Cover Art:
*Las caras de ocho hermanas* (2007) by Elena E. Cruz-Allen. Cruz-Allen was born on August 3, 1989 in Alexandria, Virginia of Puerto Rican-North American parents. Her art work has been exhibited at the Opalka Gallery of Sage College in Albany, New York and at the Emma Willard High School Regional Juried Art Exhibition in Troy, New York. In 2005 she received the First Place Award for figure drawing at the Sage Summer Art for High School Students program. Also in 2005 she received the Newspaper Bronze Award in Cartoon/Illustrated Graphics and Editorial Cartoon Categories of the Empire State Scholastic Press Association Competition for her comic strip *Little Black Olive*. During the summer of 2006 she attended a pre-college art program at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh on a full scholarship. In 2007 she had a one-woman show titled *Self-Portraits, Etc.* at the Moon and River Café in Schenectady, New York. She is currently an art major at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York.
The Latino(a) Research Review (LRR) is a refereed interdisciplinary journal focusing on the experiences of the diverse Latino groups in the United States, and those of the populations of Latin America and the Caribbean regions. The journal publishes scholarly articles, research notes, and book reviews. LRR pays particular attention to research on (im)migration issues and the transnational hemispheric processes that link US Latinos(as) with their countries of origin.

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EDITOR’S INTRODUCTION

The geographic dispersion of the US Latino population and the changing demographic profiles of many large and medium-size cities throughout the United States, both of which have become increasingly common since the 1990s, are drawing the attention of scholars to more community-focused research about different aspects of the US Latino experience. The more the US Latino population increases and individual national groups (e.g., Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans) move from their traditional communities of settlement to new areas of the country, where other Latinos(as) from many different national origins might be present, the more imperative it becomes to focus on local communities and comparative studies of the conditions that account for this continuing and unprecedented movement, and settlement of these groups throughout the United States. Whether we are referring to New York, New Jersey, Florida, Texas, North Carolina, or Missouri, to mention just a handful of those states where some of these changes are most noticeable, there is no doubt that new demographic realities will compel scholars to shift their attention to these current patterns and the impact they are having at the community, state, national, and transnational levels.

In this issue of the *Latino(a) Research Review (LRR)* we are including a group of articles that represent some of the diversity of regional experiences found among Latinos(as). The article by Cruz, Ferradino, and Friedman uses the results of the 2004 election to analyze key features of Latino participation in the electoral process in the state of New York, underscoring the inappropriateness of using New York City as the measure for the whole state, and suggesting strategies to increase this population’s participation in the political process. Home language use, and the negotiation that takes place among family members’ use of Spanish and English, is the focus of Lutz’s study, a product of fieldwork with Latinos(as) in Dallas, Texas. The author offers a conceptual model for studying patterns of Spanish language maintenance and loss, and of bilingualism.

Non-metropolitan Missouri is among the areas that have experienced Latino immigration increases. Dozi and Valdivia’s article illustrates how, in this particular rural setting, mobility has not had a positive effect on this population’s income earnings, contrary to other factors such as work experience, nativity, context of reception, and gender. In other regions of the United States, such as the South, one finds a setting where increases in the Latino population have been quite visible. The state of North
Carolina is perhaps one of the best examples of the impact of this new immigration on the school system, confronting public officials with finding remedies to provide legally-mandated equal educational opportunities to a population of diverse linguistic and ethnic backgrounds. Cortina discusses the educational policy implications of these new challenges in the context of what she refers to as the new global South and, specifically, the increasing Mexican and Central American population in that state.

Finally, Nepaulsingh’s article on the Jewish presence in the Caribbean island of Nevis reminds us of the importance of not treating these islands as mere tourist attractions with historical legacies that are often misrepresented to the general public. The author argues that the Jewish contribution to the history of the island, evoked by the ruins of the little temple of Nevis, points to the need for local authorities to excavate and preserve the site, and is a chapter in the island’s history that should not be neglected or forgotten.

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Latino Voting in the 2004 Election: 
The Case of New York

José E. Cruz, Cecilia Ferradino, and 
Sally Friedman

Introduction

This paper examines the participation of Latinos in the electoral process in New York state. It describes key features of the demographic and political context in which Latino participation takes place and provides an analysis of the Latino presence and role during the 2004 campaign. The paper also includes an analysis of Latino registration and turnout patterns in the presidential race. Our findings highlight progress in terms of increasing involvement of Latino voters in the political process. Yet, there still is a long way to go; despite significant increases in the Latino population across New York state, Latino electoral involvement is still notably lower than that of African Americans or whites. Latino participation is also context dependent. Despite much courting by candidates nationally, the low key nature of the campaign in a state that leans heavily Democratic in Presidential elections contributed to an overall disinterest in Latino concerns. Most of the literature on Latinos in New York quite sensibly focuses on activities in New York City. This paper for the first time analyzes Latino registration, turnout, and voting patterns in the state as a whole. The patterns of participation we found statewide suggest that when thinking about Latino politics in New York it is inappropriate to see New York state as simply New York City writ large.

Demography and Representation

At the national level, during the early 1990s, as whites were experiencing net increases in population of no more than 0.9 percent and blacks were growing in numbers at a rate no higher than 2 percent, Latinos were increasing their numbers within the population at a yearly rate of close to 4 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1995, 20). During that period this was also true of New York State. From 1990 to 1995, the state’s population increased by 0.86 whereas between 1990 and 1996 the Latino population grew in numbers by 15 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1998, 2, 7). In 2000, Latinos numbered 2,867,583 residents or 15 percent of the state’s population; they were 18 percent of the New
York Metro Area, and 27 percent of the population of New York City. Between 2000 and 2005 New York state lost about 2 percent of its population while Latino numbers increased by 6 percent.

The largest Latino group in the state in 2000 was Puerto Ricans, numbering a little over one million residents. The second largest group was Dominicans with 455,061 residents; Mexicans followed numbering 260,889. By comparison, at 62,590, the numbers for the Cuban population were quite small. The Metro area with the largest Latino concentration was the Rochester MSA where Latinos were 4.3 percent of the total. Of the cities with 100,000 inhabitants or more in the state, New York City holds the largest number of Latinos, with 2.1 million. New York City is followed by Yonkers with a little over 50,000, and Rochester with 28,000. Even though the minority population in all these cities is substantial, only in New York and Rochester do they constitute over fifty percent of the total.

In New York state, 66 percent of Latinos or 1,891,612, were foreign-born in 2000. This number does not include Puerto Ricans born in Puerto Rico, who hold the curious status of being both foreign-born and citizens by birth. Of the foreign-born Latino cohort—which includes people from the Caribbean, Central, and South America—1,111,942 or 59 percent were not citizens. Mexicans were only 13 percent of Latino non-citizens in 2000. In 2000, a substantial 42 percent of non-citizen, foreign-born Latinos had been residents for over ten years. (See Tables 1-4.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Resident Population New York State, 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian, Alaska Native</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian &amp; Other Pacific Islander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Hispanic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder.
### Table 2: Latino Population of New York State Metro Areas with 600,000 or More Residents in 2000 (in thousands; 875.6 represents 875,600)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>% Latino of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albany-Schenectady-Troy MSA</td>
<td>875.6</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara Falls MSA</td>
<td>1,170.1</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester MSA</td>
<td>1,098.2</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syracuse MSA</td>
<td>732.1</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Table 3: Minority Composition of New York Cities with 100,000 or More Residents in 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>NH White</th>
<th>% NH White</th>
<th>NH Black</th>
<th>% NH Black</th>
<th>NH AIAN</th>
<th>% NH AIAN</th>
<th>NH Asian</th>
<th>% NH Asian</th>
<th>NH NHPI</th>
<th>% NH NHPI</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>% Latino</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>292,648</td>
<td>151,450</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>107,066</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>2,010</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>4,045</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>22,076</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>8,008,278</td>
<td>2,801,267</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>1,962,154</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>17,321</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>780,229</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>2,829</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2,160,554</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>219,773</td>
<td>97,395</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>82,267</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>4,867</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>28,032</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syracuse</td>
<td>147,306</td>
<td>91,928</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>36,246</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>1,538</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4,929</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>7,768</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yonkers</td>
<td>196,086</td>
<td>99,346</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>30,164</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>9,290</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50,852</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder. NH = NonHispanic. AIAN = American Indian, Alaska Native. NHPI = Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander.
| Table 4: Latino Foreign-Born Population in New York State by Place of Birth and Citizenship Status, 2000 |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Foreign-Born Latinos                              | % of Total Foreign-Born         |
| Caribbean                                        | 1,004,344                       | 53                                |
| Central America                                  | 369,017                         | 20                                |
| Mexican                                          | 161,189                         | 9                                 |
| South America                                    | 518,251                         | 27                                |
| Total                                            | 1,891,612                       | 100                               |
| Non-Citizens                                     |                                 |                                   |
| Caribbean                                        | 533,312                         | 28                                |
| Central America                                  | 279,888                         | 15                                |
| Mexican                                          | 144,185                         | 8                                 |
| South America                                    | 298,742                         | 16                                |
| Total                                            | 1,111,942                       | 59                                |
| Non-Citizens with over 10 years residence        |                                 |                                   |
| Caribbean                                        | 254,050                         | 23                                |
| Central America                                  | 104,030                         | 9                                 |
| Mexican                                          | 42,498                          | 4                                 |
| South America                                    | 114,346                         | 10                                |
| Total                                            | 472,226                         | 42                                |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, SF-3. The totals for Mexicans are included in the totals for Central America.
Latinos in New York were politically underrepresented at all levels of office in 2004. This was also true in 2006. In Congress they were 7 percent of the state’s delegation. In Albany they were 8 percent of all legislators. At the State Assembly, which had the largest Latino contingent of representatives in the state, they were also 8 percent of the total. In New York City, Latinos were 20 percent of the city council. In 2006, all 16 Latino elected officials in Albany represented parts of Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx. Thus, the 707,029 Latinos that resided outside of New York City in 2000 relied on virtual representation at the state level.

**Latino Politics in City and State**

One idea about Latinos in New York during the late 1980s was that as New York City became majority-minority, their politics would gain prominence and importance not just at the city level but at other levels as well. Given that in 1982 black and Latino voters gave Mario Cuomo the margin of victory in his gubernatorial bid, this assessment seemed to hold some promise. The projection, however, was considered contingent on the ability of Latinos and blacks to forge electoral alliances. In this regard, the 1984 election seemed to offer an example of the possibilities, given the role that the presidential campaign of Jesse Jackson played in stimulating Latino political mobilization through the organization Latinos for Jackson. In the state, approximately 33 percent of Latinos voted for Jackson and close to 46 percent did so in the city. These were significant percentages and it was especially notable that Jackson carried all the districts represented by Puerto Rican elected officials despite their endorsement of Walter Mondale (National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights 1985, 9).

Two other factors were considered important to increase the significance of the Latino vote. First, dominant elites had to have an interest in Latino political incorporation. Second, Latinos needed to use electoral politics to promote the socioeconomic transformations required to benefit their communities. In this regard, in and by itself the election of minorities to office was not considered sufficient to serve minority interests (Falcón 1988, 172, 187-188). An analysis of the 1990 election in East Harlem seemed to confirm the validity of this last claim. In that year, Puerto Ricans seemed unwilling to participate in electoral contests in which there was no effective challenge of unresponsive elected officials. To Puerto Rican voters there was no perceptible relationship
between electoral politics and socioeconomic well-being and therefore not much of an incentive to participate (Goris and Pedraza 1994, 78-79).

In the early 1990s a different perspective was offered concerning Latinos and electoral politics in New York. According to Angelo Falcón, as the city became majority-minority and increasingly diverse, the role of Puerto Ricans in the political process would need reassessment given the contrast between their demographic decline and their dominance of elected posts. Falcón also noted that in time the challenges associated with minority coalition building would grow more difficult and complex as a result of increased ethno-racial competition (Falcón 1992, 163). These issues acquired a degree of practical significance in the 1992 election as the black electorate and black leaders became the focus of attention of the Democratic Party and the Latino electorate divided its support for Democrats and Republicans in unexpected ways.

In 1992, the attention paid to African Americans did not center in New York. But in the city African Americans made themselves heard even if it was to complain bitterly about how they were being ignored. In contrast, the attention paid to Latinos was uniformly minimal. While for blacks New York was an exception, for Latinos it was the norm. As for the vote, it demonstrated that Latinos did not behave as coherently as often assumed. In New York City districts with high concentrations of Puerto Ricans and Dominicans Clinton captured 77 percent of the vote whereas in those where Colombians and Ecuadorians predominated 59 percent of the voters supported the incumbent president. Similarly, support for Bush was higher in South American areas of the city than in Puerto Rican and Dominican districts by 34 to 19 percent. In Puerto Rican and Dominican districts Ross Perot accrued 3 percent of the vote whereas in South American districts he received 7 percent of the ballots (Falcón 1996, 201-203).

All in all, the Latino vote was insignificant to Clinton’s 1992 victory in New York given the Latino proportion of the city’s electorate vis-à-vis Clinton’s winning margin. In light of this, it was easy for the Clinton administration to ignore the enthusiastic recommendation of New Mexico Representative Bill Richardson of Puerto Rican Congressman José Serrano for the post of Secretary of Labor. And contrary to the finding concerning the 1990 election in East Harlem, the response of Latinos to Democratic indifference was not electoral abstention but overwhelming support for the party’s candidate. This prompted a call for a reassessment of electoral politics as a strategy of Latino empowerment in view of its perceived “irrelevance to the politics of the poor and
the working-class racial-ethnic communities” of the city (Falcón 1996, 204-205).

No analysis was offered at this point on the issue of Puerto Rican dominance of the structure of representation nor on the question of electoral coalitions among minorities. Similarly, in 1996 the focus of analysis continued to be the loyalty of Latinos to the Democratic Party. In that year, the Latino Democratic vote in the city was the highest offered by Latinos throughout the nation. In contrast, the party was indifferent, even callous, to Latino issues and concerns. In the city there was no Democratic campaign to speak of and nationally Clinton endorsed Draconian welfare reform measures that had a negative impact on Latinos. In this context, it made sense to argue that the main challenge for Latino politics in New York was how to become more politically independent in order to make the Democratic Party responsive to its needs (Falcón 1999, 242-246).

Participation, Partisanship, and Latino Voters

A basic, although not exclusive, paradox of the political context of the state is the fact that political participation is the lowest at the time in which state government is more accountable than ever to its citizens. In 1998, the proportion of voters who were registered to vote was higher while the turnout rate was much lower than in 1960 (Ward 2002, 409). From 1996 to 2004 the number of registered voters in the state grew by 16 percent from 10,162,156 to 11,837,068. Turnout at the presidential level, however, remained pretty much constant during that period. In 1996 it was 63 percent of registered voters; in 2000 the rate was 62 percent. In 2004, only 63 percent of registered voters cast ballots for President and Vice-President [http://www.elections.state.ny.us/portal/page?_pageid=153,42096,153_53293&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL].

Information concerning all aspects of governmental affairs is accessible with relative ease. The mechanisms of political parties, elections, and interest groups make governmental decisions and policies subject to scrutiny and assessment on a routine basis. One interesting feature of the politics of the state concerns the fact that the largest lobbying groups, ranked by total lobbying expenses, are health care organizations and public sector unions.

During the twentieth century the state’s governorship was almost evenly divided between Republicans and Democrats. Of the state’s 21
governors from 1901 to 2004, 11 were Democrats and 10 Republican. Republicans controlled the governorship for 55 years. From 1975 to 1994 the governor was a Democrat. From 1994 to 2006, the governorship was in the hands of the Republican Party. Control of the legislature has also been split between the parties but the balance has not always been the same. In 1915 and 1953, for example, Republicans controlled both houses by significant margins. They controlled the Assembly until 1965. In that year, the Democrats took over both houses. In 1966 Republicans regained control of the Senate. Since then, except for the period from 1969 to 1974, the Assembly has been in Democratic hands. The partisan balance in the legislature is critical because for more than 40 years the party system in the legislature has been exceptionally strong. In 1960 the legislative process was described as “a process of negotiation among the legislative leaders… and the Governor” (Zimmerman 1981, 135). This description continues to be accurate.

In New York, third parties exercise significant influence in the electoral process, most notably the Liberal and Conservative parties, founded in 1944 and 1962 respectively. Most recently the Working Families Party has been influential. In 2004, it was instrumental in the primary victory of Democrat David Soares against incumbent Albany County District Attorney Paul Kline. Soares primary victory pretty much guaranteed his election.

In terms of registration and voting at the presidential level New York is fundamentally a Democratic state. In 2004, at election time, the registration rolls included 5,534,574 Democrats compared to 3,209,082 Republicans. Those figures included increases in enrollment of more than 290,000 for the Democrats and less than 40,000 for the Republicans over the previous four years, with almost half of the increase in Democratic affiliation concentrated in New York City (Barrett 2005, B3).

In the case of Latinos, the paradox of stalled voting in the context of greater opportunities to participate is more pronounced than for other groups. With the exception of local 1199, which was led by Puerto Rican Dennis Rivera until 2006, their presence in the most important lobbying groups in the state is not significant. Because they are predominantly a Democratic constituency, Latinos have not fully benefited from the influence that third parties exercise. This also means that their voice is resonant only within the Democratic-controlled lower chamber. The strength of Democratic partisanship in New York and their small numbers within the active electorate renders them a marginal constituency.
This is also true in terms of the politics and operation of state government. In this regard, a telling detail of Robert B. Ward’s authoritative New York State Government, What it Does, How it Works, is its lack of references to Latinos. African-Americans are referenced in the book’s index only three times, twice in regards to 19th century events. Puerto Ricans are mentioned once, as “immigrants” that arrived in mass numbers after WWII with “relatively little education.” Not a word is said about the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus and its role in legislative politics in Albany. Similarly, the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force is not mentioned. Not a single Latino elected official is listed and the only reference to a Latino in the political process of the state concerns the 1999 appointment of Antonia Novello as Commissioner of the Health Department (2002, 16, 17, 216, 312). The absence of references to Joseph Bruno or Sheldon Silver in a book about the politics and operation of New York state government would constitute a serious error of omission. The omission of Latinos is more a reflection of their relative political marginality. Yet, even though they may not count for much as a group in terms of policymaking, year in and year out non-Latino elected officials as well as political candidates court Latino elected officials by making appearances at the Somos el Futuro legislative conferences held by the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force in Albany and Puerto Rico.

The 2004 Campaign

The National Landscape: Latino Voters Heavily Courted

On the heels of one of the most controversial presidential races in modern-day history, both Democrat John Kerry and Republican President George Bush looked toward decisively winning the White House in 2004. However, a lagging economy, the war in Iraq, terrorism at home, and a host of civil rights issues such as immigration, the aftermath of the Patriot Act, education reform, abortion, and gay marriage resulted in a sharply divided electorate. By election day, the Presidency was anybody’s ballgame. In the end, however, incumbent George Bush kept his job as Chief Executive by a slim margin. Part of Bush’s victory may be chalked up to the Latino vote. Accounting for half of the population growth between 2000 and 2004, Latinos were a highly coveted voting bloc that both parties actively sought (Suro et al. 2005, ii).

Despite the swelling Latino population in the United States, Latinos lack the political clout that should accompany their numbers. One explanation is that approximately 63 percent of all Latinos residing in
the United States are either too young to vote or are not citizens (Suro et al. 2005, 1). Next, despite the rise in the number of Latinos who voted nationally in 2004 — 6 percent, up from 5.5 in 2000 — not all eligible voters were registered and/or went to the polls. Only 47 percent of eligible Latinos voted, compared to 67 percent of whites and 60 percent of African-Americans (Suro et al. 2005, ii). Since the number of voters did not keep pace with actual growth, Latino political power lagged compared to other ethnic and racial groups.

Historically, Latinos have leaned Democratic when it comes to the voting booth, although it would be a mistake to classify all Latinos as such. As the 2000 and 2004 elections showed, Latino allegiance is divided between both parties. Nevertheless, when examining presidential contests between 1988 and 2004, more than half of all Latino voters chose the Democratic candidate. While support for Democratic candidates has waxed and waned over this same period — anywhere from a high of 72 for Clinton in 1992, to a low of 53 for Kerry in 2004 (National Council of La Raza 2004, 5), depending upon which exit poll was examined — support for the more liberal party has remained strong. However, as this 12-year period also shows, the Republicans have incrementally picked up more Latino voters with each election, and it appears that the trend will continue. As was the case in the 2004 election — and undoubtedly as will be the case in 2008 — eligible Latino voters were, and will be, courted by the GOP and Democrats alike.

“Necesito su voto”

To capture the vote in what were perceived as critical swing states, both the Bush and Kerry campaigns spent record amounts on advertisements written and spoken in Spanish. “Latinos in Florida, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, and Colorado are being saturated by political ads on radio and television and in print, ads that are being bought like never before in Spanish.” (Buenos Dias, Swing Voter 2004, A26.) By mid-July, 2004, it was estimated that Bush and Kerry each spent over $1 million on Spanish-language ads (Malone 2004, 9A). In the end, a total of over $4 million was spent in an effort to win the Latino vote (Buenos Dias, Swing Voter 2004, A26).

Bush and Kerry also made appearances on “Sábado Gigante,” a popular Spanish-language television show that is seen by 100 million viewers worldwide (Bush, Kerry Pop Up On ‘Sabado’ Night Live 2004, 91). The candidates discussed election issues, but also shared personal anecdotes, particularly those which they felt would strike familiar chords
with Latinos nationwide. For example, Bush appealed to the audience’s spiritual side, saying that prayer helped him find solace and peace during challenging times, while Kerry hoped to relate to viewers’ ethnic pride by remarking that he enjoyed flamenco music.2

Finally, the presidential hopefuls made personal appearances in Arizona, California (Kerry made more than 33 visits to California since 2003 and the election [Marinucci 2004, A3]), Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Nevada, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, as well as in each of their home states. The message was clear: the Latino vote was going to be critical for attaining victory. Perhaps John Kerry expressed it best when he addressed members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute in September: “My friends, I need your vote. Necesito su voto” (Roberts 2004, C1).

On a national scale, it is evident that the Bush and Kerry campaigns invested a considerable amount of money, time, and effort into courting the Latino voter—efforts that were particularly aggressive in the south and southwestern swing states (Florida, Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico). However, with regard to personally canvassing New York state, the candidates were not as active. Their behavior, specifically, their lack of personal appearances and aggressive campaigning in the state, suggested that they believed New York would once again fall to the Democrats. While the Democrat, Kerry, did indeed win New York state, and Republican George Bush won the Presidency, the assumption that homogeneity reigns supreme within the Latino voting bloc was incorrect. One interesting example concerns the Latino religious vote. Latino Protestants moved from the Democratic to the Republican column giving Bush 63 percent of their votes. Latino Catholics (31 percent) also supported Bush more than in 2000 but overall stayed Democratic (see http://pewforum.org/docs/index.php?DocID=64). The confluence of varying religious beliefs, geographic location, current events, income, social status, age, gender, education, and birthplace situate Latino voters squarely on both sides of the political aisle—a fact that appeared to be overlooked when it came to New York state.

New York State: Surrogate Candidates

Historically, the Empire State has generally voted Democratic in presidential elections; 2004 was no exception. CNN.com data showed that Kerry carried New York with 59 percent of the vote; incumbent George Bush received 40 percent, while Independent Ralph Nader garnered one percent (http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/pages/results/states
This placed New York safely in the “Blue State” category, just as had been the case in numerous presidential elections even before the designation became popular.

With the greatest number of the state’s Latino population residing in the New York City metropolitan region, the five boroughs also exhibited the strongest support for the Democratic candidate, compared to the remaining 57 counties. When taking all voters into account, John Kerry handily won the Bronx with 83 percent, Brooklyn with 75 percent, Manhattan with 82 percent, and Queens with 72 percent. George Bush won Staten Island, however, with 56 percent to Kerry’s 43 percent (http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/pages/results/states/NY/P/00/county.001.html). Yet, neither candidate made a concerted effort to reach out to the state’s Latino population, sending the message, “If you’re not a swing state, you’re not important.”

New York’s Latinos may have had even more voting power in the 2004 election, had there not been a backlog of applications for citizenship. According to Assemblyman Peter Rivera, a Democrat from the Bronx, approximately 1.3 million Latinos were unable to vote because they were waiting to become U.S. citizens (Willingham 2004, A1).

What occurred—or, more specifically, what did not occur—suggests that both the Bush and Kerry camps took New York state’s voters for granted, despite campaign-trail rhetoric touting the importance of the Latino voter. With the exception of convening the Republican National Convention in New York City, New York state, let alone Latino voters, were largely ignored. As Clarissa Martínez, Director of the Voter Mobilization Project for the National Council of La Raza said, “The only attention provided by the candidate is when they need a certain amount of votes from the community” (Willingham 2004, A1).

New York’s story begins in 2003, with the advent of the Republican National Convention (RNC), slated for late-summer in Manhattan, and concludes approximately a year later with the President’s acceptance speech at Madison Square Garden. Thereafter, the charge to lead New York’s Latinos to the polls fell to a cadre of politically-motivated surrogates.

