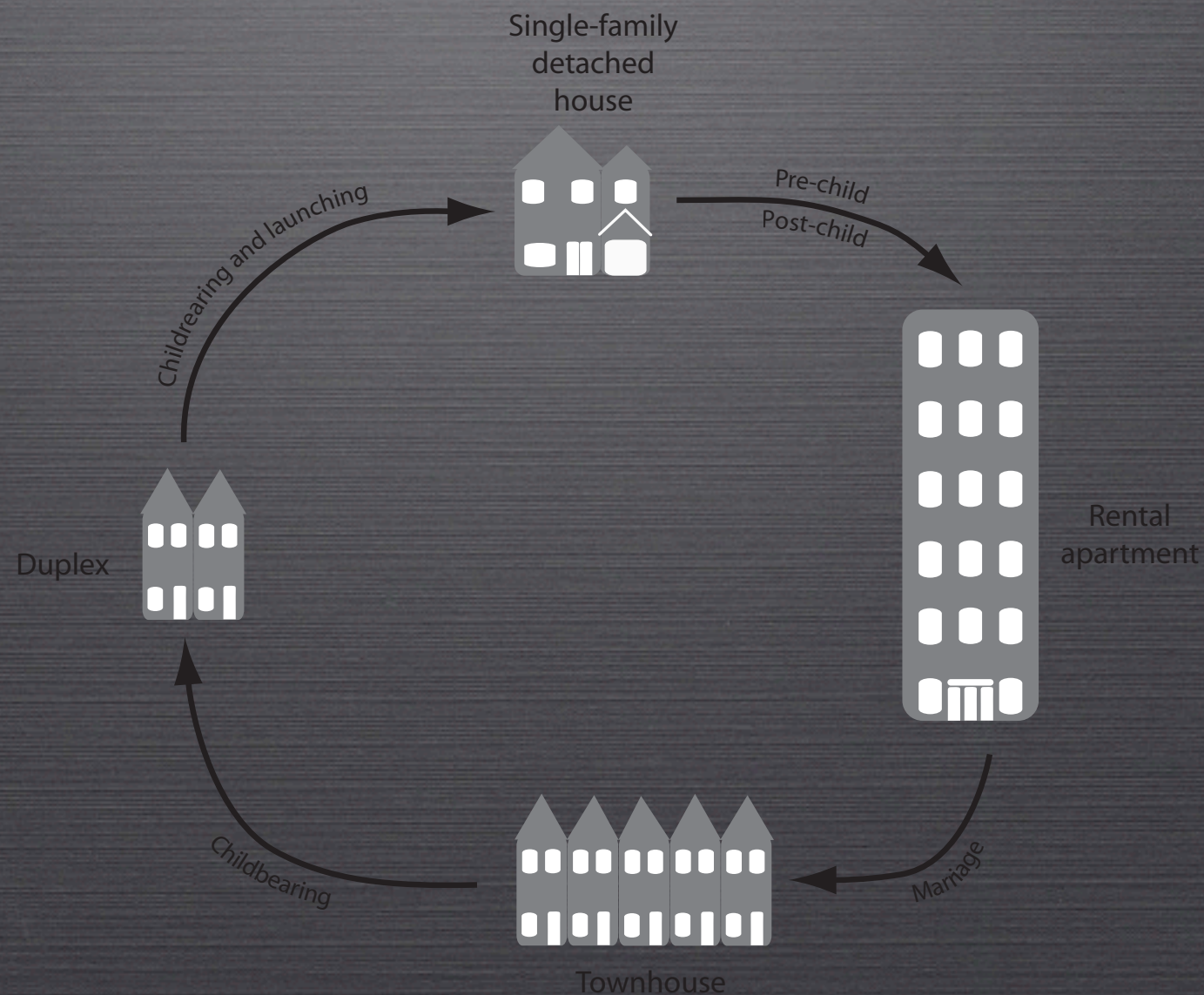


# The use of qualitative methods in studies of immigrants' housing patterns



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# Context

- Metropolis project: research on immigrants' integration into Canadian cities
- Social integration, political processes, housing and neighbourhoods
- Changing methodological approaches to questions of integration



# Methodological Approaches

## Small-scale studies

Bauder & Lusi, 2008  
Ghosh, 2007  
Walton-Roberts, 2007  
Murdie, 2002  
Osuwu, 1999  
Teixeira, 1995

### Research questions

Immigrant settlement process, social networks as influencing housing choice

### Data

Primary and secondary

### Ethnocultural group

Focus on specific language or ethnocultural groups: Bengali, Ghanaian, etc.

