihood (measured in log odds) of white and mixed relative to nonwhite identification among the second generation of non-European descent. Table 7 predicts the log odds of white ethnic vs. white British identification for the second generation of European descent. We look at three potential determinants of identification: 1) immigrant family structure, by which we mean whether both parents are immigrants, 2) class origins and destinations of the second generation, and 3) timing of migration relative to the respondent's birth and parents' age. We also include the respondent's gender in the analysis, but since it has no statistically or substantively significant relationship to ethnoracial classification and is not central to our argument, we do not discuss it here.

Family composition

Race and ethnicity are commonly understood to be related to geographic origin and inherited through family ties, so in our analysis we consider such variables first. We discussed country-of-origin differences above, so here we focus on how intermarriage patterns in the immigrant generation affect the structure of families in which the second generation comes of age.

Among the second generation of German, Polish, and "other" European parentage, a majority has one UK-born parent. This may in part explain these groups' very high rates of white British identification. Of all European groups, those of Italian origin are least likely to have a British-born parent, perhaps explaining their higher rate of "ethnic" identification. Immigrant parents from non-European countries were

relatively unlikely to be married to UK-born spouses in 1971. This is most marked among parents from Pakistan or Bangladesh, among whom only 4.3% had a UK-born spouse. The figures are considerably higher (up to 21.8% among "other" Asians) for other non-European groups.

Table 3 shows that immigrant family structure plays an important role in explaining racial and ethnic identification in adulthood. This is particularly true for those with non-European origins; in this group, the vast majority with two immigrant parents identifies as nonwhite (96.7%), whereas those with one UK-born parent are extremely unlikely (6.28%) to consistently choose a non-mixed, nonwhite category. We observe, in other words, that "pure" ethnic identities essentially disappear by the second generation when the immigrant generation ethnically intermarries. Among the second generation with European origins, we see a similar pattern, but here, even individuals with two immigrant parents are very likely (69.42%) to identify simply as white British. Among those with one UK-born parent, only 5.76% indicate a non-mainstream identity of any kind, so if European immigrants partner with non-immigrants in Britain, their children "disappear" statistically into the British mainstream, and cannot be identified with information on self-reported ethnicity. These effects of family structure remain robust in multivariate analyses (see Tables 6 and 7). We argue based on this evidence that "race" for non-European-origin groups in Britain is generally understood to be *primordial* and inherited; racial identification is largely a function of immigrant family structure. For children of European immigrants, "ethnicity" seems to be generally a matter of *choice*; even children of two immigrant parents often choose a "white British" identity. Note that European groups nonetheless do abide by a primordial conception of *race*, since almost all choose white categories.

Socioeconomic status

We are interested in the role of socioeconomic status for two reasons. First, if socioeconomic status influences ethnoracial identification, this complicates attempts to use ethnoracial identification to measure socioeconomic inequality (Telles 2004, Schwartzman 2007, Penner and Saperstein 2008). Second, it is important to consider whether mainstream ethnoracial identification is associated with privilege in other social realms, because this provides insight into the context and meaning of ethnoracial identification. We examine the relationship between the second generation's self-identification and both ascribed and achieved socioeconomic status here, focusing on their parents' occupational status in 1971 and their own educational attainment in 2001.

Table 3 shows that, among second generation individuals with non-European origins, there is a tendency for those with higher socioeconomic origins to identify as white or mixed instead of nonwhite. Among those whose parents were unskilled or semi-skilled workers, a full 90.45% identify as nonwhite in adulthood, whereas among those whose parents were professionals, only 71.43% do. Model 6 in Table 6 shows that, with a few qualifications, the relationship between socioeconomic origins and nonwhite identification is statistically significant when other variables are taken into account. The first qualification is that, while people whose parents were in professional or skilled non-manual occupations are significantly more likely than the children of unskilled and semi-

skilled workers to classify as white as opposed to nonwhite, no differences in classification patterns are apparent among children whose parents were in unskilled and semi-skilled manual, skilled manual, and managerial/technical occupations. Second, any propensity of those from higher class backgrounds to choose *mixed* versus nonwhite responses are explained away by the inclusion of the other variables. Third, the occupational origins differences in classification only become statistically significant once we control for educational attainment of the child. This is due to the fact that child's education is correlated with parents' occupation, but has the opposite effect on classification, as we discuss next.

