

A PRESENTATION FOR THE QUIRK'S NYC RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Reverse Acculturation:

A cultural phenomenon that will define marketing in the 21st century



July 17, 2024

Why are we talking about multiculturalism? Because of growth trends...

- By **2048**, projections show the **U.S. changing dramatically** – tipping to a **“majority minority” nationwide**.
- **Big picture first**: this has happened already in **24 U.S. states** (per the 2020 Census)
 - Seven (**7**) U.S. states are **majority-minority now**
 - In seventeen (**17**) more **non-Hispanic whites (NSW) are less than 60%**
 - For example, in the 2020 Census, **Hispanics had grown 23% from the previous decade** vs. a **U.S. national 7%** total population growth.
(*Pew Research*)



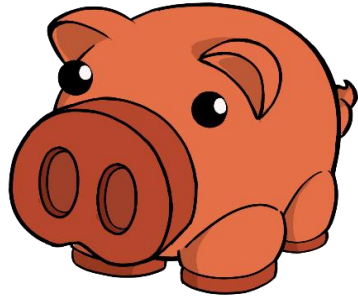
Why are we talking about multiculturalism?

For researchers:

- These demographic trends are **changing what we currently know about “Census rep” and “gen pop”**.
 - How often do we conduct nationwide or regional studies with only **one set of racial/ethnic quotas**?
- In many areas already, **typical nationwide racial or ethnic stats don't match the reality** of the local population at all.
 - Huge **Hispanic # increases** in counties in **CA, TX, AZ, FL**
 - But **bigger % increases** in other states: **ND, GA, LA, MI, IL**



Before we dive in...what's your opinion?



If you're a **brand marketer**, is your company **actively planning** around these shifting demographics and consumer attitudes?

If you're a **market researcher**, are you **advising your clients/stakeholders differently** about how these will affect "consumer insights"?



What are we focusing on for today?

- In the past, **minority groups have needed to acculturate** - adjusting and adapting to the “dominant” culture (i.e., Mexicans acculturating into the American NHW culture).
- **Reverse acculturation** is a recent phenomenon where **the majority-turning-minority must become the group adapting to and adopting a cultural shift** as they lose their dominance in a society.
- The big question: ***What’s happening to the culture within the demo trends?***
- How are attitudes of different cultural groups toward each other changing, adapting?
- How is this reflected in how different groups view common issues?



What research did CMS and Quest do?

- **We wanted to test attitudes between several ethnic/racial groups about racial/ethnic and cultural questions**
 - We expected the degree of **reverse acculturation** actually occurring **depended heavily on location and contact**.
- **The specific attitudes studied between different racial/ethnic groups:**
 - attitudes toward consumers **outside my own ethnicity/race**,
 - perceptions of ethnic/racial consumers in the **mass media**,
 - attitudes toward **cultural diversity**, and
 - attitudes toward **multicultural ads**

These are **key dimensions for anyone researching or marketing to “U.S. consumers”**.



Why is this research study important?

- **Theoretical**

- There have been only **three published academic papers** on reverse acculturation in past 20 years, and the **last was ten years ago**.
- **New research is needed** due to the **accelerating pace of demographic change** and how reverse acculturation is happening.

- **Applied**

- This phenomenon will **define marketing in the 21st century** based on the current demographic trends.
- **Understanding** reverse acculturation will be **critical for any brands and researchers relying on consumer insights** for decisions.



How was the research conducted? (for all you methodologists like us!)

- **Consumer sample - N=1350**, n150 in each city
- **Target audience - equal numbers of AA, Hispanic, Non-Hispanic White**
 - These were self-identified among 12 choices, including multiracial
- **Geography - 9 cities selected**, 3 each where one group dominates the population (highest % by 2020 US Census)
 - **Top three Hispanic**
 - New York, Chicago, Los Angeles
 - **Top three African American**
 - Philadelphia, Atlanta, Washington DC
 - **Top three traditionally NHW dominant**
 - Portland (OR), Omaha, Louisville



Hypotheses

We started the research expecting a couple of outcomes...
and got surprised.



H1:

There are **no sig differences in attitudes on cultural diversity** across groups (White, Hispanic, and African American consumers).



