DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 141 447 UD 017 053

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TITLE The Case of the Disappearing Ethnics.
PUB DATE 77
NOTE 24p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Anthropological Society (Miami, Fla., 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Acculturation; *Case Studies; Cultural Factors; Economic Factors; *Ethnic Groups; Ethnic Stereotypes; Ethnology; Field Studies; Immigrants; *Intergroup Relations; *Portuguese Americans; Social Attitudes; *Social Discrimination
IDENTIFIERS *New England

ABSTRACT

Beginning in the 1870's mill owners in Texton, a New England industrial town of approximately 100,000 people, recruited Portugese labor. From then until 1920 many Portugese emigrated to Texton. From 1920-1960 the immigration of Portugese into America slowed as the result of the declining labor market, the war, and restrictive laws. Following the Immigration Act of 1965, Portugese immigration took a dramatic jump upwards. This flood of unskilled, primarily rural Portugese to an area where unemployment was high, Texton, and where there was a tradition of hostility to Portugese speakers, exacerbated existing relations between the latter and other groups. By the early 1970's certain members of the community decided that some public steps would have to be taken to mend increasingly dysfunctional schisms. The mayor proclaimed Portugese Day, which featured a number of activities emphasizing the positive role which the target group had played. However, there were really two groups of Portugese-Americans. Those early arrivals who considered themselves and were considered by recent immigrants as Americans were distinct from recent immigrants who considered themselves and were categorized by earlier immigrants as Portugese. The disjuncture between old and new Portugese existed prior to Portugese Day. What had created the schism? At least three factors were at work: a competition for scarce resources; a higher level of expectations in the newly arrived group; and, a monetary base for corporateness among the latter which was not available to earlier arrivals. This case study demonstrates the great potential for dissonance which lies in those situations where the actors believe they have a code in common but do not; when they believe they have a nexus of common understanding which, in fact, does not exist. (Author/JM)

The case of the disappearing ethnics.

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Occasionally the field worker is blessed with the opportunity to observe an event or series of events in the community under study that not only encapsulates a variety of sociocultural behaviors and factors but also demands that he rethink some cherished 'truths.' Such truths may be fundamental to his ethnographic ordering of the data or to broader analytical concepts. The following study is, first, the account of such an event and, second, a statement of my analysis and the resulting reformulation of hitherto accepted axioms.

Prologue.

Texton[1] is a New England industrial town of approximately 100,000 people. Formerly a prosperous 19th century textile center, it has declined in both population and income during the last half-century. Today it is estimated that between 30-70% of the population are descended from or are newly arrived Portuguese immigrants.[2] Beginning about the 1870s mill owners recruited Portuguese labor since early contacts with them as fisherfolk, whalers, and agricultural workers gave rise to the stereotype of a hardworking and undemanding people; that is, they were known for being willing to work long hours, under appalling conditions, for low pay, and with little complaining.

Most of the Portuguese were from the mid-Atlantic islands--the Azores, Madeira, and Cape Verde group--probably among the most impoverished, isolated, plantation and small-scale peasants in

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Prepared for presentation in the symposium on inter-ethnic communication, Southern Anthropological Society annual meeting, Miami, 1977.

Europe. Given the chance to escape these over-populated islands they began an immigration flow which continued up to the economic catastrophe of the 1930s, though entry to the U.S. had begun to slow following the Immigration Literacy Law of 1917. Though minimal in its definition of literacy (the mere ability to write one's name made one competent in that skill) it presented a barrier for the Island Portuguese who, in the first decade of the 20th century had the highest illiteracy rate of any American immigrant segment--68.2% (Bannick 1917:39-40).[3]

Further restrictive laws, the declining labor market in New England, depressions, and the global war of the 1940s caused the 40-year period between 1920-1960 to show a total entry of Portuguese only slightly over 60,000--with almost 20,000 of that figure entering in the year 1921 alone. One may compare this with the period 1881-1920 when over 200,000 entered (Adler 1972:17). Because many of the 60,000 entering after 1920 went to California, the influx of Portuguese into New England slowed to a mere few hundred a year--and this influx was balanced by an almost equal number who emigrated back to Portugal.