Socioeconomic origins are predictive of children's educational attainment (see Table 5), so we might expect that those with higher levels of education would also be more likely to identify as white or mixed. And yet, if we look in Table 3, we see that precisely the opposite is true. If we look, for example, at the ethnic identification of those with higher education, we see that this group is somewhat *less* likely to choose a white or mixed category compared to less-educated groups, and somewhat *more* likely to choose a nonwhite category, despite the fact that those with higher education are also more likely to be from higher socioeconomic origins. Looking again at multivariate results in Table 6, we see that this effect is robust. Even after controlling for other variables, higher education (relative to no educational qualifications) significantly increases the likelihood of "pure" ethnic identification, and coefficients generally become more negative across progressively higher educational categories, again confirming that the higher the education, the more likely one is to classify as nonwhite vs. white. However, the choice between "mixed" and "pure" ethnoracial categories does not vary significantly across levels of education, once other factors are controlled.

[TABLES 5 & 6 ABOUT HERE]

Descriptive statistics in Table 3 and multivariate analyses in Table 7 reveal no clear relationship between the socioeconomic origins and ethnic identification of the second generation of European origin. Descriptive statistics suggest that children of professionals seem less likely than children of manual workers to adopt a minority ethnic identity, but regression analysis reveals that this is because they are more likely to have higher levels of education, something which, for all second generation groups, appears to be "ethnicizing." Indeed, both descriptive statistics and regression results show that the education effect we saw among the second generation of non-European descent pertains to those of European descent also. Those with higher levels of education are significantly less likely to identify as white British than those with lower levels of education, and this is true even once all other variables are taken into account.

[TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE]

Socioeconomic origins and destinations, then, seem to have opposite effects on ethnoracial identification for children of non-European immigrants. Higher class origins "whiten," while higher class destinations (at least as measured by educational attainment) "darken." For the children of European immigrants, there is no relationship between parents' occupation and ethnic identification, but more education is associated with

minority "ethnic" identification.

Why might we observe a positive relationship between white/mixed identification and social class origins among the non-European origin second generation, but not among the European origin second generation? There are several potential explanations. First, it is possibly a result of racial hierarchies in countries of origin that pre-date migration to Britain. Regression analyses (not shown here) comparing the effects of parental occupation for the children of South Asian immigrants with and without removing those with British surnames reveal that including those with British ancestors makes the relationship we observed even stronger. This suggests continuity between colonial and metropolitan experience in terms of the relationship between ethnoracial classification (mediated by ancestry and skin color) and socioeconomic status. Early British colonialists occupied higher class positions and they and their descendents would be far more likely to identify and be identified as white. Although we removed individuals whose parents' surnames were identified as British from the models in Table 7, we undoubtedly still classify people with differing degrees of European ancestry and white skin color as children of "non-European" immigrants. Among Caribbean immigrants, the surname criterion could not be employed, since it would not distinguish by "racial" status or degree of European ancestry, but one's physical appearance--generally understood as a "mark" of ancestry--would have a major impact on one's "race" and life chances. The degree of Europeanness versus Africanness (or Asianness) among "mixed" populations, as perceived through skin color and other physical and/or cultural characteristics, was important for placing people into local racial hierarchies in many parts of the world, which in turn would affect class positions and lead to the association between class and identification we observe in the second generation.