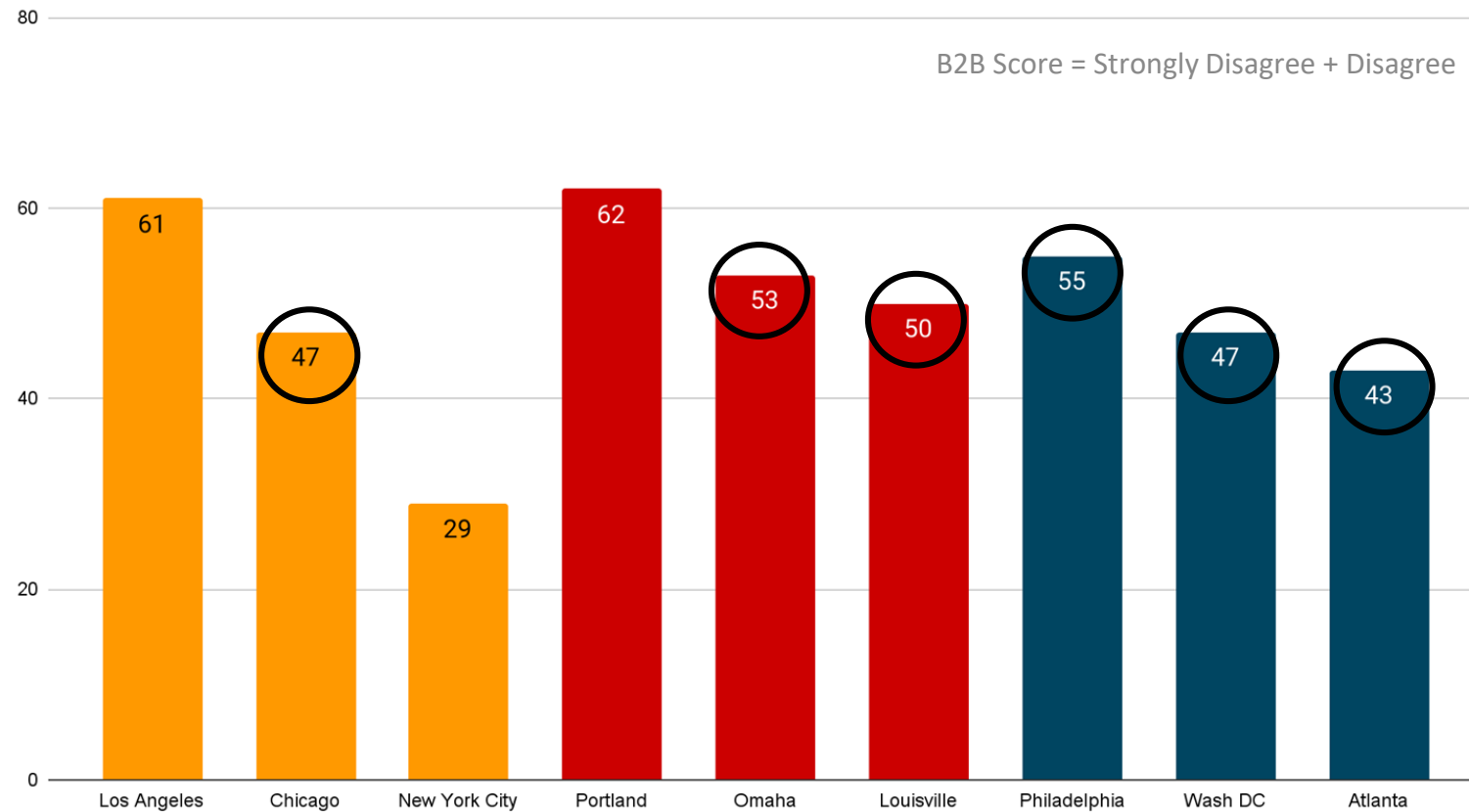
H2:

There are **no sig differences on attitudes on multicultural ads** across groups (White, Hispanic, and African American consumers).