In July, 2003, Marc Racicot, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, traveled to Washington Heights, in northern Manhattan, in an effort get the state’s Latinos to vote for George Bush. Racicot, along with RNC adviser, Ed Gillespie, and Governor George Pataki, were on hand to cut the ribbon for a new office called The Hispanic Outreach Center, a branch office of the New York Republican State Committee.
The Center’s mission was to serve as a recruitment venue to register Latinos to vote, as well as to woo existing registered voters to support the GOP in local, state, and the national elections (Sargent 2003, 1). While the effort was important insofar as its intent was to reach out to Latinos, the fact that the ribbon-cutting was scheduled as part of a highly-publicized, four-day New York City blitz by Republicans involved in planning the 2004 National Convention, indicates that the ceremony was largely symbolic.

The choice to hold the 2004 RNC in the heart of Manhattan was a coup for New York City, as it represented the National party’s first visit to the Big Apple (http://www.nycvisit.com/content/index.cfm?pagePkey=872).

It also was a visible show of strength after 9/11. Additionally, by having the RNC in a state that usually votes Democratic was another show of strength — this time, for the GOP. The Republicans also wanted to present a new self-portrait to the voters; an image that demonstrated diversity and a sense of independence — and, what better place to do so, than in New York City, the nation’s most important multicultural center? “A significant reason the Republicans decided to hold their convention in New York is that they wanted to project an inclusive image to the nation,” said Rick Davis, a nationally known Republican consultant. “It contrasts strongly with the way the party presented itself at the 1996 convention [in San Diego], when Pat Robertson spoke and the party was seen as catering to the Christian Right” (Sargent 2003, 1).

According to Davis, the challenge in 2004 was not just showing that the party was interested in the minority vote but also finding an “artful” Hispanic to play the role of spokesman for the GOP (Sargent 2003, 1). In New York, Fernando Mateo became the “artful Hispanic spokesman” of choice. Taking the podium at the RNC, Mateo voiced his support of the President’s policies, particularly those that affect immigrants—immigrants who want to stay in this country, work, and support their families at home and abroad. According to Mateo, “Most other administrations would have preferred to deport people” (http://www.nynewsday.com/news/politics/rnc/nyc-mateo-gop-video,0,1265130.realvideo?coll=nyc-delegates-headlines).

Fernando Mateo, founder of Hispanics Across America and a successful entrepreneur, was an important surrogate for the Bush camp. Born in the Dominican Republic, Mateo had immigrated to New York’s Lower East Side and made a name for himself by starting a carpet business with his father. Since then, he started numerous other businesses and non-
profit advocacy groups and became a recognized name among Latinos, as well as among politicians from both parties. Mateo’s support for then Republican Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Governor Pataki—who made frequent trips to Washington Heights to show himself as a friend of the Dominican community—appeared to have been the impetus for support, both financially and ideologically, for the President. For example, by late-2003, Mateo had raised $108,000 for the President’s re-election campaign—a figure he increased to over $250,000 by the next year (Bernstein 2003, 1). As a prominent Latino Republican, with strong ties to Governor Pataki and Candidate Bush, Mateo became an unofficial representative for the GOP.

In an effort to convince Latinos to vote for Bush, Mateo debated Miguel Martínez, a Democratic council member from the City’s 10th District in Manhattan. Martínez, also Dominican born, was an ardent Kerry supporter, who, when not campaigning in New York City, campaigned for the Senator in Florida.

The purpose of the debate was to address campaign issues such as Iraq, terrorism, the economy, and education, from a Latino and immigrant viewpoint. In addition, Mateo and Martínez debated trade policy toward Latin America and programs to help illegal immigrants—two issues that were not ranked that high on the national debate level but that resonated with New York’s Latino community (Kugel 2004, 14:5). Interestingly, the debate did not receive an endorsement from either the Bush or Kerry campaign, demonstrating that the most fundamental rudiment of the election process—debate—was left solely to community members.

Like Martínez, Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez, whose 12th District encompasses sections of Brooklyn, Queens, and Lower Manhattan, and whose constituency is largely Latino, left New York days before the election to stump for John Kerry in Florida (Savage 2004, 7). She was one of many non-Floridians who were asked by the Kerry campaign to travel south to help him attain victory in the Sunshine State (Kerry, however, lost Florida by five percentage points; [http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/pages/results/states/FL/P/00/index.html]).

The Mateo-Martínez debate, Velázquez’s trip to Florida, the Hispanic Outreach Center all demonstrate clear support and loyalty from Latino community leaders. But, they also beg the obvious questions: Where were the actual candidates during this time? Why were there no appearances in New York? Based on their reading of the polls, historical voting patterns, and their understanding of the electoral college Bush and Kerry wrote off New York and by extension Latinos in the state.
The Issue of Felon Disfranchisement

In 2000, the prison population of New York was 71,466 and while Latinos were 15.1 percent of the state’s population, they were 26.6 percent of the incarcerated population (http://www.prisonpolicy.org/importing/importing/shtml). As of mid-year 2004, approximately 65,000 New Yorkers were serving time in state or federal prison for a felony offense. Of these, almost 80 percent were African-American or Latino. Just as in 47 other states, New York’s prison population is stripped of the right to cast a ballot (Harrison and Beck 2005, 1; http://www.cssny.org/pubs/urbanagenda/2005_06_30.html; State-by-State Look 2005).

New York state election law prohibits any person convicted of a felony, in either state or federal court, from voting while serving time. If the convict receives a pardon, after the maximum sentence has been fulfilled or parole has been completed voting rights are restored, a provision enacted in 1976 (http://sentencingproject.org/pdfs/UggenManzaSummary.pdf).

Given the disproportionate number of minorities behind bars, it is clear that disfranchising felons is a state-sponsored mechanism that diminishes the electoral power of the groups that need it the most. Felon disfranchisement stems from the practice of banishing an offender from the community, thus inflicting upon the criminal a form of “civil death” (Fellner and Mauer 1988, 2). The practice was brought over to America during the nation’s founding but because voter eligibility was limited to property holders and/or free men, its impact was minimal. It was not until the end of the Civil War that voting exclusion laws became more prominent, particularly as African-Americans were able to participate. In some cases felons were permanently stripped of their voting rights and the crimes that disqualified a man from voting tended to be those that were most frequently committed by blacks. Crimes that were committed by whites as often as by blacks were excluded.

In New York, by the mid-1840s one could be disfranchised for what the state considered an “infamous crime.” And according to Constitutional Convention delegates, because African-Americans were “thirteen times more likely to be convicted of ‘infamous crimes’ than whites” they were not considered fit to vote. Even after the adoption of the 15th Amendment and more recent provisions such as the Voting Rights Act of 1965, felons remained one of two groups legally barred from voting; the other population being those who according to state law have been found incompetent by a judicial authority (New York State Election Law, Title I, §5-106, 6).
For those who support the prohibition to vote, casting a ballot is a privilege rather than a right. In their view, when a citizen violates the law and is convicted, he/she willingly relinquishes this privilege. Supporters also argue that stripping a felon of the ability to vote sends a distinct message about the consequences of breaking the law (Clegg 1999). Finally, the exclusion of felons from the electoral process hinges on the assumption that people who have committed serious crimes are generally “less likely to be trustworthy, good citizens” (Clegg 1999, 1). As such, their level of citizenship—and, by extension, their privilege to cast a ballot—may also be questioned.

On the other side of the debate are those who view the act of voting as the most critical and fundamental right each American citizen has, regardless of circumstance. According to the Sentencing Project, felon disfranchisement hinders rehabilitation by reaffirming the alienation and isolation that results from incarceration. Another contention is that while the prohibition to vote creates societal and political outcasts, the right to vote gives felons an opportunity to fulfill a duty that they will carry over outside of prison, giving the inmate dignity as well as preparation to function as a responsible citizen. A third position is that as the restrictions on voting qualifications have been lifted over the past two centuries, there is no good reason to continue to exclude any American citizen from the process. Because disfranchisement laws are rooted in a time when overt discrimination was tolerated, they are a woefully invidious and outdated modern-day mechanism (Fellner and Mauer 1998, 2; Belluck 2004, A12).

As the world model for democracy, the United States’ policy on felon voting rights is abysmal. Only two states—Maine and Vermont—allow prisoners to vote. In contrast, 18 European democracies allow their prisoners to exercise this right. In addition, so do Canada, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Perú, Puerto Rico, South Africa, and Zimbabwe ([http://www.cssny.org/pdfs/factsheet.pdf]; Fellner and Mauer 1998, 2; State-by-State Look, 2005).

What societal harm has this provision inflicted on Maine, Vermont, and all these other countries that 48 American states are avoiding? The answer to this question is simple: none whatsoever. In fact, it is these 48 states that are inflicting a serious harm on an already disadvantaged group of citizens.

Based on 2000 incarceration figures, the reduction of Latino electoral power in 2004 due to felon disfranchisement amounted to a little over 19,000 votes. In terms of overall electoral power, this does not represent
much. Latinos 18 years and over number 1,974,551 in New York state. The incarcerated Latino population in 2000 was therefore less than one percent of the voting age population. Discretely, however, 19,000 people can make a difference. If Latino felons were allowed to vote their impact could be significant depending on how participation was arranged. More importantly, the curtailment of a critical political right to such a large number of citizens is simply unacceptable. More than an electoral problem, it is a human rights issue.

Electoral Results

In the 2004 election, 64 percent of voting-age citizens in the United States participated; an increase of four percentage points over the previous election (U.S. Census Bureau 2005). In New York, as a result of their feeble campaigning, both parties failed to actively recruit eligible voters among Latinos. Republicans in particular did better in 2004 than in 2000 in a number of New York counties and towns but in none of these Latinos were a significant population (Duggan 2004, A1).

In Cayuga County, for example, the increase in the Republican vote between 2000 and 2004 was 2,755 compared to a decrease in support for the Democrats of 503 votes. In Montgomery County Bush increased his support by 1,573 votes; in Rockland County his ticket picked up 16,689 more votes than in 2000 and the increase in Seneca was 1,247; in Sullivan it was 2,616, and in Richmond 26,422 (How the Counties Voted, 2004, A4). In Cayuga Latinos were 2 percent of the total in 2000; they were 6.9 percent in Montgomery county, 10.2 percent in Rockland, 2 percent in Seneca, 9.2 percent in Sullivan, and 12.1 percent in Richmond county. In the counties where Latinos concentrate, the Kerry-Edwards victory was decisive. In Bronx County the margin of victory of the Democratic ticket was 227,293 votes; Kings County gave the Democrats a margin of 347,824 votes. Similarly, in New York and Queens Counties the Democrats won handily by 419,360 and 267,881 votes respectively (How the Counties Voted, 2004, A4). Charles Schumer won re-election comfortably and by the widest margin in recent history. Also, Republican control of the state Senate decreased by three seats, leaving Republicans with an edge over the Democrats of only eight positions. At the Assembly, Democrats picked two more seats as well, with the election of Robert Reilly, from Colonie, and Donna Lupardo, from Binghamton. This left the partisan balance at 104 Democrats and 46 Republicans (http://www.nydems.org/news/archive/2004_11_000517.html).
A significant proportion of new voters—close to 20 percent—chose not to be identified with either major party in 2004. From an estimated 575,000 new voters in 2004, more than 100,000 registered as independents (Duggan 2004, A1). Also, in 2004, the majority of the fastest growing counties in the nation were exurban communities. According to Ronald Brownstein and Richard Rainey, “these growing areas…are providing the GOP a foothold in blue Democratic-leaning states and solidifying the party’s control over red Republican-leaning states” (2004, A4). To win the presidency, the Democratic Party does not need to win in these areas. Yet, the party may as well consider it necessary to target this growing constituency if only to reduce Republican margins in competitive states. The growing independent vote may also be a target of Democratic appeals in the future. For Latinos in New York as well as nationally this may translate into diminished attention to their issues and needs as the party reasons that it is better to target 100,000 swing voters from a group that is likely to turnout at a 70 percent rate than to spend resources courting a group that is less likely to vote and whose support can be taken for granted. Only in the more competitive context of a close election would this calculus be likely to change in favor of more attention to Latinos.

**Latino Participation and Voting**

Thus far, we have described the historical background prior to the 2004 election and some of its significant events. As we have seen, the heavily Democratic character of New York state meant that presidential candidates of both parties paid little attention to the state, taking election results as a foregone conclusion. Thus, the overall campaign statewide was certainly low key, and, given this context, it is not surprising that in what there was of a campaign, candidates paid scant attention to Latinos. How did voters respond? In this section, we use procedures of ecological inference to estimate Latino participation (registration and turnout) along with voting rates, and we compare those levels to those for African-Americans and whites.

To place the findings below into a broader perspective, it is worth noting that although there is scholarly disagreement over the measurement of actual Latino participation rates (see Leal et al. 2005; Minnite et al. 1997), it is taken as a given in the literature on Latino politics that political participation among Latinos has historically been relatively low. That said, there is debate on the reasons for this relatively low partici-
While many see it as a result of factors including demographics (lower income or education), others highlight the importance of the electoral context, arguing that under circumstances of particular interest to Latinos (Latino issues are on the agenda, Latino candidates are running for office, etc.), voters can be mobilized, and participation can be notably enhanced. Thus, in the 2001 Los Angeles mayoral campaign featuring a city with a plurality of Latino voters, ethnic issues on the political agenda and competing Latino candidates, voter turnout was notably increased (Barreto et al. 2005). It is worth keeping this debate in mind as we describe our findings.

To examine Latino participation and voting in New York state, we compiled a data set consisting of aggregate level information on demographic (population data broken down by race and ethnicity) and participation and voting data for the 150 districts composing the New York State Assembly. From this aggregate data, we employed the latest and most powerful statistical techniques of ecological inference (i.e., the EZI program developed by King 1997; see also Burden and Kimball 1998; Halpin and Jaramillo 1998). Ecological inference involves estimating the behavior of individuals from aggregate level information. Thus, for example, for each assembly district, we know the total district population, the total number of both Latinos and non-Latinos in the district and the total voter registration rate. Therefore, it is easy at the aggregate level to correlate proportions of Latinos (or non-Latinos) in the district with the aggregate registration rate in the district. But how do we get more precise information to generate estimates of the proportions of Latinos and non-Latinos who actually registered in each district? This is the task of ecological inference. To produce the estimates to follow, we used EZI in three logical stages of the voting process. We estimated the proportion of Latinos in the total population over age 18 who registered to vote. Of those registered, we then estimated the proportion who turned out, and finally, of those who turned out, we estimated the proportion of the vote going to the Democratic or Republican parties.

In what follows, we first provide these estimates statewide (Table 5). We then break the estimates down for important geographic subunits, hypothesizing that participation rates might differ between New York City and regions beyond the City as well as between areas with higher (40 percent or more) and lower concentrations of Latinos in the population (Tables 6 and 7). More precisely, following the work of Barreto et al. (2005), a first speculation would be that participation and voting Democratic would be higher in New York City than outside the city and
Elevated in areas with a higher concentration of Latinos where perhaps mobilization is more likely. Finally, we provide separate estimates for each of the five boroughs of New York City (Table 8). While techniques of ecological inference are becoming increasingly common in statistical analysis, they of course only produce estimates. We have corroborated the accuracy of these estimates in two ways, by comparing them to exit polls for New York state and to other studies of Latino voting in 2004.

Let’s begin by considering data on Latino participation. The tables make it very clear that despite gains in Latino electoral participation elevated in areas with a higher concentration of Latinos where perhaps mobilization is more likely. Finally, we provide separate estimates for each of the five boroughs of New York City (Table 8). While techniques of ecological inference are becoming increasingly common in statistical analysis, they of course only produce estimates. We have corroborated the accuracy of these estimates in two ways, by comparing them to exit polls for New York state and to other studies of Latino voting in 2004.

**Table 5: Estimates of Latino Participation and Voting, By New York State Assembly Districts, 2004**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Registered</th>
<th>% Total Turnout</th>
<th>% Vote Dem*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.22**</td>
<td>0.076578</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.031719333</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.136101333</td>
<td>0.066219333</td>
<td>0.018577333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*To produce more precise estimates, we ran EZI models using a covariate of whether or not each Assembly District had a Democratic incumbent.

**In this and subsequent tables, values in second row of each entry are standard errors.

**Table 6: Latino Participation and Voting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New York City</th>
<th>% Registered</th>
<th>% Total Turnout</th>
<th>% Vote Dem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.183864615</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>89</td>
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<td>0.03392</td>
<td>0.039690769</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.123450769</td>
<td>0.061412308</td>
<td>0.017206154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-NYC</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.242642353</td>
<td>0.080628235</td>
<td>0.028748235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.01922</td>
<td>0.008428235</td>
<td>0.006777647</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>98</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.145775294</td>
<td>0.069895294</td>
<td>0.019625882</td>
</tr>
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</table>
which may have occurred nationwide (Miroff et al. 2006, 143) at least throughout New York state in the context of the 2004 elections, Latinos participated at considerably lower levels not only than whites but African-Americans as well. This pattern of lower participation holds for both registration and turnout. Thus, according to our estimates, 51 percent of Latinos registered compared to 74 percent for African-Americans and 91 percent for whites. Of those registered, 30 percent of Latinos turned out to vote compared with 43 percent and 70 percent of African-Americans and whites respectively (Table 5). Though the magnitude varies somewhat, these differences persist in the various geographic units we have examined—in areas both within and outside of New York City, in all five boroughs and in areas of relatively high or lower concentrations of Latinos.6

While it is one thing to know from an intellectual perspective and in the abstract that Latinos participate at lower levels than other groups, the differences displayed in these tables truly bring home the point: while it is just about the probability of a coin toss (50/50) that an individual Latino will register to vote, probabilities for African-Americans and whites are far from a random model, ranging in the 70 percent and 90 percent range respectively. Gains may have been made, but there is certainly room for additional progress.

As Barreto et al. (2005) have noted, certain conditions do appear to be more conducive to Latino participation. While Latino turnout (as a per-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latino Concentration 40% and Less</th>
<th>% Registered</th>
<th>% Total Turnout</th>
<th>% Vote Dem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>0.234392593</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>91</td>
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<td>43</td>
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<td>0.029376296</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>98</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.14654285</td>
<td>0.07130285</td>
<td>0.019682857</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latino Concentration More Than 40%</th>
<th>% Registered</th>
<th>% Total Turnout</th>
<th>% Vote Dem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.062186667</td>
<td>0.041073333</td>
<td>0.029033333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.052806667</td>
<td>0.047633333</td>
<td>0.06346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>98</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.132923478</td>
<td>0.064672174</td>
<td>0.01824087</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
cent of those registered) hovers around 30 percent irrespective of any of the conditions we examined, registration rates vary notably. They are higher (63 percent to 50 percent) in assembly districts where the concentration of Latinos is 40 percent or more compared to other assembly districts (Table 7), and as Table 8 shows, there is also considerable variation by borough. Registration rates are higher in the boroughs of Manhattan (66 percent) and the Bronx (56 percent) than in the other three boroughs (Brooklyn, 49 percent, Staten Island, 44 percent and Queens 31 percent). As a point of interest about minority participation more generally, it is worth emphasizing that our analysis shows that African-American and Latino participation patterns in New York differ. As is true for Latinos, there is little variation in African-American turnout rates as a percent of those registered. There is also not much variation in African-American registration rates, which consistently range between 70 and 75 percent, but in this regard they are different. Plus, these are higher proportions than for Latinos although, as we have seen, notably lower than for whites.

Despite lower level participation, how did Latinos actually vote? In the nation as a whole, initially it was claimed that the Latino vote split 56 percent Democrat compared to 43 percent Republican (Miroff et al., 2006, 208). A closer analysis revealed that on average support for Kerry was 60 percent compared to 32 percent for Bush (Leal et al., 2005, 47). EZI estimates the New York statewide voting rate for the Democratic Party to be 68 percent compared to a 76 percent Democratic proportion estimated from exit polls. So while our estimates may not be perfect, taking into account sampling error, they are not too far from the mark of overlapping confidence intervals.7 Even more notably, what stands out as particularly striking is the differences between New York City where the proportion of Latinos voting Democratic falls in the 90 percent range compared to proportions in the 60 percent range in areas outside of New York City and/or in areas where there are lower concentrations of Latinos. In this respect, New York state is certainly not New York City writ large.

Conclusion and Recommendations

First, low levels of electoral participation and the absence of party competition are two factors that explain the marginality of Latino politics in New York state at the presidential level. In fact, these two variables operate in mutually reinforcing fashion. Further, the concentration of
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Table 8: Latino Participation and Voting by New York City Boroughs
voters and elected officials in New York City seem to make it difficult for Latinos to participate more prominently throughout the state. In consonance with research findings that show correlations between significant Latino concentrations and greater turnout, participation and voting is greater in areas of higher Latino concentration (see Barreto, et al. 2004).\(^8\) However, citizenship is a factor that diminishes the rate and effectiveness of Latino political participation in the state. We estimate that over 700,000 Latinos in New York State are unable to vote due to citizenship status. This number includes Latinos who entered the country before 1980 and up to March of 2000. While all qualify for naturalization presently, we estimate that in 2004 over 300,000 had been long enough in the United States to qualify for citizenship. This represents an estimated reduction of Latino voting power in 2004 of 15 percent. Clearly, one way to increase Latino political participation in New York is by aggressively promoting naturalization.\(^9\)

Second, New York state should join Puerto Rico, Maine, and Vermont in allowing incarcerated individuals to vote. The disfranchisement of felons is an antiquated practice that ought to be placed in its rightful place: in the dustbin of history. In the United States the practice is rooted in the explicit intent to discriminate against minority citizens. The Empire State ought to reject this legacy and join the rest of the civilized world in extending the right to vote to all citizens. The arguments in support of felon disfranchisement are purely abstract and inconsequential. Convicted felons are not rehabilitated nor do they become better citizens by being deprived of the ability to vote. To the contrary, voting could be an instrument of rehabilitation. As part of a broad program of civic education, voting could prepare convicted felons for the exercise of full citizenship in or out of prison. Felon disfranchisement contributes nothing to the well-being or security of New York citizens. On the other hand, the benefits of voting are self-evident and the experience of the states and countries that allow felons to vote offers both reassurance as well as models for action. In the aggregate, the votes of the more or less 19,000 Latinos incarcerated in 2000 may not be decisive but depending on how they are tallied discretely they could be significant. Beyond that, and more importantly, their inability to vote represents the denial of a basic human right without reasonable justification.

Finally, in the context of a heavily Democratic state and a low key presidential campaign, it may not be surprising that Latino participation in the 2004 election was relatively low. On the other hand, as we contemplate possibilities for future elections, there also appear to be condi-
tions which would foster increased Latino political activity. Generally, the presence of a Latino candidate, salient Latino issues, and voter registration and education campaigns contribute to increased participation. Direct contact also makes Latino turnout more likely (Barreto et al. 2005; Ramírez 2005; Michelson 2005). High concentrations of Latinos are also conducive to higher levels of participation.

We have already mentioned naturalization as a factor of participation. Another possible way of increasing participation in the future is to more effectively use the attention provided by candidates to Latino elected officials to wrest specific policy commitments from them. With such commitments in hand, Latino elected officials can campaign locally to promote turnout in their districts. In Albany, for example, Latino elected officials are assiduously courted by political candidates during the Somos el Futuro legislative conference held every April. In November of each campaign year, candidates also travel to Puerto Rico to hobnob with Latino legislators during Somos’ winter legislative conference. At these events, candidates campaign directly by making appeals to participants through campaign literature, campaign signs, and prepared speeches; they do so indirectly by making presentations in conference workshops.

The November 2005 conference included declared as well as undeclared candidates. Present were Eliot Spitzer, Andrew Cuomo, Mark Green, and Adolfo Carrión, the Bronx Borough President who all but announced his intention to run for the New York City mayoralty in 2009. In April of 2006, the lobby of the Albany Crowne Plaza hotel, where the Somos conference was held, looked like campaign central with signs from the Spitzer and Thomas Suozzi campaigns for governor virtually covering every available inch of space. At a VIP reception held the second day of the conference the guest of honor was Hilary Clinton and even the Republican aspirant for Governor William Weld was present.

Did Latino elected officials use these opportunities to offer support to candidates in exchange for policy support? This was not done then and has never been done in the past. Of course, politicians have long memories and once elected former candidates never forget who supported them and who did not. When support for candidates is explicit but the expected returns from them are tacit, it is easy for candidates to forget political debts after their election. As a result Latino elected officials in New York are more likely to offer their support gratis. Consequently, Latino voters are mobilized, if at all, on the basis of general and symbolic
appeals as opposed to concrete and substantive expectations.

In sum, naturalization, enfranchisement of Latino felons, and a more aggressive practice of quid pro quo politics are three elements that Latino leaders, activists, and elected officials in New York ought to consider to invigorate the Latino electorate, to increase Latino political representation, and to promote the socioeconomic well-being of the community throughout the state.