Following World War II the rising expectations of minorities and the resulting 'radical' agitation led to sociocultural re-formulations in various segments of the American populace which, in turn, led to various changes in the Immigration laws. Following the first of these, the Immigration Act of 1965 (75 Stat. 911), Portuguese immigration took a dramatic jump upwards. In the period 1961-70 entries exceeded by almost 25% the accumulated total for the preceding 40 years (1921-1960=60,334; 1961-1970=76,064), with approximately 50% of that total per year going to the Commonwealth

of Massachusets and, perhaps, another 10% going to the neighboring state of Rhode Island.[5] Forty-one thousand and twelve entered the U.S. between the years 1967-69, with over 18,000 going to Massachusettes--and a majority of these going to the metropolitan Texton area. This, despite the fact that, in that city's textile industry alone, the number of jobs in the male labor market, 1950-1970, declined from 9,084 to 4,108, a decrease of 54.8% (Keerock Rook Associates 1972:21).

This flood of unskilled, primarily-rural Portuguese to an area where unemployment was high and where there was a tradition of hostility to Portuguese-speakers, exacerbated existing relations between the latter and other ethnically-defined but basically economically-oriented interest groups in the area. A plethora of 'Dumb Portygee' jokes saturated the city (e.g., Question: "Why wasn't Christ born in Portugal?" Answer: "Because they couldn't find three wise men:" or "Because they couldn't find a virgin"). The city schools were, during 1968, channeling 1000 newly arrived Portuguese-speaking children through the school system per month! Ethnic sneers became more overt among the three major categories of non-Portuguese in the town--the descendants of French-Canadian, Irish and generalized north Europeans; depending on various factors one could be told that the Portygees (itself a derogatory term) were 'dumb,' 'disease-ridden' (most commonly, either tubercular or carriers of venereal diseases), 'over-sexed,' or 'left-handed niggers'[6]--to mention only a few allegations.

The episode.

By the early 1970s the situation became so tense that certain members of the community, for reasons I will explore later, decided

that some public steps would have to be taken to mend the increasingly dysfunctional schism between Portuguese and other town folk. As one public official said to me, 'This town will just keep going down-hill if we don't start pulling together and cut out this in-fighting.' The Mayor formed a committee to study the question and suggest ways to improve relations. At the advice of this group, composed of non-Portuguese and immigrant Portuguese, he proclaimed Portuguese Day, which would feature a number of activities emphasizing the positive role which the target group had played in the history of the city: Schools were to give special assemblies; the mass media would have commentary and news highlights; businessmen would run ads addressed to or simply congratulating their Portuguese clientel; and the local community college campus would serve as the focal point for an all-day program of exhibits and speakers 'familiarizing the community with the contributions of the Portuguese to [Texton].'

The latter event was, of course, the main event. A series of speakers representing various walks of life, made short speeches throughout the program which was interspersed with music, dancing, and dramatic presentations by immigrant school children. All the speeches addressed themselves to the history, esthetic contributions, and desireable stereotypic traits of the Portuguese (such as 'their natural love of beauty'). Several of the most recent immigrants were included on the program and those who introduced them stressed that such individuals were proof that, 'in this land of opportunity' those who worked diligently would 'fulfill the American dream.' The last speaker stated:

> The Portuguese are good neighbors. We have seen that they are loyal, hard-working, diligent, and have an eye to the future. They are industrious, God-fearing, and law-abiding. They courageously came here to start a new life and they have succeeded. Americans can learn an important lesson from them.

A spirit of bonhommie seemed to pervade the city and one local TV station, in summarizing events on the late evening news, assured its viewers that, '...understanding and good-fellowship has marked this day, a day that won't be forgotten soon, a day that marks the beginning of a new era in our city.'

Aftermath.

By the next day, local radio talk shows received calls from individuals identifying themselves as 'Americans' (and even 'real' or 'loyal' Americans) who wished to comment on Portuguese Day. The majority of remarks were hostile, even bitter and, more importantly, some of the most acrimonious speeches came from those who began or ended their comments with phrases such as, "I'm of Portuguese descent....' Since many of these calls were made to a local Portuguese language station the sneers and ridicule directed towards the laudatory aura of the celebration quickly generated angry counter-callers and insults were being flung back and forth. Less than 48 hours later the editorial page of the local newspaper also became the arena for the feud.