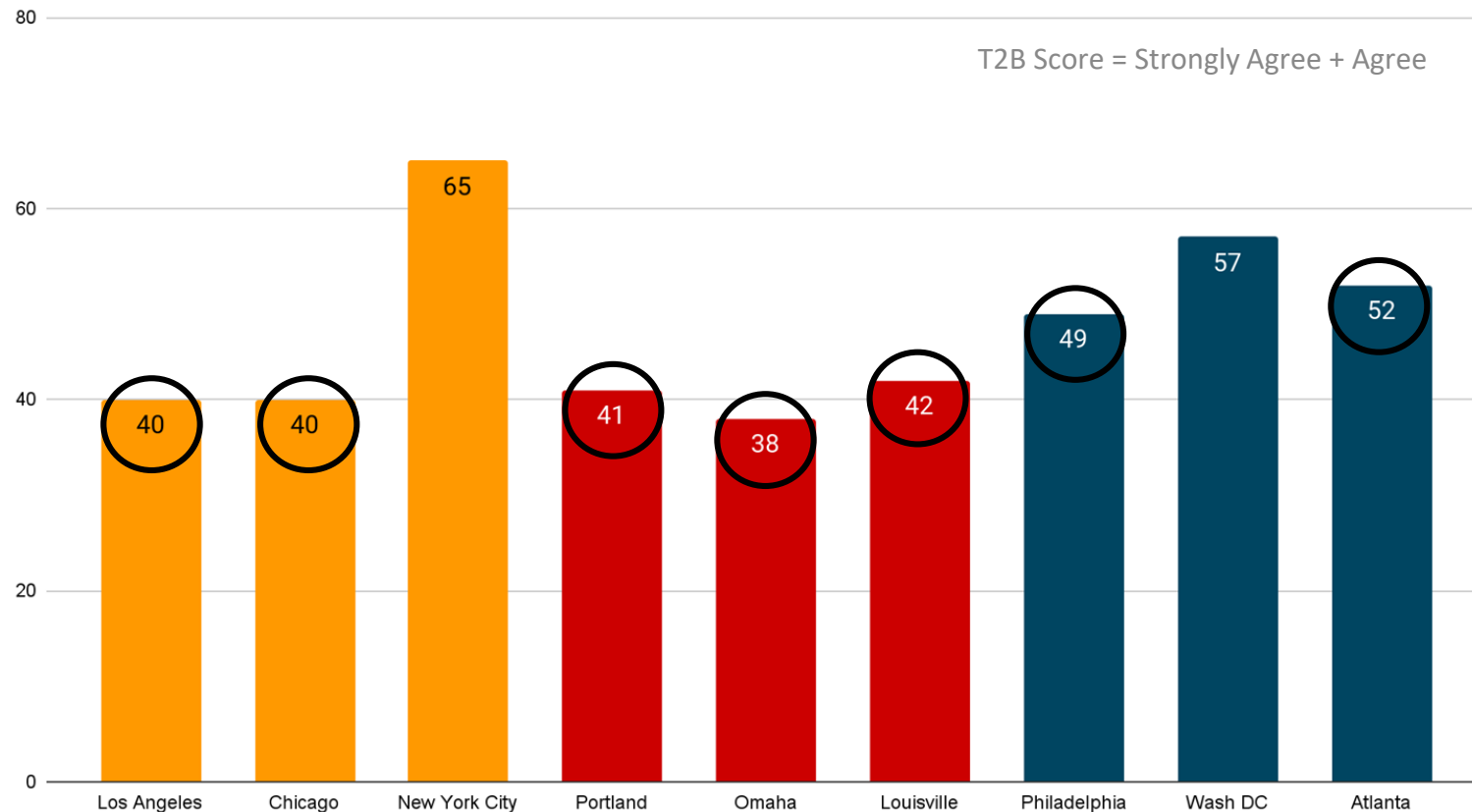
Attitudes on “immigrants should speak only English” were more similar than different - sig. disagreement

Immigrants should speak only English in the US.