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Notes

1 We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Wesley Nishiyama (Department of Political Science, University of Albany) and David Kimball (Department of Political Science, University of Missouri-St. Louis) who went above and beyond the call of duty to assist with the data analysis for the section on Latino participation and voting. We also thank Theodore Arrington for his useful comments and suggestions.

2 This was the musical equivalent of Gerald Ford’s biting into a tamale without removing the wrapping. Flamenco is from Spain. The music of Latinos in the United States is mostly Mexican, Cuban, and Puerto Rican in origin. Since the 1960s Brazilian, Colombian, and Dominican influences have grown as well.

3 U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder. To compare these proportions with 1996 percentages see Deirdre A. Gaquin and Mark S. Littman, eds., 1998 County and City Extra, Annual Metro, City, and County Data Book (Lanham, MD: Bernan Press, 1998), 418-432.


Our estimates of approximately a 30 percent Latino turnout rate differ markedly and are notably lower than those produced by Efrain Escobedo in his study of Latino registration and turnout rates from lists of Latino surnames in New York City. See *The Latino Vote in New York City*. NALEO Educational Fund, n.d..

Exit poll from: [http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/pages/results/states/NY/P/00/epolls.0.html](http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/pages/results/states/NY/P/00/epolls.0.html). A 95 percent confidence interval around our 68 percent estimate places about a 2 percent range around the 68 percent, estimating the Democratic vote at between 66 to 70 percent. Sampling errors for the exit polls were unavailable, but assuming a 4 to 5 percent margin of error, the range for the Democratic vote would be approximately 71 to 81 percent, placing our estimates very much in the ballpark.

It is important to note that Barreto et al.’s findings are for Mexican-Americans in Southern California in majority Latino districts as opposed to districts with just significant concentrations. In this study the authors assume that in a majority-Latino context turnout is driven by the belief among Latino voters that their chance of electing a preferred candidate is high. They do not fully account for the impact of competitiveness but they show that income, education, age, and gender-women are more likely to turnout to vote than men-are all positively associated with turnout.

These estimates are based on the assumption that the proportion of voting age Latinos in the foreign-born, non-citizen population is the same as in the total Latino population in the state. The proportion of the Latino population in the state that is 18 years old and over is 69 percent.

References


New York State Election Law, Title I, §5-106, 6.


Negotiating Home Language: Spanish Maintenance and Loss in Latino Families

Amy Lutz

Based on in-depth interviews and fieldwork in and around Dallas, Texas, this paper explores the ways in which Latino parents and their children negotiate home language and offers a theoretical framework for understanding language maintenance and loss in the home. The parents in this study overwhelmingly view bilingualism as the ideal, yet many parents, especially those who are English-dominant or bilingual, find it difficult to maintain Spanish at home because of outside pressures that prioritize English and concerns about their children’s English-language acquisition. The family, as the environment in which children first begin to learn language, and family dynamics regarding language are important aspects of the linguistic proficiencies of Latino children. Alba et al. (2002) argue that home language is “decisive for maintaining the mother tongue,” yet little sociological research has investigated how parents and children think about and negotiate the language of home (469). Much of the previous research focuses on the ways in which different social, demographic, and individual characteristics are associated with differential language proficiencies among parents and children. However, this study explores how elements of the parents’ and children’s linguistic context at the micro level within the family relate to the processes of Spanish maintenance and loss.

Theoretical and Demographic Traditions on Language Maintenance and Shift

The linguistic accommodation of immigrants has often been viewed as a first step in an assimilatory path toward socioeconomic mobility in the United States (Gordon 1964; Bean and Stevens 2003). Past sociological research has conceptualized this as a trend toward English monolingualism within three generations (Fishman 1972; López 1978). In this vein, research on language incorporation of immigrants has often focused on mother tongue shift—that is, a shift from one language to another over generations—and related concepts of language preference, use, and proficiencies among immigrants and their successors (see Alba
Recent research has also included discussions of the maintenance of an ethnic mother tongue in addition to English (see Alba 1999; Espiritu and Wolf 2001; López 1999; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut and Portes 2001; Zhou and Bankston 1998). Indeed, much of the contemporary research questions the notion that full linguistic assimilation is a necessary or even beneficial step in the route to social mobility. Such research emphasizes the benefits of bilingualism relative to English monolingualism such as higher grade point averages, increased mathematical ability, lower high school dropout rates, enhanced educational achievement, greater cultural unity within the ethnic group, decreased family conflicts and greater stability in immigrant households (Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Fernández and Nielson 1986; Nielson and Lerner 1986; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Zhou and Bankston 1998; Stevens 1992; Myung-Sup Byun; García Coll and Magnuson 1997). Research on contemporary immigrant groups suggests a rapid shift to English as a usual or home language (Alba et al. 2002; Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Veltman 1988), but also a trend toward bilingualism, particularly among Latinos(as) who seem to maintain their mother tongue more readily than other immigrant groups (Alba 1999; Alba et al. 2002; López 1999; Portes and Schauffler 1994; Rumbaut 1996).1

Integral to questions about contemporary ethnic identity and processes of language maintenance and shift across generations is a greater understanding of the processes of negotiation of home language in families. Parents play a key role in the linguistic adaptation of their children by speaking to their children in a particular language at home (see Veltman 1981; Portes and Rumbaut 1996). This negotiation is important because it reflects the processes by which parents and children make concessions and compromises in the linguistic ideals and practical goals they have for their children.

Lambert and Taylor (1990), in surveys in Detroit and Miami, have found that immigrant parents attempt to promote bilingualism among their children. However, Portes and Rumbaut (1996) find that “English monolingualism is the dominant trend among the second generation, and that preservation of fluent bilingualism is an exceptional outcome …” (229). This may be in part related to the desire among parents for their children to speak English well. Valdés (1996), for example, finds that the Mexican-American parents in her ethnographic study place immense importance on their children’s English-language acquisition because they feel that English is the key to their children’s success in the...
A shift to English monolingualism may also reflect the immense societal pressures on immigrant and later generation families to speak English only. Buriel and De Ment (1997) suggest that immigrant parents and their offspring “adapt their socialization practices to meet the developmental challenges posed by changing family ecologies,” such as immigration and pressures to acculturate (180-181; see also Harrison et al. 1990; Lin and Fu 1990). As such, many families that ideally would like for their children to be bilingual may find that their desire for their children to speak English well, along with societal influences that prioritize “accentless English” (Urciuoli 1996) above all else lead to increasing use of English in the home. The process by which family members, often continually, negotiate and renegotiate home language is neither simple nor without conflict. Indeed, research points to areas of generational conflict as children grow up in a society that prioritizes US cultural norms within a family that may prioritize different cultural norms, particularly when parents and children have different linguistic proficiencies (see Kibria 1993; Rumbaut 1996; Baptiste 1993; Koplow and Messinger 1990).

Based on in-depth interviews, I present in this paper a theoretical framework for understanding the processes of home language negotiation. By highlighting the ways in which parents think about language and attempt to negotiate home language with their children, this work adds a micro-level focus on family processes that can complement the primarily macro-level research and theoretical models on language maintenance and shift. The family, as the environment in which children first begin to learn language, and family dynamics regarding language are important aspects of the linguistic proficiencies of Latino children. As such, this research explores how elements of the parents’ and children’s linguistic context (arguably informed by characteristics such as social class, ethnicity, settlement patterns, generation, etc.) relate to daily struggles, negotiations, and strategies about home language.

**Methodology**

Forty in-depth interviews of adult members of Latino families were undertaken in the Dallas, Texas metropolitan area. These interviews focused on language use, preferences, and experiences at home, at work, and in the community. Parents were asked about their hopes and strategies regarding their children’s language proficiencies, as well as their perceptions of their children’s language use and preferences. The inter-
views were approximately forty-five minutes to one and a half hours in duration and were conducted in English or Spanish based on the preference of the participant. The interviews were semi-structured; an interview guide was used, but other questions were asked throughout the course of the interviews for follow up. There is substantial ethnic and generational diversity in this sample to include the variety of linguistic experiences of speakers of different ethnic origins and nativity.

Participants were selected based on a modified snowball method whereby interviewees referred other participants to the study. In order to achieve variation in social networks, class, ethnicity, generation, and language skills, I contacted various organizations in and around Dallas to strategically select participants from diverse backgrounds who could then refer other participants to the study.²

Whenever possible, I tried to interview more than one family member, and made particular efforts to interview parents and their adult children. The decision to include parents of varying ages was made to understand decision-making about home language at different points in the process. Over time and stages of life, the languages used between parents and children sometimes shifted and changed, often with the interest of the children (see Tuominen 1999). Parents of young children often had much more optimism about their decisions and the possible outcomes, while the parents of adult children were more likely to say they might have done things differently. Some field notes were also taken of observations in Dallas including notes on media offerings, daily activities involving language choices, and activities focused on or targeted at the Latino population in Dallas such as church activities, English-language classes, and networking events.

In building the theoretical model, I drew heavily on participants’ reports of their own and other family members’ language use as well as their linguistic environments and how they think about them. Thus, one shortcoming of this research methodology may be that it does not reflect the aspects of home (and other) language negotiation that are unnoticed and unconscious. With this limitation noted, however, the inclusion of a theoretical model of language negotiation based on parents’ perceptions and conceptualizations within adds a new component to the literature on mother tongue maintenance and shift.
Negotiating Home Language: A Framework for Understanding Home Language Choice

For the participants in this sample, home language—which ultimately informs children’s linguistic skills, particularly in Spanish—is often a compromise between children’s language preferences and parents’ perceptions of linguistic ideals, options, and risks. There is, of course, considerable variation in parents’ perceptions according to their own language skills, decisions regarding settlement and return, and experiences in the labor market. Figure 1 presents a framework of the elements that inform home language negotiation in households based on the interviews. On the left side of the model are the elements that frame parents’ linguistic context (although it is acknowledged that generation, social class, ethnic settlement patterns and other contextual variables inform these elements). Parents’ linguistic context informs their perceptions of the particular benefits or risks associated with different linguistic options for their children and is characterized by three elements: decisions regarding settlement and return, language skills, and language experiences in the community and labor market. Children’s language preferences are informed by their parents’ linguistic context, but also by the community in which they live; schools particularly seem to impact children’s linguistic preferences (see also Portes and Schauffler 1994). Home language ultimately becomes a compromise between children’s language preferences and parents’ perceptions of benefits and risks associated with different linguistic options.

Bilingualism as an Ideal, English as a Reality

The interviews reveal that the majority of Latino parents of various socioeconomic, ethnic, generational, and linguistic backgrounds in Dallas view bilingualism as the ideal linguistic outcome for their children. Parents express their preference for bilingualism for their children in terms of two rationales: 1) bilingualism enhances the maintenance of a family and ethnic culture, and 2) bilingualism can offer their children an advantage in the labor market.

Parents cited familial reasons for maintaining Spanish at home, such as ease of communication and enhanced understanding and connectedness with their children, as well as cultural reasons such as the transmission of ethnic value systems and cultural norms that are different from those in the United States. Mrs. López, a new migrant from Mexico, says
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Negotiating Home Language
she would like to maintain Spanish within the family even in future generations, “porque es el idioma de uno” [because it is one’s language]. It is the language of one’s past, one’s culture, and one’s family. These reasons inform the hopes on the part of many, particularly first-generation parents, that the language will be maintained.

The second rationale, that bilingualism can offer their children an advantage in the labor market, reflects a feeling on the part of many parents that knowledge of Spanish has taken on an increased importance in both the Dallas economy and the international economy. While previously English was thought to be the only language that would bring successful integration and opportunity in Dallas, many parents have begun to see bilingualism as offering greater potential success for their children. This perception is no doubt linked to population dynamics of Dallas, which has witnessed a 122 percent increase in the population that identifies as Latino or Hispanic between 1990 and 2000, with those who identify as Latino or Hispanic now accounting for over 23 percent of the population in the Dallas Metropolitan Statistical Area, and about 34 percent of the central city area (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000). Mrs. Hernández, a second-generation Mexican-American mother and teacher, feels a renewed importance in maintaining Spanish among her younger children.

With the older ones, I think I never even thought about encouraging them to speak Spanish. It just wasn’t that important. With the second set because there’s like eight years span between the first two…. So, the second set, I really have made a better effort—only because I saw the importance of it…. I think it has become more important…. I can see in job situations, the world is shrinking. People are, all over the world, are communicating. Just in my own husband’s job, people are sent to South America, Central America, Spain, France. They’re seeking those people who already know the language, so they don’t have to stop and train them and send you which is gonna be hard as an adult anyway…. Even in teaching itself, just in teaching. If you speak a second language you know, there’s a better chance of you getting a job than if you don’t. They need language teachers badly.

Parents of varied generational and socioeconomic status echoed these sentiments.
She’s going to have a big success, especially in the United States, because the minority people or the minorities are Spanish…but as the minority increasing every year, so it’s going to predominate sooner or later the Spanish people here. It’s very important for her if she’s going to be involved in any kind of business to speak both. It’s very important. For me, it’s very, very important. Like my dad when he put me in the kinder [kindergarten in Spanish] to study English [in Peru] because he say he think one day in the future you’re going to learn. He said, “You need, you’re going to need English.” It’s the same point for her (Mrs. Cáceres, Peruvian woman about her daughter).

Well, we are in Texas, this will be the second language here. It’s good for them if they want to stay in Texas and plus anywhere in the States. Having at least two languages is good. Right now the rate of, as I understand, the Hispanic population is growing faster than the Asian population (Mr. Medina, island-born Puerto Rican man about his two daughters).

Citing the growth of the Hispanic/Latino population, many parents want their children to be bilinguals because they sense that Spanish, in addition to English, will provide more and better job opportunities for their children.

With the perception that Spanish is an increasingly important skill in the labor market, Mr. Lozano expresses a sentiment echoed by other first-generation parents whose children resisted learning Spanish while growing up in Texas in the 1980s:

I always wanted them to be bilingual, but I couldn’t make them understand how important it would be. Now they say to me that I should have forced them to learn it…. I’m disappointed for them. It would have been more valuable for them on the job market to speak Spanish, especially now (Mr. Lozano, Mexican-American man).

However, parents of younger children faced similar resistance. Despite their stated desire to have bilingual children, many parents who are bilingual, and even those who speak limited English, find it difficult to maintain a Spanish language environment at home or choose not to. Mrs. López, who has limited English proficiency, notes that children in her extended family, even those born in Mexico, have lost their abilities
to communicate in Spanish. She says that after being in the United States for years, and establishing roots, Spanish somehow “gets lost.”

Being here, it [Spanish] is lost... Practically, once you are here, it’s only English (translated from Spanish).

Many parents, particularly foreign-born parents, use the same words to describe the generational shift from Spanish to English they see occurring in their families. In the context of the United States, Spanish is “lost.” How is it that Spanish-speaking parents who have a desire for their children to maintain Spanish in addition to English increasingly find that Spanish is lost? What explains this? In this paper, I argue that in order to understand this process, we need to understand both parents’ and children’s language contexts, which include not only their linguistic skills and desires to maintain a language, but also their linguistic experiences and pressures within the community.

Linguistic Preferences of Children: Exposure to English in the School System

Tuominen’s (1999) research has found that home language choices are more often driven by children than by parents. In terms of home language, school-entry is a key turning point in many families. Many parents who had established their home language to be Spanish found that upon entry to school, their children began to prefer to use English and even began to use English at home. As such, home language negotiation often occurs as parents react to the increasing amounts of English that children bring into the home as they progress through the school system. In light of the pressures exerted on children to use English in school, and the subsequent early preference children establish for using English, parents who began speaking to their children in Spanish from birth are faced with the decision of whether to shift to English or continue with Spanish upon the child’s entry to school. This time, however, unlike earlier decisions about home language when their children were too young to be involved in the decision-making process, the children become active participants, often by asserting their own language preferences.

At school, children meet and become friends with other children in an English-language environment, reinforcing the use of English among peers both at school and in neighborhoods, and they begin to shift their language use to fit into that English-dominant environment. This phe-
The phenomenon is something that resonated with parents in this study. Many mentioned that when their children began school, they became less interested or even resistant to speaking Spanish at home. An example of this is seen in an interview with a woman from the Dominican Republic and her US-born college-age daughter.

Daughter: When I was very young, they spoke to me in both languages. As soon as I got into school, in like pre-school, kindergarten, and no one else spoke Spanish.

Mother: She said to me, “Mom, no Spanish, please.”

Daughter: Yeah, I would understand it but I wouldn’t speak it. Then that started going downhill. There was less and less Spanish in the house as I grew up.

In this example, the child was aware that both of her parents knew English (the father in the family is not Latino, but does speak Spanish), although the mother spoke with the daughter in Spanish prior to entering school.

Parents without high levels of English proficiency also reported a similar trend, with a variation. Their children, growing up in the United States, speak with siblings in English, sometimes against the wishes of their parents. The Cruz family is from Colombia and has been in this country for about one year. Their eight-year-old daughter has been learning English since their arrival. Although her parents prefer Spanish at home, the eight-year-old often speaks in English to her younger sister, and the parents feel that they have to constantly reinforce that Spanish is the language of the household.

We have to insist all the time on Spanish because the older girl tends to speak with [her sister] in English. Therefore we have to be all the time, all the time, “Speak in Spanish, speak in Spanish, speak in Spanish.” I think that at first when she was beginning to learn English, she wanted to speak it all the time. Now it is a little better. Now she speaks with the other little one in Spanish and we have insisted that she help her to also build the same proficiency in the two languages (translated from Spanish).

Other parents cited that schools create pressure for children to speak English. In many families, particularly those in which parents are foreign-born and children are native-born, parents speak to their children
in Spanish and the children respond in English (see López 1996). Mr. Sánchez, a Mexican-born father with three daughters who were born in the United States, illustrates such a situation.

We basically spoke in Spanish, but because of peer pressure, they felt that they knew to speak more English. So, amongst themselves they spoke in English. My middle daughter basically refused to speak the language and throughout her junior [high], I guess, 7th, 8th, 9th grade, she, again because of peer pressure, she wouldn’t. Like I said, we spoke to them in Spanish. They spoke back to us in English.

Similarly, Mr. Torres, from Colombia, said that he believes that the school had seventy percent of the influence on the language that children speak, while he and his wife had much less influence.

Parental Perceptions of Linguistic Ideals, Options, and Risks

Parents’ reactions to children’s increasing use of English are key in the process of home language negotiation and intergenerational transmission of language, and are guided by a variety of factors shaped by their own linguistic and social context. In discussing language skills and practices, the vast majority of parents presented bilingualism as the ideal, the skill that ultimately they would prefer for their children and which they associated with the most advantages. Indeed, every parent in the study viewed bilingualism positively. However, many parents’ language practices at home, particularly those of bilingual parents who are highly skilled in both English and Spanish, often emphasized English proficiency. Further, bilingual parents often seemed to feel more conflicted about and face greater difficulty in transmitting dual-language proficiency to their children at home than parents with limited English proficiency. In terms of parents’ conceptions of bilingualism, what distinguished parents on the topic of bilingualism was not whether they saw it as a positive outcome in general or even for their own children, but rather how positive it would be in their own children’s lives in relation to the effort involved and potential payoffs and drawbacks.

The concept of investment in language learning is useful in terms of understanding the decisions about language made by parents for their children (see Chiswick 1991; Norton Peirce 1995). The parents I interviewed revealed two types of linguistic goals for their children, which I
will call the ideal and the attainable goals. Bilingualism may be seen as the ideal by most parents, but the “return on investment must be seen as commensurate with the effort expended on learning the second language” (Norton Pierce 1995, 17). If it is not, or the cost is too great (in terms or time, effort, conflict with children, etc.) parents may shift to what they perceive as attainable linguistic or cultural goals instead. Norton Pierce argues:

If language learners invest in a second language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital. Learners will expect or hope to have a good return on that investment—a return that will give them access to hitherto unattainable resources.

While Norton Pierce speaks of learning a second language in general, the same logic can be applied to the maintenance of a family mother tongue in a context where the outside society speaks another language. In this context, the investment in English proficiency is somewhat easy, given that children are exposed to English on a daily basis at school, and yields a secure payoff in the United States. The maintenance of another language, in this case, Spanish, may require considerable investment in terms of time and effort on the part of both the parents and the child.

In the context of the United States, where most children spend a large portion of their day in an English-dominant environment of school, fluent proficiency in both languages does not come without a considerable price in terms of time, effort, and potential conflict, and many parents feel unsure about the types of strategies that will lead to full proficiency in both languages. For most parents, their children’s English competency was viewed as essential (see Valdés 1996), while their Spanish competency ranged from extremely important to something “that would be nice,” but was not a priority. In some cases, parents do not feel that the additional investment in Spanish is worth the effort in the context of living in the United States and/or worry that the maintenance of Spanish may come at the expense of English. Other parents see a vital importance in maintaining Spanish and felt that their children were learning English sufficiently at school. The anticipated payoff of an investment in Spanish maintenance, as seen by these parents, reflects parents’ perceptions of risks and opportunities associated with different linguistic options informed by the particularities of parents’ linguistic context (see Figure 2). As noted in Figure 2, which indicates different
### Figure 2: Perceived Risks Associated with Ideal Child Linguistic Outcome for Bilingual and Spanish-Dominant Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bilingual parents</th>
<th>Spanish-dominant parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideal Child Linguistic Outcome</strong></td>
<td>Bilingualism/ Fluency in both languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceived Risks</strong></td>
<td>1) Child has diminished proficiency in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implication: Reduced occupational mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Conflict with child</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3) Effort not commensurate with benefits</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4) Child has diminished proficiency in Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implications: Potential loss of labor market advantage in some fields, Loss of family/cultural heritage, Potential loss of communication with extended, but not immediate family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implications: Loss of family cohesion, Role reversal</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
patterns for bilingual and Spanish dominant parents, parents have different perceived risks associated with pursuing ideals and attainable success for their children, and these ideal and attainable successes are shaped by social circumstances of the families. In this section I discuss the goals, benefits, and risks associated with various linguistic outcomes as perceived by bilingual, Spanish dominant, and English dominant parents. It should be noted that within my sample (similar to wider societal patterns) parents’ language group also overlapped with socioeconomic status. In most cases the Spanish-dominant group was of lower socioeconomic status than the other two language groups.

Parents’ Linguistic Context

By virtue of their circumstances, settlement patterns, generation and social class, Latino parents are immersed within a particular linguistic context, defined by their language skills in English and Spanish, their decisions about whether they will settle or have settled permanently in the United States or plan to return to their countries of origin at some point, and their experiences regarding the meaning of English and Spanish in the community in which they live, particularly in the labor market. This linguistic context informs decisions about home language (not only in terms of the linguistic skills parents have to pass on to their children, but also the ways in which parents feel about the importance of particular language skills in terms of their children’s success in the United States and/or a country of origin) and their potential risk of loss of parental authority or intra-family communication.

Parents’ language skills inform the language(s) they can transmit to their children at home. For Mrs. Pérez, the question of which language to speak at home was not a difficult one because she only recently started to learn English. She was, however, concerned about her older son’s acquisition of English when he began school.

I’m in a worry about he speaks only Spanish because we never try to learn English in this country because we come in illegal.

Other parents view linguistic skills in terms of a division of labor between homes and schools, with parents transmitting Spanish, and schools transmitting English.

English is for the teacher. Spanish I can teach her at home, but English is for her [the teacher]. What I did was this…put her in a class where they speak only English, because Spanish, she already has Spanish. She has learned it, but as my husband
suggested, the best thing is Spanish at home and English there [at school] (Mrs. López, Mexican migrant, translated from Spanish).

The linguistic skills of parents also tended to be associated with broader patterns of intergenerational transmission of language, related to language skills, but also metalinguistic. As one might suspect, negotiation of home language is a process that is most salient for bilingual parents, who have more linguistic options to negotiate and renegotiate with children, but is not as straightforward as it seems for other linguistic groups.

**Two Home Language Trends: English Definitely, Spanish Maybe, or “Insisting” on Spanish at Home**

Bilingual parents, in discussing language skills and practices, often presented bilingualism as the ideal, the skill that ultimately they would prefer for their children, and which they associated with the most advantages. Parents know that only English is emphasized at school, and if their children are to become proficient in Spanish, they will have to gain that proficiency at home. Ideally, this would result in bilingualism and high proficiency in both languages. However, many bilingual parents’ language practices at home were more geared toward the attainable goal of high-level English proficiency with an outcome of English monolingualism or English dominance with more limited Spanish proficiency. Another group of bilingual parents tried to maintain Spanish, but found it difficult and noted that English often emerged in family conversation despite their best efforts.

Bilingual parents who chose not to emphasize Spanish appeared to express this choice in two key ways. Some parents, particularly those for whom English acquisition has been a struggle, perceive that by emphasizing Spanish at home to achieve the ideal of bilingualism, their children may lose out on the attainable goal of high-level English proficiency (and unaccented English), seen as essential to their children’s success in the United States. Another set of parents did not perceive that the benefits of bilingualism outweighed the effort involved in terms of time and potential conflict with children. These two groups of parents may consciously decide to emphasize English or at least not insist on Spanish at home.