It is also possible that the pattern we observe is related to experiences of the immigrant first generation in Britain, with blocked opportunity due to skin color. This seems likely, since "class origins" are measured not in immigrants' country of origin, but in Britain. Those with darker skin color, regardless of education or class origins in the home country, might have more difficulty attaining high class positions in Britain. This would lead to a positive relationship between higher class origins and more white and mixed identification among the second generation. In either case, the current second-generation children of non-European immigrants carry the ethnoracial "mark" of their parents' prior socioeconomic disadvantage. However, inherited socioeconomic disadvantage does not coincide with inherited ethnic identification for the children of European immigrants. "Ethnic" identification may thus be more "optional" for people of European descent. However, it is important to remember that *white* identification is nearly universal for this group.

Our finding about the relationship between higher education and more "ethnic" identification among the second generation seems to hold regardless of European or non-European descent. This supports a hypothesis that higher education (or participation in professional work and networks of educated people) leads to greater ethnic awareness. There are two possible explanations for this. One is that higher education encourages a "multicultural" outlook, due to exposure to multicultural curricular content or multiculturalist discourses and movements at universities. Another explanation is that being in a higher socioeconomic stratum exposes the children of immigrants to a white British world, where their nonwhiteness becomes more visible (Back 1996), especially if

that white British world involves racism or ethnocentrism among peers, neighbors, and co-workers (Ford 2008). One might also hypothesize that causality runs counter to what we postulate – that nonwhite or more "ethnic" identification leads members of the second generation to pursue higher levels of education. For instance, those with two immigrant parents might have tighter ties to an ethnic community which might prompt both greater ethnic identification and higher educational attainment, as a segmented assimilation approach might suggest (Portes and Zhou 1993). In the British case, the mechanism would be stronger connections to more well-to-do members of the ethnic community and not differentiation from longstanding stigmatized minorities, such as African Americans in the United States. Since we already control for immigrant family structure and immigrant origins, this explanation seems relatively unlikely.

Length of experience in the UK

Scholars of immigrant assimilation have often noted how immigrants and their descendants learn the host country's ethnoracial system and adopt it as part of their self-conception. This could lead either to assimilation into a "mainstream" identity (Alba and Nee 2003), in this case white British, or to segmented or "downward" assimilation, where the learned hierarchy would make immigrants an ethnoracial minority (Portes and Zhou 1993, Waters 1999). In order to investigate how a family's experience in Britain affects ethnoracial self-identification, we examine whether immigrant parents came to Britain as children or as adults and whether children of immigrants were born in Britain or abroad. We call these factors "timing of migration." In order to eliminate any potentially confounding effects of age differences between children born abroad and in Britain, we also control for age of the children.

Table 3 clearly shows that the migration timing variable matters for ethnic identification, and generally in a manner that suggests assimilation into a more "mainstream" (white and British) self-identification. When migration occurs later in the parents' and child's life course (i.e., when parents were adults and especially if the child was born abroad), second generation ethnic identification tends to be more "ethnic" and less white and mixed for non-European groups and more "ethnic" and less British for European groups. When immigrant parents came as children, their children's adult identification is less "ethnic." Regression analyses in Tables 6 and 7 confirm the direction of the results once other variables are controlled, and effects of migration timing are mostly statistically significant. Controlling for age does not alter results much.

The effects of age are statistically significant for second generation members of European descent. The age effect could be due to declining prejudice against non-majority ethnic identities over time (Ford 2008) or could be an artifact of our not being able to identify step-parents. Older children are more likely than younger children to live with step-parents and single parents, and we are therefore less likely to have good information about the second parent. It is unclear why we would see such an age pattern among those of European descent but not among those of non-European descent.

Conclusion

The empirical analysis in this paper has allowed us to examine what racial categories, national origins, and surnames can tell us about ethnoracial disadvantage and identity among the immigrant second generation.

