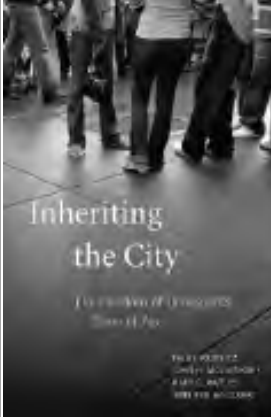


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Inheriting the City: The Children of Immigrants Come of Age

Author:	Philip Kasinitz, John H. Mollenkopf, Mary C. Waters, & Jennifer Holdaway (2008)		
Publisher:	New York City, NY: Russell Sage Foundation		
Pages	ISBN	Price	
Pp. vii + 420	978-0674-02803-6 (hardcover)	\$49.95 U.S.	

Inheriting the City is a detailed examination of the life of Generation 1.5 and second-generation immigrants who grew up and live in New York City. The researchers examined all facets of these immigrants' lives including identities, origins, including family and neighborhood, backgrounds, engagement, both political and civic, discrimination, schooling, and their careers. They wanted to create an accurate picture as possible of how, and if, these generations of immigrants were assimilating to the United States and what this assimilation looked like.

The authors chose New York City due to its diverse population of people and due to the fact that several ethnic groups were robustly represented throughout the city. However, one of the issues related to this diversity is that the authors could not focus on every ethnic group represented within New York City but instead they decided to focus on only a few select ethnic groups. These included the Generation 1.5 and second generation Chinese, Dominican, Jewish Russian, West Indian, Ecuadoran, Colombian, and Peruvian immigrants and they compared them to native white, black and Hispanic, Puerto Rican, populations. This allowed them to compare the immigrant groups against a native control group to see if the Generation 1.5 and second-generation immigrants were better or worse off than the native populations they lived among. They also compared the Generation 1.5 and second-generation groups against each other to illustrate how different ethnic groups and different factors led to different levels of success and assimilation.

The authors provide the readers with detailed statistics, charts, graphics, and information on every facet of over 3,000 18 to 32 year old New Yorkers between 1998 and 2000. They did this through telephone interviews and then through face-to-face interviews with 333 of those telephoned. *Inheriting the City* provides an almost overwhelming amount of data and information on these groups of people. Some of this information could have been pared down which would have made this book a little easier to read. However, it is a great resource for those looking into how children of immigrants assimilate into U.S. culture and which parts, if any, of their home culture they retain and how they retain them. This book is also tailored for those working with immigrant populations whether it be in the education sector or in other sectors. It provides important information on how culture does matter, especially in larger metropolitan cities, like New York City.

As is demonstrated throughout the whole book, the main theme of *Inheriting the City* is that culture does matter. Many may see culture, especially in regards to immigration, to have a negative effect; whether it is increased discrimination, a sense of isolation, etc. However, the authors of this book illustrate that for Generation 1.5 and second-generation immigrants, culture and being an immigrant can actually hold a huge advantage. Basically, the advantage comes from the fact that the children of immigrants grow between two worlds. They are part of both the 'typical' American culture as well as their own home culture. According to the authors, this allows these young adults to pick the best traits from both of these cultures giving them a distinct advantage. Of course, not everyone does this but those that are smart enough to do so create a unique advantage for themselves.

The other important piece of information this book imparts is that overall Generation 1.5 and second-generation immigrants are doing better than their immigrant parents. This is due to a variety of factors, including access to education, the neighborhoods they live in, and their family composition, among others. In addition, the researchers found that the children of Chinese immigrants are experiencing the most rapid and dramatic upward mobility. However, all groups earn equal income to or more than their native control groups. Interestingly, it should be noted that this does not mean that all immigrant populations under review are given equal access to services or have assimilated at the same rate or in the same manner. Many still experience discrimination, receive substandard education, participate in gang activity, among other inequalities; but compared to their immigrant parents they are doing much better.

Overall, *Inheriting the City* provides an interesting insight into the Generation 1.5 and second-generation immigrant population of New York City. The majority of these young adults view themselves as New Yorkers and not necessarily as Chinese, Dominican, etc., partially demonstrating their assimilation to living in a mixed society. However, this book also represents a detailed examination of how this assimilation is currently taking place, the importance of it, and what factors have affected the transformation from first generation immigrant to assimilated Generation 1.5 or second generation citizen making it an important read for ESL/EFL practitioners as well as anyone who works with immigrant populations.

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