Parents’ own struggles with language also inform the ways in which they would like their children’s experiences to be different from their
Mr. Medina, for example, wants his daughters to be bilingual, and he emphasizes English at home with his daughters because learning English has been a struggle for him.

Because of the challenges in my life to speak English, I wanted them to be proficient in English first. I wanted them to know English and that’s basically what we spoke. Maybe one word over here, over there [in Spanish] but nothing major, basically it was English. I found like in the other Hispanic homes, they speak a lot of Spanish—a lot. The minority, they try to do both, but I was doing basically English, English. Well, we live here...they need to know that language, have mastered the language (Mr. Medina, island-born Puerto Rican man).

In discussing his linguistic interactions with his daughters, Mr. Medina reveals a certain angst and indecision that many parents feel about language choices made with and for their children and whether they will benefit their children in the long run. He tells his daughter:

“You’re young. You are nine years old. You can still learn. I’m still learning things. If you want to do it, you can do it and I’ll help you.” It’s probably my fault.

Mr. Medina, like many bilingual parents, felt willing to let his children pursue the ideal on their own (such as in language courses at school), and even help them in doing so, but do not insist on or actively encourage Spanish at home. Thus, even among bilingual parents who view bilingualism as the ideal in general, and for their children, many parents more often pursue strategies that emphasize English at home with their children.

Another group of bilingual parents “insist” on Spanish at home, but maintaining this policy can be difficult for them. For example, Mr. Torres notes that he and his wife try to maintain only Spanish at home, but occasionally use English with their children. When speaking to his children in Spanish, his rule is:

If they respond in English, I stay quiet until they respond in Spanish. Then they speak Spanish. It’s part of the problem. It’s part of the process (Mr. Torres, Colombian migrant, translated from Spanish).

However, such a system requires constant vigilance. When asked how often his children tend to respond in English, he responded, “almost
always.” While his children do speak Spanish, he believes they have greater fluency in English than in Spanish:

They speak Spanish, but now I think that’s changing...The oldest uses more English because he’s with friends that speak only English (translated from Spanish).

Thus, for bilingual parents, “insistance” on using Spanish at home as a policy is somewhat flexible and potentially allows for at least some English use at home. For these parents home language can require constant negotiation with children who desire to speak English at home, despite their parents’ preference to speak in Spanish.

Parents who spoke little or no English did not perceive the same kinds of dilemmas regarding speaking Spanish at home that bilingual parents did. The risk of allowing English to become the household language (driven by child language preferences) was loss of effective parent/child communication and role reversal. While few parents described their family language strategies in these terms, they describe their “insistence” on Spanish with their children in terms that focused on preservation of the family and the special culture of the family. For bilingual parents, the stakes of Spanish loss are not as high; the loss of Spanish among their children may involve some decreased opportunities and present a communication barrier with extended family members and others, but not immediate family members.

**English-Dominant Latinos(as): “Relearning” Spanish and Latino(a) Identities Without Spanish**

An important segment of the Latino population is not included in Figure 2, namely English-dominant Latinos(as). The majority of English-dominant parents do not speak Spanish with their children simply because English is their primary language. Over generations, ties to the home country weaken and decisions regarding home language lose the relevancy they had for first- and second-generation families (see Fishman 1972). Later-generation participants report they are predominately English speakers (see Alba et al. 2002; Pew Hispanic Center/Kaiser Family Foundation 2002). For many later-generation Latinos(as), Spanish is seen as part of an ethnic background or culture, but not part of one’s own personal or even ethnic identity. Gabriela is fourth generation and for the most part, has grown up using English:

The people closest to me don’t speak Spanish, don’t use Spanish, but at the same time, that’s our background. So
there’s times when I’m kind of—I don’t know...I really don’t
know because I think about it and if I never ever learned a
word of Spanish I would still be able to communicate with
everybody in my family—the same with them—the same
with my grandmother.

Many later-generation Latino adults cited other elements of ethnic
identification such as food and participation in ethnic events (see Alba
1988; Gans 1979). Some express hopes for their children to learn
Spanish, but most often as an endeavor for children to pursue on their
own or in school.

Recontact with the language and culture of new Spanish-speaking
immigrants (see Cisneros and Leone 1983; Weinreich 1967), has in-
spired some members of the third and later generations to “relearn” a
heritage language used intermittently as a child, or never used. While
some third and later generation parents are in the process of “relearn-
ing” Spanish, largely because of the increased presence of Spanish in the
Texas labor market, they see the prospects of passing the language on to
their children as slim.

As far as the language, I’d really love to be able to pass on the
language to them, but I’m not quite there (Mr. Beltrán, third-
generation Mexican-American).

Thus, for English-dominant parents, English is the home language,
and parents who promote biculturalism think about it primarily in terms
other than language.

Nonlinguistic Aspects of Parental Language Context

While language skills are a very important factor, other issues are also
important in determining how parents think about language and the
kinds of language skills they would like for their children. These are
particularly salient themes for bilingual parents for whom continued
“investment” in Spanish at home is more highly dependent upon these
types of nonlinguistic contextual factors.

Settlement and Return

Parents also draw on their own expectations about whether they
intend to settle permanently in the United States or return to the coun-
try of origin. As transnational options become more available and inex-
pensive, particularly for Mexicans, for whom a return to the country of
origin may be as easy as a trip by bus or car, the permanency of migra-
tion or settlement comes into question. Many of the first-generation immigrants had been to the United States for extended periods of time, gone back to their country of origin, and returned once again to the United States. Others cite visits to a country of origin as a way for US-born children to maintain contact with the language and culture of the home country. Many of those who have settled and have children, and even grandchildren, in the United States talk seriously about moving back to their countries of origin, particularly to retire. Such is the case with Mr. and Mrs. Pérez who have some property in Mexico and visit once or twice a year with their two children and a dream of returning someday to live. Mrs. Pérez wants her sons to speak English well so that they can graduate from school, but also wants them to speak Spanish to communicate with her and other relatives. She uses Spanish with her children at home, and leaves English for the teachers.

Among first-generation parents, those who have shifted to only or mostly English at home have largely done so with the idea that they have settled permanently in the United States. Such is the case with the Quirós family. Although both parents speak Spanish, when they made the decision that they would permanently settle in the United States rather than living in Latin America, they also decided that they would speak to their children only in English.

Our intention all along was for the kids to grow here in the United States and to be part of this society. I don’t think we would change anything as far as just bringing the kids mostly speak in English as a first language. It’s, you know…it’s nice if they could speak in Spanish, but I think the effort and the confusion and stuff like that, I think is too much for me for it to be worth it. Mainly, as we are just in touch with my family so seldom, you know. Maybe, I mean if we lived in Calexico, for example, you know, or Mexicali, you know, in Calexico, El Centro, or Tijuana and my relatives were right there across the border and they are in constant communication—absolutely. My relatives come and visit us once every five years or we go there every five years. I don’t think it’s worth it—the effort that it will take to force the kids, actually or to encourage them to speak fluent Spanish (Mr. Quirós, Colombian migrant).

In this family, speaking English at home reflects the permanency of the decision to settle in the United States. It also reflects the belief that English will be the primary route for the children’s occupational and socioeconomic aspirations.
Parents’ Experiences in the Labor Market

Parents’ own experiences in the Dallas community and labor market come into consideration in home language negotiation, particularly when parents feel that language skills in English and/or Spanish have or would have benefited or hindered them. Parents’ experiences in the labor market are particularly important for those who have or who intend to settle permanently in the United States because it gives parents a sense of the value of language skills for their children’s future socioeconomic mobility. The relationship between English and Spanish in the Dallas labor market is a complex one in which English offers the primary route to success in the workplace, but increasingly Spanish has become an asset as well. Although use of Spanish is viewed with suspicion and contempt in the English-only environment of some workplaces, in other businesses bilinguals are in demand to communicate with Spanish-speaking customers or to provide translation. While many new immigrants struggle to gain the English skills they need to ensure success in the United States, the large influx of new Spanish speakers has created a demand in the workforce for Spanish-speaking professionals and low-level workers in health care, insurance, education, and service as well as in international firms that have clients or offices in Latin America. Mr. Sánchez, a first-generation Mexican-American father, discusses how bilingualism has helped him in his career, and has tried to stress the importance of being bilingual to his daughters.

From the very beginning, when I went back to Mexico in 1962, the only reason I was given the job was the fact that I spoke English. Then when I came back to Dallas, one of the reasons I was given the job at the hotel was the fact that I spoke Spanish. It worked both ways. This company that I’m with now…I began as a collector because I was bilingual. I would say twenty to thirty percent of their accounts were of people that either owned or leased cars [from this company] and in order for us to communicate…it has always benefited me and it’s something that I…that I have told my daughters, “Learn your Spanish well. Of course don’t forget your English because you have to use it every day.” I think it has helped them all along throughout their lives and their careers.

New opportunities for bilinguals have fostered an atmosphere in which parents, such as Mr. Sánchez, believe that speaking Spanish may
provide lucrative career opportunities for their children both in the local job market and in the global marketplace. This was particularly the case for those working in entrepreneurial pursuits, for whom speaking Spanish meant access to a larger customer base.

However, the labor market context in Dallas is one where Spanish is often desired among employees, yet less often rewarded. While the demand for bilinguals in the labor market obviates the notion of Spanish as an economic resource for many of the parents interviewed, their own experiences in the labor market indicate that speaking Spanish can hold them back because of discrimination and because of more demands on their time at work for unrewarded activities such as translation requests not associated with their immediate job requirements. Mrs. Aguilar, who works in a medical setting, describes her experiences:

I feel like I’m not getting promoted like other people and sometimes I’m thinking my pronunciation is not as good, like they think that my skills are not as good because of it…. New people come and I train them and they get promoted and I was the one who trained them. That’s why I feel I have been discriminated. One time I was talking on the phone with my husband, when I get excited, I don’t know…. My coworker said, “You need to speak English. You are American. You need to speak English.” I said to her that you know that in America there is more than one language, not just English, more than one culture.

While in this case, Mrs. Aguilar’s coworker responded to her personal call in Spanish with reproach, in other situations coworkers ask her to provide language assistance in cases where patients do not speak English, in essence creating a double standard in terms of the “appropriateness” of speaking Spanish at work. Although she feels her language skills have provided a beneficial service to her employer, Mrs. Aguilar also feels that being a Spanish speaker might hold her back in her career. Even in jobs where bilingualism provides a valuable service for employers, respondents noted that the skill is often taken for granted, and rarely means financial rewards of promotions except in entrepreneurial activity, or in the case of highly skilled professionals. As such, the labor market while presenting bilingualism as an ideal, also serves to reinforce the notion among parents that the mastery of English is the most important in terms of the labor market success of Latino children.
Home Language as a Compromise

Ultimately, home language represents a compromise between parental perceptions of risks and benefits of children’s language skills, which lead them toward strategies of language maintenance or shift at home, and children’s linguistic preferences. In many families, such a compromise results in parents using one language, and children using another.

The often low-income Spanish-dominant families were more likely to pursue the ideal of bilingualism because they did not see the same risks that the middle- and working-class parents did in Spanish maintenance (restricted occupational mobility or effort and conflict with children), while they had different risks associated with Spanish loss (loss of family cohesion and parental control). Spanish-dominant parents have a greater stake in maintaining Spanish as a home language, even for use among children, because without Spanish maintenance parent-child communication can be lost. For both English dominant and bilingual parents who plan to settle permanently in the United States, the importance placed on English mastery, coupled with children’s increasing preference for English upon school entry, leads to a greater role of English at home over time. Even bilingual parents whose parents try to maintain Spanish at home find that over time children often persist in responding in English. Those who plan to return to a country of origin or visit frequently may place greater emphasis on Spanish at home than those who plan to settle permanently, but also face similar language dilemmas.

Conclusion

In this sample of Latino parents living in Dallas, Texas, parents view bilingualism positively both in general terms and for their own children, and all place a great importance on their children’s mastery of English. However, investment in Spanish skills through use of Spanish as a home language is difficult to maintain, especially for bilingual or English-dominant parents, because community elements often discourage Spanish use and maintenance. Spanish maintenance at home involves a large investment of time, commitment, and struggles with children who spend most of their time in the English-dominant worlds of school and friends. Parents who want to use Spanish with their children at home note the large influence that schools have on children’s preference for English. Schools reinforce the use of English among youngsters not only at school, but also among friends and siblings. As such, the high hopes associated with bilingualism are met by a difficult investment in Spanish,
given the pressures on children to speak English at school and the tenuous rewards in the labor market. In Dallas, bilingual and English-dominant parents find that maintaining Spanish at home is a difficult prospect, and that across generations, Spanish is increasingly “lost.”

The theoretical model of home language negotiation advanced in this paper can help to explain how and why Spanish is increasingly “lost” in families where parents speak Spanish. It is argued that emphasizing English or Spanish at home presents different risks and opportunities for parents with different linguistic contexts. For Spanish-speaking parents who speak English poorly or not at all, the risk of allowing English at home is loss of communication and parental authority. In this sense they are able and willing to “insist” upon the use of Spanish at home, even in their children’s interpersonal communication, and thus have an easier route to intergenerational language transmission than bilingual parents.

For parents who speak English well, in addition to Spanish, bilingual competency among parents ensures that there is little risk of loss of communication with their children. These parents are presented with a choice between ensuring mastery of English or bilingual competency (mastery of English and Spanish). For these parents the lack of English mastery is the greatest risk. While they would prefer their children to be bilingual, they view English as important in terms of labor market opportunities and ultimate success for their children in the United States. The pressure to use English as a home language becomes even further magnified by children’s shifting preference toward English upon school entry, when the insistence upon Spanish can mean increased conflicts with children who prefer to use English. As such, the perceived risk of lack of English mastery coupled with the children’s preference for English for some parents can make it difficult to maintain a Spanish-language environment at home for bilingual and English-dominant parents. Others question whether the effort is worth it because the time and potential for conflict do not seem worth the payoff unless the child exhibits a particular interest. For bilingual parents who “insist” on Spanish at home, children can often negotiate greater use of English over time, in part because their parents speak both languages.

Further research is warranted on the processes of language adaptation of Latinos(as) in the United States. The experiences of these participants offer insight on the roles of family and community context in family language negotiation that might be investigated in other communities as well as in future survey research. It remains to be seen whether this theoretical model extends beyond the Dallas area, or even beyond this par-
ticular group of informants. Survey research on language is particularly needed to understand whether these types of findings and framework might be reflective of general processes on language decisions among Latino parents or parents from other ethnic groups. Ideally, a representative survey that includes measures of language proficiency among parents and children, individual and contextual level demographic data, and measures of parental opinion on language maintenance and shift, should be part of future research in this area.

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Notes

1 According to the 2002 National Survey of Latinos, 24% of the first generation, 47 percent of the second generation, and 22 percent of third and later generations are bilingual (Pew Hispanic Center 2002).

2 Of the forty respondents, twelve were of Mexican ancestry, five of whom were born in the United States and seven of whom were born in Mexico. Ten respondents were from Peru, eight were from Colombia, six were of another origin—primarily Caribbean islanders. Also included were four bilingual non-Latinos/as of European ancestry who were spouses of a Latino(a). There was also substantial within-group racial/ethnic variation, particularly in the South American groups. Because both Peru and Colombia are multi-ethnic societies, migrants from those countries included Spanish-speaking people of European, Asian, African, and indigenous ancestry. Participants were selected from two health and social service organizations, a church, and three language schools (two oriented toward teaching English as a second language, and one that offered Spanish as a second language). In each of the organizations, participants were selected, and referrals solicited from both organizational staff (doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers, pastors, etc.) and clientele (students, patients, clients, congregation members). In all, six respondents were solicited from religious organizations, twenty-five from the three language schools, seven from the two health and social service organizations, and three from other sources. By starting the snowball sample with both staff and clientele from different types of organizations, I could achieve variation in social networks, social class, generation, and ethnicity. Perhaps because of their interest in the topic of study, participants who entered the sample through the three language schools were more likely
to refer me to personal acquaintances, friends, and family members outside of the organization. The interviews and solicitation of new participants from both the staff and clientele of the organizations were intended to provide diversity in the sample along the lines of social class and language skills. In general, the organizations’ staff members were more likely to have greater fluency in English and to be of higher social class than the clientele. However this was not always the case and some exceptions are particularly worth mentioning. Students, particularly in one school, included some relatively well-off migrants who use the linguistic training to transition into professional positions in the United States. Conversely, a few staff members interviewed had very low income or limited English, such as janitors or professionals who were new migrants. All in all, respondents included teachers, janitors and maids, factory workers, restaurant personnel, students, doctors, engineers, and retailers.

3 As is well documented in previous research (see Alba et al. 2002; Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Lieberson and Curry 1971; Stevens 1985; Stevens 1992), I also find evidence that parental linguistic context is informed by differences in context of settlement and individual-level differences among families, such as generation, social class, race, and ethnicity, but because of the micro-level focus of the interviews an investigation of these differences is largely beyond the scope of this paper.

References


Vulnerabilities and Economic Wellbeing of Latinos(as) in Non-Metro Missouri

Pedro Dozi and Corinne Valdivia

Introduction

Throughout its history, the United States has experienced successive waves of immigration, but none compare to the magnitude and continuity of Latino immigration since the 1970s. Currently, Hispanics or Latinos(as) make up 60 percent of immigrants each year (Lazos 2004; Census 2004). In Missouri, 2.3 percent of the total population is of Latino origin and is still increasing. While this might come across as an unimpressive portion of the population, the reality is very different in some counties of non-metro Missouri. For instance, Sullivan County has observed a 2,164 percent increase in the Latino population in the last decade and Latinos now make up to 9 percent of the total population in that county alone (Census 2003; OSEDA 2004). The relative increase in immigration to rural areas by Latinos has prompted various sectors of the society to raise a plethora of questions. One question often raised is: What is the economic impact of Latinos(as)? One aspect of this question concerns how Latinos are doing in economic terms, including what factors affect their earnings, and their role in the economy. Recent qualitative research documents progress in economic conditions for Latinos(as), such as wage increases at different levels of settlement and adjustment, but do not address what factors explain these differences.

The most common pull to non-metro Missouri has been employment opportunities in food processing, manufacturing and services. Jobs in these sectors have an inherently high injury risk and low pay, especially in the case of immigrants (Rosenbloom 2003; Bowe 2003; Vasquez and Campbell 2002; and Wirth 2001). Some of the challenges Latinos(as) experience include low English proficiency, different cultural capital, and unfamiliarity with the local public services and with the law. Moreover, government policies and general attitudes towards Latinos(as) in many areas are considered ambivalent at best. Migration to rural towns in the Midwest is now a main settlement pattern. In Missouri it meant a reduction in population from 55 to 49.8 percent of all Latinos(as) living in St. Louis and Kansas City between 1990 and 2000 (Census 1990 and
This study analyzes how human capital and the climate of the receiving communities—the context of reception—affect the income earning ability of Latinos(as) in non-metro areas of Missouri that have for years been homogeneous in race and ethnicity.

**Background**

**Wellbeing, Risk, and the Livelihoods Framework**

The literature on sustainable livelihoods focuses on how individuals and their households manage their assets. De Haan (2001), Valdivia (2001, 2004) point out that often household assets are defined as capitals and wellbeing is achieved as the individual and household strategies lead to accumulation of capital, and integration to the community. Rupasingha and Goetz (2003) demonstrate that vulnerability is shaped by the capacity, or lack thereof, to deal with risks. They state that poverty, unemployment, insecurity, lack of access to safety net institutions, and the policies of immigration lead to vulnerable livelihoods for immigrants. Conway and Chambers (1992) and Valdivia and Gilles (2001) argue that the ability to smooth income and/or consumption is a function of different capabilities and capitals a household or individual can control, access, or own. These various types of “capital” can be created, acquired, and depleted. Income accumulation builds financial/liquid assets that mitigate risks. Morduch (1995) notes that economies with well functioning markets provide access to insurance mechanisms, reducing the impact of the realization of risk. In the United States there are many alternative forms of income smoothing, especially among the poor. There are assistance programs for the poor, but the extremely high eligibility requirements and the rigid way that most assistance programs operate alienate those who need it the most (McDonough and Korte 2000). Additionally, research shows that migration has been used as a coping strategy (for instance after a negative shock such as flood or drought), and as an income diversification strategy for rural households (Kandel and Parrado 2004; Valdivia et al. 1996).

**English Proficiency**

Good command of the English language has been considered one of the most important factors influencing the adjustment of the Latino immigrant. Abalos (1996) states that for immigrants moving to the
United States it should be expected that the ability to read and write be given special consideration. However, studies on the subject have produced mixed results at best. For instance, Borjas (1995), Reimers (1985), did not find a significant impact of English literacy on the earning ability of Latinos(as). In contrast Grenier (1984), McManus et al. (1983), and Vasquez-Case and Campbell (2002), concluded that lack of good command of the English language limited the ability to enter the mainstream job market and social integration into the local community, and thus limited earnings potential.

**Educational Attainment**

Meléndez, Rodríguez, and Figueroa (1991) report that Latinos have long been stereotyped as being less educated than other US ethnic minorities. Roderick (2000) argues that education has historically been the most important factor of social mobility for immigrants and non-immigrants. However, the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) reports that new Latino immigrants face barriers towards improving their education. These barriers include unfamiliarity with the American educational system, language, overcrowding in urban and rural schools, low quality education in poor areas, family and social disruption, and discrimination by schools and teachers often unfamiliar with the new group’s cultural norms. Figueroa (1991) also adds that a combination of lack of a home environment conducive to higher levels of learning, low income, and family language status explains a large part of the poor school performance and low educational attainment of Latinos(as). In Missouri, Latinos(as) have lower levels of educational attainment, but there has been an overwhelming increase in enrollment of rural schools (OSEDA 2004). The interaction effect of Latino language and education to wages *per se* has been given scant attention by prior research. A study by Reimers (1985) showed the interaction effect increased the returns to income for all major groups, except Cubans and other Hispanics.

**Industrial and Occupational Distribution**

Overall the number of Latinos(as) in US industries that require high intellectual input has increased (Ortiz 1991). The vast majority though, still work in the service industry (Cheswick and Hurst 2000). However, recent studies link Latinos with the agricultural industry and industries that require high physical work rather than intellectual input (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Nativity also plays a big role in industrial distribution. Cheswick and Hurst (2000) find that US-born Latinos(as) tend to
prefer urban settings, comparatively less physical jobs, and are also work in public administration where citizenship requirements leave foreign-born Latinos(as) at bay. They continue to be underrepresented in white-collar occupations, and are still overrepresented in blue-collar-ones (Hurst and Chiswick 2000). According to Sullivan (2000), the long held myth that Latinos(as) are mostly farm workers and prefer blue-collar work is partly due to their historic association with agriculture and low levels of formal education.

Social Networks and Capital

Portes (1995) defines social networks as “sets of recurrent associations between groups of people linked by occupational, familial, cultural, or affective ties” (8). The size and densities of these networks are very important in regulating the activities of individuals in society. Size refers to the number of participants in a network, and density to the number of ties between them (Portes 1995). Networks provide avenues for acquisition of information, resources, and capital that an individual could otherwise not access. Social capital gained such an emphasis because, for the poor or families lacking in other capitals, collective action can provide means for access to scarce resources by virtue of being members of a network (Valdivia and Gilles 2001). Examples of these resources include tips about employment, interest-free loans, best schools for children, access to welfare programs, acquisition of formal documents and the like (Portes 1995). Social capital takes many forms, but the most visible ones are bonding (exclusive) and bridging (inclusive) (Fukuyama 1999). Bonding has to do with associations between people, normally related to tight relationship such as kinship or very close friends; bridging, on the other hand, deals mostly with broader relationships, whereby people are connected by weak ties such as work-related clubs and church groups. Roberts (1995) states that immigration is a manifestation of social capital because it involves a collective effort of many individuals within a well established social network.

Poverty and Alternative Sources of Income

Latinos(as) in the United States experience many social problems because of poverty, marginalization, and discrimination. In 1990 they were among those with a high probability of living below the poverty line, with 28.7 percent, second only to blacks with 32.7 percent (Perez and Martinez 1993). Welfare has been a safety net for those that become unemployed, but access is based on where you are born, length of resi-
dence in the US, and documentation status (Frisk 1998). In Missouri Vazquez-Case and Campbell (2002), and Wirth (2001) find that health care and Women with Infant Children (WIC) are the benefits most often used by Latinos(as), while for other emergencies the majority of them felt that close family members and friends are the best safety net.

The Context of Reception (Welcoming Mat Effect)

The level of assets that an individual is able to command in a given society depends on the context of reception that he or she encounters in the community selected. Latino immigration has been affected by ambivalent principles, which has been aptly termed “legal inconsistency” (Lazos 2002). The government has been trying to push forward new and more vigorous efforts to police immigrants in the community. The move has consisted of passing tough laws, extending the authority of the police force to encompass some aspects of immigration and penalizing those industries that knowingly employ undocumented immigrants (De Colores 2002; Lazos 2002). Some of these laws fall in the realm of what has been called “racial profiling” (De Colores 2002; Lazos 2002).