[TABLE 8 ABOUT HERE]

For some descendants of immigrants, ancestry and ethnoracial self-identification are synonymous. That is, the birthplace of one's parents or grandparents determines the ethnoracial category one chooses. For others, however, categorization is less straightforward: some adopt "mixed" categories, while others reject minority ethnic identification of any kind, indentifying with the white British mainstream population. Table 8 illustrates this pattern, using the same categories for everyone in the second generation, whether of European or non-European descent. We can see that for only 30% of the second generation are ancestry and ethnic self-identification synonymous. This is a pattern largely driven by those of European descent, who are extremely likely to disappear into the British mainstream, but note that for around one quarter of the second generation of non-European descent, parents' origin/ancestry and ethnic self-identification are also not synonymous. Our findings suggest that those with higher levels of education, and particularly with higher/university education, are *more* likely to adopt minority ethnoracial identities. For those of non-European descent, this includes a propensity to adopt "pure" nonwhite as opposed to white or "mixed" categories, and for those of European descent, it means preference for minority white "ethnic" identities. Those with lower levels of education are more likely to choose mixed or white categories (among the non-European second generation) or the white British category (among the European second generation). This runs counter to a classical assimilationist perspective (e.g., Gordon 1964), which suggests that strong ethnic identification is associated with lower levels of socioeconomic attainment among immigrants and their descendants. However, when we look at the relationship between parental SES and children's self-identification, we do see a pattern in which higher class origins are associated with greater distance from "pure" nonwhite self-identification among the children of non-European immigrants. This pattern could reflect an association between skin tone and social class among the non-European immigrant first generation, something which would not have affected European immigrants who were overwhelmingly considered "white." In the contemporary period, though, it seems that non-mainstream ethnoracial identity serves as a symbolic identity of more socioeconomically privileged members of the second generation (see Gans 1997 and Waters 1990). This suggests that ethnic identification may be more "optional" and "achieved" for privileged strata of both European and non-European background, and more "inherited" for those of non-European background with lower class origins.

These patterns of identification are not marginal in the immigrant-origin population in Britain. Among the non-European origin population, "white" and "mixed" identification occur mostly among children of "mixed" marriages, where one parent is not an immigrant. However, some preliminary findings on intermarriage among the second generation and identification of the third generation (not shown here) suggest that

nearly half of the non-European-origin second generation marries white or mixed spouses and has children who are identified as mixed or white – far higher than the proportion of mixed/white identification among the second generation itself. So the issues we explore in this paper become increasingly important among later generations of immigrants' descendants. For children of European immigrants, these patterns of identification are even more important to understand, as non-British "ethnic" identification is rare even among children with two immigrant parents.

The mediating role of socioeconomic factors in the process of racial and ethnic identification is important because, though race/ethnicity may shape socioeconomic inequalities, the causality can certainly also run in the other direction. This then complicates, for example, our ability to "monitor" racial and ethnic inequalities, as policymakers often want to. In the British context, it is the descendents of *white European* immigrants that are arguably most difficult to "study" in this way, because they are very likely to identify with the white British mainstream. The numerically important descendents of Irish immigrants in Britain would be difficult to study with information on ethnic self-identification alone. Our paper suggests that measures based solely on self-identification may significantly underestimate the socioeconomic disadvantage that people of Irish descent face in British society.

Processes of racial and ethnic identification in Britain call attention to the importance of colonial histories, and how immigrants' countries of origin are *not* synonymous with racial and ethnic categories. The world from which migrants to Britain come is not pristine, but is in many cases a world colonized and sometimes *populated* by Europeans. Although the colonial inheritance is more explicit and visible in the British case, it is a shared characteristic of most migrants from the Global South. For example, "Hispanics" in the U.S. also come from countries built through colonialism, with varying histories of population migration and racial hierarchies. Yet the "ethnic" versus "racial" components of their experiences are rarely problematized, e.g., by explicitly studying the relationship between ancestry and self-identification. "Race" can be both an "option" and a "destiny." That is, it can work "as ethnicity" for some (such as the highly educated), and "as domination" for others (such as the descendants of nonwhite immigrants with lower class origins). Surnames can sometimes give us clues to these colonial hierarchies -- as in the case of South Asian immigrants -- but are less useful for immigrants such as those from the Caribbean, where English surnames are ubiquitous.