### Researcher distance

Interviewing  
Data comparison  
Surveys

## Large-scale studies

Hulchanski, 2007  
Walks & Bourne, 2006  
Hiebert, 2006  
Haan, 2005  
Hou & Picot, 2004  
Ray & Bergeron, 2004  
Hiebert & Ley, 2003  
Balakrishnan and Hou, 1999  
Balakrishnan and Wu, 1992  
Murdie, 1969

Housing disparities, segregation, inequities influencing housing choice

Secondary

Focus on major Census groups: South Asian, Black, etc.

Index of Segregation  
Index of Dissimilarity  
Regression analysis  
Data comparison  
Factor analysis



# Research Questions

## Small-scale studies

### Research questions

Immigrant settlement process, social networks as influencing housing choice

- Social and political integration, non-economic factors impacting integration
  - institutional/societal racism
  - transnational and social networks

## Large-scale studies

Housing disparities, segregation, inequities influencing housing choice

- Immigrants seen within a larger framework of spatial assimilation, policy-supported home ownership, car ownership



# Research Questions

Interviews  
with key  
informants

Interviews and  
focus groups  
with immigrants

Immigrant settlement and retention in second tier and small urban regions:  
A case study of Kitchener-Waterloo Ontario, Canada  
M. Walton-Roberts, 2007

Ghettos in Canada's cities? Racial segregation, ethnic enclaves and  
poverty concentration in Canadian urban areas

R. A. Walks and L.S. Bourne, 2006

Regression  
analysis

Neighbourhood  
classification



# Data

## Small-scale studies

### Data

Primary and  
secondary

- Census or LSIC data to frame the study
- Interviews and/or focus groups with immigrants, immigrant service providers

## Large-scale studies

Secondary

- Census, Longitudinal Study of Immigrants to Canada



# Data

Local, regional, and transnational networks and the integration and settlement dispersal of Filipino immigrants

