

Here and There: Immigrants from Former Soviet Republics in the United States

By

Jill Robinson

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Approved:

Douglas D. Perkins, Ph.D.

Kathryn Anderson, Ph.D.

Paul Dokecki, Ph.D.

Andrei Korobkov, Ph.D.

Richard Lloyd, Ph.D.

Beth Shinn, Ph.D.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When I first encountered Ivrita¹, a Georgian immigrant in her mid-20s, she was leaning against a light post in lower Manhattan checking her text messages. I offered to take her to lunch so we could talk. She had never been to an Irish pub so I suggested she try a shepherd's pie. She asked me if I was Irish. "Partly. I think some of my ancestors were Irish, but then I also have ancestors from all over Europe. I'm not really sure where they all came from." We exchanged pleasantries and then I explained to her my research and why I needed her help.

To situate myself in this research, I offer the following brief background: I grew up in the Texas Panhandle and then moved to Moscow, Russia after I graduated from college and found whatever work I could to live there. After spending eight months in Moscow, I moved to Kiev, Ukraine where my Russian was good enough to help me navigate day-to-day life unless I was visiting western parts of the country. People in the west refused to respond to me in Russian. I had better luck with English in Lvov, where bookstores were bilingual: Ukrainian and Polish. After moving back to the United States, I married into a family from Central Asia. They spent their lives in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan but were ethnically a mix of Ukrainian, Russian and Tatar. My ex-husband's paternal side was Ukrainian, but he identifies himself as Russian. His maternal grandmother came to the United States and claimed asylum after leaving Tajikistan during the civil war in the 1990s. In graduate school, I traveled a couple of times to Moldova where I conducted research on human trafficking. There, I would speak Russian but

¹ Pseudonyms are used in this dissertation.

often was responded to in Moldovan (Romanian). These personal experiences left me interested in how the Soviet period and Russia's historical role shaped a post-Soviet reality.

When Ivrita and I talked about ethnicity, she straightened up as if she was ready to pounce on what I was about to say. I explained that I was troubled that so many people, scholars and non-scholars alike, tend to call everyone from the former Soviet region "Russian." I said I had wondered if it might be offensive to those who are not. She let out a sigh and looked relieved. "I am NOT Russian. I am Georgian. Everything about me is Georgian."

Ivrita offered an anecdote on why she is offended when someone mistakes her for a Russian.

During the war (between Russia and Georgia, 2008-2010), I was in my university class here in New York and there was a Russian girl who was explaining the war to a Turkish guy. And she said, 'Georgians are beasts.' And I just couldn't contain myself. I said, 'Excuse me?' And she said, 'How dare you interrupt my conversation.' And I said, 'How dare you talk about my country like that.' The Russian girl then told me to 'google' it and I will understand. I told her she should be the one to 'google,' because I know my country's history.

Ivrita's mother, Oksana, identifies herself as ethnically Russian, but she also told me that her great grandparents were from Poland. I had the opportunity to formally interview Oksana. She shared with me her experience living in Georgia as a Russian, but she also attended college in Russia. In Georgia, she was treated as a Russian, and in Russia, she was treated as a Georgian. The description of her experiences, included in the results chapter of this work, suggested that she was a person who felt as though she belonged neither here nor there.

The Russification of the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union was a continuation of the Russian empire. Russian dominance is often referred to as Russian chauvinism. The first official expression of this chauvinism came from Stalin during WWII as a battle cry used against the threat of Nazism (Joo, 2008). In an effort to colonize newly acquired republics and develop the cohesiveness of the *Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)*, Soviet officials compelled Russians to immigrate to other Soviet republics. The ideological intent was to homogenize “Soviet” space so that class and ethnic inequalities would disappear. The “Soviet” identity was, however, highly Russified. The spread of the Russian language, the establishment of Moscow as the political center of control, and the urban development of traditionally rural republics using a Russian workforce are examples of how the Soviet Union was Russified (Zayonchkovskaya, 2000; Kolsto, 1993).

According to the 1989 Soviet census, the highest percentages of Russians outside of Russia were living in Kazakhstan, Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, with the majority living in Kazakhstan (Anderson & Silver, 1989). The flow of Russians to other Soviet republics, especially Central Asia and Transcaucasus, slowed by the 1970s and gradually reversed (Dunlop, 1993; Kolsto, 1993; Korobkov, 2007). The native populations in Central Asia began to compete for higher skilled jobs as they benefited from the Soviet education system. Eventually, the natural increase among indigenous populations filled the labor demand that had previously been filled by (European) immigrants (Gibson, 1994; Zayonchkovskaya, 2000). During the late Soviet period an affirmative action policy, or hiring practice based on quotas, ensured that members of native populations secured local jobs if they were qualified; preferences went to titular (ethnicities that matched titles of republics) groups in the republics (Robertson, 1996).

With *perestroika* and the subsequent dissolution of the USSR, pent-up hostilities among ethnic groups were uncorked, and this change led to conflicts and war (Korobkov, 2007; Sahadeo, 2007). A study in 1990-1991 by the All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion indicated that 40 percent of people who wanted to return to their titular nations would do so for ethnic reasons. Europeans left non-European republics for multiple reasons. Some believed there would be no future for them in the newly independent republic, others felt discriminated against within their own communities, and some fled violence and increasing conflict. Although the return of Russians to Russia was the key post-Soviet migration pattern, Gibson (1994) identified the following non-Russian ethnic groups who fled to their titular nations or sought refuge elsewhere to avoid persecution and even execution in some cases: Uzbeks from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan; Kyrgyz from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan; Tajiks from Kyrgyzstan; Armenians from Tajikistan and Azerbaijan; Azeris from Uzbekistan and Armenia; South Ossetians from Georgia.

Today, continued ethnic tension is coupled with rising violence in Russia, especially in the big cities (Korobkov, 2007). Korobkov cited a study by Mukomel (2005) who compared opinions among Russians (in Russia) over time. By 2004, 68 percent of Russians had negative views regarding non-European immigrants. Sahadeo (2007) noted the palpable nostalgia his informants, ethnic minorities who had migrated to St. Petersburg and Moscow for work, expressed for the Soviet era as a result of the rising xenophobia in Russia today. He also referred to a study conducted by Moscow State University that revealed that anti-Semitism is being overshadowed by bigotry towards non-white ethnic groups in Russia. Among Muscovites polled, 46 percent had negative feelings towards Azeris, 40 percent towards Chechens, 33 percent towards Georgians and Roma (“Gypsies”), and 8 percent towards Jews.

Emigration from the Former Soviet Union to the U.S.

About 1.5 million people emigrated from the Soviet Union between 1950 and 1992 (the year of the collapse of the USSR). At least half of these emigrants were Soviet Jews (Fassmann and Munz, 1994). The first significant wave was in the 1970s after the U.S. agreed to lift some trade barriers in exchange for the Soviet government lifting travel restrictions. The second significant wave started in 1987. The main destination countries were Israel, the U.S. and Germany. Many of these emigrants were encouraged and supported by Jewish communities in the receiving countries (Dietz, Lebok, & Polian, 2002). It is also important to note that during the 1970s and 1980s, because they were entering the U.S. as refugees, former Soviet immigrants had access to formal state support (welfare) on top of any local community support they received. I summarize below the results from reports by Kochavi (2005) and Lazarowitz (2003) on Soviet immigration to the U.S. They found that Jews were the main target of U.S. policy on migration, and Jews had a strong incentive to leave the Soviet Union. .

Soviet Jewish immigration to the U.S. Kochavi (2005) and Lazarowitz (2003) provide historical sketches about Soviet-U.S. relations on migration during the Soviet period. This section reviews their articles together to present the mix of norms, processes and events that influenced Jewish migration flows from the former USSR to the U.S. Anti-Semitism was deeply embedded in tsarist Russia. The Bolsheviks tempered this prejudice, but Stalin reinforced it. For example, passports issued to Jews indicated their nationality as “Jew,” but they were not granted territorial autonomy or other “amenities” that were granted to other nationalities. Although external concern grew about the treatment of Soviet Jews, before the 1960s, American Jews were more concerned with the U.S. Civil Rights movement. Soviet Jewish issues were not on the

official agenda of U.S-Soviet relations before 1969 in part because Israel was not advocating for Soviet Jewish emigration at that time.

The American effort to alter the fate of Soviet Jews began to gain traction in the mid-1960s with Jewish student movements. In 1965, Congress followed; Senators Javits, Ribicoff and Dodd submitted a resolution about the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union, including an exorbitant “exit” tax placed on Soviet Jews wishing to emigrate that effectively prevented them from leaving the USSR. Though the resolution passed the Senate but was dropped by a House-Senate conference committee, the exit tax became the incentive for the next congressional action which was the Jackson-Vanik amendment to the 1974 Trade Act.

Senator Javits, a ranking member of the Joint Economic Committee and an active supporter of Jewish organizations and causes, used his influence and knowledge about the USSR’s grain production problems brought on by collectivized farming to help Senator Jackson and Representative Vanik draft an amendment to the 1974 Trade Act. After Stalin initiated collectivization in the late 1920s, Russia and Ukraine, which were net exporters of grain under the Imperial regime, became net importers of grain under the Soviet regime. This new reality made the USSR especially vulnerable to poor harvests, which in turn made the country particularly reliant on Western grain in times of crisis. This situation became apparent during a summit meeting between Nixon and Brezhnev. The Soviet Union had had one of its worst wheat harvests in almost a decade and needed American grain. Under the proposed Jackson-Vanik amendment, any country that denies or restricts emigration cannot get “most favored nation” (MFN) status. Countries denied MFN are subject to high tariffs and other trade barriers.

Nixon’s administration tried but failed to block the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment. Kissinger and Nixon believed they should not link US foreign policy to Soviet domestic policy,

but should engage in “quiet diplomacy” in a push for détente. Ironically, Kissinger gave credit to the Nixon administration as the leader on Soviet Jewish emigration. For example, the 1970 Leningrad trials spotlighted the Soviet treatment of Jews. In 1970, eleven Jews were put on trial for attempting to hijack a plane and escape Russia, but this incident led to the arrest of around forty additional Jews as part of the conspiracy. This is one of the few times Kissinger intervened directly on behalf of Soviet Jews, and he was able to get their death penalties commuted. More often, Kissinger was a proponent of order over justice. In fact, he used the Jackson-Vanik amendment as a bargaining chip during the Yom Kippur War, indicating that the U.S. would further support Israel if American Jews would back off the Jackson-Vanik amendment.

It became increasingly difficult for the Nixon administration to resist the Jackson-Vanik amendment. First, the amendment was popular within the American public in general, partly because of the belief that the U.S. is not only a nation of immigrants but also a safe-haven for persecuted persons across the world. Second, the Watergate scandal weakened the administration’s ability to resist the amendment. They could not afford to alienate their remaining Jewish constituency. Although Nixon’s administration was able to stall the amendment, it failed to block it. Gerald Ford finally signed it into law in 1975 (Kochavi, 2005; Lazarowitz, 2003).

The following anecdote exemplifies a fairly typical Soviet immigrant from that period, but who is very different from most recent FSU immigrants. After one of my trips to New York City for data collection, I was headed back to LaGuardia Airport in a taxi. The driver was friendly, and we chatted about what I was doing in Brooklyn. “Ah, the Soviet Ghetto!” My driver perked up when I told him I was in Brighton Beach for research. “You know, I was recruited into a group that was responsible for bringing attention to the U.S. about what Soviet

Jews were facing in the 1970s, but we didn't get credit for it because a lot of Jews and Jewish leaders didn't want to be associated with such a radical group." I asked, "What group was that?" He responded, "The JDL." He looked at me for some sign of recognition. Seeing none, he clarified, "The Jewish Defense League²." He told me:

My father was born in Lithuania and survived the Holocaust. My mother was born in Poland, but she escaped Poland before Hitler invaded. Her father served in the Soviet Army for five years, and they didn't see him for a couple of years during his service. I had a difficult time in Russia because I am Jewish. My family first moved to Israel, and then to New York (City) when I was 14.

He called himself an "ex-immigrant," and talked about the difficulty he had in school in the U.S. And even though New York City "is a very liberal place," he was bullied because he was an immigrant and Jewish. He explained that about a quarter of the students in his high school were immigrants. He noted his surprise because the students who picked on him were the sons and daughters of immigrants. He got in a lot of fights.

Because at least half of the immigrants from the USSR was Jewish until the collapse of the USSR (Fassmann and Munz, 1994), it makes sense that the focus of research on former Soviet immigrants has been on the Jewish population. However, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the flow has become more diverse. Dr. Sam Kliger with the Research Institute for New Americans (RINA) conducts polls among the Russian-speaking population in New York. He found that the percentage of non-Jews among Russian speakers in New York increased rapidly over the past several years. According to their polls, non-Jews make up about 30-35 percent of

² The Jewish Defense League is listed on the Southern Poverty Law Center's website in the "Intelligence Files" as a prominent extremist group in the United States. [www. http://www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-files/groups/jewish-defense-league](http://www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-files/groups/jewish-defense-league)

the Russian-speaking population, but he suspects this percentage is higher if undocumented immigrants are included (Personal communication, May 17, 2010; Ruby, 2007). Motivations for Jews to leave the former Soviet Union (FSU) because of anti-Semitism may have decreased since the collapse of the Soviet Union (Sahadeo, 2007).

Liebert (2010) is the only scholar to study labor migration from any part of the FSU to the U.S. Her regional focus was Central Asia. She indicated that since 2000, the migration trend from the Central Asia increasingly became one of irregular migration. Irregular migration is an increase in temporary and/or undocumented migration. One of my research goals is to show the diversity of reasons for migration and experiences upon immigration to the U.S. Ivilita and her family's experience provides one story about motivation for emigration from the FSU. Davit, her father, who identifies himself as Georgian, explained their experience.

In the Soviet period, you could not own property. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, people became millionaires overnight because they were trying to get control of factories. You had to be very smart to survive. I was an engineer in the Soviet period and I had a good salary. After the collapse, I had to do something else. The U.S. had this system of distribution so I took the idea and implemented it in the city. We distributed goods from warehouses to stores. It was very small at first, but got bigger. The government stepped in, said they wanted half our business. In Russia now, too, there is huge corruption. There was no tax system, but you had to pay the government. My partner was shot and killed by the KGB because we refused to give the government and police half our business.

Ivilita later told me that her mother was arrested and put in prison for two days because they would not give up the business. The government took everything they had, including their car

and apartment. Ivlita's parents fled to the U.S. and she and her brother stayed behind, but they had to hide. They left the protection of their aunt's home only with an escort.

At the time of my research in Brooklyn, Ivlita was in university. Her father was working as a limo driver and her mother worked as a home healthcare worker. They, along with Ivlita's younger brother, shared a small but comfortable apartment in Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn, one of the two neighborhoods in Brooklyn where there is a concentration of immigrants from former Soviet republics. Their narrative is a good example of how history and context interact to influence the lived experience of immigrants. More specifically, refugee status, titularity (ethnicity and country of origin match), and ethnic identity are all categories under which I organized my hypotheses for research. These are the organizing categories that were intended to help me explore why people left their respective former Soviet republic and how they integrate into U.S. society.

Many scholars have made important contributions to the study of former Soviet immigrants in the United States, but I broaden the scope of research on FSU immigrants in the U.S. to include an alternative understanding of this population. I argue that it is crucial not only to understand this population in the context of the former Soviet region, but to recognize their diversity and plurality. My research is a foundational study of the diverse FSU immigrant population, but it employs established, though in some cases contested, theories of migration.

Birman and Trickett (2001) noted the lack of research on former Soviet immigrants in the U.S. Kopnina (2005) called former Soviet immigrants in Europe an "invisible population" for multiple reasons. One of those reasons she identified is that they "choose" to be invisible. Also, structurally they are invisible because many are white, and they do not tend to live in concentration (ethnic enclaves). This appears to be true in the U.S. with some notable

exceptions, such as Brighton Beach in Brooklyn, New York. Liebert (2010) recently attempted to fill the gap in research on immigrants from former Soviet republics noting that her study was the first on labor migration from the Former Soviet Union (mostly Central Asia) to the U.S. Most previous studies involving FSU immigrants focused on Jewish refugees.

My research seeks to determine how the Soviet legacy affects the lived experiences of immigrants from the FSU in the U.S. The Soviet legacy compelled me to treat the region as a whole even though the USSR collapsed into independent nations. After 1991, individual republics declared independence from the Soviet Union and reorganized their governments and economies accordingly. Many of the reforms that took place led to economic and political crises, which brought Russia (voluntarily or involuntarily), the dominant power during the Soviet era, back into the domestic sphere of newly independent states. Multiple regional organizations (e.g. Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS); Eurasian Economic Community (EEC); GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova)) draw together former Soviet republics in economic and political cooperation. One reason for the persistent post-Soviet interdependence is the legacy of the regional command economy before 1990. Industrialization and inter-republic migration united the physical, economic and social infrastructure of the Soviet Union. Today, migration patterns, trade, investment, and even military presence keep these independent republics interdependent (Lee, Sacks, Kaiser, & Heleniak, 1993; Metcalf, 1997; Sabonis-Helf, 2007; Secrieru, 2006).

My work is intended to reach three broad audiences: migration scholars and non-migration scholars studying any former Soviet population, and non-scholars working in governmental and non-governmental organizations who may interact with former Soviet populations. An additional outcome of this research is the launch of a bi-lingual (Russian and

English) website with study findings and helpful links intended to reach immigrants from former Soviet republics³. These varied audiences are engaged further in the discussion chapter, but generally, my research is intended to fill gaps and further clarify or challenge existing academic literature and public understanding of the FS population. More specifically, results of this research challenge scholars and non-scholars alike to move beyond general classifications of persons from the FSU as “Russian.” Furthermore, I argue that a historical and regional contextual understanding of immigrants is crucial to a broader understanding of the immigrant population. With this work, I highlight the existing research on former Soviet immigrants and advance scholarship and action efforts affecting this population.

³ The website was made possible by a generous grant from Vanderbilt Graduate School and Peabody College in the form of a “Dissertation Enhancement Grant.” The website for this study is: www.fsimmigrants.com

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical literature on migration studies falls into two broad categories: social capital and migration theories. Social capital and migration theories are synergistic. Social capital is embedded in the motivations for push/pull and incorporation theories of migration. Social capital is especially important for immigrant populations as they often lack access to economic capital. Although former Soviet populations generally have strong cultural/human capital in the form of education, the production and utilization of formal social capital, such as the engagement in civil society, has been weaker. Social capital operates differently in the Soviet and post-Soviet context in comparison to the U.S. context, and therefore, it is an important literature to engage for this study. Social capital is fundamental in migration processes and is used by former Soviet populations.

Social Capital and the FSU

Bourdieu (1986) defined social capital as, “the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.” (p. 119). He offered the example of “Soviet-type societies,” where social capital is actualized through political spheres rather than economic means. For Bourdieu, to gain access to resources one must have position in society and access to power. Class and other socioeconomic and political affiliations are avenues that facilitate one’s possession of symbolic and cultural capital. This in turn affects how well one can access and benefit from social capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Another way to understand social capital is that it is created by social actors who engage in relationships that facilitate some sort of action that produces access to resources (Coleman

1988). This social infrastructure produces a resource that individuals can use to meet their own interests, but the production of that resource is carried out collectively. Not every actor producing social capital benefits from it equally. The concept of obligation, then, helps explain this uneven application of social capital.

Obligation can be foundational for informal social capital; it is an easy way to initiate exchanges that begin to produce social capital. A does a favor for B, and A trusts that B will reciprocate. After A's favor, B has an obligation to A. People in higher social positions accumulate obligations owed to them. Usually these are people who have access to wealth or relationships so that they can give or promise favors (Coleman, 1988). Coleman claimed that closed social networks, networks that are insular, produce the most social capital. However, closed social networks may produce vertical and hierarchical networks in which power is concentrated upwards (Putnam, 1993). If civil society is weak and does not encourage open, varied and horizontal social networks, closed networks may be the only option.

From a community perspective, Perkins, Hughey, and Speer (2002) and DeFilippis (2001) provide understanding of how social capital operates, and why it is important. DeFilippis (2001) critiqued Putnam's conception of social capital because it does not adequately address the role of power. DeFilippis, like Bourdieu, argued that one must be able to access economic and/or political power to actualize social capital effectively. For example, social networks that create social capital do exist in low-income communities, but this does not necessarily improve the lives of the actors who are engaged in the network. "What they lack is power and the capital that partially constitutes that power." (p. 801).

Perkins et al. (2002) were concerned with how social capital is measured and understood. They addressed the hesitancy among community psychologists to engage actively with this

concept. Therefore, they attempted to concretize it and explicitly parsed out the individual and collective dimensions of social capital. Also, they highlighted the difference between formal (bridging) and informal (bonding) functions of social capital. For community development to occur, they argued, more emphasis should be placed on formal rather than informal social capital development.

Soviet and post-Soviet social capital

It seems that informal social capital is relied on more than formal social capital within former Soviet communities. For example, Kopnina (2005) found that former Soviet immigrants in London and Amsterdam do not operate in communities but subcommunities. Subcommunities are more fragmented and particularistic than traditional communities. Informal, hierarchical, and closed networks are used by organized crime, whose activity has been on the rise since the collapse of the Soviet Union. In his seminal work on social capital, Putnam (1993) claimed that “Palermo may represent the future of Moscow” (p. 183). What he meant by this is that Moscow, like Palermo in southern Italy, does not have a tradition of civic engagement. Norms of trust and reciprocity beyond the family unit are weak. Putnam suggested that social capital was very limited before the Soviet era, but the authoritarian rule during the Soviet era destroyed whatever social capital was left from the Imperial era.

During the early to mid-Soviet period, there was an intentional destruction (from exile to execution) of symbolic and cultural capital (Tomusk, 2000). These forms of capital are important because they are sources of power, how the elite reproduce their class, and how they maintain their division/status (Bourdieu, 1986). Symbolic capital may be referred to as prestige (such as family name), and cultural capital may be understood as a learned competency. Both are forms of human capital that an individual possesses, but they possess this capital because of their

position in a society based on their social, political or economic standing. The Soviets, in their push to liberate the exploited classes, not only tried to destroy symbolic and cultural capital, but they also implemented an affirmative action system to promote those from collectives and industrial backgrounds in society. Some famous examples of this are Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev, all of whom came from humble origins and educations (Tomusk, 2000). Although formal social capital generated through civic engagement, for example, may be more easily detected and therefore destroyed by the State, informal social capital generated through peer and family networks is hard to monitor and destroy. Informal social capital became an important mechanism not only for upward mobility but for survival. However, the Soviet regime tried to control private life. From the 1920s until the “thaw” of the mid-1950s after Stalin’s death, private life was essentially non-existent for Soviet citizens. Communal living and the “collective” were the logic of this time. Community members self-regulated by surveilling and reporting on one another. Private life was underground or in the very intimate “kitchen” sphere (Zdravomyslova & Voronkov, 2002). This is an important legacy for the post-Soviet period.

Several scholars researched social capital in the FSU, but focused on Russia (Bahry, et al., 2005; Cook, 2003; Kennedy, Kawachi, & Brainerd, 1998; Marsh, 2002; Petro, 2001; Stephenson, 2001). Rose (1995) best explains the uniqueness of social capital in the FSU. He refers to Russia as an “hour glass society.” Those in power in Russia interacted with others in power. The majority of the citizenry relied on itself to fulfill much of its day-to-day needs leaving a very small opening in between the power holders and non-power holders for interaction and collaboration. The gap between the citizenry and the State created an hour-glass shaped society. This hour-glass society phenomenon can be applied to other post-Soviet states as well. An authoritarian regime led citizens to create horizontal networks so that they were less reliant

on the state to fulfill their daily needs. In an hour-glass society, there are strong informal networks among trusted friends. When people are in trouble, for example, they do not rely on the authorities to solve their problems, but they turn to their networks. This may be true in many societies, but it is especially pronounced in the FSU where the legacy of the Soviet state's authoritarian rule and promotion of a nomenclature created this hour-glass division. I refer to the informal, community-level, intimate social capital in the context of the FSU as "kitchen social capital".

Migration Theories

Migration is a "permanent or semi-permanent change of residence" (Lee, 1966, p. 49). Because migration is a global phenomenon, migration scholarship has vast theoretical and empirical literatures. Migration theory includes two big umbrella categories: push/pull theories and incorporation theories. These are interrelated; motives for migration can influence adjustment processes (Berry, 1997). This section weaves established migration theories (Tables 1 and 3) into the empirical English-language research conducted on FSU immigrants.

Push/pull theories in empirical studies of FSU immigrants.

Lee (1966) referred to Ravenstein (1885, 1889, cited in Lee, 1966), a British geographer, as the original migration theorist. Although his "laws" of migration have been criticized, Lee indicated that Ravenstein's laws were the most consistent over the years. The six specific laws are interesting to consider in the context of history. 1) Migration is a gradual process; 2) most migrants travel short distances; 3) migration currents produce weaker counter-migration currents; 4) migration produces urban centers; 5) females dominate migration streams; and 6) migration increases as society advances (Ravenstein, 1889).

These laws are embedded in the push/pull theories of migration, or they can be referred to as reactive/proactive behaviors. Massey et al. (1993) offer a modern formulation of push/pull motivators for migration. Their summary includes not only individual motivations for migration, but also the structural realities that shape migration flows. The theories are more developed and sophisticated, but they are generally consistent with Ravenstein's laws. Massey and colleagues reviewed the most prominent migration theories, and I use their structure to organize my overview below (Table 1). They divided theories into "initiation" and "perpetuation" categories. I include two other theories not reviewed by Massey and colleagues or mentioned by many other migration scholars in discussions of push/pull migration: the sojourn and forced migration theories. All theories of migration help explain experiences of immigrants, but for this study neoclassical and institutional theories are the most helpful.

With the exception of Liebert's (2010) book on labor migration from the FSU to the U.S., I have not been able to locate English-language empirical studies on former Soviet immigrants that focus on the push/pull reasons for migration from the FSU. According to Liebert, economic reasons are the main push for people to emigrate from the FSU. These economic reasons include income maximization (neoclassical economic theory) and risk minimization (new economics of migration) in the country of origin.

The neoclassical theory of migration assumes that the primary reason for migration is income maximization. Individuals migrate from less to more developed countries if the expected income gain from the move is positive (Todaro, 1969). This was the case with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Exit restrictions limited the number of emigrants from the Soviet Union. However, when the USSR broke up and economic crises ensued in almost every republic, the rate of migration from the FSU to the U.S. increased dramatically. One key difference between

neoclassical theory and new economics of migration is the actor. Under neoclassical theory, the economic actor can be the individual or family unit. Under the new economics of migration, the economic actor is the individual, but the economic decision-maker is the family unit.