And feud it obviously was. Portuguese were charging Portuguese with being 'rotten Americans,' 'lazy,' 'jealous,' 'money-hungry,' 'cut-throat towards their own,' 'scabs,' and 'scroungers.' Non-Portuguese publically stayed aloof but, in private would, typically, shrug and say, 'What else would you expect?' or 'They're always knifing each other.' It soon became clear that the lines of

cleavage were between those Portuguese who were native born or had come to this country before World War II, and those who had arrived in the post-1960 era. But, while the demarcation was obvious, and the claims for why such a split existed were all too explicit, what was not clear was why 'the Portuguese' had atomized rather than demonstrated internal cohesion (especially given the usual bonding mechanism of external hostility). And why had Portuguese Day had such cataclysmic force? This attempt at inter-ethnic communication failed in its announced goal of increasing understanding and good will among the Texton citizens. Worse, it had led to behavior on the part of the Portuguese which reinforced negative stereotypic components which non-Portuguese held-and which the latter could now claim the Portuguese themselves confirmed.

Ethnographic analysis.

Portuguese, informants, in discussing this, drew sharp lines between Americans (and, in point, those of Portuguese descent) and recent immigrants who considered themselves Portuguese. The 'Portuguese-Americans' to whom Portuguese Day had been addressed had vanished and were nowhere to be found.

Different segments of the entire community received different messages. The public message that Portuguese Day intended to communicate was, in summary:

> We value the contribution which, since the early days of Texton, all those of you who came from Portugal have made. In the last few years many more have arrived and old injustices have been exaggerated rather than lessened. We recognize our responsibility in this and wish to put our hand forward in friendship so we can all work together.

I would suggest that the motivation for sending the message stemmed from the pragmatic recognition that the 'Portuguese,' the

ethnic group which most Texton residents believe to be the city's statistically dominant group, had to be publically recognized as generative of economic and political forces significant in a projected rejuvenation of one of the few cities in America ever to go bankrupt.

That message could have focussed on a number of different aspects of the structural position occupied by the Portuguese and it could have stylistically emphasized any one of a number of themes--e.g., an appeal to everyone in the community to work together as loyal Textonians, or a day dedicated to Texton's industrial workers--but the current macro-systemic emphasis on ethnicity, coupled with the recent immigration influx, programmed the strategy choice of the Texton elite.

They were led, first, to set up a commission to study a group whose presence had been little noted up to this point, except as factory fodder or as a negative force in various aspects of town affairs. This seems to have been the focus because, as one business man put it to me:

> the town needed a pep talk and the Portygees seemed the best target. I frankly wouldn't care if they all got the hell out. But we need to get the town moving and, with the TV and everything talking about bilingualism and biculturalism and cultural pluralism and all that, this seemed the best approach. It seemed like a good idea at the time. How did we know what hornet's nest we'd stir up?

Unfortuantely, as has long been recognized, language can (and usually does!) communicate a multiplicity of messages; the 'meanings' received by the hearer are always different, to a greater or lesser degree, from those sent by the speaker(s) because the message is never received in the same cognitive context as that in which it is sent. In this case different segments of the so-called homogeneous community received the message differently.

The message received by what I call the Old Portugese--who in

this context considered themselves Americans--was:

> You Americans of Portuguese descent have never amounted to much and we've always let you know it. If you had behaved as these new immigrants have when you and your ancestors arrived in this country, we would have respected you and recognized your place in the community by honoring you with a Portuguese Day.

The message that the New Portuguese received was:

> Right on, friends! You're out there being successful at the only thing that brings anyone to this country--making money. We may not like you but, at least, you're not like those dumb forerunners of your group who tried to be the mythical 'Good Americans' in that phoney melting pot that the school books tried to fool everybody with.

The Old Portuguese rejected the implication that they were part of that community of Portuguese about whom such admiring remarks were made because, for many years, they had been told that being Portuguese was bad. They had had it drummed into them--in schools, in church, on the job, by the media, by their non-Portuguese neighbors--that the only good immigrant was a good American. And, by God!, that's what they had tried to be--that's what they were. They were not Portuguese! Thus, they were distressed and embittered by the message of Portuguese Day because they perceived that the same ethnicity which had worked against them and, especially in their first years in this country, had made their lives so difficult, was now A Good Thing. It was being used by the new arrivals to gain economic privileges ranging from cheap school lunches and on-the-job training stipends, to college scholarships and funded-research positions with a bicultural genesis, that 'everyone knew were cream-puff jobs.'

