



IRLE WORKING PAPER
#199-10
February 2010

Where are all the Immigrant Organizations? Reassessing the Scope of Civil Society for Immigrant Communities

Shannon Gleeson and Irene Bloemraad

Cite as: Shannon Gleeson and Irene Bloemraad. (2010). "Where are all the Immigrant Organizations? Reassessing the Scope of Civil Society for Immigrant Communities." IRLE Working Paper No. 199-10.
<http://irle.berkeley.edu/workingpapers/199-10.pdf>



 **Peer Reviewed**

Title:

Where Are all the Immigrant Organizations? Reassessing the Scope of Civil Society for Immigrant Communities

Author:

[Gleeson, Shannon](#), University of California, Santa Cruz
[Bloemraad, Irene](#), University of California, Berkeley

Publication Date:

02-16-2010

Series:

[Working Paper Series](#)

Publication Info:

Working Paper Series, Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, UC Berkeley

Permalink:

<http://escholarship.org/uc/item/840950m0>

Citation:

Gleeson, Shannon, & Bloemraad, Irene. (2010). Where Are all the Immigrant Organizations? Reassessing the Scope of Civil Society for Immigrant Communities. UC Berkeley: Institute for Research on Labor and Employment. Retrieved from: <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/840950m0>

Abstract:

In this article, we examine the coverage of immigrant civil society in a widely-used 501(c)3 database. We estimate the organizational undercount for four immigrant communities (Indian, Mexican, Portuguese and Vietnamese) across seven cities in Silicon Valley, using interviews with 160 key informants and community leaders and extensive examination of directories, databases and media (ethnic and mainstream). Focusing on publicly present non-profit organizations, we ask whether under-representation and undercounts of nonprofit organizations impact some migrants groups more than others, and whether patterns vary by type of city or organizational activity. We find substantial under-representation and organizational undercount across our four groups and seven cities. Representation is particularly worse in smaller cities, and the undercount especially affects attempts to accurately enumerate Mexican organizations. These findings have implications for resource inequalities and advocacy among minority communities, and for accurately judging the vitality of immigrant civil society when relying on standard 501(c)3 data sources.



“Where Are all the Immigrant Organizations?
Reassessing the Scope of Civil Society for Immigrant Communities”

Shannon Gleeson¹
Latin American and Latino Studies
University of California-Santa Cruz
sgleeson@ucsc.edu

and

Irene Bloemraad
Sociology
University of California-Berkeley
bloemr@berkeley.edu

Wordcount:

8,802 (text)
1,327 (endnotes)
1,512 (references)

Abstract

In this article, we examine the coverage of immigrant civil society in a widely-used 501(c)3 database. We estimate the organizational undercount for four immigrant communities (Indian, Mexican, Portuguese and Vietnamese) across seven cities in Silicon Valley, using interviews with 160 key informants and community leaders and extensive examination of directories, databases and media (ethnic and mainstream). Focusing on publicly present non-profit organizations, we ask whether under-representation and undercounts of nonprofit organizations impact some migrants groups more than others, and whether patterns vary by type of city or organizational activity. We find substantial under-representation and organizational undercount across our four groups and seven cities. Representation is particularly worse in smaller cities, and the undercount especially affects attempts to accurately enumerate Mexican organizations. These findings have implications for resource inequalities and advocacy among minority communities, and for accurately judging the vitality of immigrant civil society when relying on standard 501(c)3 data sources.

Introduction

Like the roles they fulfill for native-born citizens, non-profit organizations offer immigrants important human, social and legal services, they serve as advocates to government agencies and wider society, and they act as a training ground for civic and political engagement (Bloemraad, 2006; Cordero-Guzmán, 2005; de Graauw, 2008; Gleeson, 2008; Marwell, 2007; Ramakrishan & Bloemraad, 2008a). These functions take on particular importance as the United States undergoes a new surge in its immigrant population. In 1970, less than five percent of U.S. residents were foreign-born; by 2008, it was one in eight, or 37.7 million people (Migration Policy Institute, 2008; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). As during the last wave of mass migration from 1880 to 1924, in the time of Hull House and other similar civil society groups, we find a growing number of voluntary and non-profit organizations dedicated to immigrants. According to “demand-side” accounts of the non-profit sector, immigrant populations should be particularly likely to spur the creation of third-sector organizations (Hansmann, 1987; Weisbrod, 1991). Their cultural, religious or language needs are less likely to be met by existing groups, while their minority status (and, often, lack of citizenship) makes it unlikely that government or the market will step in to serve their needs.²

It is thus surprising, and troubling, that a small, but growing body of evidence indicates substantial under-participation in and under-representation of immigrants in the third sector. Immigrant organizations make up a much smaller proportion of all non-profit groups in six California communities studied by Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad (2008b) than their presence in the general population would suggest. Across California, Asian Americans and Latinos—the two racial minority groups with the highest percentage of foreign-born, 65 percent and 41 percent, respectively—are significantly under-represented on the boards or in the top executive

positions of non-profit organizations (De Vita, Roeger, & Niedzwiecki, 2009), a finding repeated in studies of selected cities (Bell, Moyers, & Wolfred, 2006; Hung, 2007) and in a nationally-representative survey of nonprofits (Ostrower, 2007). If mainstream organizations were including immigrants in their membership and services, irrespective of who runs the organization, this imbalance would be less problematic. However, recent research suggests that many mainstream groups actively or passively keep out immigrants (Aptekar, 2008; Jones-Correa, 2005; Ramakrishan & Bloemraad, 2008a), while survey data on organizational membership indicates that immigrants appear less likely to belong to civic associations or be linked to nonprofit organizations than US-born citizens (e.g. Ramakrishan & Viramontes, 2006).

As researchers evaluate why immigrant organizations may be less numerous, or why immigrant membership may be lower, a key issue is how scholars identify and count immigrant organizations. Are there truly fewer immigrant organizations, or are they undercounted by standard techniques, rendering them invisible to outsiders? Most studies concerned with the funding, activities and leadership of diverse nonprofit organizations employ standard ethno-racial minority categories, such as African American, Latino and Asian American (Bell, et al., 2006; De Vita, et al., 2009; González-Rivera, Donnell, Briones, & Werblin, 2008; Hung, 2007). Such studies are invaluable in shining the spotlight on inequalities within the non-profit sector, but they fail to fully acknowledge that the particular concerns of immigrants—around legal status, linguistic isolation, access to benefits and services, and settlement needs—are often distinct from those of native-born minority groups (Cordero-Guzmán, 2005; de Grauw, 2008). Conventional data sources also often fail to capture certain types of immigrant organizations, especially those involved in transnational activities, from political action groups to hometown associations (Levitt, 2001; Ramakrishan & Viramontes, 2006).

These concerns are closely tied to the general study of the “undercount” of civic associations and non-profit organizations conducted by scholars of the third sector. Many non-profit studies rely on datasets compiled by institutions such as the National Center for Charitable Statistics from IRS Form-990 data (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2008). These data provide an important description of the universe of established organizations, and therefore allow for geographic and temporal comparisons, but an exclusive reliance on such data presents a serious bias for researchers. Official sources typically produce a gross undercount (Grønbjerg, 2002), with registered 501c(3) organizations comprising only a portion of all voluntary associations (Colwell, 1997). Small and informal organizations are commonly overlooked by these methods (Toepler, 2003), by some accounts ignoring up to 90% of civil society (Smith, 1997b).

The existing literature on the “undercount” has examined variation across communities (Grønbjerg & Paarlberg, 2001) and by nonprofit activity (Colwell, 1997; Grønbjerg, 1990) to show that a particular cause generates greater organizational activity than official data reveal. To our knowledge, however, researchers have not asked whether there are inequalities in the organizational undercount by the *type of people* who are clients or members of such organizations. This is the question that animates our paper. To address it, we study four national-origin communities in Silicon Valley, a region with the highest percentage of foreign-born residents in California, and more Asians than any other county in the United States (Castellanos, 2009). Through extensive data collection, we attempt to assess the complete universe of civil society organizations for our target populations. We first craft a conservative estimate of civil society in these communities by focusing on formally registered nonprofit organizations. Then, through an analysis of additional databases and directories, coupled with

information from interviews with 113 community leaders and 47 key informants in our target cities, we examine the extent of the undercount for the Indian, Mexican, Portuguese, and Vietnamese immigrant communities. In doing so, we analyze whether particular immigrant communities are especially prone to being undercounted, and whether undercount patterns vary by city size or organizational type.