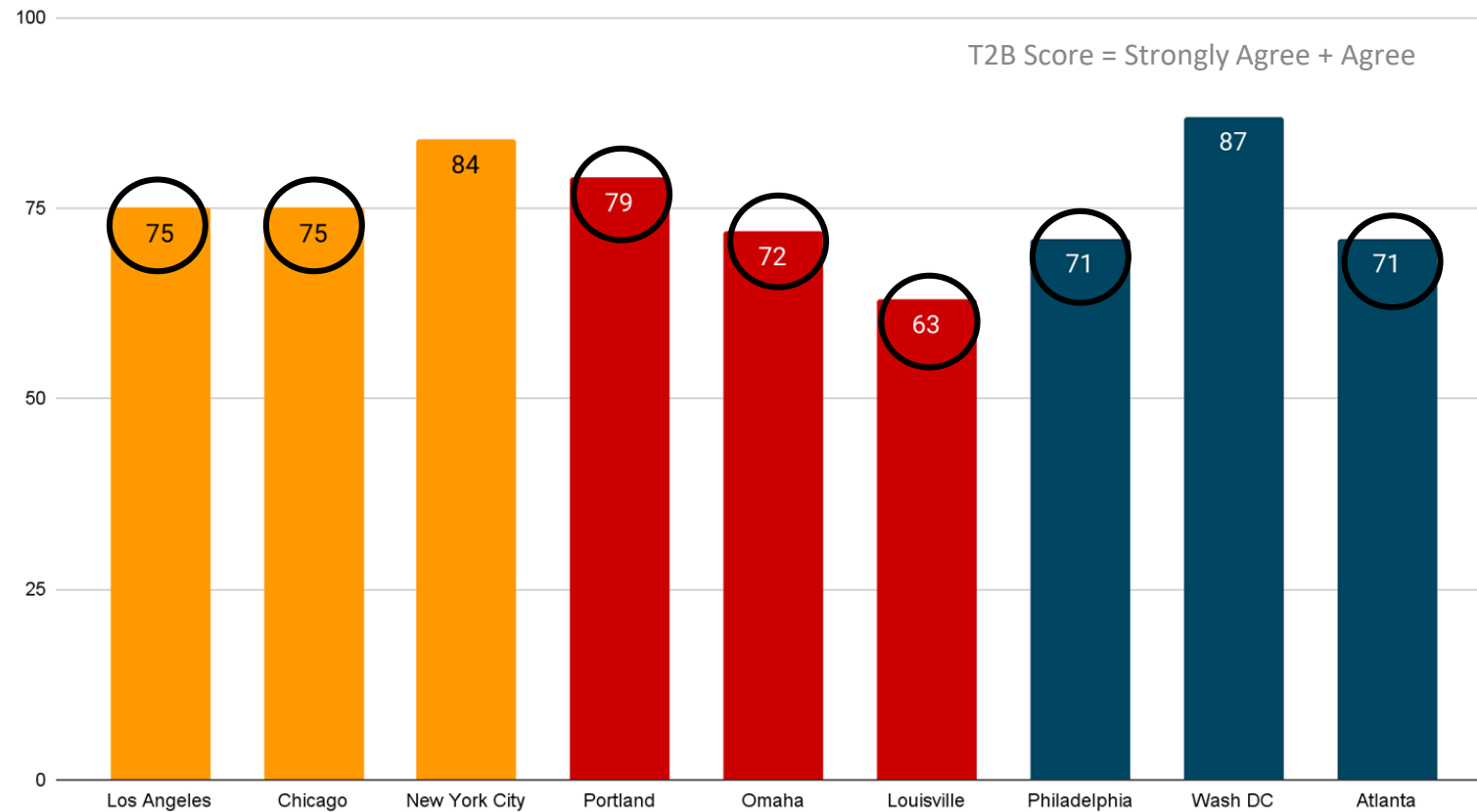
With the exception of NYC and Wash DC, attitudes on immigrants adopting American customs were similar

Immigrants who live in the US should adopt American customs.