H. Bauder and T. Lusic, 2008

Focus  
groups with  
immigrants

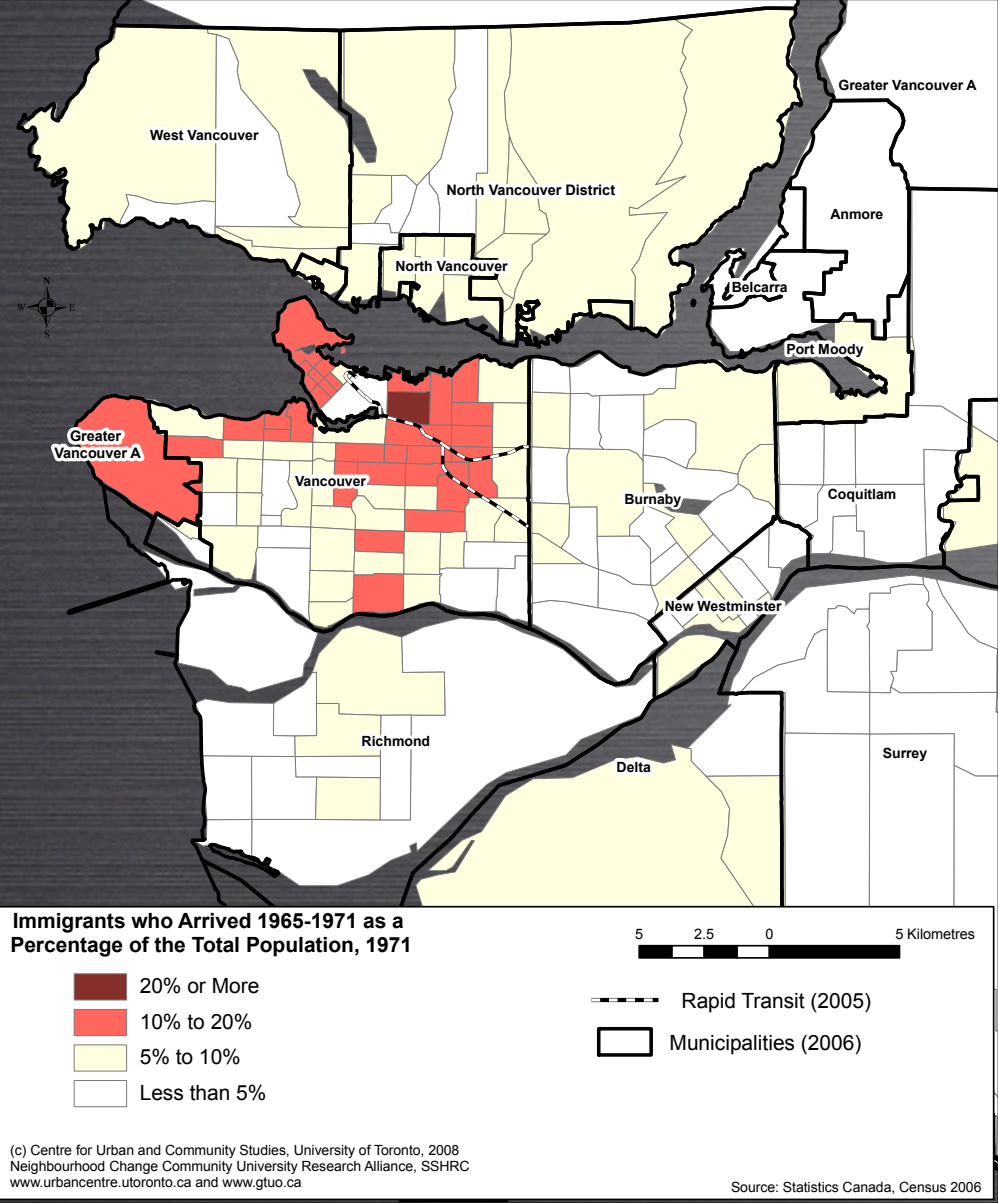
Diversity and concentration in immigration: Trends in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver 1971-2006

R. Murdie, 2008

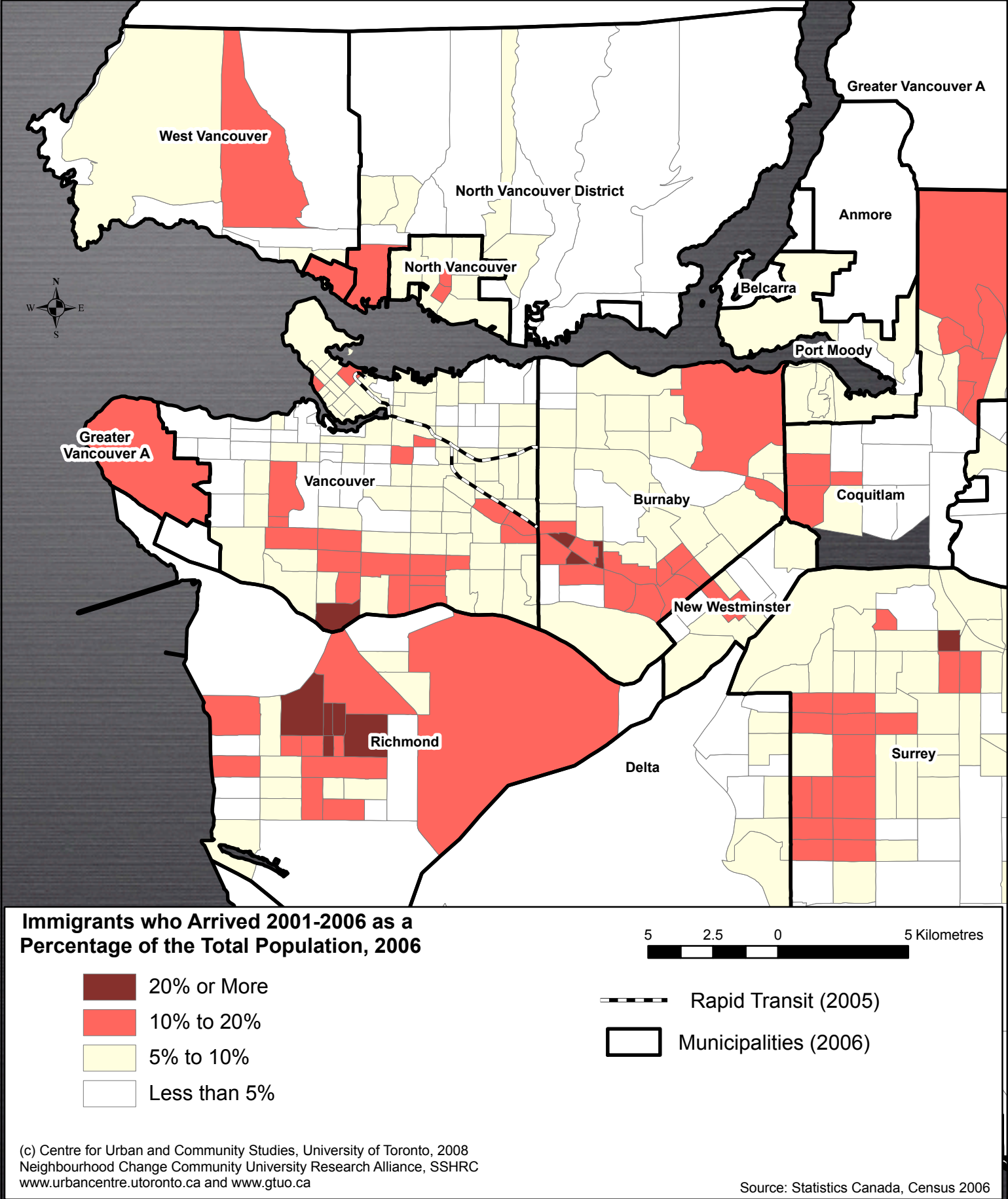
Data  
comparison  
(Census)