Table 1: Push/pull theories of migration

Theory	Key Contributor(s)	Key concepts
<i>Initiation:</i>		
Neoclassical Economics	Todaro (1969); Borjas (1994)	Migration driven by income maximization
New Economics of Migration	Stark & Bloom (1985)	Migration driven by risk minimization
Dual Labor Market	Piore (1979); Sassen (2001)	Migration driven by labor market structure
The Sojourn	Hamilton (1985)	Migration driven by desire to explore the world
Forced Migration	Lee (1966); Castles (2003)	Migration driven by force or perceptions of force
World Systems	Wallerstein (1974); Chase-Dunn (1997); Massey (1988)	Migration driven by globalization and state relationships
<i>Perpetuation:</i>		
Network	Boyd (1989); Smith (1996)	Migration patterns influenced by community-level social capital development
Institutional	Zolberg (1989); Shelley (2003); Liebert (2010)	Migration patterns caused by informal and formal institutional relationships
Cumulative Causation	Massey et al. (1987); Fussel and Massey (2004)	Migration patterns caused by migration
Migration Systems	Massey et al. (1993)	Migration patterns caused by globalization and state relationships

Remittances play an important role for risk minimization for a family. Remittances provide an additional source of income for households in the origin country, and they can become a source of economic development in the community of origin (Taylor, Rozelle, and de

Brauw, 2003). Insights from the new economics of migration help us understand household risk minimization strategies in post-Soviet states because of the collapse (or severe weakening) of their welfare system, for example the pension system (Anderson and Becker, 1999). In my study, informants were able to express this strategy via current household composition and the practice of sending home remittances.

Migration among former Soviet populations increasingly has become temporary because migrants are able to keep closer ties to home through advances in technology (White, 2007). Liebert (2010) also noted that migration flows from the FSU to New York are becoming more irregular. This “irregular” migration refers to both illegal and temporary migration. However, ethnicity and titular status may matter because, after 1990, nationalism grew in virtually all former Soviet republics. Many non-titular groups did not feel connected to the newly independent states. For example, a study conducted on emigration from the Kyrgyz Republic found that Europeans were more willing to emigrate permanently from Kyrgyzstan than were ethnic Kyrgyz during the post-Soviet period. Kyrgyz respondents expressed an interest in migrating temporarily for work in order to earn money abroad, and then they could return home to live (Agadjanian, Nedoluzhkov, & Kumskov, 2008).

In his seminal work on economic migration theory, Borjas (1989) noted that 1965 immigration reform had a profound impact on the work and earning potential of immigrants coming into the U.S. Under the 1965 reform, visa allocation shifted and was primarily based on kinship rather than skill or education level of applicants. One of his conclusions was that the safety-net a family provides for an immigrant insures against unemployment or underemployment. Essentially, “the kinship regulations in the immigration law create a lower bound in the income levels that low skilled immigrants can attain in the United States, and hence

make it more likely that immigrants are negatively selected from the population.” (p. 470). In other words, his argument appears to imply that kinship creates an economic buffer to allow for less skilled workers to immigrate.

Borjas (1994) used a “rational choice” model to explain why migration flows from less to more economically developed nations, and to discuss the effects of this migration. He argued that in the U.S., the skill levels of immigrants have decreased over time due to a change in the country (i.e. economy) of origin for the majority of immigrants. Though not his main thesis, he also was concerned about the extent to which unskilled immigrants participate in welfare programs while paying less in taxes. He was concerned that immigrants can “exacerbate the ethnic wage differentials already in existence in the host country” (p. 1667).

The study of former Soviet immigrants to the U.S. may further clarify Borjas’s neoclassical approach to immigration. Liebert’s (2010) application of institutional theory (see below) expands on an important structural element. The institutional effect may explain that the “low-skill level” of immigrants coming from less developed countries is actually a result of deskilling. Deskilling happens when an immigrant’s employment and/or education credentials are not realized in the country of destination. For example, a physician from Dushanbe (Tajikistan) may become a cab driver in New York City. Persons who leave their countries of origin are not among the poorest persons there; it takes resources, including support from family and friends, to move to a new country. Borjas does not necessarily ignore the role of institutions in migration. However, Liebert’s focus on institutional theory better explains the relationship between individuals and institutions in the migration process.

Liebert used institutional theory in her study of immigrants from the FSU in New York. Formal institutions include passport agencies, banks, and employment agencies, Informal

institutions include social networks, loan sharks, passport agency employees who break rules, and unlicensed employment agencies. These formal and informal institutions can conflict with each other or be compatible, but conflict depends on the effectiveness of the formal institutions and the compatibility of their goals. Liebert (2010) cited Helmke and Levitsky's (2003) typology of formal/informal institution relationships. Table 2 lays out this typology. When formal institutions are effective, there is less need for informal institutions to absorb unmet demand for whatever the formal institution is supposed to offer. Laws, for example, are less likely to be broken if formal institutions operate effectively, even if informal institutions have conflicting goals with formal institutions. Where formal institutions are ineffective, informal institutions with compatible goals can substitute. Liebert (2010) noted that immigrants from the FSU are deskilled because of ineffective formal institutions. For example, if governments are not effective at meeting the demand for work visas, individuals may immigrate illegally, but they will still look for work. Informal institutions, such as underground unemployment agencies, help find that person work. The individual's legal status limits the type of work they do *and* it makes them more vulnerable to abuses. Education corruption may be another form of institutional deskilling to consider for this population. A study by Heyneman, Anderson and Nuraliyeva (2008) confirmed what many scholars suspected and that was the increasing prevalence of corruption in post-Soviet education systems. One impact of corruption is a devaluation of education in the form of a negative reputation of the degree granting institution and/or disincetivizing students to learn if they can bribe instead.

Liebert uses Kyrgyzstan as a good example of how the institutional substitutive relationship operates. The Kyrgyz government largely ignores unlicensed employment agencies because they facilitate migration out of Kyrgyzstan when formal institutions are not able to keep

up with this demand. This helps decrease Kyrgyzstan’s high unemployment rate. Formal institutions are ineffective in this case, but the goals of the formal and informal institutions are compatible and the institutions create a pipeline of sorts between Kyrgyzstan and the US (New York). Liebert cites a plurality of social reasons for migration such as domestic violence, political instability/harassment, and the hope to find better educational opportunities for children.

Table 2: Formal and Informal Institutional Compatibility

		Compatibility of Goals	
		Compatible	Conflicting
Effectiveness of Formal Institution	<i>Effective</i> <i>Ineffective</i>	Complementary Substitutive	Accommodating Competing

Once an emigrant becomes an immigrant, a process of adjustment or incorporation into the receiving country ensues. I use the term “incorporation” because I feel it subsumes multiple terms used to describe the adjustment process, such as assimilation and acculturation. These terms are defined below. The majority of studies of immigrants from the FSU focus on incorporation into U.S. society. Liebert (2010), Morawksa (2004), and Kasinitz et al. (2008) looked at assimilation, and the other studies are more focused on acculturation processes and problems among former Soviet populations (Birman & Trickett, 2001; Cutler, 2008; Kishinevsky, 2004; Miller et al., 2006; Trickett & Birman, 2005; Vinokurov, Birman & Trickett, 2000).

Incorporation theories in empirical studies of FS immigrants.

There are several spheres of incorporation: cultural, social, economic, political, and spatial. Incorporation theories can be categorized under two labels: assimilation/acculturation and transnationalism. Assimilation and acculturation are used interchangeably, but Gans (1997) provided a clarification of these terms. He noted that, in general, acculturation is a quicker process that relates to an individual’s norms, beliefs, and values that are related to a particular

cultural group. Thus, it is more within the control of the individual to acculturate. However, there are strong external influences. For example, even though other populations have their own popular culture, American culture remains a dominant force in the world. American mass culture has pushed American cultural trends across the globe, priming individuals before they move to the U.S. Assimilation is more of a macro level process that refers to an entire immigrant group and how members of the group incorporate into society as a whole. Assimilation is less within the control of the individual. Therefore, it is a slower process.

“Transnationalism” implies strong feelings of attachment to an immigrant’s country of origin. Morawska (2004) defines transnationalism as immigrants’ regular involvement with happenings in the country of origin. That is a broad statement, but at this point in the theory’s development, it may be the best approach. “Happenings” in the country of origin can be in the economic, political, social, cultural, and/or religious spheres of society (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007). Assimilation, acculturation and transnationalism are not mutually exclusive categories. Furthermore, Morawska (2004) argues that acculturation and transnationalism should be understood in relation to one another rather than as parallel processes. Assimilation and acculturation are two sides of the same coin, and transnationalism is the edging of that coin. Table 3 offers a summary of these various theories and key contributors to each theory.

Table 3: Incorporation theories of migration

Theory	Key Contributor(s)	Key Concepts
<i>Assimilation/Acculturation</i>		
Straight-Line	Gordon (1965); Berry (1997)	As immigrants incorporate into country of destination, they drop country of origin identity and practices.
New Mainstream	Alba and Nee (1997, 2004)	As immigrants incorporate into country of destination, they might maintain country of origin identity and practices and influence the mainstream of country of destination
Segmented	Portes and Zhou (1993); Birman (1994)	As immigrants incorporate into country of destination their process may be upward or downward
Adhesive/Ossification	Morawska (2004); Levitt (2009)	As immigrants incorporate into country of destination, they may become insular and freeze in time country of origin identity and practices
<i>Transnationalism</i>		
Transnationalism	Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt (1999); Morawska (2004)	As immigrants incorporate into country of destination, they maintain engagement with country of origin in economic, political, social, cultural, and/or religious spheres of society.

“Russian Jews”⁴ in Philadelphia follow an “ethnic-adhesive” assimilation/transnational path (Morawska, 2004). This means that they are an insular group, and they are oriented to their ethnic community. However, they are not connected to their country of origin (a former Soviet republic), so they are host-society oriented rather than home-society focused. They are not transnationally engaged.

Liebert (2010) showed that former Soviet immigrants increasingly take low-skilled jobs that have typically been occupied by less educated immigrants from Mexico and Central

⁴ I use the terms the authors of the study used. However, I also include quotation marks to indicate that I find the term problematic. For example, in Morawska’s study, she noted that her sample included Ukrainian Jews, but referred to her whole sample as “Russian Jews.”

America; these jobs include housekeeping and construction. The employment in low-skilled jobs results in the deskilling of the immigrant group. Because the Soviet Union created a well-developed education infrastructure, populations from the former Soviet republics are highly educated. Current former Soviet immigrants in New York pick up jobs that are below their education and skill level. Although Liebert focused on Central Asian immigrants (she is Kyrgyz), she also referred to European and Transcaucasian ethnic groups in her study, such as Russians and Georgians.

Kasinitz et al. (2008) included the Russian-speaking Jewish population in New York in their comparative analysis of second-generation immigrants and native populations. Other groups included Chinese, Dominicans, “South Americans,” West Indians, Puerto Ricans, native whites, and native blacks. They found that Russian-speaking Jews (along with Chinese) are the least likely to vote or be politically active even though they are the most economically successful of all groups. One reason for this behavior is that Russian immigrants who are more threatened by downward assimilation are more likely to organize and become politically active. and Jews are not threatened, right?

More research has been done on the acculturation processes of former Soviet immigrants, especially Jewish populations, in the U.S. Empirical studies indicate that these populations can become insular, for example in Philadelphia and New York, which can result in negative psychological outcomes (Miller et al., 2006; Morawska, 2004; Vinukorov, Birman, & Trickett, 2000). However, Morawska only referred to the insular nature of this population in Philadelphia; she did not study psychological outcomes. Miller et al. (2006) made an indirect link between a lack of acculturation and depression. Feelings of isolation from the host community increase stress, and additional stress increases the risk for depression.

Vinukorov, Birman and Trickett (2000) compared employment status and psychological adaptation in two communities (Brighton Beach, New York and Washington D.C. suburbs) among Russian-speaking refugees. This sample was interesting in that 74.3% of their sample identified themselves as Jewish, but 62.6% of their sample claimed to have no religion, suggesting that Jewish was an ethnic rather than religious identification. The authors considered three employment statuses: unemployed, underemployed and employed. If immigrants were “employed,” that meant that they were employed in occupations similar to their occupations in their country of origin and commensurate with their education and skill levels. Those employed reported more life satisfaction than those underemployed. The underemployed reported more life satisfaction than the unemployed. The community context mattered. The more acculturated to American society, the better access to employment opportunities. They found that immigrants in Brighton Beach were more insular (less acculturated to American society) and less likely to be employed. This example suggests that former Soviet refugees in more insular communities are less likely to be employed and, therefore, less likely to be satisfied with life. They experience more long-term adjustment problems than other immigrants.

Dina Birman and Edison Trickett have been especially active investigating the experiences of Jewish refugees from the FSU. One interesting finding is their support of Gordon’s (1964, cited in Birman & Trickett, 2001) idea of zero-sum adaptation. As people acculturate (behavior, language and identity) to the host country, they tend to drop the cultural traits from their home country. However, Birman and Trickett uncovered an interesting caveat in that there is a generational difference in acculturation in the sphere of identity. The second or 1.5 generation of Jewish refugees is more likely to maintain or make claim to a “Russian” identity than their parents, even as they acculturate to their country of destination. They

hypothesized that this generational difference is partly due to the lived experience. For the younger generation, being “Russian” is more of a label than a reality. However, further research is needed (Birman & Trickett, 2001).

Trickett and Birman (2005) later found that for the children of Soviet Jewish immigrants, American acculturation and the adoption of an American identity mattered for school adaptation. Although their results were consistent with the hypothesis mentioned above, which was that Soviet Jewish youth would hold on to their Russian cultural identity while adopting an American identity, retaining a Russian identity seemed to have no effect on school performance. However, the adoption of an American identity had a positive effect. They suggested that this result shows that American identity has a positive connotation for Soviet Jews and so they are able to assimilate as a group into the white racial majority.

Another study looked at identification with white culture among East European (Bosnia, Russia, Ukraine, Armenia, and Bulgaria) youth in New York City. However, this was an extremely small sample (n=5), pulled from a slightly larger multi-ethnic sample (n=35). After interviewing these five respondents, the author noted that they all identified with hip-hop culture and used what the author called African American English (AAE). They were intentional about “disidentifying” with white culture. Although this is not a large enough sample to attempt any generalizations, it would be helpful to further explore why immigrant youths who are not faced with racial barriers to assimilation choose to acculturate by adapting some of the cultural traits of a marginalized native-born population (Cutler, 2008).

Kishinevsky (2004) was struck by the American relationship to food and body image. She interviewed three generations of women from five families. What emerged were larger discourses covering individualism vs. collectivism, family structures, ideas about the self, and

the losses and gains affiliated with the emigration experience. She found that there is a strong matriarchal connection within families and extended families among “Russian immigrants”⁵ that is strikingly similar to African American family structures. This structure persists after immigration, but there are acculturation processes related to ideas about beauty and eating habits that challenge the matriarchal family dynamic.

An empirical study that is closest to my research is Kopnina’s (2005) work on FSU immigrants in Western Europe. According to Liebert (2010), Kopnina’s study “...the only English-language empirical research of post-Soviet labor migration to the West is an ethnographic study of Russian-speaking migrants and immigrants in London and Amsterdam” (p. 7).

She collected data through interviews, and looked at the constructs of community, subcommunity, identity, culture and ethnicity. She found that Russian-speaking communities are “invisible” partly because they choose to be, but also because many are white and are able to structurally assimilate. Russian-speaking immigrants operate in and belong to subcommunities that are smaller and more particularistic than traditional communities. The types of informal social networks that were the key to survival in the FSU are not kept by legal Russian-speaking immigrants.

My key critique of this study is simple, but it gets at a “mistake” I am trying to correct with my dissertation research. Kopnina begins her book by identifying her population of study as “Russian-speakers.” She even offers two chapters covering the complex cultural and ethnic identity of this population. However, as the book progresses, she loses the term “speaker” as a

⁵ She uses the term “Russian immigrants” in the title of her book, and she refers to her population throughout as “Russian” even though she notes the ethnic diversity of this group. Also, all the pseudonyms of her sample have Jewish surnames.

descriptor and refers to her population simply as “Russian.” This is an example of academic work that generalizes all FSU immigrants, despite their country of origin and/or ethnicity, as Russian.

Empirical Studies on Immigrant Tensions and Conflict

Another part of the assimilation process is how immigrant populations relate to each other, rather than just to the native-born population, system and culture. The study of inter- and intragroup conflicts among immigrants is not new. Other migration studies considered intragroup conflict or tension but mostly focused on gender (Jones-Correa, 1998; Grzywacz, Rao, Gentry, Marin, & Arcury, 2009) or generation, both generation by age and generation since immigration (Kishinevsky, 2004; Jimenez, 2008). Only the Kishinevsky study focused on populations from the former Soviet Union. She looked at mother/daughter dyads (using three generations) to better understand a generational relationship to food and body image. She used “Russian immigrants” in the title of her study. However, she used Jewish pseudo-surnames and included other countries of origin-- Ukraine, Belarus, and countries of the Transcaucasus, and Central Asia – in her study. She did get at the ethnic diversity of the group and indicated that she would only use Russian to refer to the non-Jewish population from Russia, but she repeatedly fell back to the totalizing language of “Russian immigrants.” From a postcolonial orientation, she begins with a problematic identification schema.

Birman and Trickett (2001) and Kasinitz et al. (2008) noted the tensions that exist between the former Soviet and American Jewish communities. Jewish identity differs depending on one’s country of origin. In the FSU, Jews have a separate ethnicity. In the U.S., Jews have more of a religious affiliation. These studies noted the frustrations felt by both Soviet

and American Jewish communities. In Kasinitz et al. (2008), one respondent joked about the difference in feeling too Jewish in the Soviet Union, but not Jewish enough in the U.S.

Research Hypotheses

The introduction traced the history behind contemporary migration flows to the United States from the FSU. The literature review established my study's theoretical foundation in social capital, push-pull and incorporation migration theories, and it reviewed the empirical studies on the experiences of former Soviet immigrants in the United States. These concepts are interwoven throughout the seven hypotheses I created.

In the introduction, I noted that my guiding research question is: To what extent does a Soviet legacy shape the experiences of immigrants from the FSU in the U.S.? There are three relevant statuses for immigrants in the U.S. that can give some insight into this historical legacy and whether it still matters. This research project looks at the issues of refugee status, titularity⁶ and ethnicity in determining how FSU immigrants adjust and adapt to life in the U.S.

Refugee Status/ incorporation & adjustment

Refugee status is tied to a Soviet legacy. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, immigrants from the USSR were granted refugee status; after the collapse of the USSR, some civil wars, ethnic backlash against non-titular persons, and rising nationalism under the new era of independence produced a new, post-Soviet wave of refugees and asylum seekers in the U.S. This is important because refugees get formal institutional support from non-profit organizations and governmental organizations. However, the post-Soviet era brought economic and non-refugee immigrants to the U.S. as well. Liebert (2010) investigated informal institutions and

⁶ The titles of former Soviet republics represent ethnic groups. A titular immigrant is one whose ethnicity and country of origin match. For example, a titular immigrant would be a Russian from Russia. A non-titular immigrant would be a Russian from Uzbekistan.

their roles in increasing the vulnerability of immigrants, especially those from Central Asia who are often in the U.S. temporarily and even illegally.

Because immigrants from the Soviet Union had formal institutional support (e.g. government and Jewish community organizations) in general, the total former Soviet immigrant population before the collapse of the Soviet Union may have been relatively better resourced than those who emigrated after the collapse of the Soviet Union, but this hypothesis has not been empirically confirmed. Although there were refugees from the FSU after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the flows diversified and included non-refugees. Liebert (2010) suggested there have been varying outcomes based on an immigrant's access to formal vs. informal institutions. Because of these trends, my first hypothesis is:

H1: Refugees from the FSU rely on formal institutions (such as government programs, community organizations, and religious institutions) after immigration while non-refugees rely on informal institutions (such as friends and family members) after immigration.

Titularity/ post-colonial tension

The Soviet legacy is especially relevant when considering titular status. One of Josef Stalin's major decisions was to grant territorial autonomy, in the form of a Soviet republic, to the major ethnic groups of the Soviet empire, with the exception of Jews. This history of the formation and eventual independence of republics creates the issue of titularity among immigrants from the FSU. People whose ethnicity matches their citizenship are considered titular (for example, Uzbeks from Uzbekistan). People whose ethnicity does not match their citizenship are considered non-titular (for example, Russians from Uzbekistan). The mix of titular and non-titular citizens in post-Soviet republics is tied to Soviet and continued post-Soviet

migration flows, some voluntary, some forced. Scholars of former Soviet migration flows (Korobkov, 2007; Sahadeo, 2007; Zayonchkovskaya, 2000) studied the trends of former Soviet immigrants migrating within the FSU. They noted that late Soviet and early post-Soviet migration flows were related to ethnic tensions until around 1995. Ethnic tensions were especially an issue with non-titular persons. However, beginning in 1996, post-Soviet flows were more connected to economic concerns. My hypotheses 2 and 2a are:

H2: Non-titular immigrants are more likely to report experiences of ethnic discrimination as a reason for leaving their country of origin than titular immigrants.

H2a: Non-titular immigrants who moved before 1996 are more likely to report ethnic discrimination as a reason for leaving their country of origin than titular immigrants.

Research by Agadjanian et al. (2008) showed that Europeans in the Central Asian republic of Kyrgyzstan felt less connected to their country and community and reported that they would more likely emigrate permanently than titular persons. Hypothesis 3 is:

H3: Titular immigrants are more likely to be temporary immigrants and intend to return home to live.

Because temporary immigration usually does not include the migration of the entire household, it may be used as an additional source of income for the household in the home country. Stark and Bloom (1985) refer to this strategy as “risk minimization.” Hypothesis 4 is:

H4: Titular immigrants are more likely to send remittances to their country of origin, and they remit more frequently than non-titular immigrants.

Ethnicity/ discrimination

Rising nationalism since *perestroika/glasnost* exacerbated tensions within former Soviet populations among ethnic groups. These conflicts may have an effect on social networks and the

production of informal social capital. However, because the Soviet Union was a colonial empire with Russia the colonizing entity, Russians were possibly more aware of newly independent state nationalistic rhetoric than non-Russians. Hypothesis 5 is:

H5: Russians feel less connected to other immigrants from the FSU than non-Russians. Ethnic groups in the FSU can be divided into the following broad categories: European non-Jewish, Jewish, Transcaucasian, and Asian. Asians comprise the only “non-white” group. Ethno-racial hierarchies can create problems of incorporation for non-white immigrants in the U.S (Portes & Zhou, 1993). If immigrants feel marginalized because of these hierarchies, then they are more likely to take a transnational identity (Bloemraad, 2004; Levitt, 2009; Morawska, 2004). They are more likely to maintain a sense that their country of origin is home while living in their country of destination. Hypotheses 6a and 6b are:

H6a: Non-European ethnic groups are more likely to report discrimination in the U.S. based on ethnicity;

H6b: Non-European ethnic groups are more likely to express a transnational identity. (Transnational identity = country of origin is "home.")

Conclusion

The preceding chapters served as a primer for my research. In the Introduction, I situated myself in the research and wove a narrative into the historical background of Soviet and post-Soviet immigration flows into the U.S. In the Literature Review, I used two theoretical frameworks (social capital and migration theories) to explore literature relevant to a post-Soviet immigration into the U.S. Post-Soviet immigration is a process that sometimes challenges and other times supports existing theories related to immigration. The literature also served as justification for my research hypotheses. The preceding, then, is a platform on which to tell the

proceeding story of migration as explained to me by my respondents from former Soviet republics who live in Brooklyn, NY and Nashville, TN.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

My research approach involved mixed methods of inquiry in two separate communities: Brooklyn (New York) and Nashville (Tennessee). I used three methods of inquiry to generate and analyze data for this study: secondary data research, surveys, and semi-structured interviews. Those methods are further detailed below. First, I explain the reasons why Brooklyn and Nashville were chosen as research sites.

These communities, which are also sometimes referred to in this dissertation as Kings County (Brooklyn) and Davidson County (Nashville), are spatially, ethnically, and historically different. Brooklyn has one of the oldest established and most concentrated Russian-speaking communities in the U.S (Gold, 1991). Nashville, on the other hand, is considered to be a “new destination” for foreign-born immigrants. Massey and Capoferro (2008) and Donato, Tolbert, Nucci, and Kawano (2008) showed quantitatively how the geography of (foreign) immigration in the U.S. has increasingly diversified since 1990. The American South, for example, is a new destination for immigrants. Empirical studies support the claim that Nashville has become a more prominent destination for immigrants: Nashville’s foreign born population increased by more than 200 percent between 1990 and 2000 (Lotspeich, Fix, Ost, & Perez-Lopez, 2003; Cornfield et al., 2003). Such growth continued between 2000 and 2010, as the city’s foreign-born population increased from 7 percent to 12 percent of the total population. In Kings County during the same time period, the foreign-born population as a percentage of the total population held steady at 38 percent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey). The following vignette depicts the former Soviet contexts as they differ qualitatively between Brooklyn and Nashville.

When you walk into a grocery store stocking products from Eurasia, you are hit by the smells of smoked meats, the brine of salted fish, fragrant black tea, baked bread, and depending on the time of day, the smell of fried meat, potato or cabbage pies (*piroshky*). This is the same if you walk into *Alexei's* in Nashville, or *M & I International* in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn. They offer other similar products, such as black currant juice, pickled everything (cucumbers, mushrooms, beets, peppers, squash, etc.), sparkling water from Georgia (*Borjomi*), frozen dumplings (*pelmeni*), instant coffee, a dizzying array of chocolates, and Russian-language magazines. Meat and cheese are not prepackaged; you order them by the kilo from a deli counter. The surly cashier is omnipresent, and is a throwback to Soviet era customer service. Jobs were secure, no matter if one was rude or friendly. You are more likely to be greeted with a stern “What do you want?” rather than that all-American “How can I help you?” Unless you break the public cold barrier with persons from the FSU, you will never experience the private warmth that is just under the surface.

When you step outside the grocery stores, the contexts change dramatically. Outside of *M & I International* in Brighton Beach, you find yourself surrounded by Cyrillic and as one informant told me, a Soviet time-capsule from the 1980s. The pounding of the subway rumbles overhead. You experience the informality of street life on the sidewalks (Jacobs, 1993), much like you would in Moscow, Russia or Chisinau, Moldova. On the other hand, the experience of the Soviet or post-Soviet stops immediately as you exit *Alexei's* in Nashville. You find yourself in a typical American suburban strip mall. This is true with other cultural institutions in Nashville. The former Soviet cultural institutions (spaces where culture is reproduced) in Davidson County are islands surrounded by a sea of American suburbia and only accessible by car. Those in Kings County are more concentrated and allow for pedestrian interaction. Picking

very different “old” and “new” immigrant destinations can highlight different immigrant experiences.