In what follows, we first provide a brief discussion of the state of the literature on measuring and evaluating civil society. We then present the methodology we employ for our analysis, and the innovations and limitations of this approach. Three major findings emerge. First, organizational inequality is high among officially registered 501(c)3 nonprofits: a much lower proportion of nonprofits are oriented to immigrant communities than we might expect given immigrants' demographic weight in the region. Second, official data provide a very incomplete picture of immigrants' third sector activity, one that is particularly distorted for Mexican organizations, which exhibit the largest undercount across our four migrant groups. Finally, we find variation not only between migrant groups, but also across different types of cities and different types of organizations.

These findings provide important empirical data on the under-studied question of immigrant non-profit organizing, and they provide an estimate of the organizational undercount scholars may face when they rely on official 501(c)3 data to study immigrant communities. More broadly, our findings carry important implications for research on immigrants' civic incorporation. For example, under-estimating the vitality of the transnational non-profit sectors stands to miss a particularly vital part of immigrant civic engagement, further reinforcing perceptions of political apathy or silence (Huntington, 2004). Being unaware of the scope of the undercount may also lead us to misjudge the mobilization potential of immigrant organizations,

as occurred most dramatically in the 2006 immigrant rights protests, as well as in Barak Obama's campaign for the Presidency (Voss & Bloemraad, Forthcoming; Wang & Winn, 2006). Policy-makers and the media will not only be taken by surprise by these movements, but they may also misunderstand or under-represent issues critical to immigrant and ethnic communities by failing to see organizations missing from official data.

Our findings also carry important implications for the study of inequality within the non-profit sector. Formalization, notably the acquisition of 501(c)3 status, often produces a "virtuous circle" of recognition and funding. To the extent that immigrants are less likely or face greater obstacles in achieving this designation, they face greater marginalization. Underestimating the organizational vitality of immigrant and ethnic communities will likely perpetuate funding inequalities in the non-profit sector, and ultimately reify the dominance of mainstream organizations in areas ranging from cultural production to having voice in public policy debates. This is particularly problematic since immigration is reshaping American society, a transformation we would expect to reshape the contours of the U.S. nonprofit sector as well.

Understanding the Undercount: Existing Literature

The building blocks for many quantitative studies of the third sector often come from databases of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 990.³ The benefits of Form 990 data are well-documented: much of the information on the form is mandatory, and thus more consistent than other sources; the standard format required of all filers changes little from year to year; the 990 encourages more detailed reporting than other forms, such as audit statements; and since the law requires annual filing, longitudinal studies are possible, although data for the early years may be of lesser quality (Froelich, Knoepfle, & Pollak, 2000; Lampkin & Boris, 2002). As data filed

with a federal agency, 990 information also provides a way to compare organizations across the United States, which is not possible with data from state agencies that register or incorporate non-profits.

Despite these benefits, 990 data present several drawbacks, especially for compiling an accurate count of third sector vitality. First, there are several types of organizations that typically do not file a Form 990. Only IRS-registered nonprofits with revenues of \$25,000 or more must file financial information with the IRS. Religious organizations and nonprofits with less than \$25,000 in revenues are not required to file a 990 or register.⁴ IRS listings thus typically leave out many non-profit organizations known to operate in local communities (Dale, 1993; Grønbjerg, 2002; Lampkin & Boris, 2002). These include groups that are too small to qualify for registration, do not have the resources to formally register, or may be ideologically opposed to bureaucratization (Smith, 1997b). Limiting civil society research to official 501(c)3 listings carries an important undercount bias (Colwell, 1997).

Efforts aimed at identifying missing groups range from tracking down organizations that have 501(c)3 status but do not appear on official lists, to enumerating all grassroots groups, including those that never officially register. Administrative data sources used by researchers to identify missing organizations include Secretary of State lists (Grønbjerg & Paarlberg, 2002), city property data (Reiner, 2003), and the U.S. Census of Service Industries (Grønbjerg, 2002). Non-governmental data sources include sector directories (produced, for example, by hospitals, universities, the United Way, or large foundations), phone listings such as the Yellow Pages, or lists of foundation grantees (Toepler, 2003). Still others conduct surveys to identify additional groups (Colwell, 1997), or use in-depth interviews and snowball techniques (Grønbjerg, 2002). For example, in the state of Indiana, Grønbjerg and Paarlberg (2002) find that in conjunction

with Secretary of State data, the federal IRS listings provide 60 percent coverage of all organizations. Others claim that 990 databases only capture 10 percent of all voluntary associations, and that roughly half of all volunteer efforts take place in uncounted organizations (Smith, 1997a, 1997b). Regardless of the precise number, it is clear that official data sources are inadequate for identifying the full universe of civil society.

We do not know, however, whether the undercount varies by the type of people served or active in non-profit groups, an important question because it speaks to concerns about inequality in service, funding and leadership within the third sector. A growing body of work tackles the question of such inequality (Bell, et al., 2006; De Vita, et al., 2009; Hung, 2007; Ostrower, 2007), but most of these studies rely on NCCS 990 data, thereby failing to address undercount problems.⁵ They also focus on comparisons between African American, Hispanic, Asian and non-Hispanic white populations, overlooking important national origin dynamics, and conflating long-established US-born minority populations and new immigrant populations that can face unique challenges. We instead focus on migrant communities, building on an emerging research field studying immigrant non-profits (Cordero-Guzmán, 2005; de Graauw, 2008; Ramakrishan & Bloemraad, 2008b). We add to this body of work, and research on the undercount more generally, by focusing on the discrepancy between using official 990 data to evaluate immigrant organizing and using intense fieldwork to draw a more complete picture of third sector vitality in immigrant communities.

Methodology

This article draws on a study of immigrant community organizing in Silicon Valley, California. A central goal of the project was to enumerate the total universe of publicly present

civil society organizations in four immigrant communities: Indian, Mexican, Portuguese, and Vietnamese. We discuss the meaning of ‘publicly present’ organizations further below, but we focused on all groups known by a significant subset of the immigrant community or by local outsiders. We engaged in intensive field work to identify groups not listed in official 501(c)3 datasets using a combination of directory searches, media analysis and organizational interviews. Our efforts focused on seven cities, which span two counties: Fremont (in Alameda County), and Cupertino, Milpitas, Mountain View, Santa Clara, San Jose, and Sunnyvale (all in Santa Clara County). We chose to concentrate on this geographic area to bound the scope of our analysis, but also to leverage differences in city size and the size of the immigrant communities.

Geographic Focus: Silicon Valley

Like many metropolitan areas, Silicon Valley is characterized by a core city, with several surrounding suburbs and bedroom communities, some of which are also home to large, international firms. The seven cities in our study are thus diverse in size and immigrant population. San Jose is the hub of Silicon Valley, and the county seat, with almost 900,000 residents in 2006. Fremont, Sunnyvale, and Santa Clara have populations of 208,000, 136,000, 109,000, respectively, while Mountain View, Milpitas, and Cupertino count fewer than 100,000 residents at 71,000, 65,000, and 57,000, respectively. In all these cities, well over a third of residents were born outside the United States; in Milpitas the proportion surpasses half (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009).⁶ By collecting data in multiple cities, we are able to assess a broad regional area, and examine differences in small versus large cities, speaking to the call by De Vita and colleagues (De Vita, et al., 2009) for more regional and local studies of diversity in the nonprofit sector.

<Insert Table1: Overview of Silicon Valley Cities and Ethnic Communities>

Our regional focus is also important since existing research has centered almost exclusively on immigrant nonprofits and civil society in New York City (e.g. Cordero-Guzmán, 2005; Jones-Correa, 1998; Katznelson, 1982; Marwell, 2007), with lesser attention other traditional immigrant destinations such as Boston (e.g. Gamm & Putnam, 1999), Chicago (e.g. Sanguino, 2008), San Francisco (de Graauw, 2008) and Los Angeles (e.g. Rivera-Salgado & Rabadán, 2004). Yet today a majority of immigrants live in suburbs rather than central cities (Singer, 2003). The dispersion of immigrants to new destinations demands scholarship with a broader geographical focus than the traditional gateways (Jones-Correa, 2008; Singer, Hardwick, & Brettell, 2008)

Demographic Focus: Indian, Mexican, Portuguese and Vietnamese

This analysis focuses on four prominent immigrant communities in Silicon Valley with distinct migration histories, different modes of entry into the country and significant variation in the socio-economic profile of their members. These differences mean that each national-origin community has a particular set of resources at their disposal for the creation of a “third space.”