The New Portuguese, on the other hand, knew without doubt that they were Portuguese; they had been born in Portugal; Portuguese was their native language. And they were certainly not Americans simply

because they were here; they had immigrated here but next year they might immigrate to Canada, or Brazil, or anywhere--even back home. Obviously, simply working in a country doesn't make you part of that citizenry.

Clearly, Portuguese Day did not create the disjuncture between Old and New Portuguese; that existed prior to the event and was merely exacerbated by it. What, other than historical socioeconomic factors, inhibited the bonding mechanism?

I would suggest that two factors were at work: (1) competition for scarce resources in a depressed economy; and (2) a higher level of expectations in the newly-arrived immigrant group.

The New Portuguese, because of their unskilled labor status, the language barrier, and the usual occupational channelling processes, initially sought employment in the same sectors where Americans of Portuguese descent were already working--albeit intermittently, at low pay, and in a labor-glutted market. All New Portuguese who got jobs in the traditional employment sectors were seen as excluding an Old Portuguese from employment. An immigrant who got a job was someone who displaced an American. For the Old Portuguese, it was better to erect employment barriers to protect themselves even though it was understood that an immigrant who could not get employment might 'disgrace the good name of the Portuguese'--as well as possibly add to the tax burden. They resented it when such barriers were surmounted; many of them remembered the struggles <u>they</u> had gone through and believed the new immigrants did not appreciate how much easier life was. "They brag about how much faster they get richer than us and say it's because they're smarter, better workers. They don't see how they're getting benefits we never got. It's not like it was in the old days."

The New Portuguese, better educated and more knowledgeable about the world due to Portugal's inevitable modernization, were capable of devising alternate economic strategies when they saw how minimal were the opportunities in the traditional employment areas. They began to create new income sources and this was, in large measure, aided by an easier credit potential. By borrowing, pooling resources, working at jobs that often came from under-the-counter deals with bosses, floor supervisors, and union representatives, a significant number of them were able to accumulate sufficient seed money to open small businesses, buy rental property, and finance other entrepreneurial activities.

In short, the Old Portuguese were successful not so much in keeping out cheap, competitive labor as in forcing the new arrivals to explore other avenues. The success of these latecomers encouraged even more immigrants to leave Portugal, thus depressing (in absolute terms) the local economy still further. Simultaneously, however, the continuing influx of immigrants actually generated an increased demand for those entrepreneurs who had initiated services such as ethnic food stores, driving schools, ethnic restaurants and immigrant aid services--all directed to the wants of immigrants. Further, continuing immigration created a housing shortage and this led to a rent rise in those same tenaments which the early New Portuguese had bought cheaply.[7] Thus, while adding to the economic problems of the macro sector the immigrants created a boom prosperity in one of its component sectors.[8]

The second factor, that of higher expectations, is equally important. Those same forces which had produced a revolution in Portugal were also at work in America. Despite, generally, the same rural background, the New Portuguese do not come to this country as uneducated and naive as those who arrived prior to World War I. This, coupled with their arrival

at a time when attitudes in this country concerning immigrants, ethnics, and minorities are undergoing at least superficial change has created a more favorable milieu for those who wish to become 'rich and successful.' For one thing, it allows them to do so far more rapidly and spectacularly than was (and still is) possible for the Old Portuguese. The latter, far more consistently, have had such successes denied them.

The Old Portuguese can, on the whole, rationalize this 'success' in only one way: Rejecting the explanation that the New Portuguese offer--that they have 'failed' because they are lazy, servile, and lacking incentive--they argue that the new arrivals--the Greenhorns or Greenies--are 'ignorant' (used by the Old Portuguese to mean unmannerly, rude, uncouth, brash, and aggressive), 'money-hungry,' 'slumlords,' 'grasping,' 'scheming,' 'cheats and liars,' 'exploiters of their own kind,' and worst of all, 'willing to live like peasants in the Old Country--like animals--just to get rich quick.'

The attitude of the New Portuguese to such charges can be summed up by the following comments from a former landlord of mine:

> For years America was like a chamber pot. Like it says on the Statue of Liberty, "Send us your poor, dumb, and miserable." So we did. We used this country to crap in.
>
> Now times are different and we're different: We're smart and educated. We work hard to get places. The people who come now aren't like those Americans who came over before. Now we're respected. Americans may not like us--that's always the way when you don't do good enough or when you do too good. But they got to admit we can make it like those other people never could, except once in a while a smart one.