Regarding the collection of data on ancestry and ethnicity, our findings have important implications. Researchers usually assume, despite agreement that ethnic and racial categories are socially constructed, that ethnic and racial "groups" are bounded and in some sense "real," and that such categories can be used to track social inequalities. Our findings suggest that information about ancestry should supplement such studies. Since it is the socioeconomically privileged members of the second generation that retain the strongest and "purest" ethnic identification, the disadvantage of racial and ethnic minorities is actually underestimated when researchers rely on self-identification alone. Though this is relevant for all groups, it is particularly important for *white* ethnic groups, at least in the British case, since so few of the descendants of European immigrants maintain a non-mainstream identity. Only with data on parents' and grandparents' places of birth is the full second generation visible, and it is considerably more *disadvantaged* than the group of self-identified white "ethnic" minorities alone. In short, ancestry and

ethnicity are not synonymous, and we encourage future research that addresses other aspects of the relationship between the two.

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Figure 1. 2001 Census Ethnicity Question

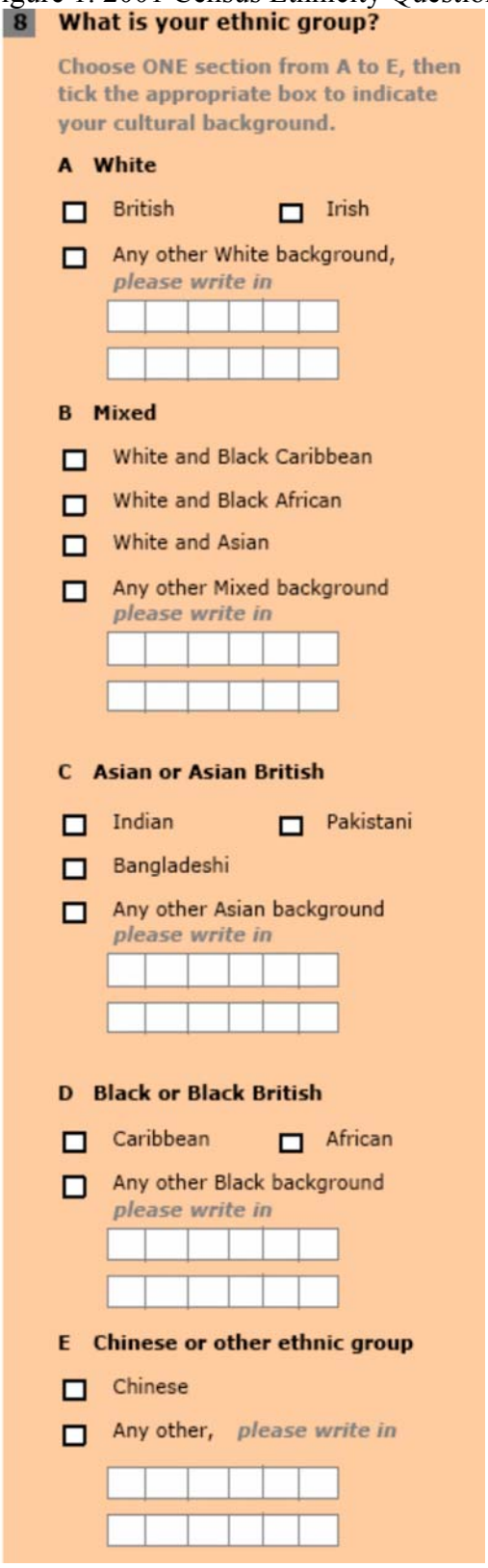

Table 1. Variables in the analysis

Generation (year)	Variables
First generation (1971)	origin of immigrant parent(s) (10 countries/regions)
	immigrant family status (describes second parent)
	age at migration (child vs. adult)
	occupational status
Second generation (1971)	birthplace (UK vs. abroad)
	age (0-15)
	sex
Second generation (2001)	ethnic/racial identification
	education

Table 2. Responses to ethnicity question (2001)