The groups represent a range of immigrant histories. Mexican, and to a lesser extent Portuguese, immigrants have been migrating for over a hundred years to the area. Some Mexican and Portuguese organizations consequently have a long history in Silicon Valley, generating ties with local bureaucratic and political structures. In contrast, the Indian and Vietnamese communities are more recent arrivals, with migration from these countries only

beginning in the 1970s. Members of these groups had to establish organizations *de nouveau*, rather than build on previous efforts.

These immigrant communities also differ in their modes of entry into the country and their legal status. All four groups have significant proportions of people who arrived via family reunification, since this is the primary way that immigrants become permanent legal residents of the United States. In addition, a large number of Vietnamese migrated under refugee or special visa statuses related to U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia; refugee status carries with it substantially more public assistance with settlement than that offered to other migrants, including help setting up mutual assistance organizations (Bloemraad, 2006; Hein, 1993). Such support might facilitate nonprofit organizing, as suggested by government-led “supply-side” accounts of the third sector (Bloemraad, 2005; Salamon, 1987, 1999). In contrast, over half of all Mexican immigrants living in the United States are estimated to lack legal residency documents (Passel, 2006), presenting a significant barrier to organizing and civic engagement, for fear of public scrutiny. In between these extremes are Portuguese and Indian immigrants. As an older, established immigrant group, the Portuguese have higher rates of legal permanent status and naturalization (60 percent of Portuguese immigrants are naturalized), while Indians represent the largest number of legal, temporary workers in the United States (Department of Homeland Security, 2007).

Finally, these groups also vary in the degree to which their members can mobilize human and financial capital, an important consideration according to human resource supply-side theories of the non-profit sector (Corbin, 1999). Indian migrants have the highest levels of education as many enter with H1-B visas.⁷ The Vietnamese case is mixed (some highly educated community members, but also a substantial number of low wage workers), while large numbers

of Mexican and Portuguese immigrants have relatively low levels of education. Given the differences in education, it is not surprising that Indian immigrants enjoy one of the highest median household incomes in Silicon Valley (\$69,076 in 2000), while one-quarter of all Mexican immigrant families live in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). Portuguese and Vietnamese immigrants have comparable household incomes (\$48,805 and \$45,740 respectively in 2000), though nearly three times as many Vietnamese families live in poverty, compared to Portuguese (14.2 and 5.3 percent, respectively), due to the wider variation in socio-economic status among Vietnamese.

Members of these four immigrant communities are not dispersed equally across the seven cities in our study. Over a quarter of San Jose residents are of Mexican descent, ranging from recently arrived day laborers, service workers and small business-owners to second and third generation Cisco engineers and city officials. Ten percent of San Jose residents are Vietnamese, many of whom resettled as refugees during the 1970s and 1980s, or later via family reunification or special entry provisions in the 1990s. Some Vietnamese own restaurants and other small businesses, while low-wage Vietnamese workers are typically employed in the few remaining electronic assembly plants or in the service industry. The Vietnamese second generation is now graduating from high school and college, and moving into various white collar and professional careers. Given the concentration of these two groups in San Jose, many city and school services are available in Vietnamese and Spanish. Those of Indian origin are less likely to live in San Jose, but they make up over 10 percent of the populations of Cupertino, Fremont, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara and Milpitas, drawn to the area since the 1960s to attend graduate school, or more recently, to work in the high-tech sector. Although today the Portuguese form less than two

percent of the population in Silicon Valley, they were amongst the earliest post-World War II immigrants to the area, and are an established and recognized presence in Santa Clara.

Data Strategy

Our study sought to compile a list of all organizations that represent “publicly present” non-profit organizations within the local immigrant community. We were especially interested in organizations that offer services, are civically engaged, are involved with advocacy work or render their community visible to others through, for example, cultural activities. Such organizations are known within their ethnic community, by local officials or by the media (ethnic or mainstream). Our search thus tended to include groups that have moved beyond an incipient stage of development and have the potential to make bridges between the immigrant community and mainstream society. As such, any undercount we find is, at best, a conservative estimate of the under-representation of immigrant groups in official 501(c)3 databases.

The starting point for our data collection was to assemble a database of formally registered non-profit organizations filing 990 IRS tax forms. This database, built from National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS) data from the Urban Institute, represents the “official count” of 501(c)3 civil society organizations in the area.⁸ The 3,864 organizations in the database were then classified as “ethnic” or “non-ethnic” specific organizations. This distinction was made based on identifiers in the organization’s name, information in the group’s mission statement, other documents and in-depth interviews. An organization was considered “ethnic” if its membership or clientele have similar immigrant origins, though they could be first, second, or third generation. Within the list of “ethnic” organizations, we further identified all groups

catering specifically or in large part to those of Mexican, Vietnamese, Indian, or Portuguese origin. These groups became our tally of official NCCS immigrant organizations.⁹

Our approach is consistent with other efforts to identify immigrant or minority organizations, though we base our categorization on more expansive criteria. Other studies of minority and immigrant non-profits, such as Hung (2007) and De Vita, Roeger & Niedzwiecki (2009), focus primarily on organizational leadership by studying directors and board members. Leadership is important, but this method overlooks overall membership. We thus adopt an approach similar to that of Cordero-Guzmán (2005) who, in focusing on nonprofit social service providers, establishes a 30 percent cut-off to identify ethnic and immigrant organizations. We did not impose a hard membership threshold since accurate data were impossible to get across the thousands of organizations we surveyed.

Our next step was to identify community-based organizations *not* included in official data sources in each city and within each immigrant community. To find these “non-NCCS” organizations, we followed a method similar to Grønbjerg’s (2002: 1757) “informant/community based approach” and in line with the recommendations by De Vita, Roeger & Niedzwiecki (2009) for more qualitative research approaches. We relied on references from 160 interviews with leaders of community groups, public officials, and government staff conducted from August 2005 to December 2006.¹⁰ We also culled through ethnic newspapers and resource directories, and conducted web searches. We then compared the list of publicly present immigrant organizations we generated to the database of officially registered 501c(3) groups; those not in the NCCS database became “non-NCCS” organizations, our tally of the undercount.¹¹

The resulting list of “non-NCCS” organizations is diverse. It includes groups that organize particular annual events, such as the elaborate annual Diwali festival in Cupertino, and

independent subgroups loosely linked to larger organizations, such as a grass-roots Latino immigrant advocacy group that uses space provided by a sympathetic social service agency in San Jose. The list also includes chapters of organizations that may be formally registered outside the seven city area, but are active in Silicon Valley, as is the case for several Portuguese groups formally based in the state's Central Valley, but with activities and members in Santa Clara. *Not* included in our list are for-profit organizations, such as ethnic TV stations or newspapers, or government sponsored organizations that rely entirely on public employees for staff support, such as the City of San Jose's Strong Neighborhood Initiative groups.¹²

Non-NCCS groups were allocated to a city and an immigrant group, to permit comparison with the official NCCS list and census data. Usually scholars allocate organizations to a geographical area based on the address provided on the IRS Form-990, a strategy we followed for our official NCCS organizations. The address information reflects where the organization prefers that the IRS contact it, and it is most likely where an organization's financial records are maintained, although it may not be where the organization performs all, or even some, of its activities (Grønbjerg, 2002). In assigning non-NCCS organizations, we used a set of allocation criteria to best match the organization to its main city of activity.¹³ Using a method similar to Hung (2007), we also allocated groups to a particular national origin, relying on references to national origin in the group title, mission, and/or website. All groups that identified as "Latino" or "Hispanic" were categorized as Mexican. This would not be appropriate in other parts of the United States, but it is a reasonable strategy in Silicon Valley, where 85 percent of all individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino report Mexican origins.¹⁴ All Hindu, Sikh, and Jain organizations were assigned to the Indian national origin group.¹⁵ Pan-ethnic organizations or groups oriented to communities of color were not assigned a particular national origin unless a

key informant mentioned the group's particular relevance to one of the four communities in the study.

Overall, our strategy amounts to a conservative assessment of the civil society undercount in these communities. Absent in-depth ethnographic research, we do not have an exhaustive list of all the relatively invisible transnational groups, from Mexican hometown associations to Vietnamese anti-Communist political groups, nor of all the informal organizations of concern to some scholars of undercounts (e.g. Colwell, 1997; Smith, 1997b).¹⁶ We only included organizations that informants could specifically name. So, when interviewees told us about "that Mexican dance group," we did not count it unless we could positively identify the group. We nevertheless feel that we generated a comprehensive count of organizations with some public presence and relevance to members of these national-origin communities living in Silicon Valley, a list that is in some cases considerably longer than official NCCS sources.