Broader implications.

We have seen that the meaning content of words such as 'Portuguese,' 'Portuguese-American,' 'American,' 'we,' and 'them' was not the same to all the participants within the message field. It is important to note, however, that because it was so in this specific instance does not mean

that the categories are always similarly defined. The lines of segmentation drawn here can, in other contexts, fuse or become more dentritic. The same individual can be American, Portuguese-American, Portuguese, Island Portuguese, Azorean, Michalense, or Ponta Delgadian (a widespread if not even universal process and the discussions of Nagata 1974 and Kasfir 1976, e.g., offer similar arguments). Each of these categories has unique stereotypic characteristics which mark the individual so identified--by choice or imposition--as like his fellows and unlike others. Once the distinction has been made those outside that set stand in a dialectic relationship; behavior predicated on the basis of that identifying process is channeled, not infrequently along the lines of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

In short, study after study demonstrates that ethnic boundaries and symbolic markers shift, and because of that shiftiness a concern with the 'reality' or nature of such boundaries and markers per se is a scientifically trivial emphasis. What should be the focus of our analytical concern are the socioeconomic processes at work in the situation. 'Ethnicity' is only a tool which enables humans to identify themselves and others, and then formulate behavior. Homogeneity or diversity is imposed for purposes of categorization; such categorizations then allow prediction and the weighing of the potential outcome of various choices in the decision-making range. After the decision is made, action (even when it takes the form of 'non'-action) follows.

Thus, it is the drama itself which must be the focus of our attention, not the masks of the Dramatic Personae. Actors shift statuses and roles but, 'the play's the thing wherein we catch the conscience;' the structure and dynamic processes of the drama are what catch our attention. As in a football game, it is not the uniforms, the cheer-

leader's rhymes, the songs, mascots, banners and other symbolic representations of the contest which grip us--they are merely cues for our responses. The player whose behavior we hissed last year is traded to our team and now, this year, becomes a hero for us.

We are left, then, with the realization that ethnic identity, just as many other identities, has fluid and flexible dimensions, primarily useful only in terms of a situational analysis. Identity is the overt manifestation of symbols, symbols which are only supra-segmental markers for and in a human dialogue. It is the dynamics of the dialogue--the responses generated rather than the words themselves--that should draw our attention.

Along these lines Shibutani and Kwan (1965:208) have suggested that, 'the degree to which consciousness of kind develops among people varies with consistency of differential treatment.' I would propose that the more heterogeneous a society and the greater the potential or actual contact among members of that society, the greater the variety of 'consistent treatments.' Thus, the more heterogeneous a society, the larger the number of identities which one may have imposed or at his disposal, and the more consistent the possibility of differential treatment in differential spatiotemporal settings. It is knowledge of that differential treatment which creates strategic options, each of which may be evaluated as to its 'adaptive' utility in this or that situation.[9]

So, the New Portuguese were categorized by Textonians as 'the same as' previous Portuguese immigrants. American society, beyond Texton's boundaries, had, however, decreed that such people were now to be treated differently from their predecessors. As post-1960 ethnics the New Portuguese were given access to resources not available in earlier years--special educational programs, housing and business loans, etc. Such

factors encouraged what Bennett (1975) has called 'a coalition for advantage' and the new immigrants were able to become an ethnic group--i.e., a corporate collectivity--rather than remain an atomistic ethnic population (cf., Despres 1975:195-204). The base for that corporateness of the New Portuguese was minority aid money, those federal, state, and foundation monies which encouraged certain individuals to form organizations through which access to those funds could be gained. Such individuals and organizations then were able to serve as a real and symbolic locus for a coalition (or coalitions) which (as Despres itemizes them) 'possess a unitary set of external relations, a relatively exclusive body of common affairs, and procedures which are more or less adequate to the administration of these affairs' (1975:196). Thus, in cybernetic fashion, forces at work in the macrosystem led to an alteration in the perception of certain components of that system. An 'output' of economic and political factors led to the creation of corporate entities to meet the macrosystemic expectations and exploit these new resources available. The resultant corporate groups became symbolic entities with which even New Portuguese who were not directly involved could vicariously identify. The society beyond Texton provided a new mode of 'consistent differential treatment', and thereby provided the base for the crystallization of a corporate group, where only an ethnic population had formerly existed. In the process, however, it helped to generate internal segmentation, creating a more narrowly defined population than the non-Portuguese of Texton knew.[10]