Non-European origin		
Response	n	%
Black Caribbean	737	31.51
Indian	688	29.41
Pakistani	263	11.24
White British	151	6.46
Other Black	106	4.53
White&Black Caribbean	90	3.85
Black African	78	3.33
White&Asian	55	2.35
Other Asian	53	2.27
Chinese	36	1.54
Other Mixed	29	1.24
Bangladeshi	23	0.98
White&Black African	13	0.56
Other White	10	0.43
Other	7	0.3
Total	2339	100

European origin		
Response	n	%
White British	4,592	84.32
White Irish	417	7.66
Other White	364	6.68
White&Asian	37	0.68
White&Black Caribbean	18	0.33
Other	7	0.13
White&Black African	6	0.11
Other Mixed	5	0.09
Total	5446	100

Table 3. Adult ethnic/racial identification of second generation, 2001, in percentages

	Non-European Origin					European Origin		
	White	Non-White	Mixed	Total		White Ethnic	White British	Total
Including all children of immigrants with foreign born grandparents	19.03	71.4	9.57	100		15.74	84.26	100
Excluding those with identified British last names	5.04	86.7	8.26	100		15.74	84.26	100
Country of origin of parent(s) (1971)								
Caribbean Commonwealth	6.96	82.74	10.29	100	Ireland	15.74	84.26	100
India	2.14	93.30	4.56	100	Germany	6.85	93.15	100
Pakistan/Bangladesh	1.89	92.45	5.66	100	Italy	23.10	76.90	100
Africa	5.91	80.79	13.30	100	Poland	11.08	88.92	100
Other Asia	11.84	76.32	11.84	100	Other Europe	17.72	82.28	100
Other	(cell sizes too small)							
Immigrant family structure (1971)								
Two immigrant parents	1.77	96.70	1.53	100		30.58	69.42	100
One UK born parent	28.99	6.28	64.73	100		5.76	94.24	100
Unclear	8.97	82.06	8.97	100		21.64	78.36	100
Absent	2.96	91.85	5.19	100		20.28	79.72	100
Class origins (1971)								
Unskilled/semi-skilled	3.95	90.45	5.60	100		17.53	82.47	100
Skilled manual	4.29	86.38	9.33	100		15.67	84.33	100
Skilled non-manual	8.70	80.98	10.33	100		14.45	85.55	100
Managerial/technical	6.34	83.10	10.56	100		13.37	86.63	100
Professional	12.86	71.43	15.71	100		18.47	81.53	100
Educational attainment (2001)								
No qualifications	8.38	82.04	9.58	100		12.13	87.87	100
1-4 GCSEs/O levels	4.66	86.86	8.49	100		12.29	87.71	100
5+ GCSEs/O levels or 1 A level	5.00	86.04	8.96	100		13.72	86.28	100
2+ A levels	7.55	84.91	7.55	100		18.80	81.20	100
Higher education	3.19	89.71	7.10	100		21.68	78.32	100
Timing of family's migration (1971)								
Child born abroad	1.88	95.96	2.16	100		62.03	37.97	100
Child born in UK . . .								
. . . and parent(s) came as adult(s)	5.46	83.33	11.20	100		13.43	86.57	100
. . . .and parent(s) came as child(ren)	19.63	72.90	7.48	100		11.37	88.63	100
Gender								
Male	4.70	87.63	7.67	100		16.87	83.13	100
Female	5.32	85.91	8.76	100		14.68	85.32	100

Table 4. Adult occupational category in 2001, in percentages

	Non-European Origin				European Origin		
	White	Non-White	Mixed	Total	White Ethnic	White British	Total
Semi-skilled	24.21	14.95	18.56	15.67	11.14	16.47	15.63
Skilled manual	13.68	14.84	11.98	14.55	14.93	16.40	16.17
Skilled not manual	20.00	25.59	29.94	25.68	21.42	23.21	22.92
Managerial/technical	35.79	34.83	33.53	34.77	41.49	37.11	37.81
Professional	6.32	9.80	5.99	9.33	11.02	6.80	7.47
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number of observations	95	1786	167	2048	817	4322	5139