Secondary Data Research

To establish a demographic profile of immigrants from the FSU in the U.S., I used U.S. Census data from 1990 and 2000. I used this data because it allowed for a comparison of demographic and social variables over time (before and after the collapse of the USSR) and across groups (former Soviet versus total foreign born). I compare a set of variables included in both the 1990 and 2000 Censuses; these variables include language spoken at home, family structure, sex and age, education, employment, poverty and housing. For the 2010 Census, the U.S. Census Bureau stopped collecting information on all of the variables included in the 2000 and 1990 Censuses. The Census Bureau used the American Community Survey (ACS) as the primary source for much of the demographic and social variables previously captured by the Census. The data for the variables listed above by place of birth are not available for years past 2000.

The ACS is useful for determining estimates on country of birth for the foreign born population at different levels of geography, such as at the census tract level or the county level. Using 2010 ACS data and geographic information system (GIS) technology, I created maps to show the spatial concentration of FSU immigrants in my two research sites and in U.S. states. The U.S. Census split the FSU into two separate regional categories: Europe and Asia. Within these categories, only some of the countries are represented individually (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan). Other former Soviet countries are absorbed into “other” regions (Eastern Europe, South Central Asia, and Western Asia).

Primary Data Research

To develop the survey and interview guide, I used my research hypotheses to justify the majority of the questions I asked. Table 4 summarizes my research matrix. It lists the measures (i.e. specific interview and survey questions) I used to explore my hypotheses. A short survey was created (Appendix B) and then translated from English into Russian. The survey was edited by a native Russian speaker and given to a different native Russian speaker to back translate it into English. I compared the two English surveys for discrepancies and resolved the discrepancies that were evident. I piloted both language versions of the survey before finalizing them. Surveys were given to potential respondents in person. If the respondent consented, then he or she filled out the survey on the spot. Refusal rate was low. Semi-structured interviews were conducted during survey collection in order to supplement the quantitative data of the study and further explore the research hypotheses. Interviews were conducted in the respondents' location of choice, often in their homes or places of business.

Table 4: Research Matrix

Individual Status	Hypothesis	Specific measures/ questions
Refugee	H1: Refugees from the FSU rely on formal institutions (such as government programs, community organizations, and religious institutions) after immigration while non-refugees rely on informal institutions (such as friends and family members) after immigration.	<i>Interview question:</i> 30: Who do you rely on for help? <i>Survey questions:</i> 9. When you entered the U.S., did you have refugee status or later get asylum status? (yes/no) 23. When you immigrated to the U.S., which of the following did you rely on for financial or other types of help (check all that apply: US Govt, State Govt, Local Govt, Church/Synagogue/ Mosque, Community/Non-profit org, Family, Friends, Other):

	<p>H2: Non-titular immigrants are more likely to report experiences of ethnic discrimination as a reason for leaving their country of origin than titular immigrants.</p> <p>H2a: Non-titular immigrants who moved before 1996 are more likely to report ethnic discrimination as a reason for leaving their country of origin than titular immigrants.</p>	<p>Interview Questions: 3. Country of Origin, 4. Year of entry, 6. Ethnicity/Nationality, 15. Why did you leave (country of origin)?, 35. Did you ever feel discriminated against in (your country of origin)? How and why did you think it happened?; Survey Questions: 3. Country you lived in before moving to the United States (Country of Origin) (open ended), 5. Ethnicity (open ended) 18. I left my country because (please check all that apply: a. I wanted to experience life somewhere else., b. I was persecuted/negatively treated because of my: Ethnicity (check box), Religion (check box), Political Beliefs (check box), I did not feel persecuted/negatively treated (check box); c. My country is corrupt and I wanted to leave; d. I did not have an economic future in my country; e. My family moved away; f. My friends moved away; g. Other: (open ended)</p>
<p>Titularity</p>	<p>H3: Titular immigrants will more likely be temporary immigrants and intend to return home to live</p>	<p><i>Interview Questions:</i> 3. Country of Origin, 6. Ethnicity/Nationality, 16. Do you intend to return home to (country of origin) to live or do you intend to stay in the U.S.? ; <i>Survey Questions:</i> 3. Country you lived in before moving to the United States (Country of Origin) (open ended), 5. Ethnicity (open ended); 24.I intend to return to live in my country of origin someday. (yes/no)</p>
	<p>H4: Titular immigrants will more likely and more frequently send remittances to their country of origin than non-titular immigrants.</p>	<p><i>Interview Questions:</i> 3. Country of Origin, 6. Ethnicity 21. Do you support anyone in (country of origin) with money earned here?; <i>Survey Questions:</i> 3. Country you lived in before moving to the United States (Country of Origin) (open ended), 5. Ethnicity (open ended); 26. I send money back home to my family and/or friends in my country of origin (approximately: Once a month, A few times a year, Once a year, Once every few years, Never)</p>
	<p>H5: Russians will feel less connected to other immigrants from the FSU than will non-Russians</p>	<p><i>Interview Questions:</i> 6. Ethnicity/Nationality 32. How do you feel about other immigrants from the former Soviet Union?; <i>Survey Questions:</i> 5. Ethnicity (open ended), 20. How strongly do you feel connected to other immigrants from the former Soviet Union in the U.S? (Very strongly, Strongly, Somewhat, Not at all)</p>
	<p>H6a: Non-European ethnic groups are more likely to report experiences of discrimination in the U.S. based on ethnicity.</p>	<p><i>Interview Questions:</i> 6. Ethnicity/Nationality, 17. When you think of home, where is it for you?, 26. How do you think you are perceived by Americans?, 34. Do you ever feel discriminated against here? How and why do you think it happens?; <i>Survey Questions:</i> 5. Ethnicity (open ended), 16. The country I consider to be my home is (open ended), 21. Do you feel discriminated against in the U.S. because of your ethnicity? (All the time, Sometimes, Rarely, Never)</p>
<p>Ethnicity</p>	<p>H6b: Non-European ethnic groups are more likely to express a transnational identity. (Transnational identity = country of origin is "home.")</p>	

Sampling

To determine my sampling universes, I first looked at the 2009 ACS data on country of birth for the foreign born population in Kings and Davidson Counties. Of the 15 former Soviet republics, only 9 (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan) are identified individually. The other six (Azerbaijan, Estonia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan) are combined with other countries under an “other” category in their respective regions. The 2011 ACS indicated that there were 111,348 immigrants from the FSU in Kings County and 1,173 in Davidson County.

Because my initial hypotheses could be tested using *t*-tests and chi-squared analyses, I used the statistical power calculator Gpower (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) to calculate a-priori sample sizes to guide my sampling. To detect a medium effect ($d = .30$) at a power level ($1 - \beta$) of 0.80, I would need a sample size of 134 surveys for *t*-tests. To detect the same effect size ($w = .30$) at the same power for chi-square analyses, I would require between 145 ($df = 1$) and 207 ($df = 4$) respondents. My goal was to collect 100 surveys at each research site (total $n = 200$). I aimed for 100 surveys at each site based on the sample size needed to achieve decent power to test my hypotheses, but my survey goal was also based on what I thought was possible given my existing connections in FSU communities and the strategies I had for making future connections. For interviewing, I wanted to have a sample that represented a demographic variety of respondents from the region. My interview goal was to collect 16 interviews at each research site ($n = 32$). The reason my target was 16 was based on what I thought was feasible and my attempt to get variability in all categories relevant to my hypotheses: refugee status, titularity and ethnicity. There were four ethnic categories, so my

goal was to get four interviews to represent each ethnic group. The pre-determined goal was not realized, but the essential goal of variability in all three hypothesis categories was realized.

Because I wanted variability in my sample, I tried to implement quota sampling (Babbie, 2005) to guide the survey and interview efforts. Based on the organizing categories for my hypotheses, I created sampling categories based on refugee status, titularity and ethnicity. I collapsed countries of origin into regions of origin: Eastern Europe and the Baltics, Transcaucasus, and Central Asia. The collapsed ethnic categories were: European non-Jewish (Belarussian, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Moldovan, Russian, and Ukrainian), Jewish, Transcaucasian (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia), and Asian (Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tajik, Turkmen, and Uzbek). Finally, I included titularity as a sampling category. A titular immigrant is one whose ethnicity and country of origin match (e.g. Ukrainian from Ukraine). During the early Soviet period, all major ethnic groups except Jews had or were granted a republic. Jews comprised the only major ethnic group in the Soviet Union that lived, mostly, in a contiguous territory but was not granted republic status. Because Jews were not granted a republic, all Jewish respondents in this study are considered “non-titular.” To further promote variability, I included age and gender in my quota sampling scheme. The age categories were: 18 or older when the USSR collapsed (born 1973 or before), and younger than 18 when the USSR collapsed but currently 18 years of age or older (born 1974-1992). As I was sampling, I monitored responses rates according to my sampling matrix. If I found that one subgroup was lacking, I tried to target members of that group. Table 5 provides my sampling matrix and some descriptive categorical results.

There were multiple points of entry for snowball sampling in both data collection sites for interview and survey collections. I used multiple points of entry to ensure that more than one

stream of FSU immigrants was represented in each site. Points of entry and data collection were guided by my quota sampling scheme outlined above to promote diversity in sampling. In Nashville, I used personal connections and cultural institutions as points of entry. These included friends, an email listserv that connects local immigrants from former Soviet republics, a grocery store selling imported Russian, East European and Eurasian goods, and a pizza parlor where I happened to overhear employees speaking Russian. The employees in the pizza parlor were from Central Asia.

In Brooklyn, I had one personal connection which led to only one interview. The majority of my respondents were found with the help of scholars doing research among the Russian-speaking Jewish population in Brooklyn, cultural institutions (grocery stores and restaurants) and on-the-spot street discussions in Brighton Beach and Sheepshead Bay, which are two areas of Brooklyn where a concentration of FSU immigrants live. The on-the-spot street discussions were possible because I was with two young teenagers who were friends with my home stay family. They helped me approach people on the street. My host mother worked several jobs, one of which was in a hair salon. She was enthusiastic about my research and introduced me to some of her clients, many of whom included former Soviet immigrants. I was able to get a couple of surveys and one interview out of her connections at the hair salon. She also introduced me to the owner of one of her favorite Central Asian restaurants. He agreed to an interview and completed the survey. This is one example of how one gatekeeper helped me meet research participants.

Table 5: Sampling Matrix

Sampling Category	Description	Interviews		Surveys	
		Brooklyn	Nashville	Brooklyn	Nashville
Region of Origin (not birth)	Eastern Europe & Baltics ^a	6	5	80	31
	Transcaucasus ^b	6	2	20	6
	Central Asia ^c	4	3	29	7
Ethnicity	European non-Jewish	4	5	65	32
	Jewish	3	2	32	4
	Transcaucasian	5	2	21	5
	Asian	4	2	13	5
Titularity	Titular ^d	9	6	73	37
	Non-Titular ^e	7	4	58	9
Refugee Status	Refugee/ Asylum	10	3	71	11
	Non-Refugee/ Non-Asylum	6	7	57	35
Age	Soviet Adult ^f : born 1973 or earlier	10	5	77	26
	Post-Soviet Adult ^g : born 1974 or later	6	5	48	20
Gender	Male	5	5	56	21
	Female	11	5	75	25
Total		16	10	131	46

^a includes Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine

^b includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia

^c includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan

^d ethnicity and nationality match – for example, a Georgian from Georgia

^e ethnicity and nationality do not match – for example a Russian from Moldova

^f turned 18 before the collapse of the USSR

^g turned 18 after the collapse of the USSR

I did not share my personal opinions, assumptions or hypotheses with the persons I interviewed. However, at the end of some of the interviews, if a respondent asked questions or seemed interested, I did share my thoughts. Potential interview and survey respondents were generally interested in my research project. The refusal rate was low.

I compared my sample survey results to secondary data statistics in order to determine the level of representativeness of my sample. I used the 2011 ACS one year estimate for the U.S. and the five year estimate for the counties (Table 6). I chose two different ACS estimates because the one year estimate is more accurate for areas with large populations and the five year estimates are more appropriate for smaller areas with smaller populations. The least frequent populations from my study sample were persons born in Central Asia and the Transcaucasus. However, compared to the Census data, these populations were actually overrepresented.

Table 6: Study sample comparisons to ACS samples (Source: 2011 American Community Survey).

Proportions (Region of Birth)	Brooklyn Survey Sample (N=131)	Nashville Survey Sample (N=46)	U.S. 2011 ACS Sample (1 year estimate; Former Soviet population N=1,049,495)	Kings County 2011 ACS Sample (5 year estimate; Former Soviet population N=111,348)	Davidson County 2011 ACS Sample (5 year estimate; Former Soviet population N=1173)
Eastern Europe & Baltics ^a	62%	72%	85%	92%	84%
Transcaucasus ^b	18%	13%	8%	1%	3%
Central Asia ^c	21%	15%	7%	8%	14%

^aSurvey Countries are: Belarus, Estonia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine; ACS Countries are: Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine

^bSurvey Countries are: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia; ACS Countries are: Armenia

^cSurvey Countries are: Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan; ACS Countries are: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan

Primary Data Analysis

I fell short of my goals in Nashville for interviews (n = 10) and survey (n = 46) collection. In retrospect, it was perhaps too ambitious to hope to sample 10 percent of the FSU immigrant population in Nashville. But, the perception among FSU immigrants whom I interviewed in Nashville is that the ACS drastically underestimates the total number of FSU immigrants in the area. Also, as noted above, many FSU countries are left out of the total FSU

estimates because they are not individually identified by the Census in publicly available data. In Brooklyn, however, I was able to meet my interview goal ($n = 16$) and exceed my survey goal ($n = 131$).

With a Brooklyn survey sample size of 131, using a chi square analysis, I am able to detect an effect size (w) of 0.31 ($\alpha = 0.05$, $1 - \beta = 0.95$, $df = 1$, $\lambda = 18.57$, Critical $X^2 = 9.49$) to 0.38 ($\alpha = 0.05$, $1 - \beta = 0.95$, $df = 4$, $\lambda = 12.99$, Critical $X^2 = 3.84$). With that same sample size, using a two-tailed t-test, I am able to detect an effect size (d) of 0.30 ($\alpha = 0.05$, $1 - \beta = 0.95$, $\sigma = 3.63$, Critical $t = 1.98$). With a Nashville survey sample size of 46, using a chi squared analysis, I am able to detect an effect size (w) of 0.53 ($\alpha = 0.05$, $1 - \beta = 0.95$, $df = 1$, $\lambda = 12.99$, Critical $X^2 = 3.84$) to 0.63 ($\alpha = 0.05$, $1 - \beta = 0.95$, $df = 4$, $\lambda = 18.57$, Critical $X^2 = 9.49$). With that same sample size, using a two-tailed t-test, I am able to detect an effect size (d) of 0.48 ($\alpha = 0.05$, $1 - \beta = 0.95$, $\sigma = 3.69$, Critical $t = 2.02$).

Because I fell short of my Nashville sampling goal, I tested whether I could combine the Brooklyn and Nashville data. I used “county” as the grouping variable and ran t-tests and chi square tests on the following variables: education, titularity, refugee status, and religion. They were all statistically significantly different, so I could not combine the datasets in order to test my hypotheses. Chi square tests were conducted on all hypotheses except H5. T-tests were conducted on H4 and H5. I also conducted correlation analyses to explore social capital variables in the Brooklyn dataset.

Once interviews were completed, I transcribed the English or English translation. I used Strauss’s (1987, cited in Berg, 2009) open coding strategy in an *Atlas.ti* program. The purpose of open coding is to take a step back from the data by looking at it very closely using a line-by-line coding process. I constructed my interview questions using my hypotheses. Therefore, I

did not have to keep each hypothesis in mind while I coded initially. After conducting a line-by-line coding, I sorted the data using a coding frame (David & Sutton, 2004, cited in Berg, 2009) into the following five categories: titularity, ethnicity, refugee status, push/pull; incorporation. Once the data were sorted into these categories, I analyzed those data looking for the plausibility of my hypotheses and supplemental information for my survey data.

Conclusion

Even though I attempted to follow a quota sampling scheme, my samples essentially are convenience samples. All the studies on FS populations included in my review of the empirical literature with the exception of Kasinitz et al. (2008) and Miller et al. (2006) relied on convenience or snowball sampling. Vinukorov, Birman, and Trickett (2000) noted that studies of this population (FS immigrants) in the U.S. indicate that these immigrants will not return questionnaires to people they do not know or have not met. My experience confirmed this difficulty in collecting data. Therefore, it was key to establish contact with “gatekeepers” in Brooklyn and Nashville. Snowball sampling has been the norm in studies of FSU populations even if a purposive or directed sampling strategy was used. Purposive or directed sampling is a non-probability sampling scheme that is guided by a set of criteria, such as variability in refugee status, ethnicity and titularity, rather than just who is conveniently available.

My research offers multiple ways of addressing a large gap in research on immigrants from former Soviet republics living in the United States. My contribution to research was my ability to access this community at multiple points of entry in qualitatively different research sites. I gathered surveys and interviews in a well-established FSU immigrant destination as well as in a relatively new immigrant destination. The next chapter describes my findings from secondary, survey and interview research.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter gives an orientation to the Soviet and former Soviet (FSU) population in the United States through the analysis of secondary data and then explores whether my hypotheses are supported in the survey and interview data. The guiding research question for this study is: To what extent does a Soviet legacy shape the experiences of immigrants from the FSU in the U.S.? Refugee status, titularity and ethnicity represent various categories of immigrant experiences, and these themes were used to explore the guiding research question and shape my hypotheses.

Secondary Data

The Census and other government data show why this population is relevant for scholars and non-scholars. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the FSU foreign-born population has grown steadily in the U.S., although that growth tapered off by the year 2000. In this section, I overview the profiled the secondary data create about FS immigrants. This profile includes population size, demographic/social characteristics, and the spatial concentration of this population in the U.S. and in my two research sites.

Figure 1 depicts how the total population of former Soviet immigrants in the U.S. has changed since 1960. Mortality and a lack of replenishment might explain the decrease of this group from 1960 to 1990, but there is no evidence to support this. Furthermore, in a personal communication with Andrei Korobkov (August 7, 2013), he commented that mortality and a lack of immigrants cannot explain the sharp decrease between 1960 and 1990. Rather, he assumes that immigrants during the Cold War period were not identifying themselves as Soviet-born. Also, Korobkov noted a discrepancy in the population of FSU and Soviet immigrants in the U.S.

reported in the U.S. Census and in Russian reports. He noted that the U.S. reports likely underrepresented the actual numbers.

Figures 2 and 3 present data from the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) Office of Immigration Statistics (FY 2012). These data are intended to contextualize the Census data in Figure 1 and provide a better idea about the flow of immigrants or potential immigrants into the U.S. from former Soviet republics. Figure 2 shows that around ten thousand people or more from former Soviet republics every year are getting visas to enter the U.S. This includes all visa categories. Figure 3 also shows that there are substantial numbers of persons from former Soviet republics obtaining permanent legal status in the U.S. every year. However, Figure 3 is a little misleading as DHS lists “Russia” as the country of last residence, but footnotes for the figure indicate that for 1990 to 1999 “Russia” meant all former Soviet republics. By 2000, Russia actually meant Russia, and other former Soviet republics were not individually identified in the data.

Figure 1: Immigrant fluctuation from former Soviet republics. (Source: US Census Data)

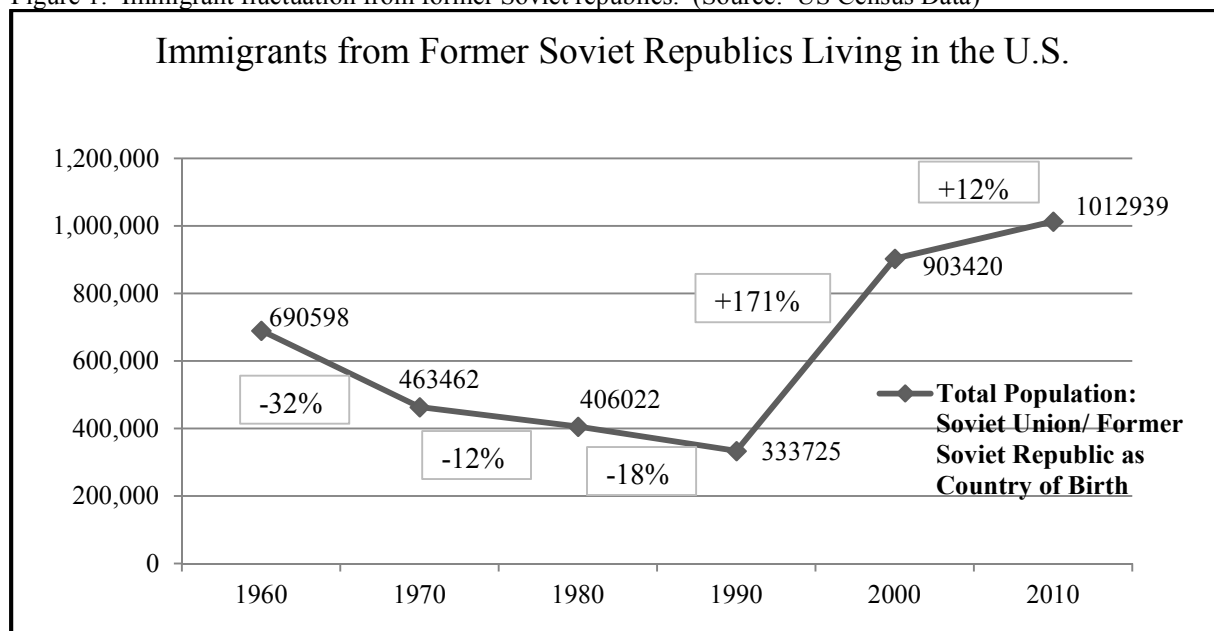
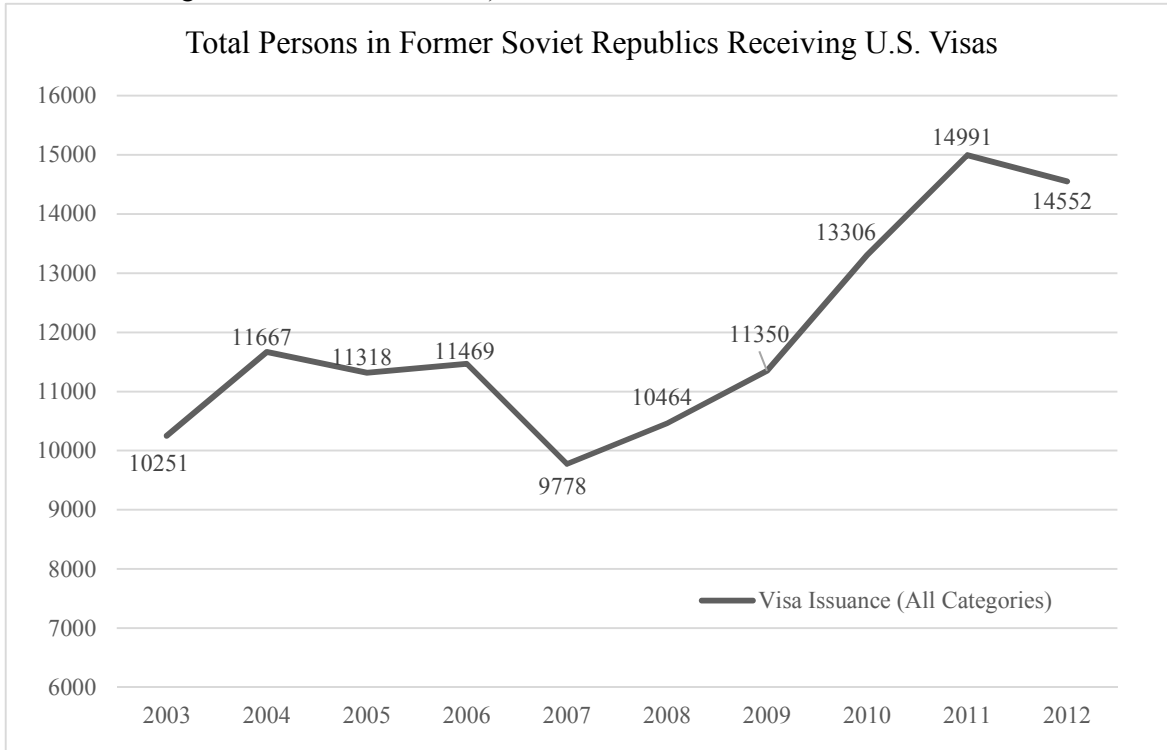
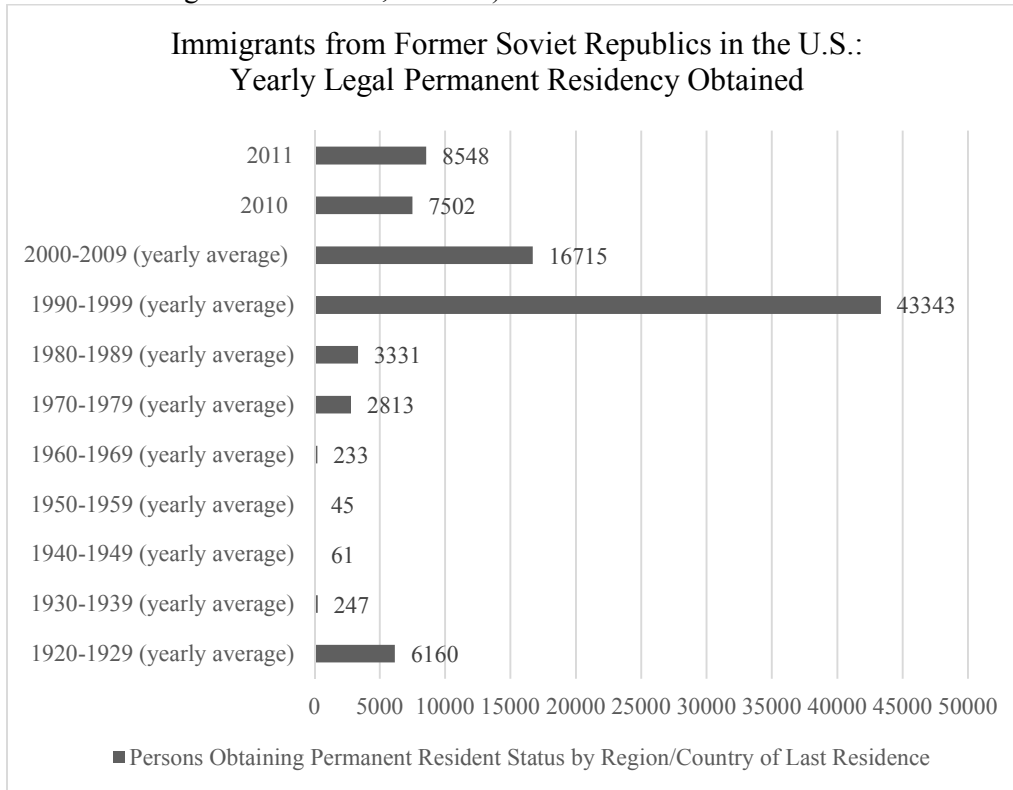


Figure 2: U.S. Visa Distribution to FS populations⁷. (Source: Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics, FY2012)



⁷ FSU populations include persons from all FSU republics except Azerbaijan and Belarus, which are not listed as having a visa issuance office in their countries.