Organizational Inequality: Official Data

Comparing the number of ethnic organizations in official NCCS data with census data reveals a dramatic degree of underrepresentation in the civil society in all cities, relative to both the foreign-born and non-White population. Immigrants comprise well over a third of the population in each of the seven cities in our study, ranging from 38 percent in Santa Clara to over 51 percent in Milpitas. If we count all non-White residents, the size of the minority community is even larger, ranging from 43 percent in Mountain View to 75 percent in Milpitas, as shown in Table 2.¹⁷ A stark level of under-representation emerges when we contrast the population figures to the percent of all organizations classified as ethnic or minority from the official NCCS data. For example, whereas nearly 48 percent of all Cupertino residents are

foreign-born, and three-fifths do not identify as white, only 21 percent of officially registered 501(c)3 organizations were classified as immigrant or ethnic minority. This disparity is also evident in the area's metropolitan center, San Jose, though to a somewhat lesser degree.

Whereas 39 percent of San Jose residents are foreign-born, and over half are non-White, only 20 percent of organizations are immigrant or ethnic minority.¹⁸

<Insert Table 2: Official Count of 501(c)3 Organizations in Silicon Valley>

Across the seven cities, the proportion of NCCS organizations that are primarily ethnic in mission is only half of what we might expect if we used the proportion of immigrants in the general population to estimate minority civil society, 20.6 percent and 40.8 percent, respectively. In no case is the gap between organizational presence in NCCS data and the percent foreign-born in the general population less than 19 percentage points (in San Jose), and it rises to almost 28 percentage points in Milpitas. To the extent that immigrant or ethnic minority organizations articulate or serve needs different from mainstream groups, such dramatic civic inequality raises concerns from issues of social service provision to interest representation.

The gap might be less consequential if mainstream organizations were including immigrants in their membership, services and activities in proportion to their weight in the population. However, several recent studies suggests that many groups actively or passively keep immigrants out (Aptekar, 2008; Jones-Correa, 2005; Ramakrishan & Bloemraad, 2008a). In our research, we found a few groups, such as certain Toastmasters chapters or mainstream social service agencies, which included large numbers of immigrants and people of color. Much more common, however, were stories of passive exclusion, such as the view expressed by one

suburban mayor that “immigrants just like to stick to 'their own'.” In other cases, mainstream organizations’ practices made it difficult for immigrants to participate, as with a high school PTA in Mountain View that did not want to take time for translation during meetings and held meetings in the evening when virtual no public transportation was available.

The data also reveal some correlation between the size of under-representation and the size of the city. Focusing on the gap between the proportion of foreign born and ethnic NCCS organizations, the smallest gap, 18.7 percentage points, is found in the largest city, San Jose. The three medium-sized cities, with between 100,000 and 200,000 residents, show an average gap of 20.7 percentage points, while the three smallest cities, all with populations under 75,000, show an average gap of 25.2 percentage points. These results lend support to the argument put forward by Ramakrishnan and Lewis (2005) that larger cities are better placed to facilitate immigrant organizing due to their larger and more professional bureaucratic structure; through the development of formal policies and informal practices, such cities better engage and assist immigrant communities. If confirmed in other settings, the relationship between larger cities and more immigrant organizing would suggest that nonprofit research demonstrating a link between smaller city size and a denser non-profit sector (Grønbjerg & Paarlberg, 2001) might not hold for immigrants, implying the need to modify third sector models when considering particular sub-populations.¹⁹

What are the implications of this under-representation? To the extent that 501(c)3 status is necessary for certain kinds of funding (Bell, et al., 2006), inequality in the number of non-profits will generate inequality in financial support for immigrant-centered services. Non-profit organizations also often engage in lawful advocacy and serve as intermediaries between immigrant communities and municipal officials, and they frequently become the public face of a

community, to which the media turn for a perspective on local events (Jenkins, 2006). Without a robust 501(c)3 sector, policy-makers and media are likely to get a distorted perspective of the needs and issues facing immigrant residents, creating civic and political inequalities (Ramakrishan & Bloemraad, 2008b).

Who is Missing? Organizational Undercounts

While the official data can be read as a measure of civic inequality, which is our interpretation, they can also be viewed as an objective measure of weak civic values or a lack of voluntary ethos on the part of newcomer populations. Such a conclusion falls in line with arguments put forward by Samuel Huntington (2004) that Hispanic immigrants will undermine America's Anglo-Protestant culture, including the Tocquevillian ethos of civic associationalism, because of less voluntarism or civic spirit. This interpretation rests, however, on the assumption that official data sources, such as NCCS 990 Form data, accurately and adequately capture voluntary organizing and organizational vitality in immigrant communities. Some observers have questioned this conclusion, either because immigrants tend to establish certain types of organizations, like transnational groups, that might not be captured in established datasets, or because they face particular barriers in achieving the level of formalization reflective in 501(c)3 status (e.g. Ramakrishan & Viramontes, 2006).

For these reasons, it is significant that our search for organizations absent from the NCCS dataset reveals a different picture of organizational activity. For each national origin group across the seven cities, Table 3 displays three columns of data: the number of 501(c)3 organizations in the NCCS database, the number of ethnic Chambers of Commerce identified during fieldwork, and the tally of other non-NCCS organizations.²⁰ Overall, the number of

Indian, Mexican, Portuguese and Vietnamese organizations in our seven cities almost double when we include the non-NCCS groups, from 210 in the official data to 389 with both NCCS and non-NCCS organizations. This means that NCCS data provide coverage of about 53 percent of all publicly present immigrant organizations in our seven cities of interest, a figure similar to, though slightly lower than, the coverage rate found by Grønbjerg and Paarlberg (2002) in their analysis of non-profit undercounts in Indiana. Critically, however, the extent of the undercount differs substantially between national origin groups.

<Insert Table 3: Organizational Undercount, by City and Ethnic Group >

The most striking undercount pattern emerges for the Mexican community. According to official NCCS data, Mexican organizations are only present *at all* in the two largest cities, Fremont and San Jose (one organization in Fremont, and twelve in San Jose). In Fremont, this sole organization is a chapter of the Sociedad Guadalupana, a Catholic devotional group that reveres the Virgen de Guadalupe. In San Jose, most NCCS organizations are long-standing Mexican American social service and cultural groups such as the Mexican Heritage Plaza, an iconic performance venue on the eastside of San Jose (a predominantly immigrant part of town), and the Mexican American Community Services Agency. Los Lupeños, a well-known mariachi performance group housed at the Mexican Heritage Plaza, is registered as a separate group, as is the Mexican Housing Corporation, an affordable housing developer connected to the Mexican American Community Services Agency.

Our research, however, reveals that in San Jose alone, there are an additional 28 Mexican organizations not represented in the official 501c(3) data, and outside of San Jose, we found

another 27 groups with sufficient public presence to be named by key informants or to be listed in directories or media reports. In San Jose, these groups include several indigenous dance groups, neighborhood groups, three business/professional groups, a Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Voluntarios de la Comunidad, one of the most active grassroots immigrant organizations in the area and one that was pivotal in the 2006 immigration protests. In the smaller cities where no Mexican or Latino organizations were found in the official NCCS data, our investigation found the largest number of additional organizations in Milpitas and Mountain View, which also have the second and third highest proportion of Mexican residents after San Jose. Even in Cupertino, where only two percent of residents identify as Mexican, we found a local chapter of the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA) at the local community college, an active community-based organization.

The undercount for the other national-origin communities was not nearly as striking as for Mexicans, but it remains substantial. Whereas NCCS organizational data included only 19 percent of Mexican community organizations in the seven cities, coverage for the other groups ranged from 46 percent of Portuguese organizations to 60 percent of Vietnamese organizations and 65 percent of Indian organizations.²¹

< Insert Table 4: Main Activity of Uncounted Organizations, by Ethnic Group >

The type of uncounted organizations also varied somewhat between the four national origin groups, as shown in Table 4, although across all communities cultural, civic, business/professional, religious and educational organizations were likely to be missing from the NCCS database.²² In particular, we find differences between the Mexican and Portuguese

nonprofit sector, on the one hand, and the Vietnamese and Indian third sector, not only in the extent of the undercount, as noted above, but also in the type of organizations missing from the NCCS database. As with Mexican organizations, most registered Portuguese groups are Catholic or cultural groups, in addition to one large social service organization in San Jose, Portuguese Social Services and Opportunities. Of the non-NCCS Portuguese groups, most also had Catholic and/or cultural missions.