The “legal inconsistency” clearly manifests itself in the apparent contradiction on the application of the laws stated above. Some industries have been employing immigrants without proper documentation and without interference from the authorities (Bowe 2003). Lazos (2004), quoting Tom Donahue, the President of US Chamber of Commerce, said that immigrants have been the backbone of these industries and if these immigrants were actually sent home, the US economy would virtually stop dead in its tracks—there is a need for a clear stand on these issues.

Methods and Procedures

Theoretical Framework

The principle of capability refers to the ability to perform certain basic functions. It describes what a person is capable of doing and being (Sen 1981; Dreze and Sen 1989). Issues such as the ability to lead a comfortable life, avoid preventable morbidity and mortality, be adequately nourished, live a life without shame, be able to visit and entertain family and friends, and be comfortably clothed are included in this concept. The principle of capability incorporates the ability to cope with stress and shocks, and the ability to find and make use of livelihood opportunities. An important lesson arising from this idea is that the elements embodied in the capability theory are not just “reactive.” These elements can also
be “proactive and dynamically adaptable,” for example gaining access to and using services and information, exercising foresight, experimenting and innovating, competing and collaborating with others and exploiting new conditions and resources (Valdivia and Gilles 2001).

Related to this theory, Swift (1989) suggests three main categories of focus: intangible assets, tangible assets, and investments. Chambers and Conway (1992) argue that these three categories could be grouped into two: stores and resources, and claims and access. Figure 1 depicts a flow chart with these elements and their implied interrelationships in a livelihood and wellbeing framework. Stores and resources refer to the tangible assets that a given individual is able to gain access to including food stocks and stores of value, such as jewelry and cash savings in banks and or credit schemes. Intangible assets, however, do not depend only on the individual or household. They also include a certain participation of external societal effects such as institutions, laws, and social capital (Flora...
Intangible resources refer to acquired capital (human), created capital (social), and facilitating capital (institutions). Human capital refers to qualities such as educational attainment, language proficiency, and relevant work experience that a given individual is able to command. For most authors, social capital refers to “features of social organization, such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Flora 2001, 45). Institutions are the sources of norms and laws that prescribe and coordinate behavior in a given society (North 1990). Therefore, they can facilitate or destabilize wellbeing for a given individual or household in a specific society.

This study adds to the livelihoods model by considering the context in which individuals operate: markets, the attitudes of local residents, institutions and policies. In the analysis of settlement of Hispanics in the Midwest, the context of reception is the “enabling environment.”

**Site and Data**

This study excludes the St. Louis and Kansas City areas, incorporating all the remaining counties in Missouri. For a lack of a better term, the area covered was called “non-metro Missouri.” Reasons for the exclusion of the two large metropolitan areas are mainly twofold: they have long experience with Latino population and immigrants, and they possess more extensive resources to serve incoming immigrants. Secondly, the rates of growth have been higher in non-metro areas. Ability to respond to this growth may reflect factors that affect income earning capacity.

The main source of data on non-metro Latinos comes from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) for 2000. The PUMS data is a five percent sample of the Missouri Microdata, which are the individual records containing information about each person and housing unit in Missouri collected during the 2000 Census. The Census Bureau derived statistical weights for each person and housing unit, which helps expand the sample to the relevant population. By using the PUMS data, statistically sound micro-level analyses and special tabulations can be performed that avoid disclosing confidential information about households or individuals. In Missouri, the PUMS data is geographically disaggregated into 17 rural regions with a minimum population of 100,000 each. A second source of data to confirm the educational achievement of Latinos was the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) data, which spans 1990 to 2004.
A third source of data is the racial profiling data obtained from the Assistant Attorney General’s website. Missouri’s law requires law enforcement agencies to prohibit racial profiling practices and report statistics. It also requires police officers to report certain information concerning each stop of a vehicle, including racial identity of the person stopped, the violations alleged, and the circumstances surrounding any resulting search and whether any arrest was made. The data is reported by each individual police or sheriff station within each county. The law further mandates that each agency should report the information to the Attorney General who compiles the data in an annual report to the governor and general assembly, identifying patterns regarding disproportionate share of stops of minority group members. The Attorney General Office produces a “disparity index,” explained below. Two indicators of the disparity index were developed for this study. The first, aggregated is an average of the police and sheriff stations within a given country; we used it to represent the ‘disparity index’ for the whole county (the normal case scenario). Second, we selected the highest “disparity index” within the county and used it as an indicator of the fact and degree of racial profiling in that specific county.

The three sources of data had one element in common: the counties. Therefore, PUMS and racial profiling database were merged through the use of a specially created crosswalk file in order to produce a unique master file for the analysis. The crosswalk file consists of PUMS codes and the respective county names from the racial profiling data. Given that the main focus of the study is on earnings, unless indicated, all results will be based on persons who were between 16 and 65 years old at the time the data was collected by the Census Bureau.

**Empirical Framework**

A probit regression analysis was performed with the purpose of determining the representativeness and/or the probability that a Latino was present in the labor market or in some other sector (e.g. student). Then, two separate semi-log wage equations were estimated in order to determine the effect of human capital and context of reception on this group's earnings.

**Analysis**

It is well known that the largest single contributor to the global earnings for Latino immigrants is their wage. Therefore, it is only logical to use this variable as a proxy for earnings. Empirically, the typical earnings
equation estimated in the literature is in the non-linear form. The dependent variable is normally transformed to a linear logarithm because of the skewed distribution of earnings. The non-constant regressors (present in \( S \)) are not in log form because in large cross-section data, the relationship between these variables and lnW is linear.\(^7\) Therefore, earnings and its determinants will be in the form given by:

\[
\ln W_{ij} = \gamma'_j S_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad i = 1 \ldots n; \quad j = 1, 2
\]  

Where \( \ln W \) is the natural logarithm of the wage rate for the individual \( i \) in group \( j \), where \( j \) consists of 2 different groups: US and foreign born Latinos. \( \gamma'_j \) is a vector of coefficients to be estimated, \( S_{ij} \) is a vector of human capital variables and observable demographic characteristics and institutional environmental factors influencing the wage rate of individual \( i \) in group \( j \), and \( \varepsilon \) is the unobservable error term.

However, because the study aims to assess the Latino population, it is necessary to estimate how representative Latinos(as) are in the selected sample in non-metro Missouri. Further, it is well known that the participation in the labor market is not a random act; therefore there is bound to be some selection bias in the sample. Heckman (1979) has postulated a two stage binary probit approach to correct for the selection bias, where a person in the wage sample is given a value of 1 and 0 if not. Thus, the probability that an individual \( i \) in group \( j \), participates in the wage sample (or is in labor market) is represented by:

\[
P_{ij} = F(\alpha_{ij} + \varphi'_j X_{ij}) = F(Z_{ij})
\]  

In this case \( F \) is a cumulative probability function and \( X \) is a vector of individual characteristics and is stochastic; \( \varphi' \) represents the vector of unknown coefficients, and \( \alpha \) is a random error that reflects unknown influences on the participation decision. In this case an assumption is made that \( Z_{ij} \) is a theoretical index determined by explanatory variables represented by the \( X \) vector.\(^8\) We would assume that \( \varepsilon_{ij} \) and \( \alpha_{ij} \) are jointly normally distributed, and not correlated with each other.\(^9\) The expected values of expression (1) above conditional on positive wage rate, allows us to determine if a Latino will be in the sample of those participating in the labor market. These estimates will obtained from the following specification:\(^{10}\)

\[
E(\ln W_{ij} | S_{ij}, W_{ij} > 0) = \gamma'_j S_{ij} + \sigma_j \hat{\lambda}_{ij}
\]
The variables in the above expression are defined as follows: \( S_{ij} \) is the vector of human capital and demographic characteristics needed to derive the semi-log model specified in (2) on page 73; \( \lambda \) is the inverse Mill’s ratio and \( \sigma_j \) is the associated coefficient that represents the selection bias in the sample. In order to get consistent estimates of \( \gamma'_j \), we estimate a sample participation equation (probit) to obtain \( \varphi'_j \), which is used to compute \( \lambda_{ij} \), and included as an additional regressor in the wage function, which is then estimated by ordinary least squares:

\[
\ln W_{ij} = \gamma'_j S_{ij} + \sigma_j \lambda_{ij} + \eta_{ij},
\]

The novel element in this equation \( \eta_{ij} \), is the new error term that is normally distributed with zero mean and variance \( \Sigma_j \).

This study, as specified above, includes only those Latinos(as) who worked when the survey took place, and reported information on all explanatory variables. Students working part-time were excluded from the study given that they might distort results because they chose jobs based on convenience and not necessarily based on the full human potential (Reimers 1985).

The variables included in the model, which are in turn represented by vector \( S \), are defined using human capital theory (Willis cited in Rivera-Batiz 1991). The theory suggests that human capital can be used to explain individuals’ skills, which can subsequently be used as a proxy for determining productivity and thus labor market earnings. Individual skills can be acquired through a myriad of activities that include formal schooling, vocational and onsite training programs, all of which are measured in years.

Educational attainment will be measured in years of schooling that each individual has accumulated over time, which will be obtained directly from the 2000 Census.

English proficiency, which could enable a given individual to navigate in the society and understand the particulars of his/her job, is likely to have a positive effect on the productivity of Latino immigrants and, consequentially, on earnings. The census survey has asked two questions related to the ability to speak English: one asks the individual to directly rate his/her level of English ability and the other question asks if they speak English at their home. For this study only the first question will be used to represent the level of English ability.

Special skills and some vocational training cannot be measured solely by using years of academic training, therefore a measure reflecting
potential work experience is introduced to reflect skills learned outside the formal academic arena. The years a person spent working in an industry are assumed to contribute to acquiring a specific set of professional knowledge. The variable will be measured by age of the person minus preschool years (5) and formal school years. In order to eliminate those without any industrial experience from the sample, this variable is defined only for those that have indicated that they have been working in the past 10 years.

Mobility is another variable that explains earnings. In this case it measures how newcomers are faring when compared to those who have been in the area for a longer period. Newcomers are assumed to have fewer connections and less knowledge of the area, which precludes them from getting the better-paying jobs, and from settling without many problems. To measure mobility a 2000 Census question identifies Latinos(as) who have moved into the area in the last 5 years as opposed to those who did not move or moved earlier.

Age is expected to impact on income earnings. The main assumption is that the individual is healthy enough to participate in the labor force. The Census data records age directly.

Gender is another factor that may explain wage earnings ability, and is closely related to the type of work, the recruiting process, the immigration rigor, and the age group. The sex of the respondent is the variable used, recorded directly in the 2000 Census.

Disparity index on racial profiling is used as a proxy for the context of reception in non-metro Missouri. Disparity index is the ratio of stops made to an individual member of a specific ethnic group over the total number of individuals composing that same ethnic group living in a specific area. Two variants are used in the analysis: the “worse case” scenario and the “normal” level. For the worse case scenario, the highest level of disparity index reported in each major town was used; and for the normal case, an average level of disparity index of all towns in a county was used. The disparity index is a proxy measure of a society’s attitude, assuming that this is reflected in its institutions. The rationale for the selection of the variable was that the industries immigrants normally work, by their very nature, are located mostly in the peripheries of these towns. Public transportation is almost non-existent. Thus, the ability to be mobile (e.g., having a car) is very important. However, the ability to be mobile can be severely constrained if the police “profiles” citizens possessing certain characteristics. Racial profiling indicates the degree of over-representation or under-representation bias that the law enforce-
ment has over a given race/ethnic group, which can severely hinder (or foster, in case of under representation) their ability to move around and travel to work.

Finally, nativity makes a difference (US-born vs. foreign-born). Research has shown that those Latinos(as) born in the US have different perceptions about their future, education, and the choice of jobs (see Valdéz 2002; Roderick 2000). In addition, rights and privileges that accrue to each are different, i.e., citizens’ rights far outweigh those of the foreign born. Two separate regressions are estimated, one for US-born, and another one for foreign-born Latinos(as). The purpose of these regressions is to capture the variability brought about by the difference in nativity. The nativity variable is extracted directly from the 2000 Census.

The model proposes that wage earnings are a function of educational attainment, English language proficiency, work experience, age, mobility, racial profiling, nativity, and the interaction effects of English ability and education. The model that we used to explain the wage rate of Latinos(as) in rural Missouri is the following:

\[
\ln W = \beta + \gamma_1 Ed \_ Att + \gamma_2 E \_ 1 + \gamma_3 E \_ 2 + \gamma_4 A + \gamma_5 G + \gamma_6 RP + \gamma_7 W \_ Exp
\]

\[
+ \gamma_9 Mov + \gamma_9 EdxE \_ 1 + \gamma_{10} EdxE \_ 2 + \sigma_j \hat{\lambda}_j + \eta_j
\]

Where \( \ln W \) in the linear logarithm wage rate for individual \( i \) in group \( j \), \( Ed\_Att \) is the educational attainment measured in years of schooling; \( E\_1 \) and \( E\_2 \) are binary variables representing English language proficiency of individual \( i \) (\( E\_3 \) is omitted—which represents those who do not speak English at all). \( EdxE\_1 \) and \( EdxE\_2 \) are interaction effects; \( W\_Exp \) is the potential work experience of individual \( i \); \( Mov \) is mobility; \( A \) represents age; \( RP \) is racial profiling for PUMS; \( G \) is gender; and \( \eta_j \) is the new random error term; \( \beta \) is the intercept and \( \gamma_s \) are coefficients; \( \hat{\lambda}_j \) represents the estimator for the inverse Mill’s ratio for individual \( i \) in group \( j \) and \( \sigma \) is the associated estimator for the group \( j \).

**Hypotheses**

**Human Capital**

The literature states that skills of individuals determine their productivity and thus their labor market earnings (Rivera-Batiz 1991). Roderick observed that, generally, low parental education, low family
income and low levels of English ability by the family helps explain much of Latinos’ low school performance, which later becomes a problem for the adults in the job market. Therefore, low parental human capital is more likely to affect the future economic success of their children, i.e., if all variables are low then it will affect the future negatively and vice-versa. It is also believed that bad economic performance by the parents will affect the type of education that they will give to their children due to the limited resource endowment, past experience, and recursive interrelation that these factors have to each other. Therefore, we would expect educational attainment and English ability to have a positive effect on Latinos(as) earning ability. Secondly, work experience, representing skills learned, might possibly affect their earnings. For instance, there is anecdotal evidence that some Latinos(as) working in Missouri’s poultry industry were recruited directly from outside Missouri and/or their home country provided they had been working before in their home country’s *haciendas*.¹³ Thus, previous hard manual work signals their willingness to carry out menial labor in the future (Bow 2003). Therefore, it is expected that the higher the potential work experience, the higher the earning ability of a Latino(a) in non-metro Missouri.

The literature identifies Latinos(as) mostly with menial jobs in service and agricultural industries and underscores their young age as an eth-

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**Table 1: Definition of Variables Used in the Probit and Semi-Log Analyses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LnW</td>
<td>Log linear hourly wage rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage</td>
<td>Hourly wage rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Age in years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E₁</td>
<td>English ability (1 if speaks English very well or well and 0 otherwise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E₂</td>
<td>English ability (1 if speaks English not well and 0 otherwise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed_Att</td>
<td>Highest level of educational attainment in years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>1 if female and 0 otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdxE₁</td>
<td>Interaction effect of educational attainment and good English ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdxE₂</td>
<td>Interaction effect of educational attainment and poor English ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>Racial Profiling (the level of over or under representation in traffic stops)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W_Exp</td>
<td>Potential Work Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPF</td>
<td>Number of Persons in the Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mob</td>
<td>Mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ξ</td>
<td>Dependent variable; A binary variable indicating the presence of the Latino in the sample (if yes = 1; if no = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>λ</td>
<td>Inverse Mill’s ratio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
nic group (Rosenbloom, 2003; Bowe 2003; Hurst and Cheswick 2000). The high turnover rate and physical requirements of these jobs would lead us to expect that age will have a negative effect on earnings.

It is expected that gender will affect the income generating ability of Latinos(as). Immigration has tough psychological effects and, given that most immigrants do not know the area, this requires the movement of one person first, usually the male. Furthermore, the types of jobs that most immigrants initially get are more likely to be accepted by males due to their grueling routines. Finally, there is the possibility that some immigrants are directly recruited from their home countries, which is likely to favor males rather than females due to local cultural capital.

**Mobility, Nativity, and the Context of Reception**

Studies on Latino income generation have proven that urban residents have a slight advantage in getting jobs and thus higher earnings as compared to those residing in rural areas (Borjas and Tienda 1985). This will provide the basis to determine the effect of mobility in the earning ability of Latinos(as) in non-metro Missouri. It is expected that the constant movement of this population will have a negative effect on income because Latinos(as) are not moving as a result of work contracts, but to look for work; thus they are more likely to start at a lower level and have lower earnings.

The majority of Latinos(as) moving to non-metro Missouri areas bring along their cultural capital, which is very different from that of local citizens. Their perception of the law is different. For instance, Latinos(as) might have a perception that the police are there to make their life miserable as opposed to protect them. These factors would severely limit their mobility and thus ability to generate income.

Nativity will be used to separate regressions for US-born and foreign-born Latinos(as) because much of individual’s human capital is country specific and, as the social science literature contends, foreign-born Latinos(as) tend to be disadvantaged because their human, cultural, and social capital does not readily fit in the US labor market (Bean and Tienda 1988). Reimers (1985) suggested that within this population there are significant differences which have some bearing on their success in the labor market. For instance, Valdes (2002) argued that their perception towards the future and the means to achieve their objectives varied by nativity: foreign-born were more driven to work, less selective of the type of work, and their benchmark of success was much lower as compared to US-born Latinos(as). On the demand side, Roberts (1995)
argued that those who are foreign-born are viewed by their employers as temporal workers therefore not worthy of positions with a high degree of responsibility. Therefore, it is expected that the majority of these variables will behave differently for US- and foreign-born Latinos(as). The discrepancy will not be correctly captured if we introduce the nativity variable only as a dummy identifier.

Results and Analysis

Selectivity Bias on the Probability of Participating in the Labor Market

The probit model was segregated by nativity (US- and foreign-born Latinos). The dependent variable being considered here was participation in the labor market. We found that the regressors selected have a significant impact on the final decision on whether to be in the labor market or not.

For US-born Latinos(as), age, education, and number of persons in the family have statistically significant effects on the probability of participating in the labor market. For the foreign-born, all variables are statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

Age has a negative effect on the market participation of Latinos(as). A probable cause might be that as they grow older they become less apt to perform the demanding physical activities, which leads to increas-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>US-Born</th>
<th>Foreign-Born</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Estimate</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.5381*</td>
<td>0.2302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.0022</td>
<td>0.5041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.0122*</td>
<td>0.0088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eng_1</td>
<td>0.0101</td>
<td>0.0033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eng_2</td>
<td>0.0014</td>
<td>0.0191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eng_2</td>
<td>0.1399*</td>
<td>0.0183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPF</td>
<td>0.0163*</td>
<td>0.0831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of Observations</td>
<td>4,801</td>
<td>3,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>–1940.19</td>
<td>–1511.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 5 percent level.
Dependent variable is $\xi$ (presence of Latino in the sample).
Source: 2000 Census, Public Use Microdata 5% Sample (PUMS).
ing probability of participating in the labor market. For US-born Latinos(as), there is an added advantage from their citizenship status, which allows them greater access to other form of compensation as compared to the foreign born. Latino males have a higher probability of being in a wage sample as compared to females, a fact that could be tied up with the dynamics of immigration and the highly demanding physical jobs available for them. English ability is a factor for the foreign-born, but not for the US-born, which is intuitive. However, those foreign-born Latinos(as) who speak English well and very well have a lower probability of being in the wage sample. This could suggest that they would prefer being in school rather than participating in the labor market given their high English proficiency.

The number of persons in the family increases the probability of a being in the wage sample. We would suspect that for some foreign-born Latinos(as), who already left some family back home, the decision to participate in the wage sample was what brought them here in the first place. Therefore, the results of these variables may not mean much because the less understood motivation effect is not captured in these variables.

**Determinants of Hourly Wage for Latinos(as) in Non-Metro Missouri**

Two ordinary least squares models (separated by nativity) were estimated. The coefficients, which were corrected for selectivity bias (\( \hat{\lambda} \)) using Heckman’s two step procedure, are depicted in Table 2. The results show that, all things equal, US-born Latinos(as) have a higher hourly wage as compared to those who are foreign-born. Both wage rates reported are an improvement from the rates found in previous studies by Reimers (1985) and Rivera-Batiz (1991) with mean hourly wage of $6 and $7.8 respectively. The effect of education on hourly wages was found to be significant and positive, with each additional educational year having the effect of increasing the returns to hourly wage by 6 percent for US-born and 4 percent for the foreign-born.

The education variable here might offer almost the same information as English ability and the interpretation of these two variables independently is almost conceptually impossible. This is said because it might be difficult in practice to hold English proficiency constant while changing the educational level and vice-versa. In sum, having sufficient grasp of English language might help improve returns to earnings; however, it does not ensure by itself access to high status or higher hourly wages in the US labor market.
The literature's position on this issue is, at best, not firm on the effects of English proficiency on the earnings of Latinos(as), and from the results of this study, it looks like this issue merits further research. The effect can best be identified if we study selected groups in specific occupations rather than collapsing them all together. Additionally, the problem with English proficiency might arise because the variable is a self-reported one rather than based on a formal test of some kind.

The interaction effect of educational attainment and good English proficiency (EdxE_1), and educational attainment and poor English proficiency (EdxE_2) provided different results. The interaction effect of educational attainment and good English proficiency had a significantly large positive effect on Latinos(as) hourly wage for both US (13%) and foreign-born (9%). On the other side, the interaction effect of educational attainment and poor English proficiency, as expected, had a lower impact on hourly wages. For the US-born, even though positive, this variable is not significant and for the foreign-born is also not that large in magnitude but is significant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>US-Born</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Foreign-Born</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Estimate</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td></td>
<td>Estimate</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>9.0194*</td>
<td>0.0729</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.0771*</td>
<td>0.0389</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed_Att</td>
<td>0.0601*</td>
<td>0.0837</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0398*</td>
<td>0.0519</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E_1</td>
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<td>0.6305</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.0401</td>
<td>1.567</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E_2</td>
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<td>0.0059</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0332</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.0283</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0954*</td>
<td>0.0109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.0105</td>
<td>0.0566</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0489*</td>
<td>0.0277</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.2175</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0311</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.0589</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.0167*</td>
<td>0.0322</td>
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</tr>
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<td>0.0045</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1277*</td>
<td>0.0076</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RP_15</td>
<td>-0.0179</td>
<td>0.0089</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.0123*</td>
<td>0.0413</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mob</td>
<td>0.0321*</td>
<td>0.0561</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.0433*</td>
<td>0.0091</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \lambda )</td>
<td>-0.439*</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.512*</td>
<td>0.072</td>
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<tr>
<td>R^2</td>
<td>0.293</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.321</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 5 percent level: Source: 2000 Census, Public Use Microdata 5% Sample.
The coefficients of these interactions are positive, which means they are synergistic. The results mean that a Latino(a) will observe a higher increase in earnings if education increases concomitantly with the level of English proficiency. For foreign born Latinos(as), educational attainment has the effect of boosting earnings for those whose English proficiency is poor. This might be that US employers have the perception that educational attainment signals other economically productive qualities such as discipline, perseverance, and occupationally specific skills (Bishop 1989). The proposition is that those who have poor English skills stand a better chance of improving their earnings if they have a relatively higher education.

For foreign-born Latinos(as), being female has an estimated effect of decreasing hourly wage by 2 percent when compared to men. This could be related to the terms of employment, both temporary and permanent, which most Latinos(as) have access to. For the foreign born a very important issue arises: almost 56 percent of the group is female and employment discrimination might imply that a majority of the group is vulnerable, making less income. In the context of the Hispanic population as a whole this might increase their vulnerability due to added negative effects that they are subjected to.

Potential work experience has the greatest impact on hourly wage for both US- and foreign-born Latinos(as), with 11 and 13 percent respectively. This result is somehow supports the anecdotal evidence that most employers engage scouts to search for those Latinos(as) with work experience wherever they are (Rosenbloom 2003).