Figure 3: Legal Permanent Residency for FS Immigrants⁸ (Source: Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics, FY2012)



It is useful to compare the demographic characteristics of FSU immigrants in the 1990 and 2000 Censuses and to compare them to the rest of the foreign-born population in the U.S. Unfortunately, the U.S. Census did not provide a similar table for 2010 so this comparison is possible only for the decade before and after the fall of the Soviet Union. Temporal and immigrant “group” comparisons suggest how FS immigrants have fared in U.S. society over time and as an immigrant group. Table 7 presents comparisons of 29 demographic and social variables. The most interesting comparisons (temporal and immigrant group) are for language

⁸ From 1920-1900, these numbers represent persons from the Soviet Union. From 1991-1999, these numbers represent persons from Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. From 2000 on, these numbers represent persons from Russia only. Data on persons from other FS republics are not reported.

ability, education level, household composition, age, employment skill set, and housing ownership.

FS immigrants have not dropped their native language as the preferred language to speak at home. The data suggest that since the collapse of the USSR, the FS population has been preserving their language at home much more than the U.S. foreign-born population as a whole. A larger percentage of FS immigrants live in married households than does the foreign-born population as whole. During the Soviet period the FS population was an “aging population.” Twenty-eight percent of the Soviet-born population in the U.S. was 75 or older as compared to only seven percent of the total foreign-born population. In 2000, the percentage of the former Soviet-born population age 75 or older dropped to 10 percent, but it was still higher than the percentage of the foreign-born population age 75 or older (5 percent). The housing ownership data also show that in 2000 a larger percentage of the FS immigrant population rented (64 percent) than the overall immigrant population (50 percent).

Table 7: Demographic Characteristics of FS and all foreign born populations in US before and after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 & 2000):

Variable	Former Soviet Population		Foreign Born Population	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
<i>Language Spoken at Home</i>				
Speak language other than English	81%	93%	79%	83%
English less than "very well"	64%	63%	59%	61%
<i>Relationship</i>				
Individuals in households	97%	99%	98%	99%
Individuals in group quarters	3%	1%	2%	1%
Total Family households	63%	71%	76%	78%
Total Married couple family household	86%	83%	78%	76%
<i>Sex and Age</i>				
Total Female	55%	54%	51%	50%
Total Male	45%	46%	49%	50%
Under 20	14%	20%	13%	13%
20-44	27%	39%	51%	53%
45-74	32%	32%	29%	30%
75 and over	28%	10%	7%	5%
<i>Education</i>				
Total population over 3 enrolled in school	19%	27%	21%	19%
School Enrollment - in higher education	44%	38%	47%	42%
Educational Attainment: High School Graduate	21%	19%	20%	19%
Educational Attainment: Bachelor's Degree	13%	23%	12%	14%
Educational Attainment: Graduate Degree	14%	23%	9%	10%
<i>Employment</i>				
Unemployed	13%	7%	8%	7%
Occupation (Managerial/Professional)	31%	44%	22%	28%
Industry (manufacturing)	19%	13%	21%	17%
Industry (health, education and social services)	16%	22%	14%	16%
Industry (finance, insurance and real estate)	9%	9%	6%	6%
Industry (retail)	15%	11%	18%	10%
<i>Poverty</i>				
Poverty status in previous year (individuals)	25%	20%	18%	18%
Poverty status in previous year (families)	19%	16%	15%	15%
<i>Housing</i>				
Occupied unit - rental	54%	64%	50%	50%
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	0.62%	1.36%	1.15%	1.25%
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	0.92%	1.35%	1.19%	1.18%
With a mortgage (owner occupied)	45%	75%	71%	77%

A significantly larger percentage of FS émigrés (1990 = 31 percent; 2000 = 44 percent) than the broader immigrant population (1990 = 22 percent; 2000= 28 percent) was employed in managerial/professional occupations. However, a larger percentage of the FS immigrant individuals than the broader immigrant population in 1990 (FS = 25 percent; FB = 18 percent) and 2000 (FS = 20 percent; FB = 18 percent) experienced poverty in the year prior to the Census.

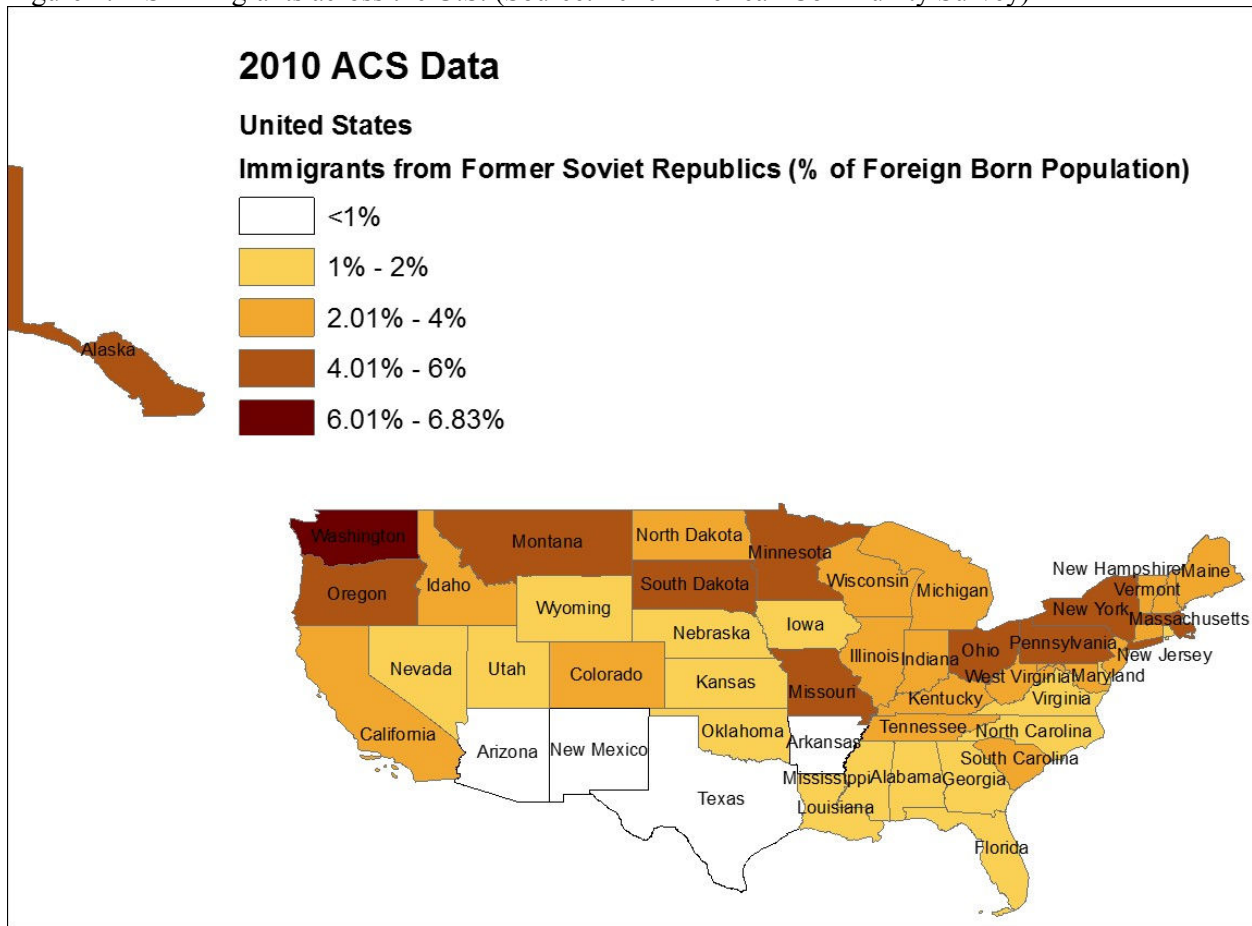
The gap was much bigger in 1990. This may be because over a quarter of the FS immigrant population in the US were 75 years or older in 1990. Additional secondary data show the former Soviet population's struggle with poverty. The 2002 Jewish Community Study (Ukeles & Miller, 2004) discovered that

Jewish poverty has increased significantly in New York City since 1991 — during a period when overall poverty rates in the city declined. From 1991 to 2002, the number of people estimated to be living in Jewish households under the 150% poverty level in New York City increased from 167,500 to 226,000 — an increase of 35% (p. 202).

This is relevant to this study because Russian-speaking Jewish households made up a significant proportion (45 percent) of those in the Jewish community experiencing poverty. The study reveals that in the Jewish community, Russian-speaking households with seniors age 65 or older form the poorest group.

Using geographic information systems (GIS) mapping, I produced maps showing where FS immigrants live in the US (Figure 4) and in my two research sites (Figures 5 and 7). The 2010 American Community Survey provides population numbers for the following FS republics: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Not all fifteen FS republics are identified specifically as countries of birth.

Figure 4: FS Immigrants across the U.S. (Source: 2010 American Community Survey)



In Nashville, FS immigrants are spatially dispersed and do not live near other immigrant populations (Figure 6). They also tend to live in middle-class parts of the city (such as Bellevue and Green Hills). Conversely, in Brooklyn, FS immigrants live in concentration and among other immigrant populations (Figure 8), such as Chinese and Puerto Rican immigrants, and they live in working class neighborhoods.

Figure 5: FS Population in Davidson County (Source: 2010 ACS)

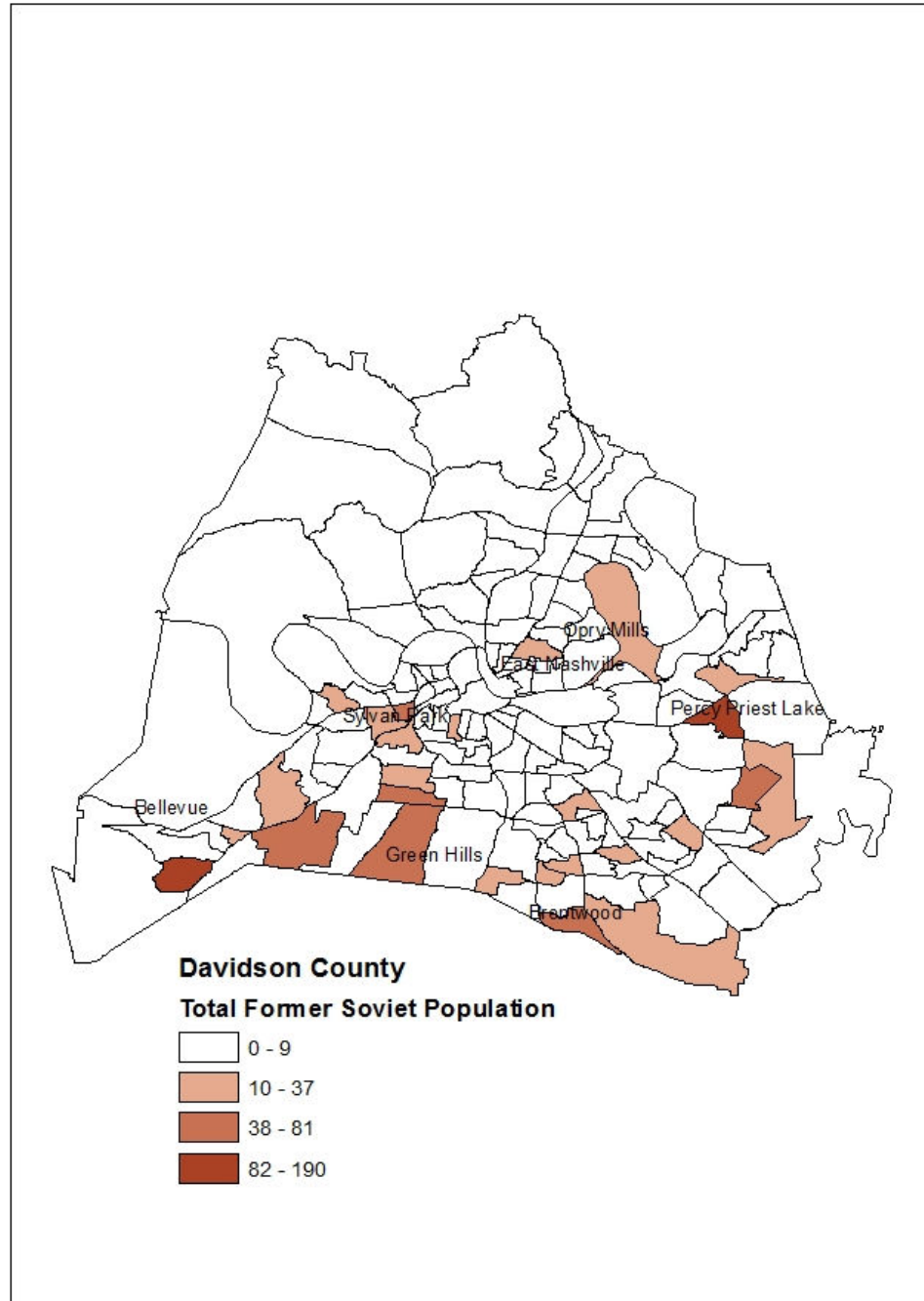


Figure 6: Foreign-born population in Davidson County (Source: 2010 ACS)

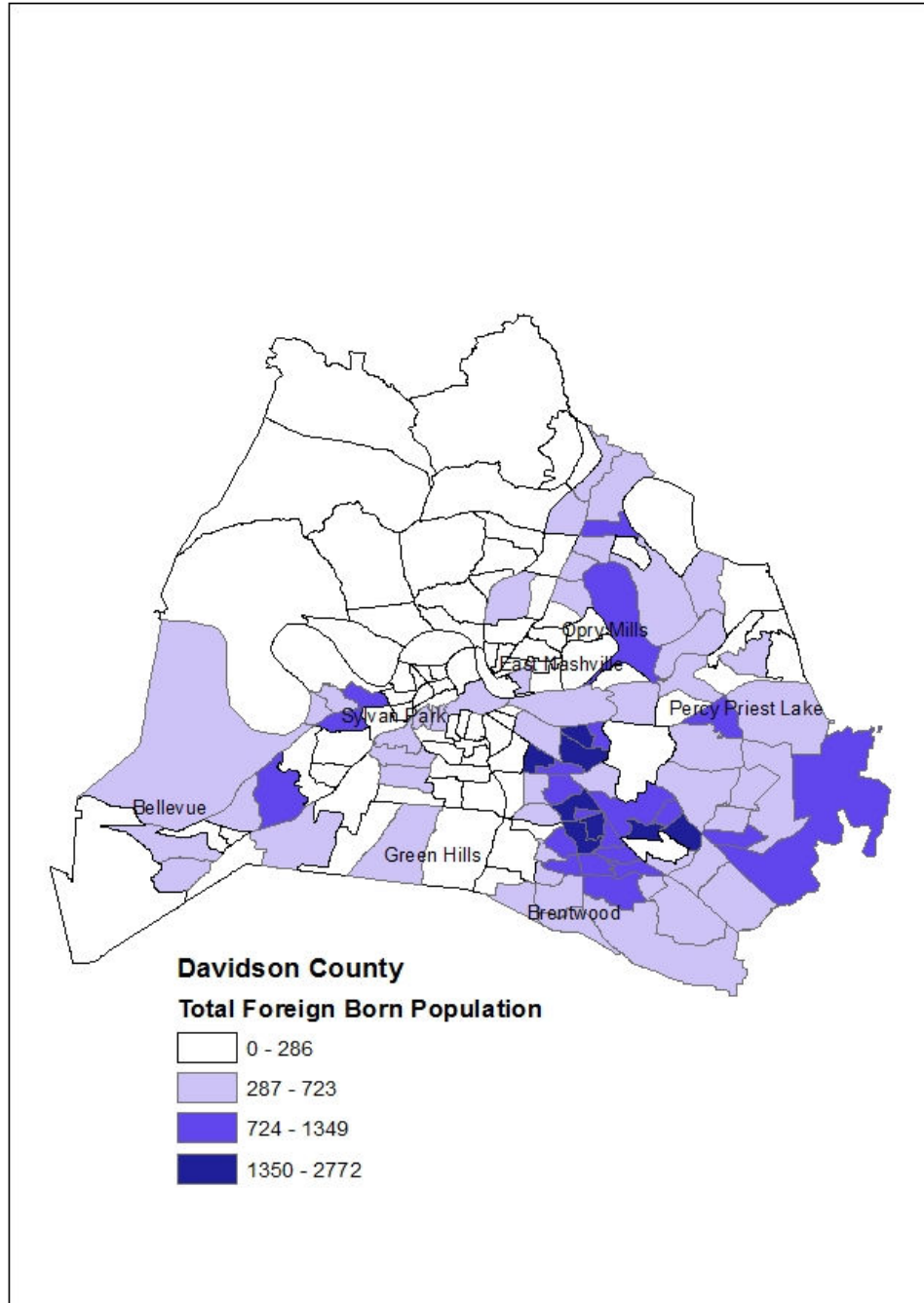


Figure 7: FS Population in Kings County (Source: 2010 ACS)

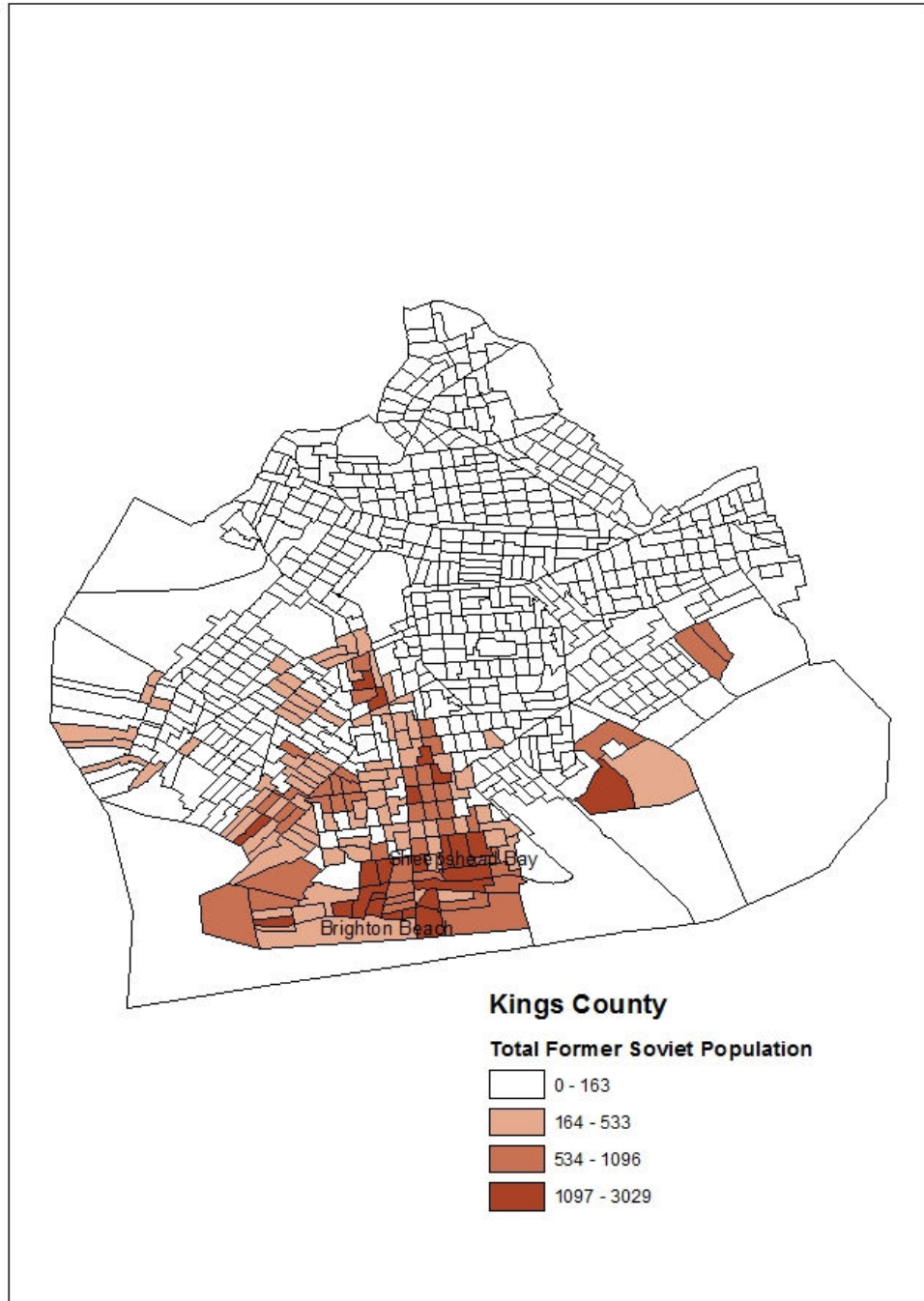
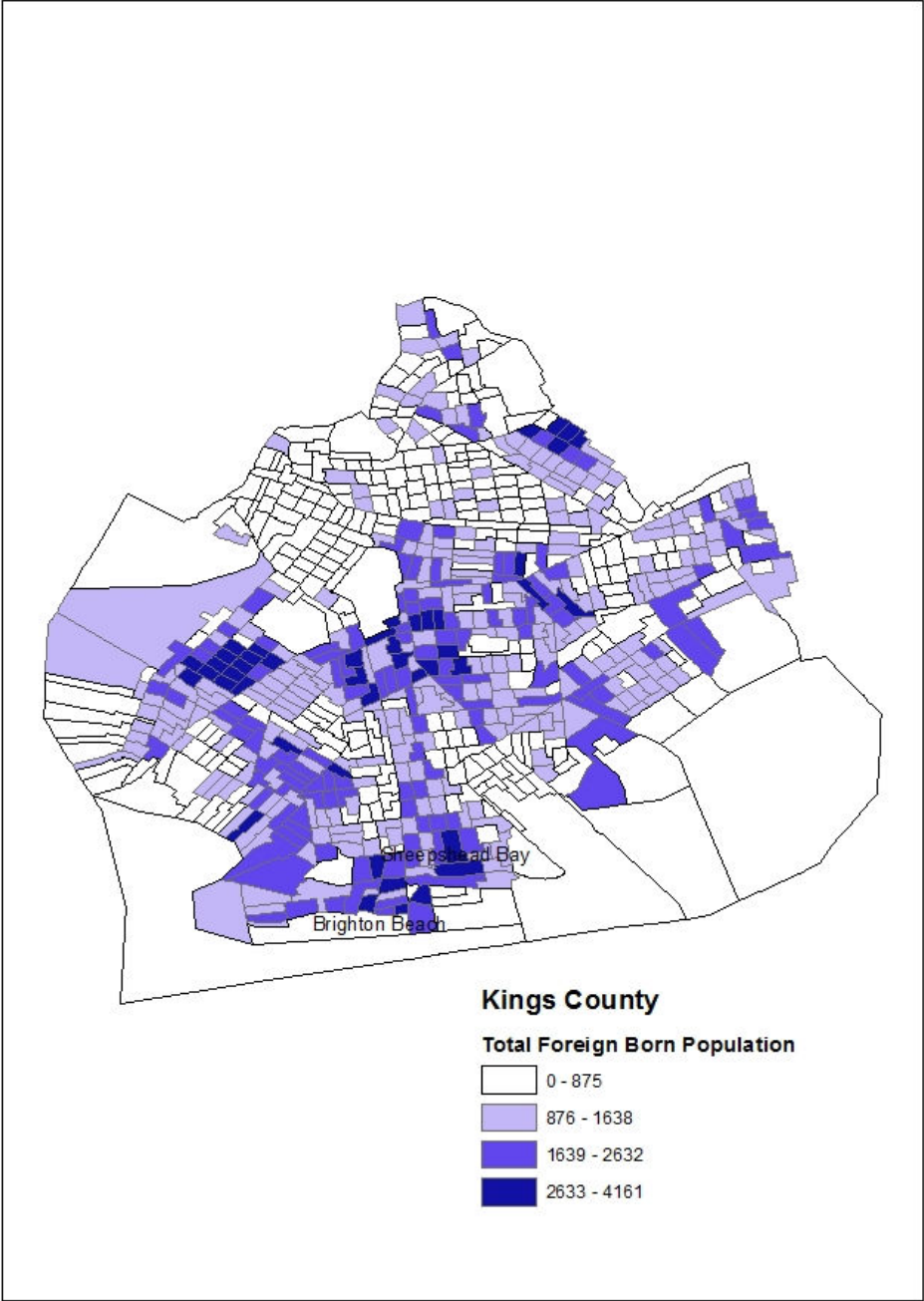


Figure 8: Foreign born population in Kings County (Source: 2010 ACS)



Survey and Interview Findings

I compared the interview data I collected for Nashville and Brooklyn on two economic characteristics (yearly income; yearly income as a proportion of area median income (AMI)) and ten demographic/social characteristics (age; year immigrated; gender; region of origin; ethnicity; titularity; refugee status; education; religion; immigration status). I performed difference in mean and proportion tests to compare the characteristics of the two samples (Tables 8a and 8b).

Because I ultimately relied on snowball sampling, these differences may reflect the differences in sampling bias. But, as I noted in the methods section, I also used a quota sampling scheme that encouraged me to make multiple points of entry into these communities as opposed to just following one entry trajectory.

There are several statistically significant differences among the demographic variables of the Brooklyn and Nashville samples: year immigrated, titularity and refugee statuses, educational attainment, and religious affiliation. The mean difference in year immigrated is not surprising as Brooklyn (M = 1999) is a more popular destination for FS immigrants than is Nashville (M = 1996) and the continued and more recent influx is to be expected. Also not surprising was the larger refugee/asylee percentage of the Brooklyn sample (56 percent) over Nashville (24 percent). This is likely tied to a much larger institutional resource pool in New York. An interesting finding from this set of variables was titularity. The Nashville sample had a much higher proportion of titular immigrants (80 percent) than the Brooklyn sample (56 percent). This finding is worth noting because several of my hypotheses (H2-H4) deal with titularity and reasons for emigrating, intentions to return to country of origin to live, and remittances. Another interesting finding is the significant difference in income when adjusted as a proportion of AMI (Area Median Income). The mean income for Brooklyn is 61% of the AMI

and the mean income for Nashville is 87% of the AMI, which means the Nashville group is relatively financially better off than the Brooklyn group.