This pattern differs for the Asian-origin communities in our study, largely because of differences in the relative resources and migration trajectories of the four migrant groups. In the Vietnamese case, in part due to the legacy of funding from the Office of Refugee Resettlement and support of local officials who distribute ORR funds, many Vietnamese groups are registered 501(c)3s. These include the many social service organizations, such as the Vietnamese Voluntary Foundation, that began by offering refugee services and today provides ESL classes, citizenship services, and employment assistance, but they also include cultural groups, language schools, the Santa Clara County Vietnamese Parent Teacher Association, and several Catholic churches and Buddhist temples that cater to the Vietnamese-speaking community. An emerging professional class of 1.5 generation Vietnamese has also helped register various transnational aid groups, such as the Friends of Hue, a group that supports an orphanage in a poor rural area in Vietnam, and Aid to Children Without Parents, which supports repatriated refugee minors. A final set of registered organizations within the Vietnamese community are groups mostly run by elderly male veterans. These groups, often divided, oppose the Communist regime in Vietnam, but they have also been active in San Jose politics.²³ Among the groups not present in the NCCS database are several student groups, additional veterans and transnational groups, as well as the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce and a few cultural and service-provision

organizations. Twenty of these non-registered Vietnamese organizations engaged primarily in civic activities.

The immigrant community with the highest degree of formalized organizing, and the one best represented in official data sources, is also the most recently arrived, a surprising finding for those who might hypothesize that immigrants need time to understand U.S. incorporation and tax regulations, as well as to absorb the American tradition of voluntary organizing. However, as supply-side accounts of the third sector suggest, it is the Indian community—the most affluent group, as well as the one with widespread English ability and very high levels of education—that exhibits the smallest undercount of their associational activities. Like the Vietnamese, professional Indians have established many transnational aid organizations, such as the Bengal Development Foundation, which gives scholarships to engineering and medical students in India, and Adhishree, which supports abused or neglected children and poor seniors in India. Several prominent cultural and social service organizations are registered, including the India Community Center and the Lasya Dance company. There are also several Hindu and Sikh temples, as well as professional and alumni groups, such as IIT Bombay, a national alumni group for graduates of the prestigious engineering college in India. All of these groups are formally registered. The majority of the non-NCCS groups are cultural and transnational groups, but also include the Northern California Cricket Association (as well as the breakaway Bay Area Cricket Association). Unlike many Mexican and Vietnamese organizations that fail to register due to economic or linguistic barriers, those active in Indian organizations appear to leave the group unregistered because they perceive few economic incentives in doing so. These group leaders are able to garner donations from community members and businesses despite the absence of tax

benefits, and without relying on government or foundation support that often requires formal registration.

Our findings of substantial, and unequal, organizational undercounts across national-origin communities support existing cautions about using official data of registered non-profits to understand the extent of civil society in a community. Furthermore, in seeking out uncounted organizations across four migrant communities with very different immigration histories and socio-economic profiles, we find that the level of under-representation is more severe in communities with fewer internal resources or external public support. This suggests that resource inequalities between groups become replicated and reinforced in civil society, since we know that relatively few mainstream human service nonprofits focus their activities on minority populations and the issues they face (Grønbjerg, 1990).

<Insert Figure 1: Overview of Organizational Undercount, by City>

Finally, while city size did appear to matter for the under-representation of immigrant-origin groups in official NCCS data, we find little evidence of a relationship between city size and the *undercount* of ethnic organizations across the seven cities studied, as shown in Figure 1. In the largest city of Silicon Valley, San Jose, only 57 percent of the all the organizations of the Mexican, Portuguese, Vietnamese and Indian communities appeared in the NCCS database, while in Fremont, the next largest city at 208,000, fully 66 percent were in our official source. Similarly, the smallest city we studied, Cupertino at 57,000 residents, had 55 percent coverage in the NCCS database, close to that of San Jose, while the coverage rate for the other two small cities, Milpitas and Mountain View, was only 42 and 32 percent, respectively.²⁴ While city size

does not appear to matter, it is unclear how the variation in the undercount should be interpreted. The fact that the undercount differs substantially across cities—all municipalities in the same region—should give pause to researchers who want to use NCCS data to assess the vitality of immigrant organizing across U.S. localities. This variation requires further study.

Conclusion: Lessons Learned

The primary goal of this paper was to assess the scope of immigrant civil society using the tools commonly employed by nonprofit scholars. Our investigation of the organizational universe of immigrant-origin communities in seven Silicon Valley cities demonstrates that a much lower proportion of officially registered 501(c)3 organizations are oriented to these communities than we might expect given the demographic profile of the region. The level of underrepresentation appears greater in smaller cities than larger ones, and it varies across immigrant-origin groups in ways that seem consistent, at first blush, with “supply side” accounts of nonprofit development. While there is a growing literature on diversity—and its absence—in the leadership of nonprofit organizations (Bell, et al., 2006; De Vita, et al., 2009), very few studies have examined civic diversity by looking at the mission and activities of voluntary organizations, especially those oriented to the growing immigrant-origin population of the United States. We see our research as a first step to obtaining baseline information that should be replicated in studies of other cities and other migrant groups.

In addition, we show that official data provide an incomplete picture of voluntary organizing. Nonprofit scholars have long known that statistical datasets, such as those compiled from IRS 990 forms, carry an undercount bias, but here we demonstrate that the bias varies dramatically across four immigrant-origin communities with very different migration histories,

socio-economic profiles and relations to government. These findings carry implications not only for how we measure and understand civic organizing, particularly for immigrant communities, but they also raise questions about the causes and consequences of civic stratification among different communities in the United States. At a minimum, measurement of the undercount—particularly dramatic for the Mexican-origin community—provides a corrective to those who might read the low numbers of Latino nonprofits in official datasets as an objective indicator of limited community organizing or ingrained cultural distrust of civic engagement. In the cities we studied, engagement takes place, but it is relatively rare that these voluntary activities lead to formalization under 501(c)3 status for those of Mexican-origin, while it is much more likely for those with origins in India. To the extent that 501(c)3 status carries material and political benefits, research on undercounts helps us understand variation in the long-term viability of immigrant organizations and the civic and political influence of different communities. Our findings, combined with other recent research showing that Latinos are especially likely to be absent from leadership positions in the nonprofit sector (Bell, et al., 2006; Hung, 2007), shines a spotlight on the need for further research into such inequalities.

Finally, our focus on immigrant organizations raises questions about the notions of mission and place commonly held by policymakers, funders and scholars of nonprofit organizations. Traditionally, the issue of ethnic diversity in the United States has been viewed from a racial minority perspective (Jones-Correa, 2007). There are some similarities in the challenges faced by certain immigrant and native-born minority communities, such as inequalities in the financial resources community members can invest in third sector activities. However, the particularities of the immigrant experience—from individuals' legal status to their ability to speak English—raise unique questions largely absent from the literature on nonprofit

organizing. To give one example, studying immigrant organizing requires an expanded geographical understanding of what constitutes “civic engagement.” Transnational groups are a well established phenomenon in the immigration literature (e.g. Bada, Fox, & Selee, 2006; Fox, 2005; Guarnizo, Portes, & Haller, 2003; Levitt, 2001; Rivera-Salgado & Rabadán, 2004), but such groups were likely to be missing from the NCCS dataset we used, the same dataset on which nonprofit scholars regularly rely. Although ostensibly oriented to the homeland, such group—like the Vietnamese veterans groups in San Jose—often involve their members in domestic politics and community events (Bloemraad, 2006).

Re-thinking organizational development across geographic space is not just restricted to international borders. In the Silicon Valley, perhaps more than in other places, technology, the phenomenon of bedroom communities and significant urban sprawl generate disjunctures between where people live, where they work and where they might gather for voluntary activities. The Indian community, in particular, appears to organize across the Bay Area (and the world), using the internet and the occasional conference as the main method of connection, a phenomenon of cyber-communities also observed by Brettell (2008).

Even putting aside cyberspace, immigrants’ movement to suburbs and new rural destinations will require policymakers and funders to re-think iconic images of central city immigrant settlement associations like Chicago’s Hull House. Although sizeable Mexican and Vietnamese populations were present in many of the cities we studied, organizations were often located in San Jose, a fact that public officials across the region mentioned during interviews. For smaller cities, in particular, we see a potential negative, self-fulfilling prophecy: political leaders in these municipalities might assume that the needs of their immigrant residents are being addressed by nonprofits in places like San Jose, and they may be less likely to reach out to these

residents to assist them in becoming integrated into the civic, cultural and political life of where they live. This would be a loss for immigrants, but also for American communities who could harness the energies of our newest residents to strength U.S. civil society into the 21st century.