Table 5. Second generation educational attainment by class origins

	Non-European Origins						European Origins					
Class origins	No qualifications	1-4 GCSEs/ O levels	5+ GCSEs/ O levels or 1 A level	2+ A levels	Higher education	Total	No qualifications	1-4 GCSEs/ O levels	5+ GCSEs/ O levels or 1 A level	2+ A levels	Higher education	Total
Unskilled/semi-skilled	20.44	27.82	20.23	6.11	25.40	100	22.67	29.77	22.26	6.16	19.15	100
Skilled manual	14.64	29.76	21.90	7.26	26.43	100	16.06	29.60	26.54	6.72	21.07	100
Skilled non-manual	5.32	19.15	26.06	6.91	42.55	100	9.48	24.01	26.86	8.53	31.12	100
Managerial/technical	5.50	19.93	21.99	8.25	44.33	100	6.27	20.32	21.08	9.21	43.11	100
Professional	5.63	12.68	9.86	8.45	63.38	100	1.38	9.34	14.53	10.38	64.36	100
Total	14.84	26.38	21.21	6.93	30.65	100	14.41	26.13	23.72	7.46	28.28	100

Table 6. Log odds of racial identification of the second generation, compared to non-white, for people of non-European descent, 200

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	White	Mixed	White	Mixed	White	Mixed	White	Mixed	White	Mixed	White	Mixed
Country of origin of parent(s)												
India	**-1.300**	**-0.933**	**-1.180**	**-0.789**	**-1.265**	**-0.796**	**-1.232**	*-0.578*	**-1.177**	-0.532	**-1.146**	*-0.549*
Pakistan/Bangladesh	**-1.417**	**-0.709**	**-1.484**	*-0.778*	**-1.508**	*-0.783*	**-1.336**	-0.661	**-1.259**	-0.609	**-1.450**	-0.679
Africa	-0.140	0.280	-0.544	-0.154	*-0.777*	-0.207	-0.607	-0.034	-0.506	0.024	-0.436	0.078
Other Asia	0.612	0.221	0.065	-0.431	-0.145	-0.503	-0.133	-0.507	-0.089	-0.507	-0.022	-0.515
Other	0.770	-0.314	0.615	-0.222	0.499	-0.365	0.445	-0.295	0.474	-0.259	0.408	-0.195
Second parent												
UK born			**5.491**	**6.453**	**5.443**	**6.444**	**5.365**	**6.326**	**5.346**	**6.320**	**5.278**	**6.322**
Absent/unclear			**1.347**	**1.669**	**1.325**	**1.693**	**1.296**	**1.731**	**1.292**	**1.724**	**1.284**	**1.704**
Class origins												
Skilled manual					0.041	0.416	-0.049	0.372	-0.072	0.374	-0.012	0.380
Skilled non-manual					*0.694*	0.364	0.616	0.306	0.594	0.313	**0.813**	0.386
Managerial/technical					-0.006	-0.019	-0.062	-0.084	-0.075	-0.074	0.166	-0.034
Professional					*1.049*	0.531	*0.963*	0.411	*1.052*	0.435	**1.243**	0.479
Child born in UK . . .												
. . . and parent(s) came as adult(s)							0.353	**0.687**	0.616	**0.767**	*0.690*	**0.798**
. . . and parent(s) came as child(ren)							**1.975**	0.568	**2.294**	0.660	**2.354**	0.670
Age									0.047	0.011	0.034	0.007
Female									0.059	0.129	0.068	0.148
Educational attainment												
1-4 GCSEs/O levels											**-0.995**	-0.453
5+ GCSEs/O levels or 1 A level											**-1.036**	-0.496
2+ A levels											*-0.805*	-0.764
Higher education											**-1.342**	-0.403
Constant	**-2.475**	**-2.084**	**-3.553**	**-3.819**	**-3.624**	**-4.022**	**-4.036**	**-4.594**	**-4.606**	**-4.825**	**-3.764**	**-4.440**

Notes: Reference categories are Caribbean, both parents immigrants, unskilled and semi-skilled occupations, no qualifications, male, and child born abroad. Bold coefficients are significant at p<.05 and italic coefficients are signficant at p<.10.