I have previously stated that talk of boundaries is scientifically trivial unless it is clear that such boundaries are situationally defined. They are not stable and are often more suprastructure than primary form. This needs reiterating for, despite the fact that Barth's le dernier cri

emphasizes this (1969:13) there has been more stress put on the structural implications of the boundaries than on the processes which both create and are affected by that structure. This is strange for Barth like Weber many years before him, stresses that, first and foremost, ethnic groups are human collectivities based on an assumption of common origin, and it is the question of the genesis of that assumption which must concern us.[11] We might begin by stressing the inverse proposition and seek to find the operational principles of non-commonality--i.e., how and for what reasons are outsiders and non-members identified and excluded?

I have suggested that, though perhaps primitive, it seems fruitful to hypothesize that the critical components in the categorizing process are situational and pragmatic (Nagata 1974 has an excellent statement on this). Identity components are part of the 'communication of transactions,' and, combinatorially, are as ephemeral or durable as the transaction. So, for example, even the most pristine of ethnics (are there any such?) will find his identity extended or delimited by other components such as religion (WASP), language (speaker of Standard American English), region (Southerner), or phenotype (again, WASP). This perspective argues that one limns out identity markers in order to define the expected parameters in a transaction. We all, as humans, must communicate with other humans; identities serve as the basis for that communication, for interaction and dialogue. If, however, we were forced to make idio-identifications each time we interacted with someone, the margin of error would be increased and individual stress would grow to intolerable limits because of the high complexity of situational variables.

It is time to recognize that the essentially normalizing nature of culture is a stereotyping process-one which conditions us to ignore

and/or emphasize the situational components of events, after which we perform the 'appropriate' behavior. Such stereotyping has the short-term positive function of reducing stress and, ideally, of facilitating communication. It also has the potential for gross simplification, for becoming increasingly dysfunctional to the extent that our assessment is disconsonant with that of others in the set--when it is incorrect, inappropriate, inadequately refined, situationally monolithic, or when repressive goals underlie the basis of the stereotype which structures the interaction.

The degree to which we are successful in any communicative situation depends on the extent to which our assessment of the identities and projected responses of participants 'fits' those projected by the other actors--for themselves and for us. The greatest lesson the anecdote from Texton offers is that the potential for dissonance--using this term as both conflict and communication theorists apply it--which lies in those situations where the actors believe they have a code in common but do not; when they believe they have a nexus of common understanding which, in fact, does not exist. Moreover, we must accept that understanding can never be absolute because no two people or groups ever experience the same culture history and to the extent that they have not, to that extent will communication contain non-equivalent messages. Thus, the more culturally hetereogeneous a population is, the greater the possibility that the message will gain in ambiguity and dissonance potential. This should serve as notice that a critical need in message sending is redundancy--sending the so-called 'same' message many times (cf., Murray Leaf's comments on this 1976:4-5). The extension of this is, of course, that we must not only strive to be consistent in the messages we send, we must also listen to the responses, for they tell us what was

actually 'heard'--what the receiver(s) understood us to say.

Inter-ethnic communication is concerned with the group dynamics of message sending--a situation which, in the final analysis, is 'only' quantitatively different from interpersonal communication. This has the frightening implication that the capacity for a breakdown in communication increases exponentially with the size of the participating population. But, contrariwise, it also implies that the capacity for a significant dialogue may also increase exponentially. Let us hope that the growing concern with and recognition of the monumental difficulties involved in inter-ethnic communication will help achieve a genuine dialogue before the dissonance overwhelms us.

Footnotes.

[1]Texton is a pseudonym. See Smith, 1975 for a broader discussion of this city

[2]An accurate figure is difficult to present since (a) names have been Anglicized, (b) intermarriage of ethnics offers an identity choice for offspring, (c) many individuals reject their Portuguese ancestory because of the low status of Portuguese in this area.

[3]There were 41 ethnic categories listed, ranging from 'African' to 'West Indian' and including 'Other peoples' and 'not specified.' In second and third ranking positions, respectively, were the Turks (59.5%) and Mexicans (57.2%) (Bannick 1917:39-40).