Tables and Figures

Table 1: Overview of Silicon Valley Cities and Ethnic Communities

	Cupertino	Fremont	Milpitas	Mtn. View	San Jose	Santa Clara	Sunnyvale	Total
Total Pop.	56,592	208,455	65,215	71,153	898,901	109,363	136,162	1,545,815
Mexican	1,290	25,265	9,766	12,532	246,410	15,969	17,063	328,295
<i>% of Pop</i>	<i>2.3%</i>	<i>12.1%</i>	<i>15.0%</i>	<i>17.6%</i>	<i>27.4%</i>	<i>14.6%</i>	<i>12.5%</i>	<i>21.2%</i>
Vietnamese	892	5,596	7,562	767	89,371	5,249	4,198	113,635
<i>% of Pop</i>	<i>1.6%</i>	<i>2.7%</i>	<i>11.6%</i>	<i>1.1%</i>	<i>9.9%</i>	<i>4.8%</i>	<i>3.1%</i>	<i>7.4%</i>
Indian	9,903	33,072	7,168	4,226	32,709	13,046	16,780	116,904
<i>% of Pop</i>	<i>17.5%</i>	<i>15.9%</i>	<i>11.0%</i>	<i>5.9%</i>	<i>3.6%</i>	<i>11.9%</i>	<i>12.3%</i>	<i>7.6%</i>
Portuguese	568	5,353	655	728	14,977	4,115	1,098	27,494
<i>% of Pop</i>	<i>1.0%</i>	<i>2.6%</i>	<i>1.0%</i>	<i>1.0%</i>	<i>1.7%</i>	<i>3.8%</i>	<i>0.8%</i>	<i>1.8%</i>

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census, 2005-2007 three year average (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009)

Note: Figures for each ethnic group are taken from subcategories of the Census tallies for "Hispanic or Latino" (for Mexican), "Race" (for Vietnamese and Indian), and "Ancestry" (for Portuguese).

Table 2: Official Count of 501(c)3 Organizations in Silicon Valley

	Total Population	Total NCCS Organizations	Ethnic NCCS Organizations	% Ethnic Orgs (of total)	% Foreign Born in population	% Non-White in population*
Cupertino	56,592	231	48	20.8	47.8	62.6
Fremont	208,455	459	108	23.5	43.4	62.3
Milpitas	65,215	140	33	23.6	51.3	75.1
Mtn. View	71,153	234	45	19.2	40.0	42.5
San Jose	898,901	2,181	442	20.3	39.0	50.7
Santa Clara	109,363	300	50	16.7	37.9	53.4
Sunnyvale	136,162	319	70	21.9	43.0	53.3
Total	1,545,815	3,864	796	20.6	40.8	53.8

Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2005) ; American Community Survey, U.S. Census, 2005-07 three year average (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009).

* This percentage includes all individuals who do not identify solely as White.

Table 3: Organizational Undercount, by City and Ethnic Group

	Indian			Mexican			Portuguese			Vietnamese			TOTAL		
	<u>NCCS</u>	<u>non-NCCS</u>		<u>NCCS</u>	<u>non-NCCS</u>		<u>NCCS</u>	<u>non-NCCS</u>		<u>NCCS</u>	<u>non-NCCS</u>		<u>NCCS</u>	<u>non-NCCS</u>	
CITY	total	CoC	other	total	CoC	other	total	CoC	other	total	CoC	other	total	CoC	other
Cupertino	15	1	10	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	16	1	13
Fremont	37	0	16	1	0	1	1	0	3	2	0	1	41	0	21
Milpitas	7	0	5	0	0	6	0	0	0	3	0	3	10	0	14
Mtn. View	4	0	0	0	0	13	1	0	0	1	0	0	6	0	13
Santa Clara	3	0	6	0	0	1	2	0	6	2	0	1	7	0	14
San Jose	34	0	16	12	1	27	8	1	5	59	1	39	113	3	87
Sunnyvale	14	0	7	0	0	5	0	0	0	3	0	1	17	0	13
Total	114	1	60	13	1	54	12	1	14	71	1	47	210	4	175

Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2005); authors' compilation.

Note: The National Center for Charitable Statistics database used here enumerates all registered 501(c)3 organizations for each city studied. "CoC" refers to ethnic Chambers of Commerce.

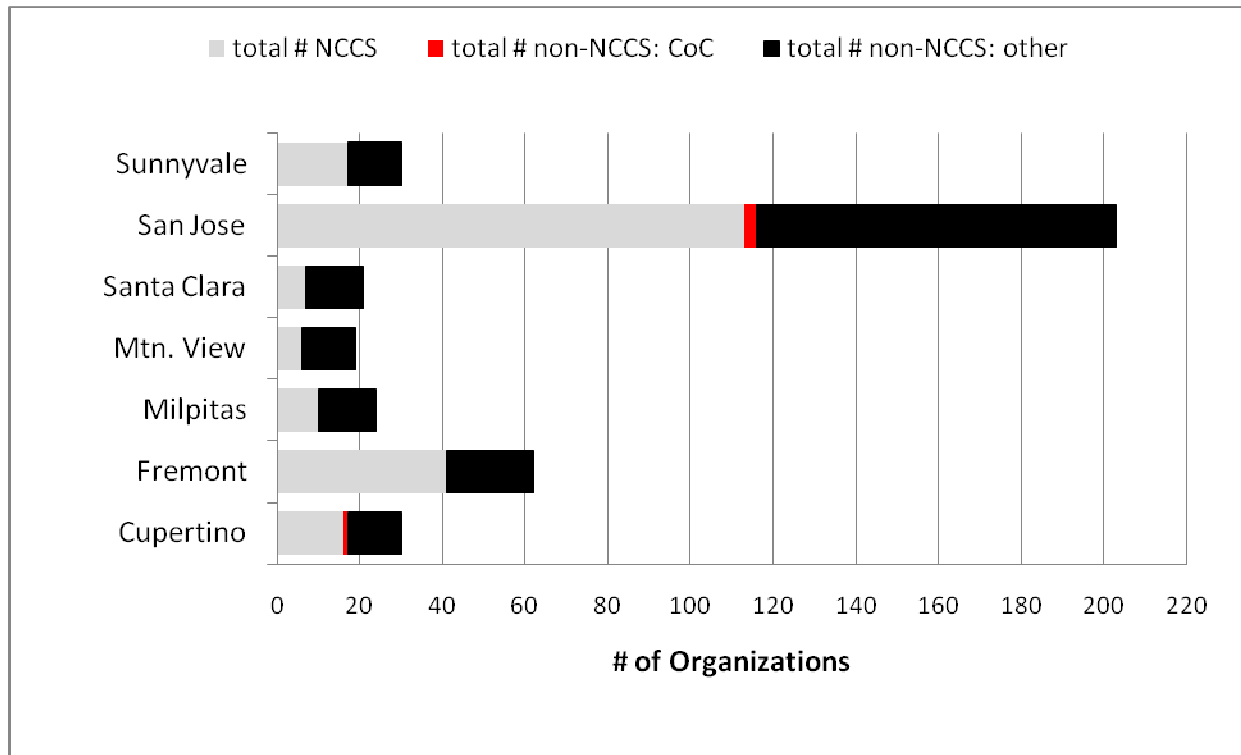
Table 4: Main Activity of Undercounted Organizations, by Ethnic Group

Activity Code	Indian	Mexican	Portuguese	Vietnamese	TOTAL
Citizenship/Government		1			1
Recreation		1			1
Health	2	2		1	5
Sports	5				5
Multi-service	2	1	2	4	9
Business/Professional*	5	6	1	4	16
Education	4	4	1	7	16
Advocacy	4	12		2	18
Transnational	16	1		2	19
Religious	6	7	6	2	21
Civic	7	2	1	20	30
Arts/Music	10	18	4	6	38
TOTAL	61	55	15	48	179

Source: Authors' compilation.

* Includes four ethnic-specific Chambers of Commerce.

Figure 1: Organizational Undercount in Silicon Valley, by City



Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2005); authors' compilation.