Table 8a: Demographic and Social Variable Comparisons (t-tests): Brooklyn and Nashville Datasets

	Brooklyn Sample	Nashville Sample	t-test
Year of Birth			
<i>N</i>	125	44	
M	1967	1969	ns
SD	16.132	9.476	
Year Immigrated			
<i>n</i>	131	45	
M	1999	1996	2.19 [†]
SD	7.161	7.106	
Yearly Income			
<i>n</i>	76	20	
M	\$41,676	\$55,525	ns
SD	\$27,654	\$32,165	
Yearly Income as Proportion of AMI			
<i>n</i>	76	20	
M	0.61	0.87	-2.46 [†]
SD	0.40	0.45	

Table 8b: Demographic and Social Variable Comparisons (chi square tests): Brooklyn and Nashville Datasets

	Brooklyn Sample		Nashville Sample		χ^2
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
Female	75	57	25	54	ns
Region of Origin					
Eastern Europe & Baltics	80	61	33	72	ns
Transcaucasus	20	15	6	13	
Central Asia	29	22	7	15	
Other*	2	2	0	0	
Ethnicity					
European Non-Jewish	65	50	32	70	ns
Jewish	32	24	4	9	
Transcaucasian	21	16	5	11	
Asian	13	10	5	11	
Titular Immigrant	73	56	37	80	8.84 [#]
Refugee/Asylee	71	56	11	24	13.52 [#]
Education					
Less than Secondary	2	2	1	2	28.09 [#]
Graduated from Secondary School	12	9	1	2	
Attended Technical College	5	4	2	4	
Graduated from Technical College	19	15	1	2	
Attended University	20	15	6	13	
Graduated from University	63	48	20	44	
Attended Graduate School	2	2	2	4	
Graduated from Graduate School	5	4	13	28	
Religion					
Christianity (Orthodox)	62	49	21	46	12.66 [†]
Christian (other)	12	10	5	11	
Jewish	32	24	3	7	
Muslim	8	6	5	11	
Atheist/Not Religious	10	8	10	22	
Other	2	2	1	2	
Immigration Status					
U.S. Citizen	69	53	30	65	ns
Permanent Resident	47	36	11	24	
Other	12	9	5	11	

* England and France

[†]p<.05; [#]p<.01

The set of social capital variables showed only one statistically significant difference between the two samples (Tables 9a and 9b). The scarcity of statistically significant differences in this set is an interesting finding in and of itself. Feelings of connectedness to countries and

neighborhoods of origin, the U.S. and U.S. neighborhoods, immigrants and other Americans were similar in strength between the samples. Immigrants from the FSU are less likely to engage in formal social capital production and rely more heavily on informal social capital production and engagement. A low percentage of respondents from both samples were active with or in formal institutions. Respondents from both samples were also much more likely to turn to informal institutions (friends and family) for help than formal institutions (religious, government, non-government organizations) when they initially immigrated. There was one exception. No respondent from the Brooklyn sample reported that he or she received help from a church, synagogue or mosque upon immigrating to the U.S. However, a small percentage of Nashville respondents (N=4) reported that they had received help from such institutions.

Table 9a: Social Capital Variables (t-tests)

	Brooklyn Sample	Nashville Sample	t-test
How Strongly Do You Feel Connected			
To*:			
<i>Country of Origin</i>			
<i>n</i>	121	46	
M	2.39	2.61	ns
SD	1.07	0.88	
<i>Local Neighborhood in Country of Origin</i>			
<i>n</i>	109	45	
M	2.24	1.98	ns
SD	0.96	0.97	
<i>The United States</i>			
<i>n</i>	108	44	
M	3.19	3.18	ns
SD	0.76	0.82	
<i>Local Neighborhood in the U.S.</i>			
<i>n</i>	105	43	
M	2.70	2.51	ns
SD	0.92	1.01	
<i>Other Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union in the U.S.</i>			
<i>n</i>	113	42	
M	2.48	2.6	ns
SD	0.81	0.77	
<i>Other Immigrants from Other Countries in the U.S.</i>			
<i>n</i>	107	42	
M	2.12	2.19	ns
SD	0.92	0.67	
<i>Americans</i>			
<i>n</i>	108	42	
M	2.65	2.64	ns
SD	0.92	0.76	

Table 9b: Social Capital Variables (chi square tests)

	Brooklyn Sample		Nashville Sample		χ^2
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
Active in**:					
Church/ Synagogue/ Mosque	25	19	6	13	ns
Political Club/Group	0	0	0	0	ns
Community Organization	2	2	3	7	ns
School/ University	11	8	8	17	ns
Recreational Club	9	7	3	7	ns
Other	11	8	3	7	ns
Help from:					
U.S Government	24	18	6	13	ns
State Government	7	5	1	2	ns
Local Government	4	3	1	2	ns
Church/ Synagogue/ Mosque	0	0	4	9	11.57 [#]
Community/ Non-profit Organization	7	5	5	11	ns
Family	58	45	19	41	ns
Friends	22	17	8	17	ns
Other***	23	17	12	26	ns

*1=Not at all; 2=Somewhat; 3=Strongly, 4=Very strongly

** Could select multiple responses

***Virtually all respondents wrote in some variation of "myself"

[#]p<.05; [#]p<.01

Push/pull and incorporation variables produced the most exciting set of findings on differences between the Nashville and Brooklyn samples (Table 10). The two most significant findings from this set are also the most interesting from the comparison of samples. These variables include both sides of the immigration coin: reasons for migration and experiences in the country of destination. Respondents were able to choose multiple reasons for emigration and immigration. One option was “I moved to the U.S. because I wanted better educational opportunities for me (or my children).” A much larger proportion of respondents from Brooklyn choose this as one of the reasons for immigration than did respondents from Nashville. This is notable because the Nashville sample had a higher level of formal education overall than did the Brooklyn sample. This suggests several possibilities. It suggests that those with lower levels of formal education still value educational opportunities for themselves or their families. It also

suggests that for whatever reason, they felt they were not able to access or feared their children would not be able to access good educational opportunities in their country of origin. Another possibility is that FS immigrants in Nashville on average have a higher level of education than those in Brooklyn so education might be a less important reason for coming. However, the statement in the survey also included educational opportunities for children as a reason indicated in the question about educational opportunities, so it is not clear what reasoning drove the difference in responses.

The other notable finding from this set of variables was the differences in experiences of discrimination in the U.S. based on ethnicity. A larger proportion of respondents from Nashville than from Brooklyn reported experiences of discrimination based on ethnicity in the U.S. Two possibilities for this are that Nashville is less multicultural and multiethnic than New York, and discrimination based on “indicators of difference” is likely more rampant and more overt. Also, the GIS maps above show that FS immigrants in Nashville do not tend to live in areas of the city where other immigrants live (such as the Nolensville Pike area). So their “difference” as immigrants may be more noticeable and felt more bluntly.

Table 10: Push/Pull and Incorporation Variables

	Brooklyn Sample		Nashville Sample		X ²
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
The U.S. is My Home	93	78	28	62	4.28 [†]
I Left My Country Because*:					
I wanted to experience life somewhere else	61	47	29	63	ns
I was persecuted/ negatively treated because of my:					
Ethnicity	23	18	6	13	ns
Religion	12	9	5	11	ns
Political Beliefs	2	2	4	9	ns
My country is corrupt and I wanted to leave	35	27	11	24	ns
I did not have an economic future in my country	65	50	17	37	ns
My family moved away	51	39	16	35	ns
My friends moved away	14	11	6	13	ns
I Moved to the U.S. Because*:					
I could make more money here than in my country of origin	65	50	27	59	ns
I wanted better educational opportunities for me (or my children)	85	65	18	39	9.65 [#]
I had/have family members here	50	38	15	33	ns
I had/have friends here	21	16	5	11	ns
I came here as a visitor and eventually became an immigrant	19	15	14	30	5.58 [†]
I did not want to move to the U.S. but I had no choice	7	5	8	17	6.28 [†]
In the U.S. I Feel Discriminated Against Because of My Ethnicity:					
All the time	2	2	0	0	
Sometimes	13	10	18	39	24.79 [#]
Rarely	23	19	12	26	
Never	90	70	16	35	
I Intend to Return to My Country of Origin to Live Someday	27	22	12	26	ns
I Send Money Back to My Family and/or Friends in My Country of Origin:					
Once a month	17	13	3	7	
A few times a year	34	27	16	36	
Once a year	11	9	5	11	ns
Once every few years	14	11	7	16	
Never	52	41	14	31	

*Could select multiple responses

[†]p<.05; [#]p<.01

Correlations

Correlations were run on the Brooklyn sample only for variables related to connectedness, education, and remittances. Appendix D includes all correlations. Several bivariate relationships were statistically significant. The three questions that correlated with three or more other questions were: 1) How strongly do you feel connected to your local neighborhood in the U.S? 2) How strongly do you feel connected to Americans? 3) How many times do you send money back to family/friends in your country of origin?

Connectedness. There was a positive correlation between connectedness to local U.S. neighborhood and connectedness to the U.S. ($r = .495$, $n = 102$, $p = .000$), other immigrants from the FSU ($r = .209$, $n = 105$, $p = .032$), immigrants from other countries ($r = .275$, $n = 102$, $p = .005$), and Americans ($r = .384$, $n = 104$, $p = .000$). Connectedness to local U.S. neighborhood negatively correlated with feelings of discrimination in the U.S. based on ethnicity ($r = -.274$, $n = 103$, $p = .005$). There was a positive correlation between connectedness to Americans and connectedness to the U.S. ($r = .491$, $n = 105$, $p = .000$), other immigrants from the FSU ($r = .220$, $n = 108$, $p = .022$), and immigrants from other countries ($r = .346$, $n = 104$, $p = .000$). Not surprisingly, feelings of connectedness to country of origin strongly and positively correlated to connectedness to local neighborhood in country of origin ($r = .770$, $n = 109$, $p = .000$), but it also negatively correlated to connectedness to the U.S. ($r = -.212$, $n = 108$, $p = .027$).

Remittances. The number of times a respondent sent money back to family and friends in country of origin positively correlated with education level ($r = .211$, $n = 125$, $p = .018$), connectedness to country of origin ($r = .405$, $n = 121$, $p = .000$), and to local neighborhood in country of origin ($r = .339$, $n = 109$, $p = .000$). The correlation between education and remittance behavior is not surprising as those with a higher education are more likely to find better paying jobs which gives them more income. The most interesting connections in this group are between

remittances and feelings of connectedness to one's country or origin as well as one's local neighborhood in country of origin. Even though this correlation does not necessarily imply causation, it would be helpful to explore why there is a connection between feelings of connectedness to place and remittance behavior. Does the connection to place encourage one to send money more often? Or, does the act of sending remittances make one feel more strongly connected to their place of origin? Remittance behavior is further explored below in the section on hypotheses.

Hypotheses

My original research question was, "To what extent does a Soviet legacy shape the experiences of immigrants from the FSU in the U.S.?" From the literature and my own experiences, three categories emerged to organize hypotheses for testing: refugee status, titularity and ethnicity. I test the association and independence of variables relevant to my hypotheses using chi squared, Fisher's exact tests, a logistic regression and t-tests on my survey data. I also use coded interview data to explore the substance of the hypotheses. Below is a review of the results of the hypothesis testing and relevant qualitative findings. Appendix E also summarizes the hypothesis findings.

Refugee Status/ Institutional Support

I asked respondents in my survey to identify the types of help they used when they immigrated to the U.S. These responses fell into two categories: formal and informal institutions. Formal institutions include official entities such as governmental as well as non-governmental organizations. Informal institutions included friends, family, and even non-official entities such as "underground" employment agencies. The complexity of varying kinds of institutions emerged during interviews, but for the purposes of the analysis of the survey data my categories for formal institutions were "U.S. Government; State Government; Local

Government; Church/Synagogue/Mosque; Community/Non-Profit Organization,” and informal institutions were “Family; Friends.” My hypothesis for refugee status was:

H1 Refugees from the FSU rely on formal institutions (such as government programs, community organizations, and religious institutions) after immigration while non-refugees rely on informal institutions (such as friends and family members) after immigration.

I conducted a chi-square test of association between refugee status and institutional support using the survey data and found support for this hypothesis in Brooklyn $X^2 (1, N=128) = 19.04, p < .01$ and Nashville $X^2 (1, N=46) = 11.24, p < .01$ (Table 11). What is interesting about this result is not that refugees relied on formal institutions when they immigrated, which is not surprising considering their automatic qualification for some programs, but that non-refugees typically did not get help from any kind of formal institution, even religious institutions or community organizations.

Table 11: Refugees and Institutional Support

H1: Refugees from the FSU will rely on formal institutions (government programs, community organizations, religious institutions, etc.) for adjustment purposes while non-refugees will rely on informal institutions (social networks, family members, etc.) for adjustment purposes.

	Brooklyn		X^2	p
	Institutional Support			
	<u>Informal</u>	<u>Formal</u>		
Non-refugee	52 (91%)	5 (9%)	19.04	0.000
Refugee	40 (56%)	31 (44%)		
	Nashville			
	Institutional Support			
	<u>Informal</u>	<u>Formal</u>		
Non-refugee	32 (91%)	3 (9%)	11.24	0.001
Refugee	5 (45%)	6 (55%)		

Survey respondents were asked on whom or what institution did they rely for help when they first moved to the US. Respondents could select more than one answer. About 17.6% of

Brooklyn respondents and 26.1% of Nashville indicated “other,” with virtually all blanks being filled in with some variation of “myself” or “nothing”. The breakdown of other responses is as follows with Brooklyn and Nashville listed respectively: U.S. government (18.3%; 13%); state government (5.3%; 2.2%); local government (3.1%; 2.2%); church/synagogue/mosque (0.8%; 8.7%); community/non-profit organization (5.3%; 10.9%); family (44.3%; 41.3%); friends (16.8%; 17.4%). The largest category is “family.” This is consistent with what Borjas (1989) describes as family serving as a typical safety-net for immigrants when they newly arrive in the U.S. If “friends” were to be added to the “family” category, then in both research sites, friends and family would make up the majority support mechanism for FS immigrants when they arrive in the U.S.

In interviews, few people talked about their reliance on government institutions, even though half of them (N=13) had refugee or asylum status at one point. Their view and/or memory of adjustment were of assistance through self-reliance and informal institutions (friends/family). When I probed about their possible reliance on government institutions, the reaction was typically a hypothetical one. If pushed, they might call the police or expect the government to support them when they get older. There was one particular refugee interview during which I probed further when it was obvious that the respondent relied on formal institutional assistance. He was living with his family in public housing, and he mentioned applying for food stamps while he talked about struggling with the English language (Interview 4124-Brooklyn).

Interviewer: Whom do you rely on for help?

Respondent: I don't believe to in any organization, in government. I don't believe in it.

We have a situation when we had no help from no one. We just trust each other. We just hope for the best.

I: Did you have a bad experience? You said you got food stamps when you first moved – (cut off)

R: No, when you take the person in a very bad situation and you put them in a situation that is not that bad, you just get excited. You're happy. If you ask me now? You ask me about that situation now? It's nothing. It's difficult for me to ask help. I'm not that person. I'm thinking about myself and I understand that you can't get help now. Here in this country is based on the self. Self-improvement.

His situation was further complicated by having a child with autism. He said that his wife cannot work because she needs to care for their son full time. He was clearly bothered when it came to the question of government or any kind of outside help. Based on his responses, I felt he believed he was entitled to help for the hardships he has faced, but at the same time felt guilty, maybe even ashamed, about not being self-reliant. I did ask him about his experience with public housing, and how long it took him to get into his apartment.

R: We didn't wait for the long time, but we want to get some better area. This area is not that good for a family.

The physical environment was intimidating in public housing in Coney Island. Graffiti is just about anywhere there is a surface big enough to make a letter, and lettering rather than imagery was about all there was to the graffiti of Coney Island public housing. There were no colorful murals, only gang signs and personal initials. Even the taxi cabs were not immune from

graffiti. In New York City, most public housing is high-rise and contains enclosed stairwells. In Nashville, public housing is mostly low-rise with more open staircases. The smell of urine hits you almost immediately in the enclosed spaces in NY public housing, especially the rickety elevator we took four floors up. The first impression of my respondent's apartment was "concrete." No amount of Central Asian adornment could mask the concrete box in which this family of four lived.

Only one respondent mentioned her reliance on Medicaid for help with her son because he was born with a disability. She is a 52-year-old non-refugee Georgian who works in the billing department of a transportation company in New York. In Georgia, she was a scientist (hydrotechnician) and has a degree in engineering. Conversely, other respondents shared their reluctance to rely on formal institutions, especially government ones. This may stem from the normalcy of corruption in FS republics as reported by virtually all respondents. For example, an Uzbek from Uzbekistan working in Nashville as a part-time bank teller commented that he does not trust the government anywhere, including the U.S, and would not want to rely on them for any kind of help. Other immigrants looked negatively on those who used the government for financial support. Another non-titular Uzbek immigrant from Nashville said,

Respondent: I don't like to rely on the government. I had to wait six years to get my permanent residence and first thing I did, I went to buy health insurance. First thing a lot of people do when they get their greencard is get on welfare. This is. . . I don't like it. Because somebody is working. And you do nothing?

I: Did you have any kind of assistance when you were waiting to get your permanent residency? Any kind of medical or food assistance?

R: No, nothing.

However, one of two undocumented immigrants I interviewed reported his faith in U.S. institutions and people to help him if he really needs it, no matter his legal status:

I'm legal or illegal. I'm in this country, so I'm human too. So the paper, because I don't have a paper doesn't mean I'm not a human. If I need help, I'm sure that everybody is going to help me – somehow, you know? Maybe not like fully, but somehow they are going to help me. So I'm sure because it's democracy.

One Russian Nashville immigrant who was trafficked as a hotel maid noted that she trusts the police and other government institutions, but did not have any luck with a human rights organization in Kentucky when she was victimized. She shrugged at my surprise when she told me that the organization was not helpful to her. Her reasoning was that her language must have not been very good at the time and that is probably why the human rights organization did not follow-up with her when she reported it. Fortunately, the trafficking ring was busted by police and because she was a legal immigrant, she was able to find work elsewhere. Unfortunately this did not happen before she experienced abuse at the hand of her employer. She reported to me that she was hit in the face, threatened and yelled at constantly.

Another respondent (titular Georgian, documented and non-refugee immigrant) living in Brooklyn noted that she may have to rely on the government if she was ever “really in trouble,” but “thank God I've never needed to (collect unemployment).” In a follow-up discussion to the interview, she mentioned she was frustrated with a Jewish immigrant friend of hers who talked about how the immigration experience is not as bad as he hears from other immigrants. She noted that he gets help with housing and other assistance from Jewish community organizations and the government. She told me that there have been times she has been close to being “out on the street,” because she does not get any formal support. Her case is also an example of

deskilling. She has a degree in computer science and speaks three languages fluently, but like many female FS immigrants in Brooklyn, she works as a home healthcare attendant.

The support that Jewish immigrants receive (or are perceived to receive) came up several times in interviews and informal conversations. Non-Jewish immigrants believed the help Jewish immigrants receive is unfair. When asked about her general feelings towards other immigrants from the FSU, a titular Ukrainian immigrant in Nashville with a Ph.D. who has not experienced deskilling put it this way:

Generally, the Jewish community, the immigration community from former Soviet Union, I do not like very much. And I will explain why. Because they take too much from the country than give back. This is my personal opinion – from this country. And because of the Jewish lobby, they get things that other nationalities from the former Soviet Union couldn't get.

Several non-Jewish respondents acknowledged rampant and sanctioned discrimination against Jews in former Soviet republics (during and after the Soviet period), but they still took issue with any special treatment Jewish immigrants received in the U.S. Ethnicity and ethnic tension are explored later, but another source of differing experiences for immigrants is based on titularity.

Titularity

Considering a combination of factors from empirical literature and established migration theories, the following hypotheses on titularity were formed and supported by data analysis for the Brooklyn sample (N=131).

H2: Non-titular immigrants are more likely to report experiences of ethnic discrimination as a reason for leaving their country of origin than titular immigrants.

Table 12: Titularity and Push Factors

H2: Non-titular persons will be more likely to report experiences of ethnic discrimination as a reason for leaving their country of origin than will titular persons.

			Brooklyn	X^2	p
			Left country because of ethnic discrimination		
			<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>	
Non-Titular			39 (67%)	19 (33%)	16.32
Titular			68 (94%)	4 (6%)	
			Nashville		
			Left country because of ethnic discrimination		
			<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>	
Non-Titular			4 (44%)	5 (56%)	17.83
Titular			36 (97%)	1 (3%)	

A chi-square test of association was conducted to test this hypothesis. The connection between reasons for emigrating and non-titular persons was significant for those who reported ethnic discrimination in Brooklyn ($X^2(1, N=131) = 16.32, p < .01$) and Nashville ($X^2(1, N=46) = 17.83, p < .01$) as a reason for leaving (Table 12). In both samples, titular immigrants were far less likely to leave because of ethnic discrimination than were non-titular immigrants. In the original hypothesis, I included the immigration year of 1996 or earlier as a factor. Based on scholarly literature, those leaving their country of origin in the FSU before 1996 did so because of ethnic tensions; by 1996 civil turmoil was abating. I did a cross-tabulation analysis of the association between period of immigration and ethnic discrimination as a push factor using non-titular immigrants in both samples. In Brooklyn, 44% of the total sample was non-titular. Of this non-titular subsample, 34% of those who immigrated before 1996 claimed ethnic discrimination as a push factor and 30% of those immigrated in 1996 or later claimed ethnic discrimination as a push factor, but the differences were not significant. Therefore, 1996 as a dividing year does not seem to matter (Table 13).

Table 13: Titularity and Push Factors (Immigrated before 1996)

H2a: Non-titular persons who immigrated before 1996 will be more likely to report experiences of ethnic discrimination as a reason for leaving their country of origin than will titular persons.

	Brooklyn		χ^2	p
	Left country because of ethnic discrimination			
	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Immigrated before 1996	23 (66%)	12 (44%)	ns	ns
Immigrated in 1996 or later	16 (70%)	7 (30%)		
	Nashville			
	Left country because of ethnic discrimination			
	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Immigrated before 1996	3 (43%)	4 (57%)	ns	ns
Immigrated in 1996 or later	1 (50%)	1 (50%)		

In the interviews, a couple of respondents spoke of religion-based discrimination. All non-titular interview respondents except one who talked about experiences of ethnic discrimination in their countries of origin were from Central Asia or the Transcaucasus. One non-titular immigrant from Eastern Europe who emigrated from Russia to Nashville because of ethnic and religious persecution did so in the 1970s. His experiences of discrimination were especially severe because his family was German and Lutheran. He reported that family members were jailed and he was constantly harassed in high school.

One ethnic Russian from Georgia living in Brooklyn reported the following experience of feeling as if she belonged nowhere in the FSU:

The situation was very bad there (in Georgia) for my family. There were problems about nationalism. In my job, even if I did everything well, there was always a problem because I was Russian. When I was in Russia, people told me I was Georgian not Russian. And I had some problems there too. When I was studying in Russia, I felt more discriminated against in Russia than in Georgia. In Russia, they considered me Georgian and told me I was Georgian even though I was Russian.

A couple of non-Uzbek immigrants reported on their experiences in Uzbekistan. When I asked one young woman why her family left Uzbekistan, she looked at me as if it was obvious. “Well, we’re not Uzbek.” She went on to explain how bad the discrimination against non-Uzbeks was in the 1990s, when her family left Uzbekistan. “There was no future for us,” she concluded. Another non-Uzbek (Kazakh) immigrant went as far as to make sure his passport indicated his ethnicity was Uzbek so he would not have any trouble securing a visa to leave. The third hypothesis of this research projects is connected to the aforementioned desire to leave one’s country of origin permanently or temporarily depending on titularity:

H3: Titular immigrants are more likely to be temporary immigrants and intend to return home to live.

Table 14: Titularity and Intentions to Return to Country of Origin

		Brooklyn		X^2	p
		Intend to return to country of origin to live			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Non-Titular		48 (89%)	6 (11%)		
Titular		47 (69%)	21 (31%)	6.83	0.009
		Nashville			
		Intend to return to country of origin to live			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Non-Titular		9 (100%)	0 (0%)		
Titular		24 (67%)	12 (33%)	4.09	0.043

I conducted a chi-square test of association to test this hypothesis. The connection between titularity and intentions to return home to live was significant for Brooklyn ($X^2 (1, N=122) = 6.83, p<.01$) and Nashville samples ($X^2 (1, N=45) = 4.09, p<.05$) (Table 14). But intention to return home is a complicated topic when one considers the interview responses. Very few people talked in depth about their desire to return to their country of origin to live. Most of those who expressed a desire to return said it depended on how their country develops in the future. For a few respondents, it was their cities to which they were most connected

(Moscow, Kiev, and Tashkent) rather than their country of origin. Of the total sample (N=176), 85% came from urban areas in their countries of origin.

For those who expressed a desire to stay connected to their countries (cities) of origin, many did not find returning to live in their home country to be practical. The discussion of this also shows how complicated the migration process becomes even if there is a deep nostalgia for one's place of origin. Some immigrants have children born in the US. Others remember a place of origin that is no longer there. The following interview responses about possibly returning to countries of origin come from titular immigrants.

A Russian immigrant from Moscow talked about her longing to return to Russia. She feels isolated living outside of Nashville and does not feel like she has adjusted well in Davidson County. In fact, her summary of where she is living now was "I moved from the capital of Russia to the capital of rednecks." However, when I asked her about returning to Russia to live, she responded:

Right now, it would be a really hard decision to go back to Russia because I lost my apartment there, so it's like chasing a train. My son is American, so it would be a broken family. If I could, I would have a place to live there and travel back and forth and have a job there, because it's easier for me to get a job there. I'm from Moscow and several generations lived there. There is a huge difference in Russia between the capital and the other cities.

Another respondent longed for her city of origin, Kiev (Ukraine). Her narrative about Kiev seemed as though she was talking about an attachment to a person rather than a geographic space:

You need to understand one thing. Everything that I remember and am attached to is already 20 years old. So Kiev is not as it used to be when I was there. I remember very vividly in 2003, when at the middle of Khreschatyk Street, I just dropped down into tears because I couldn't recognize my city. My husband was freaking out because he couldn't understand. He didn't grow up in Kiev, but he is also very attached to the city. I've been in a lot of cities, but Kiev has a very interesting personality. It has a soul, essentially. And everybody who spends time there has a special relationship (with it) especially if you were born there and lived your life there. It's very eclectic because it doesn't have a very specific style of architecture, unlike St. Petersburg, because it (St. Petersburg) was created as a city, a European capital city, with the straight radial streets. Kiev is very old. And it just grew as life was going on, so there is no regularity about Kiev at all. It's very eclectic. It (was) allowed to develop in small parts. (There are) very quiet spaces, places where you would have one bench surrounded by a couple of trees and bushes and it's already in a very special atmosphere. It's very different now. A lot of buildings are coming down and it's changing. And I'm talking about the older part. What I like about the newer part, very interesting now – it's very megapolis looking. (There are) very high apartment buildings with interesting architecture. So especially on the left bank of the Dniepr, Kiev is very green. There (are) a lot of trees, parks and a lot tree boulevards. And it is on hills. Not a lot of churches, but they are very distinct churches, and there are still some monasteries. It's very interesting architecture and interesting feeling around them. This is how I see it.