[4]The first quota law of 1921 restricted national immigration to the equivalent of 3% of their countrymen who had been in the U.S. in 1910; the second quota law of 1924 shifted the base figure to that of the American population in 1890; and the third revision of the National Origins Law (1929) decreed that the number of each nationality admitted per year was 'to bear the same ratio to the total quota of 150,000 as the number of that national origin in the US in 1920 bore to the total population then' (Novotny 1971:130).

[5]Massachusetts has begun to keep figures on such immigrants but Rhode Island has not.

[6]This refers to the fact that the Portuguese-speaking Cape Verdeans are African Blacks, giving rise to the belief that all Portuguese are to a greater or lesser degree black. As one Irish-American informant put it, 'A nigger's a nigger, no matter how white they look. And I don't want any of them--Portygee or whatever--in my house, in my neighborhood, or in my kid's schools. And they goddamn well better keep to their own churches too!'

[7]One typical example is provided by Mr. X who, within a year of his arrival, bought a 3-story, 6-apartment tenament (a term which, in this region refers only to the style of building), paying $600 down on its $5500 cost. Rents have remained relatively stable, averaging $70.00 per month per apartment over the past 10 years. He has continued to add to his list of rental homes and now controls 4 such buildings which bring him an average income of $1600 per month. Although everyone is aware that all new immigrants do not buy their own homes, let alone become landlords, the spectacular successes of those who have become successful in this area colors the stereotype of the New Portuguese--positively from their own perspective, negatively from the perspective of others. Out of a sample of 31 immigrants who have rental property, 19 of them owned 4 tenaments, 3 owned 3, 5 owned 2, and one each owned 7, 8, 11, and 16. Additionally, 46 other individuals owned a multi-family house or tenament in which they themselves lived. The Old Portuguese point to the people who own several properties and complain, as did one such typical informant, 'This, while I'm still paying off the mortgage on the house I live in, with my parents being born in this country!'

[8]E.g., the New Portuguese could have become militant or stayed acquiescent (in the manner of earlier immigrants) but they chose instead to adopt an amalgam of the two--militant enough to argue for aid funds on grounds of discrimination, etc., as well as encouraging ethnic support of ethnic businesses, professional and educational personnel--but accepting enough of the dumb stereotype that non-Portuguese were lulled as to the extent of the threat they represented. The Dumb Portygee jokes also served as an outlet for the hostility that, inevitably, was surfacing more and more.

[9]It is important to note that strategies are only relatively adaptive and the choice of a strategy is (a) never really 'free' but is structured by the range of choice which are both in fact and cognitively available; (b) may, post hoc, be maladaptive despite the action being selected for its potential as the maximally adaptive responsive. Thus, for the Old Portuguese, ethnicity was minimized as a strategy, being signalled publically to the community only when it emphasized the traditional arts, crafts, folklore, religious focus, and recreational aims of the group (e.g., sports clubs, the Holy Ghost Feast, marching band clubs); the New Portuguese emphasized ethnicity as it identified them as a deprived and exploited minority group; and the non-Portuguese used the identity not only to exclude the Portuguese from power groups in the occupational, educational, economical and political sectors (so as to keep control within their 'old-boy' network) but also to channel personnel into least desireable but functionally necessary positions. The extent to which any of these identifying strategies was, in fact, the maximal adaptive strategy is open to debate but, unfortunately, we cannot test for it!

[10]The Portuguese themselves see many ethnic markers as adaptive, 'masking strategies' used to deceive others. So, for example, a multitude of Dumb Portygee jokes mushroomed at just the time that the New Portuguese began to utilize alternate income tracks, especially the federal, state, and foundation monies discussed.

[11]Barth's work is also flawed by variously vague and/or sweeping generalizations. For example, given the fluidity in time and space which marks most ethnic populations in America (or anywhere else) we would be hard put to identify boundaries or membership by using his criterion that, 'The organizational feature which...must be general for all inter-ethnic

relations is a systematic set of rules governing inter-ethnic social encounters' (Barth 1969:16) [italics mine]. How many of us, without forcing the data or our analysis, could truly demonstrate that such a 'systematic set of rules' governs the inter-ethnic relations with which we are concerned?

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