REFERENCES

- Aptekar, S. (2008). Highly Skilled but Unwelcome in Politics: Asian Indians and Chinese in a New Jersey Suburb. In S. K. Ramakrishnan & I. Bloemraad (Eds.), *Civic Hopes and Political Realities: Immigrants, Community Organizations, and Political Engagement* (pp. 222-243). New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press.
- Bada, X., Fox, J., & Selee, A. (Eds.). (2006). *Invisible No More: Mexican Migrant Civic Participation in the United States*. Washington, D.C.: Mexico Institute and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.
- Bell, J., Moyers, R., & Wolfred, T. (2006). *Daring to Lead 2006: A National Study of Nonprofit Leadership*: Compass Point Nonprofit Services.
- Bloemraad, I. (2005). The Limits of de Tocqueville: How Government Facilitates Organizational Capacity in Newcomer Communities. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 31(5), 865-887.
- Bloemraad, I. (2006). *Becoming a Citizen: Incorporating Immigrants and Refugees in the United States and Canada*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Brettell, C. B. (2008). Immigrants as Netizens: Political Mobilization in Cyberspace. In D. Reed-Danahay & C. Brettell, B. (Eds.), *Citizenship, Political Engagement, and Belonging: Immigrants in Europe and the United States*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Castellanos, T. (2009). Santa Clara County Model of Immigrant Integration: Overview of SCC County Programs *Latino Immigrant Civic Engagement Trends Conference*. Washington, D.C.: Mexico Institute, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

- Colwell, M. A. C. (1997). The Potential for Bias when Research on Voluntary Associations is Limited to 501 (C) 3 Organizations *Nonprofit Sector Research Fund Working Paper Series*: The Aspen Institute.
- Corbin, J. J. (1999). A Study of Factors Influencing the Growth of Nonprofits in Social Services. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 28, 296-314.
- Cordero-Guzmán, H. (2005). Community-Based Organisations and Migration in New York City. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 31(5), 889-909.
- Dale, H. P. (1993). On Estimating the Size of the Non-profit Sector in the US Economy. *Voluntas*, 4(2), 183-189.
- de Graauw, E. (2008). Nonprofit Organizations: Agents of Immigrant Political Incorporation in Urban America. In S. K. R. a. I. Bloemraad (Ed.), *Civic Hopes and Political Realities: Community Organizations and Political Engagement among Immigrants in the United States and Abroad* (pp. 323-350). New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press.
- De Vita, C. J., Roeger, K. L., & Niedzwiecki, M. (2009). Measuring Racial-Ethnic Diversity in California's Nonprofit Sector. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.
- Department of Homeland Security. (2007). 2007 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics. http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/yearbook/2007/ois_2007_yearbook.pdf.
- Fox, J. (2005). Unpacking 'Transnational Citizenship'. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 8, 171-201.
- Froelich, K. A., Knoepfle, T. W., & Pollak, T. H. (2000). Financial Measures in Nonprofit Organization Research: Comparing IRS 990 Return and Audited Financial Statement Data. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 29(2), 232-254.

- Gamm, G., & Putnam, R. D. (1999). The Growth of Voluntary Associations in America, 1840-1940. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 29(4), 511-557.
- Gleeson, S. (2008). Organizing for Latino Immigrant Labor Rights in Two U.S. Cities: The Case of San Jose and Houston. In S. K. Ramakrishnan & I. Bloemraad (Eds.), *Civic Hopes and Political Realities: Immigrants, Community Organizations, and Political Engagement* (pp. 107-133). New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press.
- González-Rivera, C., Donnell, C., Briones, A., & Werblin, S. (2008). Funding the New Majority: Philanthropic Investment in Minority-Led Nonprofits. Berkeley, CA: The Greenlining Institute.
- Grønbjerg, K. A. (1990). Poverty and Nonprofit Organizational Behavior, Contingencies, and Linkages. *Social Service Review*, 64(208-243).
- Grønbjerg, K. A. (2002). Evaluating Nonprofit Databases. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 45(11), 1741-1777.
- Grønbjerg, K. A., & Paarlberg, L. (2001). Community Variations in the Size and Scope of the Nonprofit Sector: Theory and Preliminary Findings. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 30(4), 684-706.
- Grønbjerg, K. A., & Paarlberg, L. (2002). Extent and Nature of Overlap Between Listings of IRS Tax-Exempt Registration and Nonprofit Incorporation - The Case of Indiana. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 31, 565-594.
- Guarnizo, L. E., Portes, A., & Haller, W. (2003). Assimilation and Transnationalism: Determinants of Transnational Political Action among Contemporary Migrants. *American Journal of Sociology*, 108(6), 1211-1148.

- Hansmann, H. (1987). *Economic Theories of Nonprofit Organization*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Hein, J. (1993). Refugees, Immigrants, and the State. *Annual Reviews in Sociology*, 19(1), 43-59.
- Hung, C.-K. R. (2007). Immigrant Nonprofit Organizations in US Metropolitan Areas. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 36(4), 707.
- Huntington, S. (2004). *Who Are We : The Challenges to America's National Identity*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Jenkins, J. C. (2006). Nonprofit Organizations and Political Advocacy. In W. W. Powell & R. Steinberg (Eds.), *The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook* (pp. 307-332). New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Jones-Correa, M. (1998). *Between Two Nations: The Political Predicament of Latinos in New York City*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Jones-Correa, M. (2005). Bringing Outsiders In: Questions of Immigrant Incorporation. In C. Wolbrecht & R. Hero (Eds.), *The Politics of Democratic Inclusion* (pp. 75-101). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Jones-Correa, M. (2007). Fuzzy Distinctions and Blurred Boundaries: Transnational, Immigrant and Ethnic Politics. In R. Espino, D. Leal & K. Meier (Eds.), *Latino Politics: Identity, Mobilization and Representation* (pp. 44-60). Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.
- Jones-Correa, M. (Ed.). (2008). *The Bureaucratic Incorporation of Immigrants in Suburbia: The Role of Bureaucratic Norms in Education*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press.
- Katznelson, I. (1982). *City Trenches: Urban Politics and the Patterning of Class in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Lampkin, L. M., & Boris, E. T. (2002). Nonprofit Organization Data: What We Have and What We Need. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 45(11), 1675-1715.
- Levitt, P. (2001). *The Transnational Villagers*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Marwell, N. P. (2007). *Bargaining for Brooklyn: Community Organizations in the Entrepreneurial City*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
- Migration Policy Institute. (2008). Foreign-Born Population and Foreign-Born as a Percentage of the Total Population for the United States: 1850 to 2006 *US Historical Trends*. Washington, D.C.
- National Center for Charitable Statistics. (2005). DD Revenue and Expenses v2005b. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute.
- National Center for Charitable Statistics. (2008). Nonprofit Statistics. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute.
- Ostrower, F. (2007). Nonprofit Governance in the United States: Findings on Performance and Accountability from the First National Representative Study. Washington, D.C. : Urban Institute.
- Passel, J. S. (2006). Size and Characteristics of the Unauthorized Migrant Population in the U.S. Washington, D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center.
- Ramakrishan, S. K., & Bloemraad, I. (2008a). Introduction: Civic and Political Inequalities. In S. K. Ramakrishnan & I. Bloemraad (Eds.), *Civic Hopes and Political Realities: Immigrants, Community Organizations, and Political Engagement* (pp. 1-44). New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press.
- Ramakrishan, S. K., & Bloemraad, I. (2008b). Making Organizations Count: Immigrant Civic Engagement in California Cities. In S. K. Ramakrishnan & I. Bloemraad (Eds.), *Civic*

- Hopes and Political Realities: Immigrants, Community Organizations, and Political Engagement* (pp. 45-76). New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press.
- Ramakrishnan, S. K., & Viramontes, C. (2006). *Civic Inequalities: Immigrant Volunteerism and Community Organizations in California*. San Francisco, CA: Public Policy Institute of California.
- Ramakrishnan, S. K., & Lewis, P. G. (2005). *Immigrants and Local Governance: The View From City Hall*. San Francisco: Public Policy Institute of California.
- Reiner, T. A. (2003). Tally of Nonprofits. *Administration and Society*, 35(5), 629-637.
- Rivera-Salgado, G., & Rabadán, L. E. (2004). Collective Identity and Organizational Strategies of Indigenous and Mestizo Mexican Migrants. In J. Fox & G. Rivera-Salgado (Eds.), *Indigenous Mexican Migrants in the United States* (pp. 145-178). San Diego: Center for Us-Mexican Studies.
- Salamon, L. M. (1987). Partners in Public Service: The Scope and Theory of Government-Nonprofit Relations. In W. W. Powell (Ed.), *The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook* (pp. 99-117). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Salamon, L. M. (1999). *America's Nonprofit Sector: A Primer* (2nd ed.). New York: Foundation Center.
- Sanguino, L. (2008). Selective Service: Indians, Poles, and Mexicans in Chicago. In S. K. Ramakrishnan & I. Bloemraad (Eds.), *Civic Hopes and Political Realities: Immigrants, Community Organizations, and Political Engagement* (pp. 244-270). New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press.
- Saxenian, A. (2007). *The New Argonauts: Regional Advantage in a Global Economy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