Another titular respondent spoke of his home city, Taskhent, with great affection and also supported the people of his country in hope they would revolt. But he was proud of Uzbekistan's

history as a part of the Great Silk Road. His reluctance to return was based on government corruption:

Respondent: Well, when I came to the US, I made a goal and a commitment. I want to be able to use that degree. But if I can't use my degree in Uzbekistan because of corruption, then I'll want to stay in the US. People (in Uzbekistan) are very hospitable. They invite people to their house, make them food, etc. I'm really disappointed in the government. I'm really hopeful that one day, people will stick together and revolutionize the government. And I really hope people will start living better. I know someone who is an asylee (in the U.S.). She is an active member in a political organization. They are trying to tell people to connect together to fight against the government to remove the president. But it's been hard. Someone has to tell the people from the outside, to get to the public.

I: How big is this movement?

R: There are like 2 or 3 organizations. The movement is pretty strong. But in terms of being effective, there is this cynicism that they (Uzbek government) will send people here to kill them. They (Uzbek immigrants) still have that mentality.

Another example of support for revolution came up during an interview with a Ukrainian from Ukraine. She sent money to Ukraine during the mid-2000s to support the Orange Revolution. It seems that titularity may matter when it comes to remittance behavior. Thus, my final hypothesis concerning titularity was:

H4: Titular immigrants are more likely to send remittances to their country of origin and they remit more frequently than non-titular immigrants.

Table 15: Titularity and Remittances

H4: Titular immigrants will more likely and more frequently send remittances to their country of origin than will non-titular immigrants.

		Brooklyn		X^2	p
		Send Remittances?			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Non-Titular		31 (55%)	25 (45%)		
Titular		21 (29%)	51 (71%)	8.96	0.003
		Nashville			
		Send Remittances?			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Non-Titular		4 (44%)	5 (56%)		
Titular		10 (28%)	26 (72%)	ns	ns
Send Remittances to County of Origin: 1=Never, 2=Once every few years, 3=Once a year, 4=A few times a year, 5=Once a month					
		<u>N</u>	<u>Mean Rank</u>	<i>Mann-Whitney</i> <i>U</i>	p
		Brooklyn			
Non-Titular		56	54.86		
Titular		72	72	1476	0.014
		Nashville			
Non-Titular		9	16.50	103.50	ns
Titular		36	24.63		

This hypothesis was split into two tests: a chi square test to test the association between titularity and remittance activity, and a Mann-Whitney test to determine if titular immigrants more frequently sent remittances. Both showed significance (Table 15) for the Brooklyn sample. The chi square test showed that non-titular immigrants were more likely to report that they never send remittances back to their country of origin but was statistically significant for Brooklyn only ($X^2 (1, N=128) = 8.96, p < .01$). For the Mann-Whitney test, there was a significant difference in remittance frequency (1=never, 2=once every few months, 3=once a year, 4=a few times a year, 5=once a month) scores for titular (mean rank=72) and non-titular (mean rank=54.86) immigrants for the Brooklyn sample only. A higher mean rank means that remittances are sent more frequently. More specifically, a much larger percentage of titular

immigrants than non-titular immigrants send remittances relatively frequently (a few times a year or once a month) in Brooklyn (48 percent versus 29 percent) and Nashville (50 percent versus 11 percent). Therefore, not only are titular more likely to send remittances to their countries of origin, but they also more frequently send them than do non-titular immigrants. The data are in the same direction for the Nashville sample even though the tests were not statistically significant.

The interviews revealed that remittances support individuals (friends and family) and institutions (orphanages and political movements). Some remittances are in-kind in the forms of gifts and clothes. Respondents reported that cash remittances were sometimes intended to supplement someone's income and for others it was their only means of survival. It is important to look at what the qualitative data say in terms of use and purposes of remittances in reference to titularity of immigrants.

A couple of interviewees from Brooklyn (both non-titular) send clothes and toiletries to their friends and family. One respondent, who reported that she sends her father care packages, reported that he often does not use what she sends him. He saves it. She talked about a nice Adidas top she once sent him, and he never wore it because he did not want to ruin it. Another non-titular immigrant talked about organizing missionary trips to orphanages in Russia, but he does not send them money directly.

Respondents often reported that the cash remittances they send to their countries of origin are supplemental. A Georgian immigrant from Georgia said at one point she supported her sister who is a single mother. However, as the economic situation and salaries are improving in Georgia, she sends less and less as time passes. Another titular immigrant from Ukraine sends cash money with friends who are traveling to Kiev to give to his late father's wife. The

respondent did not get to know this woman until his father's funeral, but then decided to start helping her with income to supplement her pension. Another titular immigrant from Uzbekistan talked about his grandmother's use of supplemental money from the remittances he sends to her:

Sometimes I send a couple of hundred dollars as a gift to my grandmother. She's almost 80 years old. She likes to buy stuff for neighbors, to cook something. I send her money maybe every one and a half years or something.

However, for some respondents' friends and family, remittances are crucial for basic needs. A Georgian immigrant from Georgia pays for his sister's mortgage in Tbilisi. An Uzbek immigrant from Uzbekistan talked about supporting his parents because they are on pensions but are trying to support other family members in Uzbekistan:

My parents are on a pension, and that is not enough for them. They have grandchildren and my brother is really struggling with the job. It's a big family. They live all together in one house. Three families in one house. Five kids. It's a lot of expenses.

When I asked one Georgian immigrant from Georgia about the remittances she sends to her friends and family, she said they relied on her support. I asked her what kind of situation they would be in if she did not send them money. Her response was, "Stark."

Finally, there were some respondents who reported that their worsening financial situation in the U.S. prevents them from continuing to send remittances to family members in their countries of origin. A Russian immigrant from Russia who is struggling to find work reported that she used to send her family money, but they could support her now. Another unemployed immigrant (Tajik from Uzbekistan) in Brooklyn also reported that she used to send remittances but no longer can afford it. An undocumented construction worker (Georgian from

Georgia) in Brooklyn talked about how difficult it was for him to send money home to his family. In fact, they wind up supporting him sometimes.

I'm sending some presents to my nieces and nephews. But not really, to be honest. Only sometimes. When I first was here, I was sending money for some time. But for an illegal guy (who) is alone, I have to do everything by myself. Until I find a good job, it's difficult. . . There was one time when I cut my hand, hard. (My brother) sent me \$2000 for surgery. He's in Georgia. He is supporting me very hard. If I need it and it's necessary, he will sell his car; he will sell his house and support me with everything.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity was the third category potentially affecting how a Soviet legacy has shaped the experience of immigrants from the FSU. Two of the three hypotheses in this category were not supported using the Brooklyn sample, but surprisingly, one hypothesis was statistically significant in Nashville but not Brooklyn.

H5: Russians feel less connected to other immigrants from the FSU than non-Russians.

Table 16: Ethnicity and Connectedness

H5: Russians will feel less connected to other immigrants from the FSU than will non-Russians

How strongly connected do you feel to other immigrants from FS republics? 1=Not at all, 2=Somewhat, 3=Strongly, 4=Very Strongly

	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<i>t</i> -test	p
Brooklyn				
Non-Russian	2.46	0.78	ns	ns
Russian	2.53	0.92		
Nashville				
Non-Russian	2.36	0.79	ns	ns
Russian	2.45	0.76		

The mean scores for non-Russians in Brooklyn and Nashville were slightly lower than for Russians, but given their standard deviations, they were about the same (Table 16). Even though

this hypothesis was not supported by the survey data, there are interview data that give insight into how Russian colonial power influences the experiences and perceptions of FS immigrants.

For two respondents, Russian culture and language were positive and unifying forces before and after the Soviet period. A Jewish immigrant from Russia remembered the Soviet period fondly, and she looks negatively upon those who stress their ethnic differences.

Respondent: It was better in the Soviet Union. Now in Russia, when there are Armenians, Georgians, whoever, people would stress their difference. But in the Soviet Union, it was normal to see others. Now, and not just in Russia, it's an issue.

Interviewer: What do you tell your children about the Soviet period?

R: I tell them about Russian culture, its theatres, books, movies, and so on.

A young Russian woman from Uzbekistan whose family left because they were not Uzbek also noted the positive influence of the Russian language in Central Asia for people who did not feel at home in Uzbekistan because of their ethnicity.

Respondent: Over here (U.S), it's so many different cultures. Over there it was only five percent of Russian speakers in all of Uzbekistan, and we would stick together.

Interviewer: So even during the Soviet period, it was only a small percentage?

R: I'm not sure. No, I don't think so – it was bigger. But after collapse, people moving out. But Ukrainians, Koreans, we all stick together. Over here it's different. I find it easier to connect to people of the same background (speak Russian) as I am. Let's say Georgians.

The positive or nostalgic views of Russian influence in former Soviet republics expressed above were not echoed by other respondents, including an ethnic Russian from Georgian. However, it is important to note that though she experienced discrimination in Georgia because she was an

ethnic Russian, she reported her treatment while attending school in Russia was much worse. Russians saw her as a Georgian, even though her ethnicity was Russian. She reported to me that the Soviet Union was “represented by lies,” but people throughout the Soviet Union could not see that, especially Russians. Another immigrant from Georgia, an ethnic Georgian, put it this way, “During the Soviet time, we were all one unit, but Russia believed that all republics belonged to Russia.” A titular immigrant from Ukraine also commented that the Soviet Union should not be considered a Soviet empire. “It was (a) Russian empire. It was Russia and everything it accumulated through different ways, usually not very good ones.”

The legacy of the Russian empire was pointed out by several respondents. A titular immigrant from Uzbekistan talked about how Russian is still seen as the language of educated people in Uzbekistan because many official forms remain in Russian even though Uzbek is now the official language. He also noted the discrimination ethnic Russians from Uzbekistan experience when they move to Russia. “They are actually being discriminated against by their own people, by Russian people. Even if they look totally Russian, Russian people (from Russia) don’t see them as Russian.” Also, a Georgian journalist from Georgia talked about her experience working for a Russian-language newspaper in New York. She reported that she quit because it was very “pro-Russian” and problems arose for her during the Russia-Georgian war of 2008.

Although some non-Russian interviewees said it was just easier to say they were Russian to Americans, there were a few who found it offensive to be called Russian, and told me that they make it a point to correct people when they mistake them as Russians. One Georgian respondent reported that he would rather be thought of as any ethnicity but Russian.

Interviewer: What ethnicity do people think you are?

Respondent: Russian.

I: Do you ever just give in and say, “Yeah, I’m Russian”?

R: No! I would say I was Italian or something. No, no. I’m not Russian. I can speak my own language, and no Russian would understand me.

I: Do you speak Russian?

R: Yes. My generation was the last generation to have mandatory Russian in school.

Examples of ethnic discrimination are peppered throughout the above interview excerpts. The academic literature and theories on migration often refer to a global ethno-racial hierarchy that shapes the experiences of immigrants. Therefore, I attempted to create a hypothesis to capture this experience and how it may affect adjustment processes for immigrants from the FSU.

H6a: Non-European ethnic groups are more likely to report experiences of discrimination in the U.S. based on ethnicity.

H6b: Non-European ethnic groups are more likely to express a transnational identity.

Table 17: Ethnicity and Experiences of Discrimination in the U.S.

H6a: Non-European ethnic groups are more likely to report experiences of discrimination in the U.S. based on ethnicity.

	Brooklyn		χ^2	p
	Have you ever experienced discrimination in U.S. based on ethnicity?			
	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
European Non-Jewish	44 (71%)	18 (29%)	ns	ns
Jewish	21 (66%)	11 (44%)		
Transcaucasian	17 (81%)	4 (19%)		
Central Asian	8 (62%)	5 (38%)		
	Nashville			
	Have you ever experienced discrimination in U.S. based on ethnicity?			
	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
European Non-Jewish	10 (31%)	22 (69%)	NA*	0.05
Jewish	3 (75%)	1 (25%)		
Transcaucasian	3 (60%)	2 (40%)		
Central Asian	0 (0%)	5 (100%)		

* Fisher’s Exact Test done in lieu of Chi Square test, because of low expected values in some cells.

H6a was not supported for the Brooklyn sample but it was for the Nashville sample using Fisher's exact test ($p=0.05$) (Table 17). The difference between the Brooklyn and Nashville samples is notable. For European non-Jews, the experience of discrimination was quite different in Brooklyn and Nashville. Although this group may be considered "white" in the ethno-racial spectrum, a larger percentage of Europeans living in Nashville (69%) noted experiencing discrimination based on ethnicity than did Europeans living in Brooklyn (29%). Even though the survey question specified discrimination based on ethnicity, respondents may have been responding about experiences of discrimination based on numerous indicators of difference. This topic is picked up below in the discussion on interview responses. Ethno-racial differences may be at play as well. This is likely the case for the Central Asian respondents. All Central Asian respondents in Nashville reported feeling discriminated against because of ethnicity, but only 38% of the Central Asian Brooklyn sample reported the same experience.

Hypothesis H6b was supported using the Brooklyn sample ($X^2(3, N=119) = 18.615$, $p<.01$) only (Table 18). In Brooklyn, European Non-Jewish and Jewish ethnic groups are much less likely than Transcaucasian and Central Asian ethnic groups to call their country of origin home. However, in Nashville 42% of the European non-Jewish respondents considered their country of origin "home" as opposed to only 18% of European non-Jewish respondents in Brooklyn.

This expression of transnational identity may tie back to titularity. Therefore, the question is whether titularity is really predicting a transnational identity instead of ethnicity. To test for that, using the Brooklyn sample, I conducted a logistic regression using transnational identity (yes/no) as the dependent variable and ethnic category and titularity as the covariates. The Nagelkerke R^2 for this model is 0.268. Controlling for titularity, Transcaucasian and

Central Asian ethnic groups had a higher probability of having a transnational identity than did European non-Jewish and Jewish ethnic groups, and titularity was not a significant predictor (Table 19).

Table 18: Ethnicity and Transnational Identity

H6b: Non-European ethnic groups are more likely to express a transnational identity. (Transnational identity = country of origin is "home.")

	Brooklyn		χ^2	p
	Country of Origin is "Home"			
	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
European Non-Jewish	47 (82%)	10 (18%)	18.615	0.000
Jewish	31 (97%)	1 (3%)		
Transcaucasian	10 (56%)	8 (44%)		
Central Asian	6 (50%)	6 (50%)		
	Nashville			
	Country of Origin is "Home"			
	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
European Non-Jewish	18 (58%)	13 (42%)	na*	ns
Jewish	4 (100%)	0 (0%)		
Transcaucasian	4 (80%)	1 (20%)		
Central Asian	2 (40%)	3 (60%)		

* Fisher's Exact Test done in lieu of Chi Square test, because of low expected values in some cells.

Table 19: Logistic Regression for Transnational Identity

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Ethnic Category (European non-jewish is contrast)			11.004	3	0.012	
Ethnic Category (Jewish)	-1.399	1.18	1.406	1	0.236	0.247
Ethnic Category (Transcaucasian)	1.464	0.593	6.104	1	0.013	4.324
Ethnic Category (Central Asian)	1.464	0.681	4.62	1	0.032	4.324
Titularity (Yes=1)	0.682	0.639	1.142	1	0.285	1.979
Constant	-2.035	0.599	11.529	1	0.001	0.131

Discrimination comes in many forms, and discrimination was the most “grounded” code of the interview data. With my hypothesis, I focused on experiences of discrimination in the U.S. based on race/ethnicity and how that might shape an immigrant’s experience of

incorporation and adjustment. What my interview respondents revealed to me was that discrimination is a multifaceted experience for immigrants in countries of origin and/or destination. For this study, cases of discrimination were based on race/ethnicity, religion, language ability/accent, and gender. Many respondents expressed discriminatory attitudes towards others as well.

Ethnicity. Ethnicity or perceived ethnicity was the most frequently discussed reason for discrimination. Only one respondent reported an experience of violence based on ethnic discrimination. Even though she suggested that the discrimination she experienced was not too concerning for her, here is her report of it in Uzbekistan.

Interviewer: Did you even feel discriminated against in Uzbekistan?

Respondent: Yes. It was mostly ethnic. I was, as I said, a teenager when I lived there. No major issues.

I: How could you tell you were being discriminated against?

R: Some people would tell me ‘Go back to your Russia.’ They would treat me as Russian. As long as you’re not Uzbek, you get discriminated against. They throw stones at you.

I: Did they ever throw stones at you?

R: Oh yeah. People my age, bigger guys. When I was walking in my neighborhood. A titular immigrant from Uzbekistan reported his experiences of discrimination brought on by his marriage to a Russian woman. He said that “the chance to be yourself” regardless of who you are or who you marry is what he likes the most about living in the U.S. Because he was married to a Russian, he said that in Uzbekistan “people talk about me; people point at me; people ignore me.” A non-titular (Tajik) immigrant from Uzbekistan experienced religious

discrimination in Uzbekistan (see below) and ethnic discrimination in the U.S. However, her experience of discrimination in the U.S. was with a Jewish family from Samarkand (Uzbekistan). She worked for the family as a nanny and was not allowed to eat meals with them. She said that she was surprised because “we spoke the same language.” It was hard to discern whether she felt discriminated against because of ethnicity or class. She made it a point to say the family was Jewish, which denotes a difference in ethnicity, but the fact that she worked for them as a nanny suggests it may have been a perceived economic class difference. Some other respondents reported that they felt discriminated against (in Brighton Beach only) because they were not Jewish. One young Georgian woman said that she thinks Jews are insular in Brighton Beach, and said she heard a group of women talking about a non-Jewish acquaintance: “Oh, she’s okay. Even though she’s not Jewish, but she’s still okay.”

Trying to understand why Jewish immigrants in Brighton Beach are insular or engage in discrimination is further complicated by the experiences of discrimination they faced in former Soviet republics. Many respondents, including non-Jewish immigrants, noted in interviews the discrimination experienced by Jews in former Soviet republics. One Jewish respondent shared with me her specific experiences of discrimination in Russia:

It started in school. I had problems. I had to switch schools. The principal in my school told me that I did not have a chance to go to university because I was Jewish. The principal hated all Jewish people. I was told that the university would only accept a few Jewish people. But I was pretty lucky with work. I worked with good people. People in the streets would make comments . . . not always to me personally but in general. For example, I would stand in line to get sausage and if it was all gone, people in front of me

would say ‘The sausage is all gone. It must be because of Jews.’ Anytime something went wrong, people would blame it on Jews.

I asked her if she experienced any kind of discrimination in the U.S. She said she had not, except for one time when an African American female on the subway called her “white trash.” She did not go into detail about the exchange or its context, but waved it off as “just talk.” This is a good example of a Brooklyn respondent expanding on the reasons why someone might not have access to educational opportunities because of overt discrimination. As was covered in the Brooklyn and Nashville sample comparison above, a higher proportion of survey respondents from Brooklyn rather than from Nashville cited educational opportunities for self or children as a reason for immigrating to the U.S.

Another immigrant from Belarus talked about discrimination in the U.S. in terms of racial conflicts between “white and black.” She said, “As a white person, I have been afraid to walk past some high schools that are all black.” Other immigrants picked up on the negative view of Latin American immigrants by much of the American public. An Uzbek immigrant living in Nashville said that he experienced discrimination based on ethnicity in the U.S. only when he worked at a local grocery store, and even adopted the comments about Latin American immigrants.

But sometimes, when I used to work at the Kroger, people (are) talking to you. For example, someone (would) come in and tell you, ‘You better go home’. But they are talking about Mexicans and they (would) tell me, ‘I didn’t mean you, I didn’t mean you.

I meant him.’ I don’t say anything. But later I start joking myself. ‘That damn Mexican.’ One respondent, a titular immigrant from Georgia living in Nashville, talked about experiences of discrimination in the U.S. based on accent and language (more on this below). I asked her if

she ever felt discriminated against because of her appearance. She said that she did not feel it, but her daughter did because “everyone thinks she’s Mexican because she has dark hair.” I asked her if that bothered her. “No. It doesn’t bother me. It bothers her. I actually think it’s funny.”

Another respondent, a titular immigrant from Ukraine living in Nashville, talked about less overt experiences of discrimination in rural areas of the U.S. He noted loving to travel across country in his car earlier in our interview. He said he felt discrimination,

Sometimes, when you, for example, travel and you fill up at the gas station at a very rural area. You feel that people don’t appreciate you. But it’s. . . the difference is they couldn’t say anything because I’m a customer. You feel that, but nobody makes a big deal out of that. I pretend that I don’t notice it, and he pretends it (my foreignness) is not an issue. It’s very rare. Especially when you have a layer that’s not very well educated. Like in Ukraine, if you go to (a) working class area. If you are black, for example – I wouldn’t go there. But you can feel fine in the center of the city.

The above is a rich and nuanced description of discrimination. In several sentences, he captured discrimination as it is related to class, geography, overt discrimination tempered by a capitalist system and he even revealed some of his own biases. For many immigrants, discrimination becomes much more covert in form and expression than what they experienced in their countries of origin.

Religion. Other immigrants experienced discrimination in their country of origin and/or the U.S. because of religion. One experience was particularly violent. This interview is seared in my memory, not only because of the experience of violence she reported but because of her overall demeanor. She came to our interview out of breath. She was in a hurry. She had left her

baby in the care of a neighbor, but when she heard I was talking to FS immigrants about their experiences, she wanted to participate. She was afraid her husband would find out that she left their baby with a neighbor for this interview. In fact, he did not even know about the interview. She was dynamic and engaging and we conducted the interview in record time, but she got her points across to me. I remember being surprised that she was wearing long-sleeves even though it was warm outside and stuffy inside. Issues with religion first emerged when I asked her what she liked about living in the U.S.

I like everything. You can talk about religion. It's open, everything, not like in my country. In my country, I'm Christian. My sister is a pastor there. They caught her and put her in prison, and fined her a lot of money.

I paused and had to gather myself. I was taken off guard by how matter-of-fact her response seemed. A few questions later, I asked her about her experiences with discrimination. Again, I felt like I was slow to process what she was telling me. She said she experienced discrimination in Uzbekistan,

Because I'm a Christian. When I changed my religion (from Muslim to Christian) they poured acid on me.

Interviewer: Wh-um-when did you . . . um . . . change your religion?

Respondent: 2000. The imam's son poured acid on me.

Silence. I fumbled through the rest of the interview while she looked at me intently. After the interview, our mutual contact told me that she had seen the scars on her body. They covered her arms and legs, and that is why she wears long sleeves no matter what the weather is outside.

Another moving example was offered by a titular Georgian immigrant. She shared a vivid example of religious discrimination in Georgia during the Soviet period.

I was a religious person in Georgia, but only on the inside. Once, when I was in college, I went to a church and lit a candle. Some of the candle wax spilled on me and I couldn't get it off. I had to go back to class, and the professor was accusing me of being in church. I didn't know what to do. He just spoke to me disapprovingly.

An Uzbek immigrant in Nashville talked about the religious discrimination he experienced at work in Nashville because he was a Muslim. Although he said he did not discuss religion very often because he felt that he was “not that religious,” he said his boss was a Church of Christ member and told him often that because he was Muslim he needed to “change his religion.”

Language. Another basis for discrimination in the U.S. was an immigrant's language ability or accent. Even though one immigrant commented that Americans did not take issue with his inability to speak English, he heard it was harder for immigrants in Europe; others noted that language ability and accent were common indicators of difference. The experiences of immigrants varied widely, from one who said she could sense negative perceptions only from “uneducated” Americans to one immigrant reporting that her experience with abuse as a trafficking victim was made worse because of language problems. As noted above, the victim of trafficking stated that her employers treated her badly because of her language ability. She said it led her employer to assume she was an undocumented immigrant, and she believed it was the reason the human rights organization, to which she reported the abuse, did not follow up with her.

Gender. An unexpected category for discussion on discrimination was gender. Although only three interviewees spoke of gender explicitly, it is an important topic to include because of the interesting history of gender equality in the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union, at least officially, was much more progressive than the U.S. when it came to gender. It is beyond the

scope of this research project to engage in the complexities of gender, but it is widely acknowledged that women in the Soviet Union more rapidly moved closer to “official” equal treatment than did women in the U.S. during the same time period. However, the realization of this equality should be taken with skepticism. Official histories of the USSR, not unlike in many societies, were not always lived realities.

One non-titular immigrant from Uzbekistan reported that something that she “loved” about the U.S. was how women are treated. She contrasted women’s treatment in the U.S. to how they are treated in Uzbekistan: “In my country, women are abused in the family.” A Georgian immigrant from Georgia noted that she believed many women from former Soviet republics immigrate to the U.S. by way of marriage to American citizens. She feared that because they are dependent on their husbands, they may be more susceptible to abuse by their American husbands. And finally, a titular-Ukrainian immigrant shared how shocked she was by her treatment as a woman in the U.S. She commented that gender equality was one of the positive influences of the Soviet period. She said that because her workplace in academia is multicultural, she experiences gender discrimination from various cultures of the world.

Respondent: In research, we have a lot of Chinese and Indian population. I have a lot of problems with people from India mostly based on their relations towards women. So, and I understand every country has their own way to develop. But I myself as a woman very often feel it.

Interviewer: Even at this very high level of work?

R: Exactly, and because of this – it’s very difficult to tolerate.

I: Is it condescending? Or what is the relationship?

R: They just – I need to think how to put it together. In their personal lives – I observe a lot of families. And it's just a very subservient relationship from women and toward women. But they accept it because of their history and culture. For me, one of the best things that happened when the Soviet Union was formed – some were very good things happened, some were very bad. But one of the good things, the best thing was the equal rights of women and men which actually was provided into life. So I never had this feeling. It actually happened when I came to US. And I was very surprised in a bad way. I was expecting it to be progressive in every way. But it is not. Every country has a lot of problems, but this is the thing that still does not fail to surprise me, the gender differences, specifically professional. It takes me much more time and persuasion to show that essentially I am who I am. And that I'm not taken as a woman but as a professional. Just because a woman is supposed to be expected less. So it surprises me very much.

Conclusion

This Results chapter summarized what secondary and original data say about immigrants from FS republics living in the U.S., and specifically in two different immigrant destination cities: Brooklyn and Nashville. Some highlights of the secondary data analysis results include the following observations: As a whole, the FS immigrant population is more formally educated than the total foreign-born population in the U.S. However, FS immigrants on average have experienced higher rates of poverty than the general foreign-born population. Native language retention at home is much higher among FS populations than the general foreign-born population. In Nashville, FS immigrants do not tend to live in concentration as they do in Brooklyn. They also do not tend to live near other foreign-born immigrants.