A very important pattern arises if we put into perspective some of the results. US employers, especially those located in non-metro Missouri, are trying to minimize their costs. Thus the decision to conveniently locate their operations closer to the source of raw materials (Green and Barham 2003); erecting basic housing facilities closer to the factory to eliminate housing and transport allowances; and finally there is the issue of industrial and functional training that most employers simply do not want to deal with (Green 2004). These issues raise questions about discrimination against Latinas, especially for the foreign-born. Employers contend that foreign born Latinos(as) have different cultural capital, which makes women less of a stable investment (e.g., training) as compared to men; because women can leave anytime and are not likely to accept working those grueling hours under harsh conditions as men do (Green 2004).
Mobility provides a boost of 3 percent in the hourly wage of US-born Latinos(as) and was significant. The effect is opposite and significant for those who are foreign born, which reduces their hourly wage by more than 4 percent. This result is apparently paradoxical and does not conform to the mainstream economic postulates. However, one of the main economic assumptions that make this result a little odd is that we treat labor as being uniform across the board—there is nothing uniform about this labor. The US-born Latinos(as) hold citizenship, a fact that confers them an advantage in the labor market as compared to the foreign-born. Therefore, as we hypothesized whereas a US-born Latino will likely move, a result of a job offering with possibly better conditions, for a foreign-born the reason might be just a job offering period. Most of the time these jobs are the entry level type of work. If we look at the occupational distribution, we find that there is a considerable percentage of US-born Latinos(as) who occupy positions requiring higher skills (37%). On the other hand there is a considerable percent of foreign born Latinos(as) who occupy relatively low-skill positions (41%). This might also have to do with the idea of whether an individual found a job before or after moving.

Age has a positive effect on hourly wage and is non significant. This may not be surprising because employers might be interested in Latinos’ experience rather than their age per se. Moreover, it has long been established in economic literature that hourly wage increases with age at a decreasing rate.

Racial profiling, a proxy used to represent the context of reception, provided very interesting results. It is important to note that this variable does not affect only the residents of a specific county that the police station is based. For instance, Decker (2006) has reported that there is a great deal of commuting going on in the southern counties of Missouri; thus many Latinos leaving for work may interact with police officers from their county of residence or from the county where their employment is based. Given that it is impossible to separate those Latinos that commuted from those who did not, we decided to estimate two regressions: the first one with average disparity index (“normal-case” scenario) and the second one with the highest disparity index in a given county (“worse-case” scenario). In so doing we hope to cover the majority of the possible interactions between Latinos(as) and the police officers. The results for the normal-case scenario showed a negative effect on their hourly wage for both US and foreign born Latinos(as), even though the estimate was not significant in either instance. For the
worse-case scenario the estimates for the variables ended up being significantly negative for both US-born and foreign-born Latinos(as) in non-metro Missouri. For instance, in the case of US-born Latinos(as), the disparity index decreases the earning ability by 2.1 percent, whereas for foreign born there is a decrease of 3.4 percent of the earning ability. The worse-case scenario confirms our hypothesis that the disparity index has a significantly negative effect on Latinos(as) earning ability—the estimate is significant even at 1 percent level.

Conclusions and Policy Implications

The main purpose of this research was to examine the opportunities and vulnerabilities of Latinos(as) in the greater part of Missouri, through the lenses of the immigration, well-being, and capability building literatures. The option to use these sets of literatures relates to the majority of this population’s cultural capital and the public impression about them, which tends to group all Latinos(as) under the umbrella of immigrants even though most are actually US-born. However, more than 50 percent of them do not have good English proficiency and have an average educational attainment just below the high school level.

US-born Latinos(as) living in Missouri have higher yearly wages when compared to those who are foreign born. However, the assertion that low English proficiency and educational levels are the main causal factors explaining their occupational and industrial distribution do not hold in this research. Thus this assertion is missing the big picture, because there are large percentages of Latinos(as) with at least some high school and college education and good English proficiency found in low skilled jobs. This situation suggests that they tend to gravitate to a lower level of skill in order to secure a job. Alternatively, this might reflect a case of an informal institutional set up whereby long-term, high skill jobs are not offered to Latinos due to the immigrant stigma. However, this is an issue that this research was ill equipped to assess and could very well be suitable for future research. For those Latinos(as) who are already in the lower skill category it is assumed that they are less demanding in the type of jobs they accept. The scenario described above positions Latinos(as) with a lower reservation wage as compared to non-Hispanics and provides the former group with a competitive advantage in accessing lower skilled jobs but not the high skill ones.

English proficiency by itself turned out to not be a significant determinant of earning ability by Latinos(as) in non-metro Missouri. One of
the most important reasons for this is that much of the information contained in the English proficiency variable might also be found in the educational attainment variable.

Potential work experience has the most important influence on wages, and thus wellbeing, of Latinos(as) in Missouri. The high turnover nature of low skilled jobs suggests that they have to keep moving in order to secure work that will allow them access to income, and mobility has been shown to have a negative influence on earnings for foreign born. This might lead to the conclusion that Latinos do not move from one job to another or one county to another to get a better job but to merely have a source of income. However, the results of this study, are at best conservative because they do not include undocumented Latinos(as). If we extrapolate the interpretation of this result and include the undocumented Latinos(as) in the picture, the negative effect might have been even larger.

Racial profiling negatively influences the ability of Latinos(as) to generate income in non-metro Missouri. However, this is still a novel way in terms of looking at the effects of the context of reception and the law enforcement agencies on this population. However, care should be taken in order to not interpret this as unidirectional causality effect; that is only from the perspective of police behavior towards Latinos(as). This information cannot be obtained from statistics alone; ethnocentric studies should be used to complement the trends that regression results have determined, which could better inform the causality factor in this case.

The education of Latino newcomers is not readily transferable into US society even though some of them come with acceptable levels of education. Also, the majority of the foreign-born Latinos(as) do not have good English skills, which has been shown to improve their earnings. This suggests that the prospect of improving their livelihood does not center so much on how much education they get but more on what type of education they get, and how the society values the education they possess to improve their earnings. An extension of the situation described above is the creation of policies that support service organizations that build on the competencies of newcomers in most of these non-metro Missouri areas. At the individual level, it is believed that strengthening skills/education will have the greatest effect on earnings, and exercising choice in the market. However, Missouri’s policy on education has been perceived to be against immigrants (Waslin 2006), which will have to change if we are to help immigrants improve their livelihood.
The results presented in this study support the background literature that suggests that Latinos(as) are coming into non-metro Missouri mostly due to the pull forces created by the employment opportunities generated by emerging businesses, which cannot be fulfilled by the local labor force. Therefore, the institutions should intervene by helping create a better context for receiving immigrants in their communities by educating individuals on the negative aspects that prejudice and racial profiling can cause on newcomers’ livelihood. Additionally, Latinos(as) bring a different cultural capital, which influences their interpretation of the law and of law enforcing agencies. So, racial profiling work inhibits their normal activities. Also, the fact that the police are now being asked to act as immigration agents only exacerbates this group’s vulnerability since they tend to see the police as deporting agents. Therefore the law enforcement agencies should refrain from relying on ambivalent policies in order to uphold the law. This effort would go a long way in creating a setting that deters loss of capital to the community and employers. A suggestion is that the laws be more protective of labor in sectors where workers have less education and poor English skills.

Finally, it has been shown that mobility has a negative impact on newcomers’ earnings. Moreover, for foreign-born Latinos(as), experience has a very positive effect on their earnings. This might suggest that policies that reduce the mobility of newcomers and in the process help them gain work experience and create networks can contribute to reduce their vulnerability as workers. Solutions suggested to reduce mobility of Latinos(as) are various: for instance, policies that ignore on-going worker-employer positive relations in granting resident visas would appear detrimental under these findings, and temporary worker programs need to take this into consideration when dealing with a mobile workforce. Legislative efforts should be aimed at promoting stable and long-term relations between employers and employees.

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Notes

1. Some authors distinguish between Latinos and Hispanics. Here we use them interchangeably.

2. For a lack of a better term, non-metro Missouri has been chosen to refer to the whole part of the state of Missouri excluding those areas covered by St. Louis and Kansas City.

3. Office of Socio Economic Data Analysis.


5. For more information please see the following website: http://www.ago.mo.gov/racialprofiling/racialprofiling.htm

6. The average may mask the fact that racial profiling occurs in a given region.

7. The linear log equation is obtained from the following specification:

   \[ W_y = \exp(y'X_y) \exp(\varepsilon_y) \]

8. The \( Z_{ij} \) is assumed to be continuous and normally distributed and can be expressed as: \( Z_{ij} = \alpha_y + \varphi'X_y \). That is, an individual is in the wage sample only if s/he possesses the characteristics specified in the vector \( X \).

9. That is \( E(\varepsilon_y) = E(\alpha_y) = 0 \)

10. The expression is obtained as follows:

    \[ E(\ln W_y | S_y, W_y > 0) = E(\gamma y'X_y + \varepsilon_y | W_y > 0) = \gamma y'X_y + E(\varepsilon_y | W_y > 0) \]

    \[ = \gamma y'X_y + E(\varepsilon_y | \xi) = \gamma y'X_y + \sigma_{12} \hat{\lambda}_y \text{ where } \xi = W_y > 0 \text{ and } \hat{\lambda} = f(Z_y \hat{\gamma}_y) / F(Z_y \hat{\gamma}_y) \]

11. For more see the above discussion on the research done on the nativity difference.

12. Some econometric studies include age squared to represent the non linear character of the relationship between experience and earnings. We have excluded the square effect and instead we included in the model the interaction effect and mobility to capture the non-linearity.

13. Haciendas are large farms in Latin American countries.

14. These two categories of English proficiency were combined because there was no significant statistical difference between them.

15. When modeled for the worst case scenario (the highest values of disparity index) US born = - 0.0188*; foreign born = - 0.0588*.

16. We used “disparity index” as an indicator variable for this latent variable.
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Latinos and Education Policy in the New Globalized Economy of the American South

Regina Cortina

During the last decade and a half, the American South and more specifically the State of North Carolina have attracted a great many workers and families from Mexico and Central American countries. This migration has resulted in a sharp increase in the number of Latin American-born children in public schools, which in turn has created uncertainty among educators and public officials about who these children are and the policies that need to be implemented to best educate them.

Three out of every four people of Latin American descent in North Carolina are from Mexico (U.S. Census 2003). Economic opportunities in the state draw increasing numbers of Mexican citizens to work in emergent and competitive industries such as construction, meat packing, hotel and restaurant services, as well as to declining textile and furniture businesses trying to survive against lower production costs of competitors in China and elsewhere. As a result, communities and school systems across the state are experiencing a rapidly expanding presence of Mexican-born children in their schools. The interaction between these newcomers and the schools of North Carolina is the principal focus of this article.

As is true for other states in the Southeast that have experienced high rates of immigration since the 1990s, the arriving Mexican population is young. Their youthfulness explains the high fertility rates of this social group and their growing impact on public schools. Arriving directly from the rural countryside of Mexico or through internal migration from other states where they have lived and worked briefly in the United States, most of the adult newcomers come with only a few years of formal schooling. Once in North Carolina, they confront difficult working and living conditions. Their low salaries often force them to work more than 12 hours a day seven days a week. Impoverished and marginal in relation to the communities around them, they suffer a poor quality of life. Both their education level and the precarious economic situation of their families have a decisive impact on the well-being and academic
progress of their children. To make things even more difficult, Mexican families are typically concentrated in counties where the schools are under great stress because they already have a high concentration of at-risk students.

How can the State of North Carolina and its schools meet the educational needs of this newly arrived population? At the policy level, the answer to that question is inextricably intertwined with the decision by the North Carolina Supreme Court on the financing of poor districts, commonly known as the Leandro decision. The state legislature must decide how to generate appropriations and policy strategies to comply with the order of Judge Howard E. Manning, Jr., Superior Court Judge, on February 9, 1999, upholding the law under the North Carolina Constitution that guarantees to each and every child “the right to an opportunity to receive a sound basic education in the public schools” (Almeida 2004, 540). The specific ways in which new support for education is organized, along with any changes made to the current system to comply with the Leandro decision, could have a great impact on the education and life chances of Mexican immigrants and their children. How is the state going to intervene to provide equal education to immigrant children and linguistic minorities? And how can teachers and other education professionals be prepared to address the educational needs of Mexican-born children?

As Tico Almeida has argued in the Yale Law Policy Review, the most interesting piece of the Leandro decision is that it requires the State of North Carolina to address the special needs of at-risk students. Rather than just calling for additional resources, it demands “greater resources for the students with greater needs” (Almeida 2004, 566). Since the litigation started in 1991, the poorest counties in the state have received some additional funding, but the disparity in overall funding per pupil between the lowest spending and more affluent districts has grown. How can the state direct additional resources to change the pattern of growing inequality wherein children with greater needs are concentrated in schools with the lowest resources and the least prepared teachers? So far, the most salient impact of the litigation has been in closing the gap between teachers’ salaries in North Carolina and the national average (Almeida 2004, 587; Public School Forum 2004).

The potential consequences of the Leandro decision for immigrant children are difficult to discern. The budget proposed by the Governor’s office in 2005 suggests that the most likely scenario will be the provision
of modest increments of additional funding to affected schools systems so that the State of North Carolina make at least some progress in giving at-risk children their constitutional right to a sound basic education. One problem for recent immigrants, as policy initiatives are developed for at-risk generally, is that the newly arrived students are seen primarily as low English proficiency (LEP), even though low English proficiency is just one of the many factors that define this group of at-risk children, along with poverty, health issues, quality of neighborhoods, lack of legal documents, etc. Most of the newly arrived immigrant children can be labeled as at-risk children students along several dimensions of need that shape their family situation and their engagement with public schools. To characterize all these children only as LEP and develop services for them in response only to that condition oversimplifies a complex and diverse world of immigration. Such a focus makes it impossible for schools and policy makers to understand the educational needs of these children. Instead of using a deficit perspective that defines these children only as lacking in English proficiency, the pressure of the *Leandro* decision creates an opportunity to build upon the cultural resources and educational potential that these recent immigrants bring to the state.

At present, children of Latin American descent are a small percentage of the overall school population in North Carolina. They constitute 101,380 or 7.5 percent of the more than a million students in K-12 public schools (Kasarda and Johnson 2006). Of that 101,380, public statistics appear to show that roughly 76,000 speak Spanish as their first language, but in many cases, as I will explain further below, neither Spanish nor English is their first language. The statistics also highlight how recent has been their arrival to the United States (Department of Public Instruction 2004), the majority of Latinos in North Carolina having arrived since 1990. Nationwide, Latinos have become the largest minority group in the United States, according to the 2000 U.S. Census, and Mexican-Americans form the large majority of Latinos. People of Mexican descent represent 75 percent of the Latinos in North Carolina. Mexico alone accounted for 43 percent in the growth of the foreign-born population in the United States between 1990 and 2000 (Camarota et al. 2003). Given the predominance of Mexicans among the new immigrants, I will devote the rest of this essay to issues related to the education of Mexicans in North Carolina and the United States.
Mexico and the United States

Some background can be helpful in understanding the response of North Carolina schools to the students of Mexican descent. Even though Mexico and the United States are neighbors, and despite the fact that they share one of the longest and most porous borders dividing any two nations in the world, there has always been difficulty in bridging the cultural and political differences that divide them. They have been, in Alan Riding’s phrase, *Distant Neighbors*, but this reality is changing with the massive influx of Mexicans to the United States (Riding 1984). Through a vast process of circular migration, the two neighboring countries are becoming closer.

The history of Mexican nationals in the United States goes back more than a hundred and fifty years when, during the Mexican American War, the northern territories of Mexico were annexed to the United States. One hundred years ago, during the expansion of the railways to the West and the final days of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1921), a considerable migration of Mexican families to the United States took place. Today, we are in the midst of the second most important wave of migration of Mexicans moving north for economic opportunity, and it has been portrayed as the largest movement of population in the world (Durand et al. 1999). The presence of Mexicans in the United States, what we might call MexAmerica, includes more than 30 million Mexican citizens, Mexican-Americans and many other families of Mexican descent, some of them recently arrived, but many others having been here for several generations.

MexAmerica can be seen as cultural area that has been developing as such for the last twenty years with circular migration from and to Mexico. Its culture can be defined as transnational; most of its population is bicultural and increasingly bilingual. The cultural presence of Mexicans in the United States expands day by day through the media, through distinctive food, customs, and music, and through the growing number of community and grassroots’ organizations that are advocating for the social and educational needs of Mexicans. It is within the context of this larger presence of Mexico and Mexican culture in the United States that the integration of the Mexican community in the Southeast needs to be understood.

For at least the last one hundred years, Mexican workers have performed mainly agricultural jobs in the Southeast region of the United States. Most of them usually came during the growing season and re-
turned home to Mexico. In the last few years, especially in the post-9/11 era, significant changes in the border policies of the United States have made it more difficult for Mexican citizens to go back and forth. The increasing difficulty in going back home has fostered staying for longer periods of time. It also has augmented substantially the migration of women and the growing presence of Mexican children in public schools. Along with the sealing of the U.S. Mexico border, thriving economic development has created strong demand for low-wage workers. Internal migration from the West Coast to the East Cost is bringing many families of Mexican descent from California to the New South. Furthermore, during the 1990s, new migration—especially from Mexico—became widespread up and down the eastern seaboard, driven not only by traditional agricultural work, but also by a high demand for unskilled and low-paying service jobs in urban areas (Cortina and Gendreau 2003). Within the context of a greater presence of Mexicans in the United States generally, the Mexico-North Carolina migration has followed the same pattern.

A distinctive feature of the recent migration is the youthfulness and rural origin of the migrants. Throughout North Carolina, another salient pattern is the growing presence of indigenous communities. This greater concentration of members of indigenous communities has lowered the average level of education for Mexican workers arriving to the United States, even though that level has been increasing during the last twenty years. For this reason, the majority of new migrants are coming without a high school degree (Durand and Massey 2004). The low level of educational attainment of Mexicans when they arrive to North Carolina shapes their economic opportunities and reduces their likelihood of social and economic mobility. Moreover, the low educational attainment of the adult population is decisive in shaping the integration of their children into the new society.

As the population of Mexican descent continues to grow—in a few years it will become the largest single ethnic minority in the United States—a core issue we face as a nation is how we can change the existing pattern of incorporation of Mexicans from one that tends to isolate them in impoverished areas. Education is key to supporting the Mexican immigrants in North Carolina. But educational opportunity will remain elusive if educators are not able to recognize and engage the cultural diversity of the newly arrived population.

One critically important theme with respect to cultural diversity is that the Mexican population arriving in North Carolina is multiethnic.
and multilingual. People are coming from new areas of emigration within Mexico that have not traditionally sent workers to the United States. These areas are mostly rural, and they are not concentrated in a single Mexican state. Three examples of this diversity are communities arriving from the states of Veracruz, Michoacán, and Puebla.

In the case of the state of Veracruz, the third largest state in Mexico, the decline of sugar prices in the world market has forced many agricultural laborers out of their traditional forms of employment. Those recruited to low-wage employment in North Carolina are economic migrants looking for better living conditions for their families. A strikingly different population of workers is being recruited to low-wage work in North Carolina from the state of Michoacán. In this case, they are Púrepecha, an indigenous people for whom Spanish is their second language. The Púrepecha have been arriving in Burnsville, North Carolina, to plant sapling trees in the mountains. In Durham, there is a concentration of four thousand Totonaco and Nahua Indians, an emigration constituting approximately one-fourth of their community in the northern sierra in the State of Puebla. The drop in the price of coffee in the international markets as well as the drop of the price of pepper and citrus fruits explains the need for migration among families who had been able to maintain, until recently, an acceptable standard of living (Cortés 2003, 186).

While people from each of these communities are from Mexico, they have distinctly different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In the case of the workers from Veracruz, they have well developed Spanish language literacy skills and experience with the public school system in Mexico. In contrast, the Púrepecha, Nahua and Totonaco have maintained their indigenous culture and language. Their children have been socialized in that culture and were much more marginal to the public school system of Mexico. They often have only rudimentary oral literacy in Spanish, which is not their home language. When these three different groups begin studying oral and written English, the educational strategies that will work best in teaching their students will vary drastically. And these are but three among many groups in the immigration from Mexico that is changing the complexion of North Carolina schools. It is imperative that we understand the diversity of this Mexican population in order to furnish the best possible insights to educators who are receiving an ever-increasing number of Mexican-descent students in their classrooms.

The expansion of economic opportunities in the New American South is not only affecting the communities in the United States that are receiv-
ing the workers and their families. It is having equally dramatic effects on the communities of origin that the migrants are leaving behind. Going back to my example from the state of Michoacán, the research on the town of Cherán shows that approximately one-third of the adult population of this community is presently working in Burnesville, North Carolina.\footnote{1}

The pressures that the community feels to migrate north and improve their economic conditions are creating wrenching changes for the school-age children. Parents prefer to take their children with them to the United States, rather than to leaving them behind in Mexico. Once in the United States, children as young as ten years old are starting to work side by side with their parents, abandoning school since it is difficult for them to attend schools in North Carolina because they do not speak English. Neither Spanish nor English is the language of the home for these children. The leap to school literacy in English is impossibly great for them under current methods of instruction in schools.

The ethnographic work that Casimiro Leco is conducting in Mexico and North Carolina describes what happens to these children when the parents return to their native communities, where it is also difficult for the children to adapt once they are back. Similar to what is happening in North Carolina, Mexican schools find it difficult to accommodate students who are coming and going. The statistics show that an increasing number of the children are returning to Mexico after spending two or three years in schools in the United States. During those years outside of Mexico, the children forget their academic Spanish and fall behind grade level, and it is difficult for them to return to the schools they left. The circular migratory process is challenging the children to go through a process of integration and then one of reintegration, with little help from the schools and educational authorities in both countries.

In some regions of Mexico and the United States, mainly those areas that have a history of more than a hundred years of circular migration between certain communities in Mexico and the United States, schools and communities are working to facilitate these processes of integration and reincorporation. This bilateral effort seeks to reduce the rates of school abandonment that are otherwise increasing on both sides of the border. Among other things, an education memorandum of understanding between the governments of the United States and Mexico includes agreed-upon report cards that educators on both sides of the border can understand, thus facilitating the reintegration of students as they move along with their parents from country to country.\footnote{2}
Mexican states with the highest rates of emigration are at the forefront of supporting the binational program. For example, the state of Zacatecas, that has 30 percent of its population living in Los Angeles, and the state of Veracruz are especially careful of tracking their children as they cross the border and arrive to new schools and communities in the United States. It is imperative that schools and communities in the United States learn about the communities of origin of the Mexican children to develop greater understanding on how to address their educational needs.

The assumption that permeates North Carolina schools is that children arriving to their door need to be assimilated into an English-only academic environment. That assumption is no longer tenable, nor is it desirable in view of the much more interdependent world that has come into being. Just as the new immigrant parents are binational or transnational, the incoming students are responding to the economic pressures of globalization by living in two countries and two cultures. The globalization of the New American South is quickly transforming not only the local economy but the local culture and the traditional isolation of the South as a region. This rapid transformation, the opening of the economy of the South to the world economy, brings with it the need for schools to educate students and citizens capable of managing themselves and interacting in a multicultural, multilingual world.

Policy Challenges for Education in North Carolina

National policy makers and education researchers believe that North Carolina and the New American South have the historic opportunity to change the dominant pattern of high rates of school abandonment for Latino students (Wainer 2004). How can the State of North Carolina and its schools prepare to meet the educational needs of this newly arrived population? How can we do something different from replicating the gap in academic achievement between Latino students and the majority population of students?

So far, the trends are not promising. Available statistics confirm the high dropout rates for Latino students in North Carolina, but a significant problem remains unexamined. Thousands of Latino and Mexican students are being pushed out of schools because of several factors, including instruction in a language they do not understand, the lack of preparation of most teachers in the state on issues regarding second-language acquisition, and the shortage of teachers with training to teach
English as a Second Language. Adding to these negative factors is the chasm between schools and the culture of parents and communities, which presents barriers to the involvement of the parents in the education of their children. A report by the Tomás Rivera Center also cites examples of outright discrimination, in cases when the students’ immigration status makes teachers and schools less responsive to their educational needs, which stands in violation of federal legislation supporting educational services for these young people (Wainer 2004, 32-34).

Business performance in North Carolina has been enhanced by the presence of Mexican workers and their families. Yet, the business community and the state have not invested sufficiently in helping school districts assemble the necessary resources to educate this new population successfully. For example, in Durham County there has been a large influx of Mexican workers primarily in construction, but there is a shortage of education resources directed toward them, and there are only 143 teachers for English-as-a-Second-Language instruction services to meet the needs of more than 5,000 students (Wainer 2004, 16). The impact that the Latino community is having on the economic well-being of the region is nowhere near being matched by investment in educational resources that might benefit them. Meanwhile, the demographic shift in the region makes it clear that the South needs an educated Latino labor force to continue its economic growth.

Mexican children have significantly lower educational aspirations than other Latino groups and are more likely to believe that “college is not for people like me” (Smith 2003). In response to this sober reality, the research literature notes the urgent need to improve educational aspirations and attainment of Mexican-born children and their US-born sisters and brothers. Only when school leaders and teachers understand the economic, social, cultural, and family circumstances of emigrants from Mexico will they be able to engage the attention of students and parents alike in building greater opportunities available for educational advancement. Because Mexicans arriving from rural towns have not grown up in community cultures well integrated with formal schooling, it is difficult for parents to support their children as they embark on this new experience. Education is the answer, but it must be education that can engage and mobilize the aspirations of those new immigrants in the context of the globalized American South. Education itself, as a social institution, must change to function effectively in the new context.