Table 7. Log odds of ethnic identification white British, compared to white ethnic, for people of non British European descent 2001

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Country of origin of parent(s)						
Germany	**0.933**	*0.370*	**0.445**	**0.592**	**0.589**	**0.678**
Italy	**-0.475**	**-0.325**	**-0.332**	-0.211	-0.187	-0.214
Poland	**0.405**	0.258	0.296	0.186	0.134	0.248
Other Europe	-0.143	**-0.361**	**-0.314**	-0.127	-0.117	-0.089
Second parent						
UK born		**1.958**	**1.989**	**1.902**	**1.907**	**1.917**
Absent/unclear		**0.463**	**0.490**	**0.403**	**0.395**	**0.434**
Class origins						
Skilled manual			-0.002	-0.112	-0.102	-0.073
Skilled non-manual			-0.120	-0.177	-0.177	-0.063
Managerial/technical			-0.058	-0.122	-0.121	0.098
Professional			**-0.572**	**-0.642**	**-0.631**	-0.238
Child born in UK						
Parent(s) came as adult(s)				**2.241**	**2.309**	**2.357**
Parent(s) came as child(ren)				**2.338**	**2.438**	**2.475**
Age					**0.028**	**0.027**
Female					*0.154*	*0.153*
Educational attainment						
1-4 GCSEs/O levels						-0.086
5+ GCSEs/O levels or 1 A level						-0.179
2+ A levels						**-0.668**
Higher education						**-0.932**
Constant	**1.678**	**0.905**	**0.929**	**-1.068**	**-1.434**	**-1.153**

Notes: Reference categories are Ireland, both parents immigrants, unskilled and semi-skilled occupations, no qualifications, male, and child born abroad. Bold coefficients are significant at p<.05 and italic coefficients are signficant at p<.10.

Table 8. How different are "objective" ancestry and ethnic self-identification?

	Ethnicity corresponds to parents' origin	White British	Other
European Origin			
Ireland	13.32	84.34	2.34
Germany	2.66	93.00	4.35
Italy	20.98	77.16	1.86
Poland	10.99	89.01	0.00
Other Europe	16.15	82.29	1.56
Non-European Origin			
Caribbean	70.34	8.99	20.68
India	78.56	3.87	17.57
Pakistan/Bangladesh	78.60	1.85	19.56
Africa	35.12	6.83	58.05
Other Asia	61.04	12.99	25.97
Total	30.50	61.13	8.37

Table A1. 1991 by 2001 ethnicity responses

Non-European Origin				
	2001			
1991	White	Non-White	Mixed	Total
White	77	68	45	190
Non-White	19	1,553	54	1,626
Mixed	5	14	65	84
Total	101	1,635	164	1,900

European Origin			
	2001		
1991	White Ethnic	White British	Total
White Ethr	74	46	120
White Briti	663	4,039	4,702
Total	737	4,085	4,822

Table A2. Ethnic/racial identification by class origins and educational attainment

	Non-European Origins			European Origins	
	White	Non-White	Mixed	White Ethnic	White British
Manual					
No qualifications	7.5	83.6	8.9	12.2	87.8
1-4 GCSEs/O levels	5.0	86.8	8.2	13.8	86.2
5+ GCSEs/O levels or 1 A level	3.6	87.9	8.5	14.7	85.3
2+ A levels	4.3	89.7	6.0	18.7	81.3
Higher education	1.1	94.1	4.8	25.8	74.2
Non-manual					
No qualifications	17.2	65.5	17.2	11.8	88.2
1-4 GCSEs/O levels	3.0	87.1	9.9	8.3	91.7
5+ GCSEs/O levels or 1 A level	9.5	80.2	10.3	11.8	88.2
2+ A levels	16.3	72.1	11.6	18.9	81.1
Higher education	6.8	81.9	11.2	18.2	81.8