Almost all hypothesis findings were in the same direction for Nashville and Brooklyn samples, even if some of the Nashville findings were not statistically significant. I found that non-refugees were not likely to rely on formal institutions for adjustment help. Titularity was a compelling variable for immigrant experiences. Non-titular immigrants in Brooklyn and Nashville were more likely than titular immigrants to report ethnic discrimination as a reason for leaving their countries of origin. Also, titular immigrants in both research sites were more likely than non-titular immigrants to report an intent to return to their country of origin to live someday. For Brooklyn respondents only, titular immigrants more likely and more frequently than non-titular immigrants sent remittances to their countries of origin. In Nashville only, a majority of European non-Jewish and Central Asian immigrants reported feeling discriminated against in the U.S. because of their ethnicity. Finally, in Brooklyn only, the largest percentage of those who considered their country of origin as their home were ethnic Transcaucasian and Central Asian immigrants. In this case, titularity was not a significant predictor. The Discussion chapter further summarizes this study's results and ties them into the theoretical framework introduced earlier in the dissertation.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of immigrants from FS republics in the U.S., a population relevant to migration scholars, non-migration scholars and non-scholars working in government and non-profit organizations. In this study, I attempted to pull back the iron curtain that appears to have descended when it comes to this population. I attempt to make visible what Kopnina (2005) referred to as an invisible population by using multiple methods of inquiry. Secondary data analysis provided an orientation to this population. Survey and interview research were used to explore this population in two contrasting research sites (Brooklyn and Nashville).

Even though the surveys and interviews were designed and coded to understand their relevance in respect to the three *a priori* categories for research (refugee status, titularity, and ethnicity), numerous themes emerged inductively. All of these themes and categories create an outline to better understand the Soviet legacy and why the FS region should be understood in its entirety rather than based on one particular country or ethnicity. The Soviet period interconnected the various parts of this region, and some twenty-odd years later, that legacy remains relevant. Immigration seems always a timely topic in the U.S., but it is especially relevant as our government attempts immigration reform, drawing academia and the public into debates about various facets of the issue. This discussion chapter situates my results in the context of my theoretical and literature framework. I use an adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model and frame the discussion as an "ecology of experience" for immigrants from the FSU living in the U.S.

Hypotheses

The general question of inquiry was, “To what extent does a Soviet legacy shape the experiences of immigrants from the FSU in the U.S.?” From this question and the literature emerged three categories of inquiry that organized my hypotheses: refugee status, titularity and ethnicity.

Refugee status

Refugee status is an obvious category for this study because it is tied to a Soviet legacy; before the collapse of the Soviet Union, all immigrants from the USSR were granted refugee status in the U.S. This policy continued after the collapse of the USSR because of the civil wars, ethnic backlash, and rising nationalism under the new era of multi-national independence. However, the post-Soviet era also brought in economic and other non-refugee immigrants to the U.S. The introduction showed how a sociopolitical history combining community organizing and political action in the U.S., as well as state sanctioned anti-Semitism in the USSR, set into motion a steady flow of Jewish refugees from the USSR to the U.S.

Liebert (2010) highlighted the importance of legal status because of varying outcomes for immigrants from Central Asia based on their immigrant status. Those who could access formal institutions were less vulnerable to exploitation than those who could not access them because they were not documented immigrants. Though my study only included a few undocumented immigrants, there was a variation in my participants’ legal status types. Refugees and asylees automatically qualify for several government benefits, such as Medicaid, so I wanted to determine whether there was a difference in what types of support immigrants turned to based on differences in status. I hypothesized that refugees are more likely to rely on formal institutions (government and community organizations) than non-refugees and non-refugees are more likely

to rely on informal institutions (family and friends) than refugees. These hypotheses were supported by survey data from Brooklyn and Nashville. However, it should be noted that survey and interview data indicate that immigrants from the FSU (regardless of legal status) overwhelmingly rely on informal institutions for adjustment purposes. There was a distrust and distaste for government support indicated by respondents. This reality ties back to my discussion of “kitchen social capital,” presented in the literature review.

Titularity

Titularity emerged as the most interesting thematic category in this research, and it supports my inclination to treat the former Soviet Union together as a discrete region, but also to focus on the countries within it. The mix of titular and non-titular citizens in post-Soviet republics is tied to Soviet and continued post-Soviet migration flows. Migration scholars studied the trends of former Soviet immigrants migrating within the FSU (Korobkov, 2007; Sahadeo, 2007; Zayonchkovskaya, 2000). They noted that late Soviet and early post-Soviet migration flows were related to ethnic tensions until around 1995. Ethnic tensions were especially an issue with non-titular persons (i.e. Russians in Uzbekistan). However, later (1996 onward) post-Soviet flows were more often connected to economic reasons. Also, research by Agadjanian et al. (2008) showed that Europeans in the Central Asian republic of Kyrgyzstan felt less of a connection to the country and community and reported that they would more likely emigrate permanently than did titular persons.

All three hypotheses relating to titularity were supported for the Brooklyn sample. For the Nashville sample, the hypotheses for titularity and ethnic discrimination as a push factor and titularity and intentions to return to live in one’s country of origin were supported and statistically significant. Non-titular persons more often indicated in both the survey and

interview that their reason for leaving was related to, at least in part, experiences of discrimination in their country of origin. Titled immigrants were more likely to indicate on the surveys that they would like to return to their country of origin to live someday. However, the interviews revealed that this was often wishful thinking and not a practical option for many. The hypothesis that titled immigrants would more likely and more frequently send remittances was not statistically significant for the Nashville sample. Titled immigrants were more likely than non-titled immigrants to send remittances to friends or family. They also sent them more frequently. Titledness, more than the other categories of inquiry, captures the Soviet colonization, and maybe the neocolonization, that has occurred.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity is tied to titledness. Rising nationalism since *perestroika/glasnost* has exacerbated intra-group (interethnic) tensions. That is, there are tensions within former Soviet populations between ethnic groups. Because the Soviet Union was a colonial empire with Russia the colonizing entity, I believed that Russians would be more sensitive to newly independent state nationalist rhetoric. However, my hypothesis that Russians would feel less connected to other immigrants from the FSU was not supported by the Brooklyn or Nashville sample.

Ethnic divisions in the FSU can be divided roughly into the following categories: European non-Jewish, Jewish, Transcaucasian, and Central Asian. Of these FS ethnic categories, Asians are the only “non-white” group. Ethno-racial hierarchies can create problems of incorporation for non-white immigrants in the U.S (Portes & Zhou, 1993). If immigrants feel marginalized because of these hierarchies, then they are more likely to take a transnational identity (Bloemraad, 2004; Levitt, 2009; Morawska, 2004). In other words, they are more likely to maintain a physical and/or virtual connection to their country of origin while living and being

in their country of destination. Therefore I assumed that non-European ethnic groups would report more experiences of discrimination than other groups. That hypothesis was supported in Nashville but not Brooklyn. This is an important difference to note and was especially striking for European non-Jewish and Central Asian ethnic groups. Geography matters. Discrimination may be much more overt in a mid-southern state, even though Nashville has a relatively large immigrant population and is not a monolithically “white” city. Therefore, the experiences of discrimination for immigrants are likely more noticeable in Davidson County than in a more multinational, multiethnic county such as Kings.

Migration scholarship literature refers to a global ethno-racial hierarchy. Bloemraad (2004) points out that transnational identities are created because, in part, ethnoracial hierarchies can produce feelings of marginalization. In other words, immigrants are often received in countries where they are racialized and relegated to the bottom rungs of the ethno-racial hierarchy and do not feel welcomed by that society. This creates a state of belonging neither here nor there. That non-European ethnic groups would more likely express a transnational identity in the form of considering their country of origin as “home” was the only hypothesis supported in this group for the Brooklyn sample. Although I believed this was related more to titularity than ethnicity, a logistic regression showed that when titularity was controlled, Transcaucasian and Central Asian ethnic were more likely than European non-Jewish and Jewish ethnic groups to express a transnational identity.

“Ethnicity” was a jumping off point to the broader concept of discrimination. The interviews were the most useful source of data to tease out this complex construct. Discrimination was experienced and perpetuated based on a number of indicators of difference including language ability, gender, ethnicity and religion. Experiences of discrimination

happened either in the country of origin or in the U.S. and ranged in severity. These experiences ranged from feeling unappreciated in one's workplace (U.S.) to being covered in acid because of a religious conversion (country of origin). Those who experienced discrimination were sometimes the perpetrators of it; one example was the Uzbek immigrant in this study who felt discriminated against because of his skin color and simultaneously engaged in joking with others about "damn Mexican" immigrants in Nashville.

Social Capital and Migration Theories

Social capital and migration theories are cornerstones of migration scholarship. This section revisits these theories briefly and offers the insight my research has brought to these theories. Social capital is ever-present. Among immigrants, it is an important substitute for a lack of access to other forms of capital: economic, cultural, and political. The former Soviet context presents an opportunity to look at how social capital is produced and used differently than what is seen in Western societies. FS populations, in general, rely heavily on informal social capital as a result of sociopolitical history of the FS region, which includes a legacy of corruption and an hour-glass society.

The social capital data captured by the surveys show that there are few differences between the Brooklyn and Nashville samples when it comes to social capital production and utilization. Feelings of connectedness (1 = Not at all, 2 = Somewhat, 3 = Strongly, 4 = Very Strongly) showed no significant statistical differences between the Brooklyn and Nashville samples. The strongest response solicited on average was for feelings of connectedness to the U.S. for the Brooklyn ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 0.763$) and Nashville ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 0.815$) samples. The weakest response solicited on feelings of connectedness was to immigrants from countries

outside the FSU for the Brooklyn sample ($M = 2.12$, $SD = 0.92$) and to one's local neighborhood in the country of origin for the Nashville sample ($M = 1.98$, $SD = 0.965$).

As was covered in the Results section under the hypothesis about refugees and formal institutions, the data show that few respondents relied on formal institutional help or were engaged in formal institutional activity, but refugees were more likely to rely on formal institutions for adjustment purposes than were non-refugees. Sixty-two percent of the Brooklyn sample and 58 percent of the Nashville sample reported reliance on informal institutions for help. In other words, immigrants tapped into informal social networks rather than formal social capital or other formal capital networks.

The lack of reliance on formal institutions is striking because the economic struggle FS immigrants face is captured by the secondary and primary data from this study. According to the Census data comparisons, FS immigrants as a whole are much more educated than the general foreign born population in the U.S, but on average, FS immigrants have experienced higher rates of poverty. The survey data showed that even though the Nashville sample was relatively better off than the Brooklyn sample, both groups were below the average median income (AMI).

There was only one statistically significant difference between the Brooklyn and Nashville samples regarding social capital and that was the use of religious institutions for support. Even though only a few Nashville respondents ($N=4$) relied on a church, synagogue or mosque for financial help, none of the respondents in the much larger Brooklyn sample claimed this form of help. This finding may be related to the larger role religion plays in local culture and human service delivery in the southern U.S, but no conclusions can be drawn from such a small number. Another consideration to note is that reliance on formal institutions may have been

underreported in the surveys. I suspect underreporting because the interviews revealed there was an overall negative attitude towards using any type of welfare benefits.

Another difference regarding informal social capital relates to the spatial dispersion of FS immigrants in Nashville versus the relative concentration of FS immigrants in Brooklyn. This reality was revealed through GIS mapping of both research sites. It may be harder to engage in informal social capital production for immigrants who do not live in enclaves, but, as reviewed above, the sample comparison analysis showed no real differences between the Brooklyn and Nashville samples regarding feelings of connectedness to other immigrants from FS republics. Furthermore, when considering the building of formal or informal social capital, it is important to consider the role of trust. Aberg (2000) notes the importance of “accumulated trust” as a foundation for the production of social capital. With a FS population, or any immigrant population, it is important to consider the context from which they are coming. Several respondents noted the corruption of the government in former Soviet states and that may account for their lack of trust in the government or other formal institutions for help. Coming from communities where interpersonal trust may or may not have been established may also affect the production of informal social capital.

Migration theories

The theoretical domain of migration scholarship is very well developed. Push/pull theories of migration capture a range of driving factors behind the initiation of migration including income maximization (neoclassical economics), risk minimization (new economics of migration), labor market structure (dual labor market), exploration (the sojourn), involuntary conditions (forced migration), and globalization (world systems). Migration patterns emerge because of community and family relationships (network), formal and informal institutional

relationships (institutional), existing migration (cumulative causation), and globalization (migration systems).

Push/Pull theories. The reasons for migration cited by my respondents ranged from economic to forced reasons. Liebert (2010) cited economic motivations as the main reasons for migration among her Central Asian. Economic motivation as a strong driving force for migration also was supported by my research. Figures 4 and 5 show the pooled Brooklyn and Nashville breakdown of reasons for emigration and immigration reported by my respondents as captured by the survey. Respondents could choose multiple reasons. The most frequently cited pull factor was to experience life somewhere else. But a close second was that there was no economic future in the immigrant's country of origin. The most frequently cited (pooled) pull factor was the prospect of a better education for the immigrant or the immigrant's child(ren). The next most frequently cited (pooled) pull factor was the expected potential to make more money in the U.S. than elsewhere.

There were interesting differences between the Brooklyn and Nashville samples. In Brooklyn and Nashville, the top reason cited for leaving one's country of origin (push factor) was the desire to experience life elsewhere. For both samples, the second most cited reason was that there was no economic future in one's country of origin (Nashville = 37%; Brooklyn = 50%). The pull reason differences were most interesting. Sixty-five percent of the Brooklyn sample indicated they wanted a better educational opportunity for one's self or child as opposed to 39 percent of the Nashville sample. What is it about the geographic or sample selection context that created these differences? The only explanation that emerged from these data was the statistically significant difference between levels of education for the Brooklyn and Nashville sample. In Nashville, 28% of respondents had a graduate degree versus only 4 percent in

Brooklyn. That could mean that because almost a third of the Nashville sample had an advanced degree, educational opportunities did not factor into their migration decision-making process. It could also mean that those who chose to immigrate to Brooklyn may have done so in part because they believed educational opportunities would be greater there than elsewhere. However, the statement about the educational opportunity was not just for oneself but for one's child or children. Therefore, it is not clear what these differences may mean.

Interviews revealed that the non-economic reasons for migration were especially prominent among non-titular immigrants who did not feel at home in their countries of origin. However, those immigrants with refugee status, who would fit under the forced migration theory, elucidated the complex reasons for migration, and showed why singular theories of migration are limited. For example, a refugee living in Brooklyn who cited that he and his wife experienced discrimination in Uzbekistan because his wife is Russian noted that there were strong economic incentives for moving to the U.S.

Figure 9: Reasons for emigrating from country of origin (% of sample – could choose all that applied)

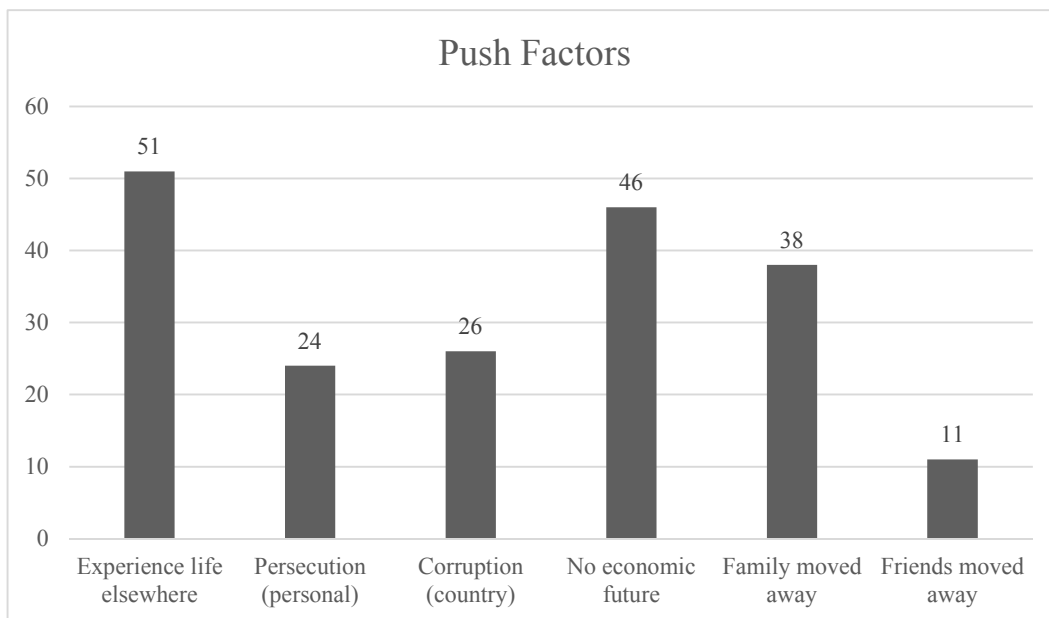
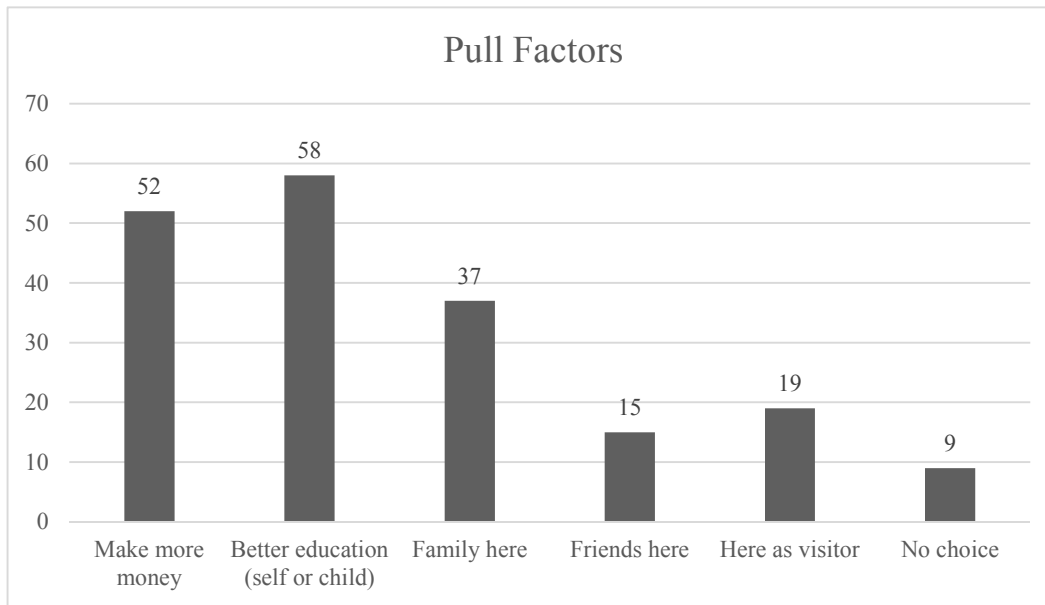


Figure 10: Reasons for immigrating to U.S. (% of sample - could choose all that apply).



Incorporation theories.

Incorporation theories of migration tackle the adjustment process of immigrants in their countries of destination. Some theorists (Birman & Trickett, 2001; Gordon, 1965) have theorized about or found support for a zero-sum process of adjustment in the country of destination during which one's country of origin identity is stripped away as the country of destination identity is absorbed. Theorists critical of this perspective (Bloemrad, 2004; Gans, 1997) see the process in a postmodernist (both/and) way during which the immigrant adapts some of the identity of the country of destination but maintains to some degree their identity and attachment developed in the country of origin. Meanwhile, they influence the mainstream culture of the country of destination (new mainstream (Alba & Nee, 1997; 2004)). There is also the possibility that immigrants will become upwardly or downwardly mobile (segmented; Portes & Zhou, 1993), or that they will become insular and make static their culture and identity (adhesive/ossification; Levitt, 2009; Morawska, 2004). Because of what Harvey (1991) calls a time-space compression, immigrants are more able to actively engage with their country of

origin (transnationalism). Time-space compression means that the space between two points is made smaller because of advances in technology. In other words, an immigrant may live thousands of miles away from the city she grew up in, Kiev, but she can travel there physically within 24 hours by plane. He can get the latest news on what is happening on the political scene in Georgia immediately by internet and Skype with his friends and family in Tbilisi on a regular basis. This time-space compression concept is incorporated in my ecological model below.

Experiences of discrimination can be one of the toughest obstacles to deal with in a new country and culture. Well over half of all of my respondents (60 percent) reported that they never felt discriminated against in the U.S. based on their ethnicity. But experiences of discrimination differed between the Nashville and Brooklyn samples. An overwhelming majority (70 percent) of the Brooklyn sample claimed to have never felt discriminated against versus only 35 percent of the Nashville sample.

New Mainstream Theory of migration is helpful to decipher the majority of interviews I conducted. While respondents often talked of not caring about the ethnicity of their friends, those who talked in length about their intimate friendships described them as being with persons from their countries of origin or who shared the same language. But these same respondents also adapted to American norms and culture. Those living in Nashville were more often forced to adapt to American culture and institutions because there are not the plentiful options of former Soviet cultural institutions in Nashville as there are in Brooklyn.

Transnationalism became an increasingly compelling theory for this research project. Transnational acts are a way of staying connected, but they may encourage insularity. There is a paradox of engagement via transnationalism. It helps one stay connected but might also facilitate isolation. A Ukrainian immigrant talked at length about her attachment to Ukraine. She

was so attached that she spoke of her home city, Kiev, as if it were a person. She had a drastic response to the changes of her city when she revisited it. Attachment theory may be a helpful theory to include under the incorporation umbrella category of migration theory. It is especially important to consider how disruptions in place attachment occur because of the migration process (Brown and Perkins, 1992).

The results of my research show some support for multiple theories of migration. There is the seduction of simplification with “catch-all” theories of migration, but using a global theory is problematic. In the case of this study, I am critical of those who simplify the language used to refer to immigrants from former Soviet republics. The use of “Russians” by scholars and non-scholars alike inadvertently perpetuates the Russian colonization of the former Soviet region. Therefore, I believe it is best to be theoretically pluralistic in migration scholarship.

More specifically, what push/pull and incorporation theories of migration are missing are theories related to titularity. Both umbrella categories of migration could benefit from the development of such theories. My data show that titularity is relevant to the migration decision and the processes/experiences of incorporation. This is not limited to the FSU as a region of origin. A Colombian immigrant living in Mexico who immigrates to the US or an Algerian immigrant from France may also leave their countries of origin and experience incorporation differently than titular immigrants from their countries of origin. Considering titularity forces one to expand one’s view of migration. In short, a postmodernist view of immigration may be the most beneficial approach. To that end, a postmodern model is offered below as a potentially helpful tool to better understand the immigration experience.

Nashville versus Brooklyn

Data were collected in two very different contexts: a new versus old destination of immigration. As was established in the methods section using peer reviewed literature (Cornfield et al., 2003; Donato et al., 2008; Lotspeich, Fix, Ost, & Perez-Lopez, 2003; Massey and Capoferro, 2008) and Census data, the U.S South, and more specifically Nashville, is a new destination for the foreign-born population. Nashville's foreign born population increased by more than 200 percent between 1990 and 2000 (Lotspeich, Fix, Ost, & Perez-Lopez, 2003; Cornfield et al., 2003). Between 2000 and 2010, the city's foreign-born population increased from 7 percent to 12 percent of the total population. In Kings County during the same time period, the foreign-born population as a percentage of the total population held steady at 38 percent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey).

Contrasting two fundamentally different immigrant contexts for research might shed light on the continuity, or lack thereof, of theories about a particular immigrant population. If a hypothesis is supported in both sites, that could create a compelling argument about the nature of a population. For my hypotheses, the Nashville sample generally mirrored what was found with the Brooklyn sample, even if there was not enough power to achieve statistical significance. As noted above, there was a telling difference. That difference was what was found when testing for experiences of discrimination. A much higher percentage of the Nashville sample had experienced discrimination than did the Brooklyn sample. This is an important finding in that it implies that if refugees, for example, are being resettled in new immigrant destinations where the foreign-born population is not well established, they may experience more discrimination than they would in a place that is more accustomed to foreign-born persons. Also, Nashville and Brooklyn were statistically compared in a number of demographic and social areas. The

demographic and social differences between samples are worth noting because, for the most part, the hypotheses tested in each site were in the same direction.

The mean year immigrated differed for Brooklyn and Nashville and the difference was statistically significant. The mean year for Brooklyn (1999) was more recent than for Nashville (1996). That may seem strange as Nashville is noted as a “new” immigrant destination, but what this may mean is not how well established or “new” an immigrant destination is, but how active that immigrant destination may be. Brooklyn is still a very active destination for newly arriving immigrants. Also, the difference in the FSU immigrant income as a percentage of the area median income (AMI) was statistically significant for both sites. It was 67 percent for Brooklyn and 87 percent for Nashville. While immigrants in neither location are faring very well economically, they are relatively better off in Nashville.

Another important social characteristic difference was titularity. A larger percentage of the Nashville sample (80 percent) than the Brooklyn sample (56 percent) was titular. Not surprisingly, then, a larger percentage of the Brooklyn sample (56 percent) than the Nashville sample (24 percent) had refugee status at some point in their migration process. Education was another contrasting variable. A larger percentage of the Brooklyn sample (15 percent versus 2 percent) had a technical degree, but a much larger percentage of the Nashville sample (28 percent versus 4 percent) had a graduate degree. Finally, religion contrasted. In Brooklyn, a higher percentage of the sample was Jewish (24 percent versus 7 percent). In Nashville, a higher percentage claimed no religion or atheism (22 percent versus 8 percent). Another point about religion is the finding on what types of formal institutions were used for adjustment needs. None of the Brooklyn sample relied on a religious institution. Although only a few in Nashville (N=4) relied on a religious institution, this may imply that in new destinations (i.e. the U.S. South),

faith-based organizations and religious institutions are more likely to be a source of help for immigrants than they are in other geographic areas of the U.S.

Ecology of Immigration

In academia and in the public, a contextually rich framework can be beneficial to better understand the motivations, needs and overall experiences of immigrants. The ecological framework forces one to consider the individual in context and to look at immigration at multiple levels of abstraction, from the everyday experiences of immigrants to how macrostructural processes affect experiences and perceptions. The ecology of immigration model (Figure 11) is an adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner and Ceci, 1994). It is adapted to lay out an ecology of experience for immigrants. Bronfenbrenner's model consists of different systems an individual experiences, or is affected by, over the life course. With the individual at the center of the model, the radiating systems include the most immediate system to the individual, the microsystem (family and immediate peers) and then what Bronfenbrenner terms "external systems" (Bronfenbrenner, 1986a), which include the mesosystem (buffer or interactional space between systems), exosystem (formal institutions, mass media), and macrosystem (culture, political economy). The chronosystem was added after the original ecological model was developed and includes sociohistorical and lifecourse events (Bronfenbrenner, 1986b; Bronfenbrenner and Ceci, 1994). Bronfenbrenner developed this model to look at a child's development, but that concept easily can be transferred to other individuals, regardless of age.