Recent Immigrant (1965-1971) Percentage of the Population  
by Census Tracts, Vancouver CMA, 1971



Recent Immigrant (2001-2006) Percentage of the Population  
by Census Tracts, Vancouver CMA, 2006





# Ethnocultural Group

## Small-scale studies

### Ethnocultural group

Focus on specific language or ethnocultural groups: Bengali, Ghanaian

- Groups defined by members/communities
- Illustrate differential incorporation among immigrant groups

## Large-scale studies

Focus on major Census groups: South Asian, Black, etc.

- Groups defined by Census
- Concentrate on major trends/differences between immigrants and non-immigrants



# Ethnocultural Group

Residential patterns and housing choices of Ghanaian immigrants in Toronto  
T. Owusu, 1999

Interviews  
with  
immigrants

Assimilation, cultural pluralism, and social exclusion among  
ethnocultural groups in Vancouver  
D. Hiebert and D. Ley, 2003

Index of  
Segregation



# Researcher Distance

## Small-scale studies

### Researcher distance

Interviewing  
Data comparison  
Surveys

- Need to gather primary data
- Researchers often members of the ethnocultural group

## Large-scale studies

Index of Segregation  
Index of Dissimilarity  
Regression analysis  
Data comparison  
Factor analysis

- Secondary data and statistical software require no contact with the community/ies being studied



# Researcher Distance

Transnational ties and intra-immigrant group settlement experiences:  
A case study of Indian Bengalis and Bangladeshis in Toronto  
S. Ghosh, 2008

Interviews with  
immigrants from  
each group

Geographies of ethnocultural diversity in a second-tier city: Moving  
beyond where people sleep  
B. Ray and J. Bergeron, 2006

Location  
quotients



# Resiliency in Housing and Transportation Choices: The Experiences of Filipino Immigrants in Toronto

- Principal Components Analysis (PCA)
  - structural changes in policy that have impacted choices
- Interviews with Filipino immigrants who arrived between 1968-2008
  - illustrated resiliency of this group
  - housing histories revealed preferences towards rental housing and public transit



# Advantages of Qualitative Methods

- Immigrants' experiences have become central
- Revealed institutional racism, language and cultural barriers in the housing search, illustrate different trajectories
- Broadened knowledge of spatial settlement patterns, social networks
- Illustrated the interconnectivity of labour market barriers and housing choice
- Contributed to policy debate and change



# Questions?

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