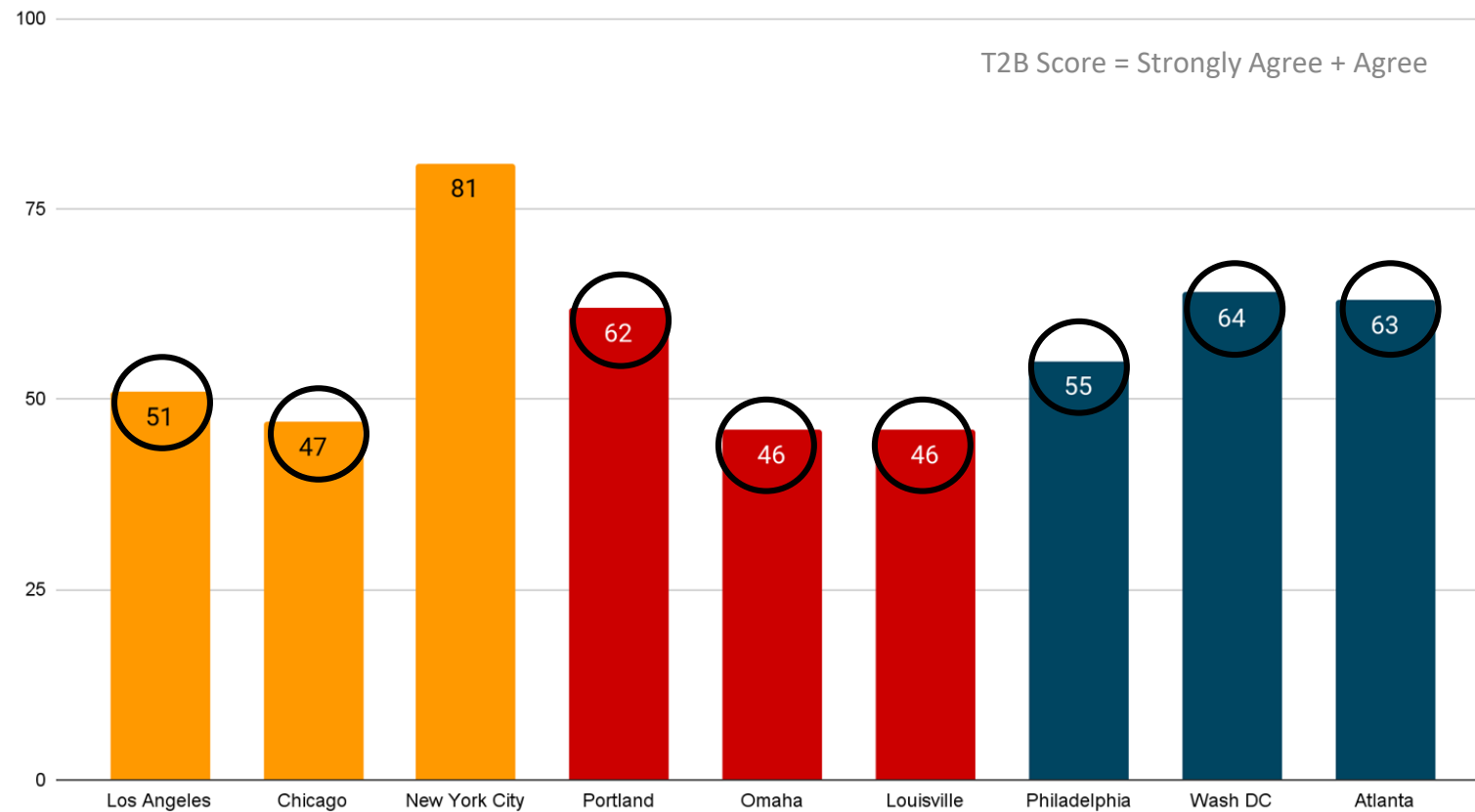
There is significant convergence around the importance of minority members to retain cultural identity

I think it's important for minority members to maintain their own cultural identity.



Multicultural ads “that speak to people like me” resonate in cities with a higher multicultural population

Ads with multicultural themes are talking to people like me.



Multicultural ads show greater preference by Hispanic and African American consumers than Whites

T2B Score = Strongly Agree + Agree (across 9 cities)

Items	Total	Hispanic	African American	White
Ads with multicultural themes are talking to people like me.	58%	60%	61%	51%
Ads with multicultural themes attract my attention.	62%	62%	67%	55%
Ads with multicultural themes interest me a great deal.	60%	61%	66%	50%

Differences between Hispanic and NH White, African American and White are stat significant at 95% confidence level.



What's the bottom line?

It's all about change. And on a local level.

- **Reverse acculturation** is happening. Attitudes of different groups we studied are not showing the differences we expected.
- **Hyperlocal marketing efforts** based on a bottom-up approach will fit the reality of the marketplace.
- **Reassess your sample plans – who are you talking to, where, and how do changing consumer demos and attitudes affect your research?**

Brands with the **courage to recognize shifts** and how reverse acculturation is working, then **act ahead of changes**, will win.

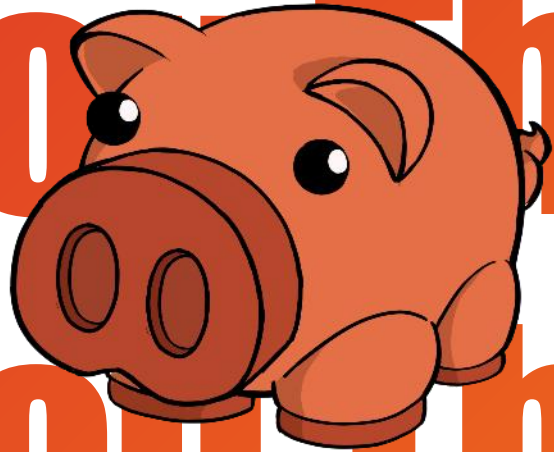


Where do we go from here?

- **Conduct a nat-rep study on reverse acculturation.**
 - We picked “ethnicity-heavy” markets for comparison.
 - A much larger national study will provide a needed roadmap.
- Continue to **disseminate research findings:**
 - Host private webinars with clients and media publishers in Aug and Fall.
 - Publish findings in the *Journal of Cultural Marketing Strategy* in the Fall.
- Follow this consumer research with a **B2B investigation to gauge company awareness, preparation, planning.**



Thank You Thank You
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