My adapted model is split into two spheres because there are at least two significant geographic spaces for an immigrant: country of origin and country of destination. There may be multiple countries of origin or destination, but this model is limited to two spheres. It takes into

account the context from which they came in their country of origin and juxtaposes it to the context in which they are in the country of destination. An immigrant's "ecology" shifts through migration.

There are multiple system levels to consider and those shape the experiences of immigrants. In this study, there were examples of immigrants not trusting formal institutions in the U.S. solely based on their experience with corrupt institutions in their countries of origin. An immigrant's engagement in each sphere can be static or dynamic depending on actions, expressions and beliefs. Transnationalism is a relatively new discussion point for migration scholarship, partly because historically, transnational acts were not as feasible as they are today. Transnational acts can be engaged in more actively because of what Harvey (1991) referred to as time-space compression, as defined above. Time-space compression facilitates connectivity. How one engages in transnationalism has changed with time. The advent of technology and relative ease of travel helps one stay more connected to their country of origin. But that does not mean one becomes unconnected from their country of destination or local community. It brings the geographic spheres of experience closer together for immigrants and, subsequently, communities surrounding the immigrant. This model compiles the complexity of the immigrant experience into a snapshot of understanding and might be helpful in future research to create a more developed understanding of the immigrant experience. In other words, individual experiences may be mapped using this model. These individuals' experiences then can be applied to a more abstract "immigrant experience." Such a model could help construct surveys for research.

The experiences of one of my Brooklyn interview respondents, a titular immigrant from Uzbekistan, serves as an example (Table 20). The organization of just some of his narrative into

this model gives a relatively comprehensive snapshot of his experiences, from his family dynamics to how he views society. Most levels of the model are relatively straightforward and determined by what the respondent reported. However, the macrosystem level was not identified by the respondent. I entered what I believed to be relevant macrolevel items based on his experiences and perceptions listed at other levels. For example, Soviet/Russian colonialism is included at the macrosystem/country of destination level because he talked at length about the difficulties he had because of his marriage to a Russian woman. These difficulties included limited job and educational opportunities for his family, and have been driven by the rise of nationalism in several post-Soviet states. Another macrosystem entry in the table is under the country of destination, and that is “limited welfare state.” That entry was made because the respondent spoke about his economic hardship in the U.S. Part of his struggle is related to the limited assistance he receives from the government. However, he noted that he does get government assistance (see exosystem), but believes it is not sufficient to help his family. Also entered at this level on the country of destination side is “democratic society.” This was entered because he spoke about the freedom he reports to enjoy while living in the U.S.

Figure 11: Ecology of Immigration Model

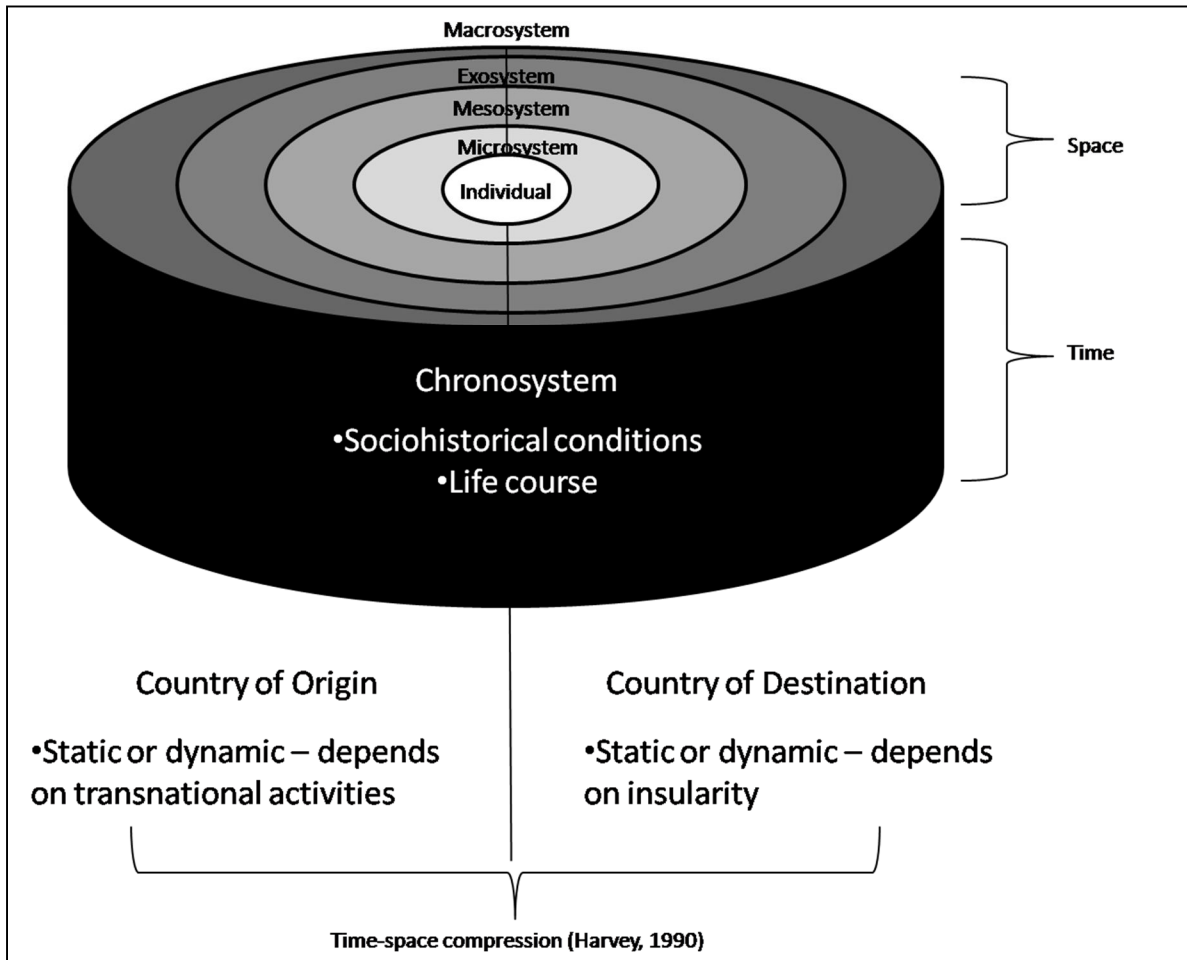


Table 20: An application of the ecology of immigration model

System Level	Interview Notes	
	<u>Country of Origin: Uzbekistan</u>	<u>Country of Destination: US</u>
<i>Individual</i>	Male, Uzbek, Muslim. Left Tashkent at age 28 for U.S. Worked at paper factory.	Male, Uzbek, Muslim, 43. Immigrated to US at age 28 (in 1996). Refugee status now citizen. Works in traffic control for government.
<i>Microsystem</i>	Married to a Russian woman. Had one child in Uzbekistan with wife. Lived in neighborhood near family.	Oldest child in university. Now has another child with disability. Still married to same Russian woman. Other family lives in Uzbekistan. Lives in public housing.
<i>Mesosystem</i>	Believes marriage was looked down upon by community.	Believes community does not judge his interethnic marriage.
<i>Exosystem</i>	Believed daughter did not have economic or social future because she was half Russian.	Received food stamps and still receives housing assistance and Medicaid. Looks negatively upon public assistance.
<i>Macrosystem</i>	Russian/Soviet colonialism. Collapse of Soviet Union, independence of Uzbekistan. Authoritarian society.	Limited welfare state. Democratic society.
<i>Engagement.</i>	Watches news about Uzbekistan. Connects to family and friends through phone and internet. Does not intend to ever return to Uzbekistan to live.	Wants to remain in U.S. Does not like public housing community. Most current friends are childhood friends who also moved to U.S.

Intervention. The ecological model might be a helpful tool when considering types of intervention needed to better immigrant communities from within or from outside. The most accessible and understandable level for engagement is the individual level. However, as the example above shows, understanding the individual level is incomplete without considering it in the context of the different system levels. For example, if finding employment is something with which the immigrant overviewed above needs assistance, then various information at different levels might better reveal his needs, capacity and limitations when looking for employment such

as the facts that he cares for a special needs child and lives in public housing with his family. If his family is still struggling and needs further public assistance, helping him find community-based organizations for social support might be more beneficial to him than suggesting other government services because of his clear discomfort with government help. Regardless of the intervention involved or suggested, a dynamic understanding of an immigrant's lived experience in both countries of origin and destination can more fully inform intervention efforts.

Limitations and Strengths

There are several limitations to this research. The Nashville data set was quite small and could not detect a range of effect sizes. Although my hypotheses were relatively simple, more complicated analysis, such as multivariate analysis, of the data are limited by the sizes of the Nashville and Brooklyn samples. Convenience sampling, though guided by quota sampling, limits the generalizability of these findings. The existing literature sets a limitation in that this general population, FS immigrants, has not been well defined or understood. This lack of a better foundation creates a lot of new territory to explore. But the state of the existing literature could be considered an opportunity rather than a limitation.

Another important limitation was the construction of the three categories used to guide this research. The *a priori* categories for research were refugee status, titularity and ethnicity. A better third category would have been "identity" instead of "ethnicity." This would have produced better hypothesis options to test as identity better encapsulates the experiences of discrimination based on a wide range of indicators of difference, such as gender, religion, accent, and so on. Engagement with identity literature and theories would have helped my research design and analysis. Engagement with gender is also limited in this research. It came up occasionally, but as I explained in the Results section, I believe the special case of gender history

in the Soviet period and the dynamic social changes that have occurred as a result of the collapse of the USSR create the need for a completely separate research project devoted to the study of gender. I also regret that I did not better capture occupation statuses in country of origin and the U.S. as deskilling emerged as an interesting theme in the interviews.

Despite the limitations of this research, there are several strengths. They include a use of mixed methods of inquiry at two vastly different research sites among a population that has been difficult for scholars to access. Even though I note the limitations of my sampling method above, I was able to find multiple points of entry so that my samples did not represent just one “stream” of the population at each site. Though limited, the sample sizes were large enough to run statistical analyses, which provided support for most of my hypotheses. Using secondary data along with primary data yielded a more complete portrait of FS immigrants living in the U.S. and confirmed some of the primary data findings, such as the economic struggle of this immigrant population despite their high levels of formal education.

Future Research and Implications

My research was intended for three broad audiences who may conduct inquiry among or work with or on behalf of FS immigrants: migration scholars, non-migration scholars and government and non-profit staff. For migration scholars, this research gives rise to several topics for future research projects. More research is needed on the institutional engagement of immigrants based on their specific legal status. Scholars might consider shifting their lens to regions of origin rather than just counties of origin. In the case of this research, the use of the FSU as a unit encouraged a pluralistic understanding of the population. In this vein, titularity is an especially relevant topic of inquiry. Titularity as a unit of analysis and/or moderating variable further reveals the plurality of immigrant populations. Titularity might also be a helpful

contextual anchor for non-migration scholars. If, for example, educational research is being conducted among immigrant youth, researchers would do well to consider the youth and family's titular status and their experiences in their country of origin. More research is needed into the nuances of identity and what that means for decisions to migrate and incorporation into a new society. For migration and non-migration scholars, an ecological framework could be a helpful tool to use for inquiry for any immigrant population.

One of my hopes is that scholars and non-scholars alike will rethink how they define and conceptualize immigrant populations, especially persons from former Soviet republics. Government and non-government organizations that might interact or work with this population should understand that they are not all Russian and that ethnicity and country of origin matter. Sensitivity to ethnic distinctions may help build trust. Understanding discrimination among “white” immigrants can help diversify an understanding of the motivations and processes of discrimination. It is not just the ethno-racial hierarchy that matters when it comes to discrimination. What are the indicators of difference that produce discrimination towards immigrants? My research shows that geographic context matters. Even though Nashville is becoming more multicultural, immigrants continue to feel the sting of discrimination. This could help the government better understand what immigrants might face in particular refugee resettlement locations.

My research hints towards the importance of allowing immigrants access to legal status. Current immigration reform offers a path to citizenship, but the new legislation has not yet passed the House chamber. If a path to citizenship is not offered, then perhaps a different approach, such as a path to legality (permanent residency) will make immigrants less vulnerable to ineffective institutions. I cannot address the economic implications of undocumented

immigrants in the U.S., but I can give some insight into their vulnerability. In my limited sample, I interviewed a former victim of trafficking and an undocumented construction worker, both of whom showed how legal status affects the vulnerability of an immigrant. The trafficking victim was a legal immigrant (now a citizen) and even though her cry for help to a human rights organization fell on deaf ears, she was able to find other work because of her legal status. Conversely, the undocumented worker I spoke to had to get help from his already financially burdened Georgian family when he injured himself at work. Furthermore, very few immigrants from the FSU are inclined to turn to formal institutions for help, so they rely on informal institutions. This increases their vulnerability. An uncertain legal status further exacerbates this vulnerability.

One of the more important outcomes from this research is the creation of a website⁹. It includes the results from this study, helpful resources for immigrants, and a link to the survey used in the study so that I may continue data collection. The website will be promoted by word of mouth, social media, and editorial announcements in Russian-language newspaper published in the U.S. My hope is that it will be useful for newly arriving immigrants who are still trying to orient themselves to life in the U.S.

Conclusion

The original research question was “To what extent does a Soviet legacy shape the experiences of FS immigrants living in the U.S.?” The Soviet Empire did more than expand Russia’s colonization of surrounding areas, it colonized the world’s imagination of the Soviet Union. It continues to shape a perception about what the Soviet Union was and what the former Soviet region continues to be.

⁹ www.fsimmigrants.com

The major contribution of this dissertation is to present a decolonized understanding of the immigrant population from former Soviet republics. Unlike “Russian,” “Soviet” is not a language, ethnicity, or even much of an identity. It refers to a political and economic system and also a period during which Russia extended its empire and expanded its culture and influence. It may seem odd to maintain the FSU as a region of origin in 21st century scholarship, but the Soviet period is relevant in this current period of globalization because it helps to capture the inextricable legacy of Russia in its surrounding region and the transcendence of Russian nationalism in post-Soviet space. As global migration hyper-accelerates, a regional understanding becomes more important to migration scholarship – in geographical and sociohistorical terms.

Appendix A
Research Matrix with Literature and Theories

Individual Status	Potential Problem	Hypothesis	Corresponding Literature/Theory	Specific measures/questions
Refugee	Incorporation/ Adjustment	H1: Refugees from the FSU rely on formal institutions (such as government programs, community organizations, and religious institutions) after immigration while non-refugees rely on informal institutions (such as friends and family members) after immigration.	Neoclassical and institutional migration theories (Borjas, 1994; Liebert, 2010)	Interview question: 30; Survey questions: 9, 23
Titularity	Post-Colonial Issues	H2: Non-titular immigrants are more likely to report experiences of ethnic discrimination as a reason for leaving their country of origin than titular immigrants.	(Korobkov, 2007; Sahadeo, 2007; Zayonchkovskaya, 2000); Forced migration theory; Neoclassical migration theory (Todaro, 1969)	Interview Questions: 3, 4, 6, 15, 35; Survey Questions: 2, 5, 18
		H3: Titular immigrants will more likely be temporary immigrants and intend to return home to live.	The sojourn migration theory (Agadjanian et al., 2008; Hamilton, 1985.)	Interview Questions: 3, 6, 16; Survey Questions: 2, 5, 24
		H4: Titular immigrants are more likely to send remittances to their country of origin and they remit more frequently than non-titular immigrants.	New economics of migration theory (Stark & Bloom, 1985)	Interview Questions: 3, 6, 21; Survey Questions: 2, 5, 26
		H5: Russians feel less connected to other immigrants from the FSU than non-Russians.	Russia as dominant republic/cultural/ ethnic group during Soviet era	Interview Questions: 6, 32; Survey Questions: 5, 20
Ethnicity	Discrimination	H6a: Non-European ethnic groups are more likely to report discrimination in the U.S. based on ethnicity.	Assimilation/acculturation theories of incorporation (Portes & Zhou, 1993) Transnationalism theory of incorporation (Bloemraad, 2004; Levitt, 2009; Morawska, 2004)	Interview Questions: 6, 17, 26, 34; Survey Questions: 5, 16, 21
		H6b: Non-European ethnic groups are more likely to express a transnational identity. (Transnational identity = country of origin is "home.")		

Appendix B: Survey

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Country of Birth: _____

3. Country you lived in before moving to the United States (Country of Origin) _____

4. What type of area did you live in? Urban Semi-urban Rural

5. Ethnicity _____

6. Year of birth: _____

7. Year immigrated to the U.S. _____

8. Which county do you currently live in? Kings County (Brooklyn) Davidson County (Nashville)

9. When you entered the U.S., did you have refugee status or later get asylum status? Yes
 No

10. Did your entire household move with you to the U.S.? Yes No

11. In your lifetime, how many times have you moved to a new country? _____

12. What is the highest level of education you reached?
 Less than Secondary School/Vocational School Graduated from Secondary School
 Attended Technical College Graduated from Technical College
 Attended University Graduated from University Attended Post-Graduate School
 Graduated from Post-Graduate School
 Other _____

- 12a. In what year did you reach this? _____

13. Religious affiliation:
 Christian (Orthodox) Christian (Other) Jewish Muslim
 Atheist/Not Religious Other _____

14. Current occupation:
 Business Owner Clerical/Administration Construction Farming/Forestry
 Manager/Executive Manufacturing Professional Sales Service
 Student Other _____

15. Occupation in country of origin:

- Business Owner Clerical/Administration Construction Farming/Forestry
 Manager/Executive Manufacturing Professional Sales Service
 Student Other _____

16. The country I consider to be my home is: _____

17. My current immigration status is: U.S. Citizen Permanent Resident Other

18. *I left my country because (please check all that apply):*

- a. I wanted to experience life somewhere else. Yes No
 b. I was persecuted/negatively treated because of my:
 Ethnicity Religion Political Beliefs
 I did not feel persecuted/negatively treated
 c. My country is corrupt and I wanted to leave Yes No
 d. I did not have an economic future in my country Yes No
 e. My family moved away Yes No
 f. My friends moved away Yes No
 g. Other: _____

19. *I moved to the United States because (please check all that apply):*

- a. I could make more money here than in my country of origin Yes No
 b. I wanted better educational opportunities for me (or my children) Yes No
 c. I had/have family members here Yes No
 d. I had/have friends here Yes No
 e. I came here as a visitor and eventually became an immigrant Yes No
 f. I did not want to move to the U.S but I had no choice Yes No
 If yes, please explain _____
 f. Other: _____

20. How strongly do you feel connected to:	Very Strongly	Strongly	Somewhat	Not at all
Country of Origin	1	2	3	4
Local Neighborhood in Country of Origin	1	2	3	4
The United States	1	2	3	4
Local Neighborhood in the United States	1	2	3	4
Other immigrants from the former Soviet Union in the U.S?	1	2	3	4
Other immigrants from other countries in the U.S?	1	2	3	4
Americans	1	2	3	4

21. Do you feel discriminated against in the U.S. because of your ethnicity?

- All the time Sometimes Rarely Never

22. I am an *active* member of my local:

- Church/Synagogue/Mosque Political Club/Group

- Community Organization (Neighborhood Group, YMCA, etc.) School/University
 Recreational Club (like chess, reading, cooking, etc.) Other: _____

23. When you immigrated to the U.S., which of the following did you rely on for financial or other types of help (check all that apply):

- U.S. Government State Government Local or State Government
 Church/Synagogue/Mosque Community/Non-Profit Organization
 Family Friends Other:

24. I intend to return to live in my country of origin someday. Yes No

25. I intend to live permanently in the U.S. Yes No

26. I send money back home to my family and/or friends in my country of origin (approximately):
 Once a month A few times a year Once a year Once every few years Never

Appendix C
Semi-structured Interview Guide

Demographic Questions:

1. Age	2. Gender	3. Country of Origin
4. Year of entry	5. Current immigration status (if you are comfortable telling me)	6. Ethnicity/Nationality
7. Religion	8. Highest level of education completed	9. Are you married?
10. Please describe who is living in your household.		11. Does some of your family still live in (country of origin)? If so, who? Were they a part of your HH when you lived in (COO)?
12. Current place of employment		13. Place of employment in country of origin.

14. Why did you immigrate to the U.S.?
15. Why did you leave (country of origin)?
16. Do you intend to return home to (country of origin) to live or do you intend to stay in the U.S.?
17. When you think of home, where is it for you?
18. Describe where you are from (country, city, village, neighborhood).
19. How do you feel about (your country of origin) today?
20. How do you stay connected to your country of origin? (country, friends/family, other)?
21. Do you support anyone in (country of origin) with money earned here? (What can you tell me about that?)
22. What expectations/perceptions did you have before you moved to the U.S.?
23. What was hard for you when you moved to the U.S.?
 - How did you cope with that?
24. What do you like about living in the U.S.?
25. What do you think are the main differences between the U.S. and (your country of origin)?

26. How do you think you are perceived by Americans?
27. Are you satisfied with your life in the U.S.? Why/Why not?
28. Do you feel like you belong to any community here in the U.S or in (city)? If so, could you name that community and describe it to me. If not, why not?
29. Who are your friends?
30. Who do you rely on for help?
- Can you rely on anyone or anything else for help?
31. Are you active in any organization or group? (civic, social, political, religious – please describe each)
32. How do you feel about other immigrants from the former Soviet Union?
33. How do you feel about other immigrants in general living in the U.S?
34. Do you ever feel discriminated against here? How and why do you think it happens?
35. Did you ever feel discriminated against in (your country of origin)? How and why did you think it happened?
36. What do you remember about the Soviet Union?
- What do you tell your children?
 - What do you tell others?

Appendix D
Correlation Results

	How strongly connected to country of origin	How strongly connected to local neigh in country of origin	How strongly connected to the US	How strongly connected to local neigh US	How strongly connected to other immigrants from FSU	How strongly connected to other immigrants from other countries	How strongly connected to Americans	Do you ever feel discriminated in the US because of your ethnicity?	How many times send back money home to family/friends in country of origin
Highest level of education reached?	-.041	-.058	-.015	-.025	-.090	.080	-.098	-.119	.211*
How strongly connected to country of origin		.770**	-.212*	-.125	-.109	.008	-.083	-.014	.405**
How strongly connected to local neigh in country of origin			-.050	-.026	-.059	.030	-.084	.061	.339**
How strongly connected to the US				.495**	.140	.087	.491**	-.053	.017
How strongly connected to local neigh US					.209*	.275**	.384**	-.274**	.064
How strongly connected to other immigrants from FSU						.625**	.220*	-.008	-.002
How strongly connected to other immigrants from other countries							.346**	.013	.025
How strongly connected to Americans								-.107	.080
Do you ever feel discriminated in the US because of your ethnicity?									.075

Note. *p<.05, **p<.01

Appendix E
Hypotheses Tests

H1: Refugees from the FSU will rely on formal institutions (government programs, community organizations, religious institutions, etc.) for adjustment purposes while non-refugees will rely on informal institutions (social networks, family members, etc.) for adjustment purposes.

		Brooklyn		X^2	p
		Institutional Support			
		<u>Informal</u>	<u>Formal</u>		
Non-refugee		52	5	19.04	0.000
Refugee		40	31		
		Nashville			
		Institutional Support			
		<u>Informal</u>	<u>Formal</u>		
Non-refugee		32	3	11.241	0.001
Refugee		5	6		

H2: Non-titular persons will be more likely to report experiences of ethnic discrimination as a reason for leaving their country of origin than will titular persons.

		Brooklyn		X^2	p
		Left country because of ethnic discrimination			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Non-Titular		39	19	16.324	0.000
Titular		68	4		
		Nashville			
		Left country because of ethnic discrimination			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Non-Titular		4	5	17.829	0.000
Titular		36	1		

H2a: Non-titular persons who immigrated before 1996 will be more likely to report experiences of ethnic discrimination as a reason for leaving their country of origin than will titular persons.

		Brooklyn		X^2	p
		Left country because of ethnic discrimination			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Immigrated before 1996		23	12	ns	ns
Immigrated in 1996 or later		16	7		

		Nashville			
		Left country because of ethnic discrimination			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Immigrated before 1996		3	4	ns	ns
Immigrated in 1996 or later		1	1		

H3: Titular immigrants will more likely be temporary immigrants, intending to return home to live

		Brooklyn		X^2	p
		Intend to return to country of origin to live			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Non-Titular		48	6	6.827	0.009
Titular		47	21		

		Nashville			
		Intend to return to country of origin to live			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Non-Titular		9	0	4.091	0.043
Titular		24	12		

H4: Titular immigrants will more likely and more frequently send remittances to their country of origin than will non-titular immigrants.

		Brooklyn		X^2	p
		Send Remittances?			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
Non-Titular		31	25	8.958	0.003
Titular		21	51		

		Nashville	
		Send Remittances?	
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>

	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<i>t</i> -test	p
Non-Titular	4	5	ns	ns
Titular	10	26		
Sends Remittances to County of Origin: 1=Never, 2=Once every few years, 3=Once a year, 4=A few times a year, 5=Once a month				
Brooklyn				
Non-Titular	2.2	1.5	-2.728	0.007
Titular	2.93	1.5		
Nashville				
Non-Titular	2	1.1	ns	ns
Titular	2.89	1.4		

H5: Russians will feel less connected to other immigrants from the FSU than will non-Russians

How strongly connected do you feel to other immigrants from FS republics? 1=Very strongly, 2=Strongly, 3=Somewhat, 4=Not at all

	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<i>t</i> -test	p
Brooklyn				
Non-Russian	2.54	0.775	ns	ns
Russian	2.47	0.915		
Nashville				
Non-Russian	2.64	0.79	ns	ns
Russian	2.55	0.759		

H6a: Non-European ethnic groups are more likely to report experiences of discrimination in the U.S. based on ethnicity.

	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>	χ^2	p
Brooklyn				
Have you ever experienced discrimination in U.S. based on ethnicity?				
European Non-Jewish	44	18		
Jewish	21	11	ns	ns
Transcaucasian	17	4		
Central Asian	8	5		
Nashville				
Have you ever experienced discrimination in U.S. based on ethnicity?				
European Non-Jewish	10	22	7.096	0.05*

Jewish	3	1
Transcaucasian	3	2
Central Asian	0	5

H6b: Non-European ethnic groups are more likely to express a transnational identity. (Transnational identity = country of origin is "home.")

		Brooklyn		X^2	p
		Country of Origin is "Home"			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
European Non-Jewish		47	10		
Jewish		31	1		
Transcaucasian		10	8	18.615	0.000
Central Asian		6	6		
		Nashville			
		Country of Origin is "Home"			
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>		
European Non-Jewish		18	13		
Jewish		4	0		
Transcaucasian		4	1	na	ns*
Central Asian		2	3		

*Fisher's exact test

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