Latin Americans and Mexicans, just like people from many other ethnic backgrounds, are proud of their cultural identity. But “identity” is
not static. It is reinforced through community and social practices that often disappear as groups migrate. Language, fiestas, cuisine and religion are some of the ways of reaffirming and transmitting a sense of strong cultural identity. It is imperative to acknowledge and support community processes that reinforce a sense of cultural agency. The loss of their language and culture contributes to the fact that Mexican children in the United States have been found to exhibit the lowest self-esteem among immigrant groups (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). This helps to explain their growing participation in gangs and their abandonment of school at early ages.

The increasing investment that the State of North Carolina must provide to education in response to the Leandro decision offers a momentous opportunity to focus on the needs of these students and their parents, along with needs of other at-risk groups in the state. As an initial response, public schools need to expand professional development to instill in teachers and other educators the crucially needed understanding of language, culture and identity brought to their schools by the newly arrived Latino population. In an effort to provide readily available assistance to teachers and other school personnel, the School of Education of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill published a CD containing The Handbook for Educators Who Work with Children of Mexican Origin (2005). The handbook is designed to assist school administrators, school board members, teachers, counselors and social workers on how to better address the learning needs of Latino children and young adults in their schools. Moreover, the handbook provides information about the educational system in Mexico and facilitates the grade placement and grade equivalence between the United States and Mexican schools. But much more is needed in public policy and in educational practice to meet the challenge of providing an effective education for Latinos.

An immediate step should be to create greater understanding among teachers about the Mexican population in the state. Despite their good intentions, the lack of knowledge and understanding among teachers and other educators is creating a negative pattern of incorporation for Latinos in schools and communities in the New American South. It is time to reverse that pattern, not only for the benefit of newcomers in our midst, but for the growth and well-being of the whole state and its many communities.

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Notes

1 I am grateful to Casimiro Leco Tomás for sharing with me the educational issues facing the Purhépecha communities migrating to North Carolina, research that is part of the dissertation he is finishing in El Colegio de Michoacán, Mexico.

2 In August of 1990, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by officials within the Departments of Education in the United States and Mexico as a way to strengthen their working relationship with one another to enhance their efforts to improve primary, secondary, and post-secondary education in both countries. For more information see http://www.ed.gov/admins/tchrqual/learn/binational.html.

References


The Little Temple of Nevis: The Need for Better Research

Colbert I. Nepaulsingh

Nevis is no insignificant little tourist attraction. Its history is rich with important data about the development of the New World. For reliable scholarship about Jews and the descendants of Jews in the New World, researchers need to know how to avoid misinformation about the history of Nevis. To understand the ascendancy of Alexander Hamilton and the United States in this hemisphere, to trace the paternal roots of a politician as important to the islands as Eric Williams, who faced that ascendancy, researchers need to study the culture of Nevis (La Borde 421). To understand what Nevisian names like Huggins mean on islands like Trinidad, for another example, the history of Nevis is crucial to people, like me, born in Trinidad. For solid cultural reasons, therefore, I feel very much at home as a researcher in Nevis. As a student on and of the islands all my life, I bear proudly a distinct responsibility to let my voice be heard in academia about Nevis and its culture. About Nevis and its culture, it pains me to record that the works produced about it recently,

Mr. Hanley at the lot Ms. Terrell thinks is the synagogue site. The mikveh is on the adjacent lot left of this picture (Nevis, 2006).
two of which are the subject of this article, make no use or mention of the bibliographical data provided by the *World Bibliographical Series*, volume 174 (Moll); nor do these recent works about Nevis know of the supplement to that bibliography, a work in progress being updated by a bibliographer at the University of the West Indies, Mona (Cassell). Better research is achieved only when accomplished research is fully assimilated and acknowledged. As a direct consequence of this sad failure to assimilate and acknowledge, the history and culture of Nevis continue to be misrepresented to the world, while the data in the archives of Nevis are not being digitalized before they crumble into useless dust.

In her fictionalized account of the life of Alexander Hamilton, the novelist Gertrude Atherton writes about her search for documents in the court records of Nevis. She “found a deed of separation,” she said, “between John and Mary Fawcett,” Hamilton’s grandparents, “executed on February 4th, 1740” (Atherton 1932, 322). After three days searching documents in Nevis, Atherton returned to St. Kitts, where she made a major find:

“Look! Look! Look!” I cried. Almost dancing up and down in excitement. A deed from Mary Fawcett of three slaves to “My beloved daughter Rachel Levine!”

And then a strange and almost terrifying thing happened. As they stood crowded about me, reading over my shoulder, the page crumbled to dust, like an old corpse exposed to air” (Atherton 1932, 324).

Atherton’s search was conducted in 1901 (Atherton 1902, 231), more than one hundred years ago, and the important documents in Nevis remain, today, like corpses ready to disintegrate at the slightest touch.

Alexander Hamilton said about his early years that he had learned to recite the Ten Commandments in Hebrew in Nevis (Mitchell 19, 480). This story has been repeated in island lore (Stern 1958, 153; Lewisohn 19; Bobbé 7), and with normal caution about accretions common to oral and to written traditions, the core of the story, as far as it can be determined, should be treated with respect. Failure to unearth further documentation about a synagogue in Nevis has deterred many serious historians of the early history of the United States and many biographers of Alexander Hamilton from exploring fully the ramifications of Hamilton’s exposure to Judaism at an early age; every effort should be expended to fill this void in scholarship about the descendants of Jews and their influence on the shaping of the New World.
The void to which I refer attracts the kind of misinformation for the
general public found in two recent books (by Hubbard and Terrell) which I select here to begin to illustrate my point about what Nevis needs. Hubbard’s book, especially, is now in its fifth edition since it first appeared in 1992, perhaps because it is “dedicated to the people of Nevis [and its] proceeds [are said to] benefit the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society” (Hubbard 5). But no country’s institutions deserve to receive proceeds from misinformation printed about them; Nevis needs a professional historian, not an amateur, to write its history. Here is a typical passage from Hubbard:

Jews were welcomed in Nevis. In the 17th century, they were suffering religious persecution in Brazil and many fled to the Protestant and Dutch Caribbean Islands. They were restricted to being merchants and could not own land, but later some became planters. They and Dutch traders brought with them the secret of how to crystallize sugar, which the Portuguese and Spanish had invented and attempted to keep for themselves. This was the process of boiling the cane juice in a line of coppers of decreasing size, removing impurities and adding lime, and at the end pouring the thickened syrup in cooling pans to crystallize. The line of coppers in boiling houses for years was called a “Spanish train.”

Part of the synagogue in Charlestown, dating from the 17th century, has been rediscovered behind the Administration Building, and the nearby remains of the Jewish cemetery in Charlestown are still maintained today. The stones are dated between 1670 and 1758 and bear inscriptions in Portuguese, Hebrew and English. Evidence points to the year 1684 as the date the synagogue was built, and efforts are being made to confirm it (Hubbard 56).

The passage, like almost every page of Hubbard’s fast-selling book, is replete with half-truths. Hubbard makes three apparently contradictory claims in the same paragraph, with no attempt whatever to clarify the obvious questions these claims create: 1) that “Jews were welcomed in Nevis”; 2) but that “they were restricted and could not own land”; and 3) that “later some became planters.” There is not enough space here to disentangle this web of misinformed generalizations, but serious readers who wish to understand what Hubbard might mean should consult
works not used by Hubbard, like those of Fortune, listed at the end of this article. Suffice it to say that any scholar with even a rudimentary knowledge about the Jewish experience worldwide knows that the word “welcomed” is inappropriate and insensitive. Until as recently as 1947 with the creation of the state of Israel, Jews were not “welcomed” in any country, unless by “welcomed” one means forced to negotiate permission to stay precariously, always to the distinct economic advantage of the hosts. And even after 1947, Jews are still forced to negotiate with their neighbors, and even with the entire world, one might argue, their existence as a nation state.

About the presence of Jews in Dutch Brazil from 1630 to 1654, readers should ignore Hubbard’s second sentence entirely and consult instead the works by Boxer, Gonsalves de Mello, Bloom, Novinsky, Galindo, Schalkwijk, Watjen, Dantas Silva, Schwartz, and Witnitzer listed below, not one of which was used by Hubbard or by Terrell. Understanding the search for freedom by Jews during this remarkable twenty-four year period is essential for a comprehension of the development of the islands. Understanding how and why sugar technology was transferred from Brazil first to Barbados and then to islands like Nevis could lead to the discovery of more information about the little temple Jews built in Nevis. It was not a question of keeping secret how to crystallize sugar, as Hubbard claims; crystallizing sugar was no secret in the seventeenth century.

The problem was how to cure the prized white sugar, in the first place, and secondly how to conserve fuel, the scarce wood used to boil the cane juice, especially after places like Barbados were almost completely deforested. The solution to curing white sugar involved using clay (Ligon 92). The solution for conserving fuel was to use bagasse, the dried stalks of the cane plant after the juice has been squeezed from it, under the so-called “Jamaica train,” which Hubbard calls the “Spanish train,” and which he still does not understand, even after I explained it to him at his request in August, 2006. To understand the “Jamaica train” readers should consult Ligon, which Hubbard does not know, and Watts (especially chapters 5 and 9), which Hubbard lists in his bibliography but never uses. Ligon explains in detailed sketches (between pages 84 and 85) that at the time of his visit to Barbados in 1647, the boiling method still involved wasteful fires under each of five copper kettles of decreasing size; Watts explains that around 1680 fuel was saved by using one fire only under the largest copper kettle and conducting the heat by means of a pipe to each of the other four kettles (Watts 399, 406, 443-44).
About what he calls the rediscovery of “part of the synagogue in Charlestown,” readers should consider what Hubbard told Ellsworth Boyd: “Records found in Amsterdam refer to a synagogue in Nevis built in 1684” (Boyd 1). Apparently, what Hubbard means here is that in 1688, the writer Daniel Levi de Barrios published a poem in which he states that there is a synagogue in Nevis. Before we begin to discuss the implications of what Levi de Barrios wrote, we should examine the implications of what Ellsworth said he was told by Hubbard, namely, that David Robinson, then curator of the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society, was walking to work one day when he noticed the architectural details of a structure and “concluded he had discovered the island’s ‘Lost Temple’” (Ellsworth 1). In Ellsworth’s account of his conversation with Hubbard, no mention is made of the visit to Nevis by Rabbi Malcolm Stern and his wife in 1957. In 1957, neither Hubbard nor Robinson was in Nevis. Robinson and his wife Joan were sent to Nevis by the Peace Corps in the early 1980s and they started the NHCS. Hubbard went to Nevis in 1985 “to help establish the offshore corpora-

Jew’s Walk  
(Nevis, 2006).

The cemetery is across the street at the bottom of this picture. The synagogue site is to the right side of the wall; the “rabbi’s house” is at the top left.
tion formation system,” he says on the back cover of the first edition of his book. It seems reasonable to assume that the founding members of the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society learned about the lost little temple of Nevis, after they got there, as a direct result of Rabbi Stern’s visit.

Rabbi Stern explained that “he visited Nevis on Sunday, February 3, 1957, while serving as Jewish Chaplain for the Virginia Jamestown 350th Anniversary Cruise, aboard the S.S. Ryndam. This was the first cruise ship ever to stop at Nevis, and the visit was commemorative of the fact that the 1607 Jamestown expedition had visited the island en route from England to Virginia” (Stern 1958, 151). As a direct result of Rabbi Stern’s visit, the Old Sephardic Cemetery was reconsecrated on February 25, 1971, in a ceremony attended by the Prime Minister of Nevis, St. Kitts, and Anguilla, Robert Bradshaw; the earliest date on any tombstone in that cemetery is 1684, the date in which Hubbard assumes the synagogue was built (Ezratty 133). It seems clear that the government of Nevis had come to respect, after Rabbi Stern’s visit, the economic value of tourists who search for their roots; the government of Nevis needs the help of experts who understand what has come to be called “roots tourism.”

The mikveh (Nevis, 2006).
Instead of consulting with experts who understand “roots tourism,” the government of Nevis has permitted the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society to enter into agreements with young scholars at the beginning of their academic careers whose work has not yet matured and whose contributions are, by definition, a factor of their limited experience; this inexperienced work is then propagated by the NHCS as fact.

For example, in 1985, a young scholar (Wilson) working on his doctoral dissertation for the University of Chicago produced a preliminary report for the NHCS about “The Prehistory of Nevis,” and his report is seriously misrepresented in Hubbard’s book, so seriously misrepresented that not even the name Nevis is correctly explained. Hubbard writes, citing Wilson as his source, that “by 1540, the island’s name appeared on maps as ‘Nieves’…a contraction of the name ‘Santa Maria de las Nieves,’ the origin of which was a miraculous summer snowstorm in Spain” (Hubbard 20). In fact, it is well known among scholars that the name Nevis commemorates “the pleasant legend of the Virgin causing snow to fall on the Esquiline in August” in Italy, not in Spain (Morison 73-74).

For another more serious example, “in the fall of 1992 [Michelle Terrell, a young scholar working on her doctoral dissertation for Boston University] was asked by the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society to undertake an archaeological investigation to confirm what they believed to be the location of the synagogue of a Sephardic Jewish community that had existed on the island from the mid-17th through the late 18th centuries” (Terrell 2000, 12). As the published version of her doctoral dissertation indicates, Ms. Terrell was not the best person to conduct this investigation in continuation of the work of Rabbi Stern. Her approach to the problem was hindered by her inadequate command of the sources necessary for resolving the issue. Consider, for example, what Terrell does with the key quotation from Daniel Levi de Barrios’s poem published in 1688. Terrell cites a stanza of the poem from a secondary source, translates that stanza inadequately, and is unable to draw any meaningful conclusions whatever from it. A full quotation of the passage from page 48 of Terrell’s book follows.

It is not certain when the Nevis synagogue was constructed, but like the cemetery, it was probably established during the 1670s. The presence of a synagogue on Nevis during this period is substantiated by the island’s inclusion in a 1688 poem recorded in Historia Real de la Gran Bretaña by Daniel
Levi de Barrios that mentions six far-flung Jewish communities with synagogues (Bethencourt 1925: 38; my translation):

Ya en seis ciudades anglas se publica
Luz de seis juntas de Israël sagradas:
Tres en Nieves, London, Jamaica;
Quarta y quinta en dos partes de Barbados;
Sexta en Madras Patân se verifica.

[Now, in six English cities, made known is
the light of six sacred points of Israel:
three in Nevis, London, Jamaica;
the fourth and fifth in two parts of Barbados;
the sixth takes place in Madras Patân.] (Terrell 2005, 48)

“Se publica/luz de seis juntas de Israël sagradas” does not mean what Terrell says but rather that “light from six sacred assemblies of Israel is now published or made public” in six English cities, including Charlestown, Nevis. These lines beg for a search of Levi de Barrios’s sources: published or made public where? Levi de Barrios is writing for an audience that knows what he is referring to, and he is inviting that audience to check his sources for verification: “se verifica” does not mean here “takes place,” one of the meanings Terrell obviously found in the dictionary; it means instead “can be checked or verified [as existing] in Madras.” To what sources is Levi de Barrios appealing?

Judging from her bibliography, Terrell is completely unaware of the extensive work that critics (like Scholberg, Kayserling, Pieterse, and Besso) have done to elucidate the writings of Daniel Levi de Barrios. Terrell does not know to tell us that Daniel or Miguel de Barrios “in 1660, traveled to the West Indies, where his first wife, Deborah Vaez, died” and was buried in Tobago (Scholberg 1962/63, 120; 1962, 10). In 1660, the Jewish communities mentioned by Levi de Barrios in Barbados and Jamaica had been thriving for some time, and it is very likely that those communities had already extended themselves to Nevis. In other words, even after the research of Terrell, the writings of Daniel Levi de Barrios remain an unexplored source of information about early Nevis. Terrell does not even use the information about Levi de Barrios’s motives for writing available to her in Bodian (especially 20-24, 173), a source she cites.

This latest search for the lost little temple of Nevis by Michelle Terrell, “a registered professional archaeologist [who] has received numerous awards for her scholarship, including the 2001 Society for
Historical Archaeology Dissertation Award and the 1996 Edwin S. and Ruth M. White prize from the Boston University Humanities foundation” (Terrell blurb) is more fanciful than factual. I say fanciful because crucial parts of the argument are admittedly conjecture. For example, after readers are invited on page 31 to think that Abraham Bueno de Mesquita had received a “letter from his brother Joseph in New York [with] a request for him to be on watch for an opportunity for their friend Isaac Pinheiro,” they are told on page 160 that “the existence of this letter and its instructions are conjecture.” Fanciful and poorly researched, because Terrell relies on sources intended for a generalized reading public to document what she says about the Jewish diaspora. Readers should know that Sachar and Ruderman, Terrell’s main sources of information about Jews in Spain, cannot be compared favorably with Baer, Netanyahu, Ashtor, Neumann, Lea and other well known authorities not used by Terrell.

Ms. Terrell tried to establish, after six labyrinthine chapters and extensive “archaeology of the suspected site,” that the structure referred to as the “Jews’ School” in Nevis was “built nearly a century after the synagogue” (Terrell 2005, 68-98). Then, thinking backwards, Ms. Terrell “reached an impasse in the reconstruction of the history of the Liburd property” (Terrell 2005, 104), or, more accurately, of what became the Liburd property, the large block of land, bound by what is now Government Road on its north and Main Street on its south, that was bought by the Jews of Nevis for a synagogue complex. Next, Ms. Terrell created for her synagogue search “a historical jigsaw puzzle...[by] constructing a map of colonial Charlestown,” and she wondered whether “by chance [she] had stumbled backward into the excavation of a Jewish household” (Terrell 2005, 104-107, 110). Using land records, Ms. Terrell traced the properties known as Liburd’s yard and Merton Villa back to Isaac Pinheiro, one of the better known descendants of Jews who lived in eighteenth-century Nevis. Why “stumble backward” in any search, especially in a search that leads to Isaac Pinheiro, whose connections are fairly well known to scholars of Sephardic Jews? Who was directing such a backward search by a bright young scholar?

Since Ms. Terrell discovered, with hard work, that Isaac Pinheiro was one of the owners of what is now called Liburd’s yard, how can her dissertation director claim that “the site [Liburd’s yard] that local lore identified firmly as a synagogue was not even a place where Jewish people had lived!”? (Terrell 2005, x). Where is the evidence that Ms.
Terrell’s director, Mary Beaudry of Boston University, ever visited Liburd’s yard? What does Mary Beaudry know about “local lore in Nevis” that permits her to speak authoritatively about the people who create Nevisian lore?

To find the synagogue of Nevis, no archaeology, no archival research, no resistivity survey, is necessary. To find the synagogue of Nevis, do what my knowledgeable Nevisian friend, Mr. Samuel Hanley, and I did on August 15, 2006: simply look straight ahead, not backward, across the street from the Jewish cemetery, cross the narrow street now called Government Road, and walk through the now wall-less ruins of a building to what I told Mr. Hanley was the synagogue’s mikveh in its southeast corner. Out of the mikveh now grows what Mr. Hanley told me is a black fig tree. In the southeast corner of the lot, Mr. Hanley showed me what used to be a well; and south of the well, I showed Mr. Hanley what looks like an oven, presumably for the outside kitchen of the synagogue. Together, Mr. Hanley and I checked the property, scratched our heads, checked the property to the west of the synagogue (which Ms. Terrell claims to be the site of the synagogue), then scratched our heads again; together we checked and re-checked Ms. Terrell’s maps, especially the map on page 127, and we found it incomprehensible, Mr. Hanley and I, that anybody could not find the “lost” temple of Nevis.

I remain convinced that many visitors who paid their respects to their ancestors by leaving small stones on their tombstones in the cemetery, also crossed Government Road and assumed that they were on the ruins of the synagogue site. And I am also convinced that many Nevisians who have walked through the synagogue lot have also known that it must have been part of the Jewish lore of Nevis. In other words, the best scholarship comes, almost always, from what academics like to call the “lore,” but what I insist on calling the common sense of common people, including ordinary scholars like myself. Nothing that was told to the late Rabbi Malcolm Stern by the people of Nevis in 1957 has proved to be any more misleading than what scholars like Ms. Terrell, her dissertation director, and their colleagues in the Society for Historical Archaeology have told themselves.

Ms. Terrell says repeatedly in her book that Nevisians misled Rabbi Stern, claiming in one sentence that “the fictive attribution of the title ‘Jews’ School to the Pemberton cistern appears to have been simply for the Sterns’ benefit,” a somewhat ambiguous sentence (Terrell 163)! Does the sentence mean that the Nevisians are lying, or that Rabbi Stern...
was seeking some kind of benefit by believing the Nevisians, or both, namely that the Nevisians and Rabbi Stern were choosing to believe what is in their mutual interest? Does it mean something else?

But the facts seem clear. The Nevisians called the cistern the “Jews’ School,” as Ms. Terrell herself admits; Nevisians did not call the cistern the synagogue. Stern himself, according to Terrell, insisted that the cistern was part of a synagogue, and Ms. Terrell was blinded in her determination to prove the rabbi wrong. Nevisians also led Rabbi Stern accurately through a path they called the Jews’ walk, presumably because they saw Jews walking to the little temple on Sabbath days and on other holy days when it is against Jewish law to use forms of transportation used on workdays. Nevisians led Stern and others directly through this path to the Jewish cemetery. What more could the good people of Nevis have done?

Before we found what should be ruled out, at least, as the synagogue, I had shown Mr. Hanley Ms. Terrell’s maps, and I had asked him to take photographs of the synagogue for me, thinking that Ms. Terrell’s conclusions were correct, and thinking that I would not have time enough from my research at the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society’s archives to check her claims. But Mr. Hanley took no pictures. Instead he insisted that I confirm what he already seemed to know to be correct, namely that Ms. Terrell’s conclusions are wrong. For me, the mikveh, which had a “lip” around it to make it the required depth, points to a probable location for the synagogue, and all the textual documentation provided by Ms. Terrell about land titles supports that probability, especially “the sale of a half acre of land on February 23, 1749…bounded on the east by ‘the lands of Michael Williams,’ on the west by the ‘Common Gaol,’ on the north ‘with the Jew Synagouge [sic],’ and on the south with the street’” (Terrell 2005, 124).

After we convinced ourselves of a probable location for the synagogue, Mr. Hanley invited me to walk with him east from the synagogue site; he wanted me to meet his daughter, who happens to work a few yards away in a building past the Cable and Wireless offices. After I made a few steps behind Mr. Hanley, I noticed in the corner of my right eye a similarly aged set of plastered stone as that of the ruins of the synagogue. I turned around sharply, fixed my gaze at the foundation of the building, and told Mr. Hanley that the building I was looking at must have been the rabbi’s residence. We explored the lot on which we believe the rabbi’s residence to have been built, and we found a detached kitchen
similar to the ones on the synagogue site, and, thanks to Ms. Terrell’s
dig, on the Pinheiro home. The pattern seems clear. The Nevis syna-
gogue complex was located on a large block of land, on which three
major buildings were constructed, each with its own outside kitchen and
water supply: 1) a little temple; 2) a house for the rabbi; and 3) either a
home [for the Pinheiros] or a school.

About the Pinheiro, Terrell and others have not inquired about the
possible relationship of the popular Nevisian name, Pinney, to Pinheiro.
Pinney sounds like an easy English nickname for Pinheiro, a name much
more difficult than Pinney for English speakers to pronounce properly.
The English suffix “y” is common: Thomas becomes Tommy, Ken-
neth becomes Kenny, and so on. It is well known that Sephardic Jews
changed their names with frequency, depending on their immediate
circumstances:

As the Spanish consul in Amsterdam opined in 1655, “The
president of the Synagogue signs his name Cortez instead of
Corticos, which is his real name. …It is a custom among the
members of his nation to assume as many names as they
please, either for purposes of deceit or in order not to jeop-
ardize their relatives who still bear their [true] name in Spain”
(Faber 264).

About the Pinheiro “cistern” called the Jews’ school, the structure could
have belonged to a school or to a home, or to both, since it made little
difference in the eighteenth century whether children were taught at the
synagogue or at a home. Although we did not have time and tools to
explore further, we felt certain we would also find a well near the rabbi’s
kitchen. In other words, Nevisians have transmitted correctly, as far as
we now can tell, what they know to be true about their eighteenth-
century Jewish neighbors.

Decisions about the future of some of the treasures of Nevis remain
at the discretion of expatriate citizens not native to Nevis; the current
president of NHCS, for example, is a former manager with Pacific Bell
TelephoneNumber Company. However well-meaning expatriates might be, it
is always salutary for natives to appropriate the telling of their own his-
tory. When I wrote to them with my opinion about the location of the
synagogue, the board of members of the NHCS replied defensively that
they “were not at all pleased with what [I said] and shocked at some of
the contents” of my report. They claim “to know that the location [I]
suggest could not have been the location for the synagogue” (e-mail
correspondence with the author), and they advise me strongly to consult with Michelle Terrell. If it is true that the location I suggest could not have been the synagogue, then why did Michelle Terrell not explain anywhere in her book why she excluded the site I suggest? And I cannot understand how the board of the NHCS can arrive at a decision about my opinion of Terrell’s work if no one on the board had read or seen Ms. Terrell’s book; I took a copy of Terrell’s book to Nevis in August, 2006, at which time no one on the board of NHCS in Nevis knew that the book had appeared in 2005. Furthermore, as far as I could tell, there was no copy of Ms. Terrell’s dissertation (which appeared in 2000) in the collection of the NHCS. Communication between well-meaning expatriate researchers and natives is not always ideal.