- Singer, A. (2003). *The Rise of New Immigrant Gateways Immigration, Demographics, Ethnicity, Race*. Washington, D.C.: Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, the Brookings Institution.
- Singer, A., Hardwick, S. W., & Brettell, C. (2008). *Twenty-First Century Gateways: Immigrant Incorporation in Suburban America*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Smith, D. H. (1997a). Grassroots Associations are Important: Some Theory and a Review of the Impact Literature (Vol. 26, pp. 269): ARNOVA.
- Smith, D. H. (1997b). The Rest of the Nonprofit Sector: Grassroots Associations as the Dark Matter Ignored in Prevailing "Flat Earth" Maps of the Sector. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 26(2), 114.
- Toepler, S. (2003). Grassroots Associations Versus Larger Nonprofits: New Evidence from a Community Case Study in Arts and Culture. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 32(2), 236.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2008). *Foreign-Born Profiles (STP-159)*. Washington, D.C.: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2009). 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Custom Table. *American Factfinder* Retrieved January 21, 2010, from <http://factfinder.census.gov>
- Voss, K., & Bloemraad, I. (Eds.). (Forthcoming). *Rallying for Immigrant Rights*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Wang, T., & Winn, R. C. (2006). *Groundswell Meets Groundwork: Recommendations for Building on Immigrant Mobilizations (Special Report): Four Freedoms Fund and Grantmakers Concerned With Immigrants and Refugees*.

Weisbrod, B. A. (1991). *The Nonprofit Economy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

ENDNOTES

¹ Please direct correspondence to Shannon Gleeson, (Latin American and Latino Studies, Merrill Faculty Services, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA, 95064). A prior version of this paper was presented at the 2009 Annual Meeting of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action, Cleveland, Ohio, November 19-21, 2009. We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the National Academic Centers Council and the Russell Sage Foundation, as well as the helpful feedback of Els de Graauw, Kevin Rafter, and Karthick Ramakrishnan.

² In this article, we refer interchangeably to “organizations” and “groups”.

³ These data are compiled by the National Center for Charitable Statistics (which serves mainly academic researchers) and Guidestar (which provides services mainly to practitioners and companies).

⁴ All private foundations must file a Form 990-PF annually regardless of size.

⁵ They either use the data directly, or use the data as a sampling frame to survey organizations. The Greenlining Institute uses a slightly different methodology, examining the list of organizations receiving grants from major U.S. foundations, but since many foundations require grantees to have 501(c)3 status, their findings are also unable to help us get a handle on organizational undercounts.

⁶ Our fieldwork took place in 2005 and 2006, thus we provide demographic data from the 2005-2007 American Community Survey (three year average). ACS data come from U.S. Census samples. Estimates are subject to random sampling error and likely undercount immigrants, so the precise figures must be treated with caution. For our analysis, an undercount will *understate*

organizational inequality. For more on ACS sampling, see:

<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/AdvMeth/CollProc/CollProc1.htm>

⁷ H1-B visas are temporary work permits available to highly-skilled workers in specialty occupations. Many software engineers in Silicon Valley arrived from India and China as H1-B visa holders (Saxenian, 2007).

⁸ We examine c(3) filers because scholarly research on 990 data overwhelmingly focuses on these organizations to define the scope of civil society. We also aimed to keep constant the funding regulations for an organization, which are not standard across all 501(c) categories.

⁹ Thus, “non-ethnic-specific” organizations include those whose mission is not directed at any given racial/ethnic group (e.g., an Elks Lodge, a mainstream Parent-Teacher Association), while an “ethnic” organization largely serves a particular group (such as the Santa Clara County Vietnamese PTA).

¹⁰ The list of organizations we collected during fieldwork in 2005-06 was compared to the most recent NCCS dataset available in 2006, which covers the 2003 fiscal year. It is possible that some non-NCCS organizations did not appear in the 2003FY data because they were established between 2003 and 2005, but we did not identify any such organization. As previously noted, our focus on publicly present organizations privileges more established organizations over incipient ones.

¹¹ Non-NCCS organizations fell into three main categories: 1) groups located within the seven cities of interest, but not formally registered as 501(c)3 organizations; 2) groups with headquarters outside Silicon Valley (which may or may not be formally registered) but with a significant membership and activities within one of our seven cities; or 3) registered groups that

did not file or were registered as another 501(c) category. Reasons for not registering or not filing were diverse: some group were not required to do so (i.e., they had revenues under \$25,000 or were a religious group), others had not completed the necessary paperwork, did not know about non-profit registration, had no interest in doing so or, if open to registering, faced barriers to acquiring non-profit status. For our purposes, the reason a group was not in the NCCS database is secondary to our primary question of how much the reliance on standard, widely used 501(c)3 data distorts the picture of immigrant organizing.

¹² The non-NCCS list includes “ethnic” chambers of commerce, such as the Vietnamese or Hispanic Chambers of Commerce in San Jose. They did not appear in our NCCS database due to their status as (c)6 organizations. We include them in the discussion below, as publicly present organizations that play an important role in the civic life of their immigrant communities, but we list them apart in the tables.

¹³ The allocation criteria involved the following steps: (1) If a group’s city location could be identified through web searches, and that city was one of the seven cities in our study, they were allocated to that city; (2) if an organization demonstrated activity in one of our 7 study cities, but the official group location was outside the seven cities (yet within Santa Clara or Alameda County), it was allocated to the closest city of our study; (3) if the city location was outside the seven cities, and outside of the South Bay, they were allocated to the city of the organization that the interviewee source represents, or if multiple interviewees mentioned this non-registered nonprofit organization, the group was listed once for each city mentioned; (4) any government sponsored organization that relied on government-funded staff (such as a city commission, city-sponsored neighborhood association, or school-sponsored group) was allocated to the city of support; and (5) if no city location could be explicitly identified, and the interviewee source

represented an entity outside the seven cities (e.g. a consular office), or the group was identified from a directory or web search, that group was allocated to San Jose.

¹⁴ Any group explicitly identified as Latino from a country other than Mexico would have been excluded, but we did not encounter any such group.

¹⁵ Two Muslim organizations with a significant Indian membership were also included.

¹⁶ Our undercount list includes numerous transnational or informal groups identified through interviews or other sources, but we doubt that we have an exhaustive list of all such organizations nor of all religious groups. Unions, which are active in the Mexican community in particular, were not included, nor were social service agencies that are not ethnic-specific in mission.

¹⁷ The immigrant population is not a simple subset of the racial minority population, hence the need for immigrant-focused research studies. A focus on racial minority communities will exclude immigrant groups such as the Portuguese, and can exclude Hispanics who identify as white in census tallies and surveys. Conversely, the African American community in Northern California is overwhelmingly non-immigrant.

¹⁸ In comparison, a recent study of non-profit leadership found that whereas people of color made up 54 percent of Bay Area residents (including San Francisco, San Jose and East Bay cities such as Oakland), only 24.5 percent of area non-profits were run by a person of color and only 30 percent of board members were people of color (De Vita, et al., 2009).

¹⁹ Space considerations prevent an extended discussion of the reasons behind the organizational inequality documented here, but at first blush our data lend support to “supply-side” accounts of the third sector, if city size is taken as an indication of the resources (financial, human, etc.) city

government can provide to immigrants, or to a community structure approach (Grønbjerg & Paarlberg, 2001). Our field research also suggests that suburban governments close to immigrant gateways, such as San Francisco and San Jose, engage in organizational free-riding, assuming immigrant organizations in the gateway city will cater to newcomers in their population.

²⁰ The ethnic Chambers of Commerce hold 501(c)6 status, and so could not be expected to be in the NCCS 501(c)3 data. However, since they were consistently mentioned by informants as publicly present organizations, we include them in the table.

²¹ These calculations do not include the ethnic chambers of commerce, registered as 501(c)6 organizations.

²² As discussed above, the absence of some of the business and religious groups can be explained by, respectively, the fact they file as another type of nonprofit organization (501(c)6), or because they do not need to register with the IRS.

²³ This was most evident in the run-off city council election between Madison Nguyen and Linda Nguyen (no relation) in 2005, and the recent much contested, and ultimately unsuccessful move to unseat the victor, Madison Nguyen, over her position on the naming of a local business district.

²⁴ These calculations do not include the ethnic chambers of commerce, registered as 501(c)6 organizations.