Whoever is right, Terrell or me, the site of the synagogue is clearly in the block demarcated by the Pinheiro household in the southwest corner and the lot across the road from the cemetery in the northeast corner. It is extremely important that the government of Nevis secure this area quickly for appropriate excavation by knowledgeable experts. For example, Mr. Hanley saw what he believes to be a mortar made of stone, without its pestle. This site is undoubtedly an invaluable part of the heritage of the people of Nevis, of America, and of the entire world, where it is well known that the Jewish people have repeatedly been persecuted and sent into exile. The synagogue of Recife is older and better restored than the synagogue of Nevis. But few sites in the New World, including the site of the synagogue of Recife, can claim to be as clearly demarcated as the synagogue of Nevis to show how Jews attempted to buffet themselves, even as they interacted daily with their neighbors, knowing always that that interaction has repeatedly led to their persecution and their exile. If indeed it has been found once more, let us never again forget the location of the little temple of Nevis.

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BOOK REVIEW


Locating the Latino(a) Literary Canon: The Politics, the Market, and the Music

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With Dominican-American writer Junot Díaz’s recent selection as the winner of this year’s Pulitzer Prize in Fiction (for his novel *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*), it seems newly important to consider the place of Latino(a) literature in the larger category of American literary study. If we add to such inquiry the growing mass appeal of Latino(a) writers outside the preserve of dedicated university courses on the subject, a discussion feels long overdue about what forces have shaped—and will continue to shape—what has unquestioningly become the de facto “canon” of U.S. Latino(a) literature. Raphael Dalleo and Elena Machado Sáez take up this task in an ambitious way in their book *The Latino/a Canon and the Emergence of Post-Sixties Literature*, a study that situates its sense of Latino(a) literary canonicity not only in the orbits of academic criticism but in larger arcs of historical, cultural, and economic context. In short, it is a volume that tackles the reasons why those of us who study and write about Latino(a) literature privilege the texts that we do while accounting for market forces beyond the control of any single academic or artistic entity.

In Dalleo and Machado Sáez’s view, a “common sense periodization” has emerged in discussions and categorizations of Latino(a) literature by scholars and anthologists that lumps texts into either “Civil Rights” or “post-Sixties” generational camps (2). Dalleo and Machado Sáez note, and rightly so, that scholars tend to highlight writers of the Civil Rights generation in what seems to have become a set of tacitly-expected characteristics: political engagement, a progressive stance on social issues, and the rejection of oppressive economics that give rise to ghettos and the ostensibly separate-but-equal communities that effectively deny Latinos full access to the privileges that other Americans enjoy. Because
of these expected ideological sympathies and affiliations, argue Dalleo and Machado Sáez, scholars often conclude that these Civil Rights-era writers were (or are) uninterested in finding a market for their literary works, eschewing popularity and book sales in order to stay true to their political and artistic principles. Similarly, these same scholars tend to see the “post-Sixties” group of writers as the binary opposite of this earlier literary generation. In these scholars’ thinking, suggest Dalleo and Machado Sáez, the post-Sixties are almost apolitical in their artistic stances and highly interested in establishing publishing markets for their work as well as in currying popularity and acclaim with a wide readership. As Dalleo and Machado Sáez point out, this binary thinking about the corpus of Latino(a) literature leads as often to a misreading of the literature than to useful readings of it, as writers who might be politically-engaged but more subtle in the presentation of their politics find themselves having to awkwardly justify their choices to skeptical critics, and as writers whose work sells too well must finesse with these same critics the reasons why their work can still qualify as literary and political despite the critical embarrassment of their market success. Mixed up in all these dynamics but teased out usefully by Dalleo and Machado Sáez is the problem of “anticolonialism” present in many of these literary works, a political sensibility that has itself become a sort of commodity in the Latino(a) literary marketplace. Does anticolonialism, once it is glorified and fetishized by younger Latino(a) writers seeking to emulate those who are critically-esteemed among their writerly elders, become reified and then sold en masse, not as a way of breaking down the colonialist system but rather as a means of slaking that system’s new thirst for all things multicultural?

In order to escape the traps of what they allege to be the too-reductive paradigms of Latino(a) literary canonization to date, Dalleo and Machado Sáez instead choose to revise the received wisdom of Latino(a) literary canonicity from both ends of its conceptual binary. First, Dalleo and Machado Sáez insist that post-Sixties literature breathes new life into the political tradition of earlier Latino(a) literature by “engaging with the triumphs and defeats of the past” (7), allowing itself to be aware of the history and the historical precedent inherent in earlier Latino(a) literature without unreflectively reiterating it. Likewise, Dalleo and Machado Sáez see the need to “reimagin[e] the possibilities of the popular” (8)—namely, to resist the view that market popularity means the concession of progressivism in favor of a necessarily conservative stance vis-à-vis the issues that face the Latino communities throughout the United States. Employing Nestor García Canclini’s argument that authors and the market negotiate a co-produced identity for their works, Dalleo and Machado
Sáez finally wish to leave their readers with the sense that the spirit of the predominantly anticolonialist writing of the Sixties is still with us (and indeed “haunts” contemporary Latino(a) literature) but that its anticolonialism finds itself made fresh by a contemporary reassessment of that anticolonialism’s past failures and successes, and by newer Latino(a) literature’s accommodations to the literary marketplace.

As the book passes into the case studies of its five chapters, Dalleo and Machado Sáez divide the book into two rough conceptual halves. The first half deals with writers who resist the marketing categories that outsiders would superimpose upon what has been called “ghetto fiction,” including Pedro Pietri, Miguel Piñero, Abraham Rodríguez, and Ernesto Quiñonez. The second half of the book details the work of Junot Díaz, Angie Cruz, Cristina García, and Julia Alvarez, writers who in Dalleo and Machado Sáez’s estimation “have been more readily labeled as mainstream” (10) and therefore the bearers of at best questionable political critique. Notably, the writers studied in all five chapters derive from what we might call “east-coast” Latino(a) origins, as they are all US Puerto Rican, Cuban-American, or Dominican-American. Dalleo and Machado Sáez see this east-coast Latino(a) orientation—and the fact that all of these writers have important biographical, artistic, and/or thematic connections to New York City in their work—as part of the strategy of their book, partly because the similar anticolonialist experiences of these three east-coast Latino/a groups lend themselves to shared study, and because the close geographical proximity of their communities in the United States has already forged some of the interethnic and pan-ethnic collaborations that Dalleo and Machado Sáez’s book wants to underscore. Thus, The Latino/a Canon and the Emergence of Post-Sixties Literature is more properly a study of what the book ends up calling an examination of “Latino Caribbean writers” (12) than one that would include Chicano/Mexican-American and other Central American writers as part of the constellation of its “Latino(a)” texts. Given the sprawl of the texts and contexts that Dalleo and Machado Sáez’s study already manages, however, their decision to limit their study in this way is understandable and even desirable as it brings a historical and cultural tightness of focus to its argumentation.

One surprising benefit of The Latino/a Canon and the Emergence of Post-Sixties Literature lies not only in its views of Latino(a) writers but in its assessment of the critics of Latino(a) literature as well—Ilan Stavans, Juan Flores, Gustavo Pérez Firmat, and Lisa Sánchez González among them. Of these, Ilan Stavans’ The Hispanic Condition (1995) and Gustavo Pérez Firmat’s Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way (1994) fare
the worst in Dalleo and Machado Sáez’s critique, evidencing in their eyes a view of latinidad as something to be consumed by America-at-large rather than affording the Latino(a) the role of being a consumer. Critics are right to be concerned about the role of the political in Latino(a) literature, the *The Latino/a Canon* argues, if Latinos(as) are nothing more that something to be consumed, as evidenced in the food metaphors that Dalleo and Machado Sáez point out throughout Stavans’ and Pérez Firmat’s work (108). Tracking Juan Flores’ work from his *La Carreta Made a U-Turn: Puerto Rican Language and Culture in the United States* (1981) and *Divided Borders: Essays on Puerto Rican Identity* (1993) to his most recent *From Bomba to Hip-Hop: Puerto Rican Culture and Latino Identity* (2000) involves in Dalleo and Machado Sáez’s hands a journey less troubled by food metaphors and more attuned to the terms upon which Puerto Rican and other Latino(a) literatures should become well-known and studied in the marketplace, but ultimately the authors see both Flores and Lisa Sánchez González’s *Boricua Literature: A Literary History of the Puerto Rican Diaspora* (2001) as flawed by their own nostalgias for the political past. But Dalleo and Machado Sáez do praise Flores and Sánchez González for rearticulating the study of Latino(a) literature alongside other popular cultural forms like music. Though it may not entirely solve the dilemma between the politics of Latino(a) literature and its potential market value, Dalleo and Machado Sáez argue that music like the salsa of Rubén Blades, Willie Colón, and Héctor Lavoe offers a model for seeing how political critique is possible in a format that can also be wildly popular; perhaps the politics of critique can co-exist along with something that people want for pleasure’s sake as well. It is in this wedding of the politically-critical and the popularly-cultural that Dalleo and Machado Sáez finally plead for a “third space for literature,” a conceptual space that registers “the complex theorizations of music’s relation to politics and the market in Latino/a studies” and that “position[s] Latino/a literature in a comparable manner” so as to “grapple with the possibilities and limitations of the market” (175).

Especially because of the timeliness of its arguments, but also because of the breadth and depth of its study and argumentation, *The Latino/a Canon and the Emergence of Post-Sixties Literature* will be an important text for scholars and students of Latino(a) literature. One can already see how Dalleo and Machado Sáez’s book could well occasion a lively discussion of the next steps in the formation and cultivation of a Latino(a) canon for the twenty-first century.
Toda reseña le debe dar al lector o la lectora una idea precisa y fiel del contenido del libro reseñado. En el caso de *A Companion to US Latino Literatures* se hace aún más necesario cumplir con ese deber, no sólo para llenar los requisitos del género sino para establecer claramente sus logros y fallas. Procedamos, pues, a describir este volumen que nos llega a las manos con la promesa de acompañarnos por las nuevas rutas de las literaturas latinas en los Estados Unidos.

*A Companion to US Latino Literatures* recoge doce estudios sobre diversos aspectos del tema. Pocos—ejemplar entre ellos es el de Elizabeth Coonrod Martínez sobre la literatura chicana—lo ven desde una perspectiva amplia. Algunos—como el de Eva Paulino Bueno sobre Sandra Cisneros—se concentran en una figura en particular. En la mayoría de los trabajos se estudia algún aspecto de esas letras: el ir y venir entre la Isla y los Estados Unidos en la producción de los escritores neorricans (Patricia M. Montilla), el tema afrocubano en el teatro de esa diáspora (Armando González-Pérez) o varias poetas caribeñas (Carlota Caulfield). Otros prestan atención a literaturas de grupos latinos que sólo comienzan a crear un cuerpo literario: escritores centroamericanos (Vincent Spina) o brasileños (Antonio Luciano de Andrade Tosta) o argentino (Sergio Waisman). Uno está dedicado a la producción de algunos escritores latinoamericanos de ascendencia judía (Lydia M. Gil) y otro, muy fuera de contexto dado que el título que promete tratar sólo la literatura, al cine (Darién J. Davis). Los ensayos van, pues, desde los panorámicos, como el de Coonrod Martínez, a los extremadamente especializados, como el de Bueno. Pero el conjunto, que fluctúa en calidad, no ofrece un amplio panorama de las literaturas latinas que se nos promete desde el título. Éste no es el guía o el acompañante que se anuncia aun antes de abrir las páginas del volumen.
Dejemos, por el momento, este problema y vayamos a otros: la distribución de temas. *A Companion to US Latino Literatures* trata de cubrir todas las ramas de esas nuevas literaturas. Por ello se incluyen ensayos sobre las letras chicanas, las de los puertorriqueños en los Estados Unidos—a veces llamados neorricans, aunque el término no deja de ser problemático—y la de los cubanoamericanos, los tres principales grupos entre los latinos. Los editores de este volumen muy sabia y justicieramente han tratado de ofrecer ensayos que traten la producción de otros grupos. Por ello incluyen uno sobre algunos escritores dominicoamericanos, quienes en algunos círculos han sido llamados “dominicanyork”, o brasileños, a quienes se le ha prestado poca o ninguna atención. Pero ese mismo deseo de amplitud y justicia lleva a los editores a un grave error: dedicar espacio desigual a los grupos ya que los ensayos incluidos no representan la cantidad ni la importancia de las letras estudiadas. Por ejemplo, un ensayo general sobre las letras chicanas y otro sobre una de sus principales creadoras no refleja acertadamente la importancia de esa literatura, especialmente si se compara con el espacio dedicado a otras letras que sólo comienzan a producir un cuerpo literario en los Estados Unidos.

Esta selección de temas esconde otro problema mayor y más peligroso: ¿quién se puede considerar escritor(a) latino(a)? Y es que no todos los creadores de origen latinoamericano que viven y producen en los Estados Unidos pueden llamarse latinos. Lo latino es una nueva categoría cultural que implica una trasformación. Tomemos un ejemplo de otra literatura: Julio Cortázar vivió por décadas en Francia y hasta llegó a ser ciudadano de ese país, pero eso no lo hace un escritor francés; Cortázar siguió siendo un escritor argentino, latinoamericano, toda su vida y lo sigue siendo hoy. De la misma manera, el vivir y crear en los Estados Unidos no hace latino a un escritor latinoamericano. Por desgracia, el intento de presentar una inclusión amplia de escritores latinoamericanos que viven en este país desvaloriza y tergiversa la definición de lo latino en este volumen.

¿Quién es latina(o)? Esta definición muchas veces es una autodefinitión: muchas veces lo es quien como tal se identifica. Alberto Sandoval y Frances Aparicio salomónica y escuetamente definen al latino como un “sujeto de ascendencia latinoamericana que radica en los Estados Unidos y cuyas experiencias históricas han sido marcadas por su condición de minoría racial”. Por ejemplo, Manuel Puig no es un escritor latino ni tampoco lo es—hasta el momento, hasta que no se defina de otra forma—Isabel Allende. Hoy muchos quieren ser latinos y es que los llamados
“Latino Studies” se han convertido en un ámbito de moda en el contexto académico estadounidense. Pero si se quiere ser justo hay que decir que no todo escritor de origen latinoamericano radicado en los Estados Unidos cabe en esa categoría. Los editores de *A Companion to US Latino Literatures* debieron tener mayor cuidado al seleccionar los escritores estudiados en este volumen pues en algunos casos rompen con una verdadera definición de lo latino.

Pero el problema central de este libro que, - insisto - recoge trabajos de mérito e importancia, es el título mismo. Un “companion”, en la tradición editorial angloamericana, es un libro de referencia, usualmente presentado en el formato de enciclopedia compuesto por breves ensayos, que ayudan o acompañan al lector o la lectora en un campo en particular. Nuestras bibliotecas están llenas de excelente ejemplos que pueden ir desde “companions” de una literatura continental, a una literatura nacional a la obra de un solo autor o autora. Pero *A Companion to US Latino Literatures* no es ese tipo de libro, aunque desde el título promete serlo. Y es una pena, porque de habérsele dado a este volumen otro título, de tal manera que no prometiera algo que no cumple, éste sería mucho mejor. Su título lo hunde porque lo traiciona. Por todo ello, me tienta forrar con un papel oscuro mi ejemplar para no ver el título y así poderme olvidar de la promesa incumplida que se me hace como lector y disfrutar así de sus ensayos por su propio mérito, mérito que no dejan de tener, a pesar del título.

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A Look at What is “Happening” in Latina(o) Studies

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A comprehensive and masterfully planned collection of essays, *A Companion to Latina/o Studies* opens with a foreword in which the editors acknowledge the work done by pioneering scholars in the field and mention other anthologies that have been published in the past twenty years, as a way of contextualizing and providing a historical framework for Latina(o) Studies scholarship.

The collection is organized in seven sections that contain between five and eight articles each. The first section is entitled “Latinidades” and includes seven articles that explore a wide variety of topics, such as immigration, language, music, food, religion, and literature. Although the articles are written from diverse theoretical and disciplinary perspectives, there is a common thread that points toward the impossibility of conceiving a single unified definition of *Latinidad*. The contributors articulate and support the idea of a redefinition of *Latinidad* that will “...force us to transform the existing identity paradigms that still inform our thinking” (47).

The second section, “Actos: Critical Practices,” includes six articles. Dance, oral traditions, migrant workers, children as translators, gender identity, and a self-portrait are revealed as personal and public examples of *Latinidad* in action. The articles in this section explore the critical interventions performed by a range of social actors who must use a variety of strategies to survive hostile environments. Their daily personal and professional actions constitute critical practices.

“Vidas: Herstories/Histories” is the title of the third section which also includes six articles that explore life stories as they have been affected by race, class, education, location, family displacements and, of
course, gender. Perhaps the best way of illustrating this section is by using some of Noriega’s concepts about the relationship between university and community: “What value is there in preserving the artifacts of a community-based institution, or developing academic publications about its past, without also assisting that institution to survive and to continue serving its community? That is the social responsibility with which the scholar and the university are confronted” (192).

Section four bears the title “En la lucha: Sites of Struggle.” The eight articles that make up this section denounce the inequalities that Latinos(as) face in the educational, medical, and legal systems as well as in the political and labor arenas. There are two articles that deal with the criminalization and incarceration of Latino youth (Fernández-Kelly and López), and they are especially relevant because they depict, and at the same time constitute, sites of struggle. The authors offer a way of conceptualizing problem solving for at-risk populations that are already inside prisons and also for those who have not entered a labeling system that will most likely criminalize them.

The fifth section, “Mestizaje: Revisiting Race,” consists of six articles. Mestizaje has been a much debated, used, problematized, and romanticized concept that has informed the scholarly debate in a variety of disciplines. Candelario asserts that race does matter because what is at stake is people’s “…ability to access symbolic, social, and economic resources they need to survive and to sustain their families and communities” (346). But in terms of mestizaje, what might be crucial is that “understanding racial mixture as a universal reality and not a particular purview of Latin Americans and Latinos(as) is a vital step in the crucial project of demystifying the role of race and racism—and making all of us visible” (334).

“Identidades: Producing Subjectivities” is the title of section six, which contains seven articles in which the authors address the definition, constitution, and perception of Latino(a) identities. At the crux of the matter is the distinction between a performative identity that is the product of subjectivity, and an identity that is a mere adjustment to preconceived notions of Latinidad and already-used labels.

The closing section, “En el mundo: Transnational Connections,” includes five articles that explore the idea of Latinidad from a global perspective. In the past fifteen years the scholarly as well as the political discourse has moved to consideration of the local and the particular in the context of the global and the transnational. In the case of Latino(a) Studies, the particularities of lives lived in the United States cannot be
disassociated from lives lived in Latin America, and it is precisely in the interconnectedness of the two locations that the future of Latino(a) Studies research is moving.

* A Companion to Latina/o Studies * is a broad and substantive collection of essays that aptly and elegantly addresses current as well as future directions in a field of study that has become of paramount importance for any cultural, social, political, or economic considerations in the United States as well as in Latin America. The reader will notice that each section has a title in Spanish and a subtitle in English, signaling the importance of the transnational connections between the two parts of the Americas, as well as acknowledging the two languages most commonly used in Latino(a) Studies.

The forty-five articles presented in this collection provide a wide range of disciplinary as well as theoretical perspectives that are sure to please the first-time reader of the topics addressed in the volume, as well as students and scholars with interest and curiosity about what is “happening” in Latino(a) Studies. Most of the articles are relatively short, a feature that makes the collection especially inviting, and an effective way of introducing readers to the wide range of topics. The quality of the research evident in all the articles is of the highest caliber, and the resources/topics that each article points to are an invaluable source for future academic endeavors.

* A Companion to Latina/o Studies * is a *must-have* collection of essays that already constitutes essential reading and reference material for this growing field.

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Review of César J. Ayala and Rafael Bernabe,
*Puerto Rico in the American Century: A History Since 1898.*

**BOOK REVIEW**

Understanding a Complex Past:
Puerto Rico in the American Century

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During the past decades significant attempts to reinterpret Puerto Rican history, culture and society from nontraditional perspectives have been undertaken. However, in one way or another, the majority of those attempts could not fully achieve their objectives but contributed to the process of opening new intellectual venues for the understanding of the complexities of Puerto Rican experience. I should remind the reader that in the late 1960s Manuel Maldonado-Denis wrote an important essay that became an essential book and presented a different approach by challenging the history of colonial subordination that Puerto Rico had experienced during the 19th and the first part of the 20th century. Maldonado-Denis’ *Puerto Rico: A Socio-Historic Interpretation*\(^1\) sought to contextualize the peculiar case of this American colony in relation to the imperial domination of the Caribbean and Latin America by the United States. Inspired by the ideas of Frank Fanon and other anti-colonial thinkers, Maldonado-Denis deconstructed the multifaceted forms of political, economic, and cultural colonialism that had reshaped Puerto Rican history both under Spain until 1898 and under US rule after that date. Though it was an ambitious project, Maldonado-Denis’ work had serious flaws that limited its theoretical and methodological contributions undermining the transcendence of the book in the long run.

During the following two decades (1970s-1980s) new perspectives inspired by Marxist analyses emerged and a new radical historiography associated with CEREP (Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Puertorriqueña) and the Center for Puerto Rican Studies (affiliated to the City University of New York) produced important works that fertilized the terrain for the development of sharper interpretations of Puerto Rican reality. Authors such as Angel Quintero Rivera, Gervasio García,
Fernando Picó, Juan Flores, Frank Bonilla, Ricardo Campos, Arcadio Díaz Quiñonez, José Luis González, among others, revitalized the public debate regarding Puerto Rican history, society, and culture by advancing innovative ways of thinking and analyzing modern Puerto Rico. Fortunately, after the collapse of the Marxist paradigm in the mid-1980s, scholars realized that most class-based interpretations that characterized the aforementioned studies needed to be reconsidered, abandoning the schematization and over deterministic class reductionism associated with historical materialism.

On the other hand, exciting interdisciplinary works about diverse aspects of Puerto Rican society, political economy, and culture have been produced since then. A common element that distinguishes all these approaches is a balanced analytical articulation between economics, politics, and culture. Hence, these refreshing sociological and anthropological studies to which I am referring have overcome some of the theoretical limitations and conceptual problems of the more orthodox Marxist interpretations of the 1970s and the 1980s.

The reason to make reference to all those works produced since the late 1960s is to frame Ayala and Bernabe’s book in its appropriate context. This is a “history” book written by two sociologists who identify with the political left and that explicitly defends a Marxist perspective. To achieve this superb work the authors have engaged in a productive and critical conversation with writers who at different historical periods have attempted to make sense of Puerto Rico’s history, society, and culture. And they also have accomplished this troublesome task by having a respectful and critical conversation with scholars whose ideas and views they do not necessarily share.

_Puerto Rico in the American Century: A History Since 1898_, is divided in two interconnected parts and organized in fifteen chapters and a brief conclusion. In the first part (Chapters one to eight), the authors examine the period comprised between 1898 and 1952, while in the second part (Chapters nine to fifteen), the focus is on the transformation and crisis of modern Puerto Rico during the last part of the 20th century.

Following late Ernest Mandel’s theory about long waves of capitalist expansion, the authors have framed diverse periods of Puerto Rico’s contemporary history within the context of the dynamics of global capitalism. According to this view, “…Puerto Rico’s rapid integration into the world capitalist economy from the late 1800s, the chronology of these phases coincides closely with the major stages in the evolution of international capitalism after the depression of 1873” (3).
The Spanish-American War of 1898, according to this analysis, should be understood in the context of expansionism of the United States as a rising economic power searching new territorial possessions. Though Ayala and Bernabe examine the process of colonization of Puerto Rico under US rule in detail, they do not argue that colonialism is the only important variable that one should consider when explaining the evolution of Puerto Rico during the 20th century. Differently from other historical interpretations, such as the one embraced by Maldonado-Denis, this book presents a non-reductionist view regarding the colonial domination of Puerto Rican society. In the authors’ own words:

As we carried out our work, we have tried to avoid some of the one-sided conceptions that have often characterized similar efforts in the past. Thus, although we feel U.S. colonialism has deeply shaped Puerto Rican life since 1898, we do not think all key events or turning points of Puerto Rican history can be attributed to U.S. colonial policies. We thus allot considerable space to the initiatives and the ideas, the contradictions and limitations, of Puerto Rican actors in this intricate drama. Similarly, while U.S. policies have been colonial, they have not been monolithic or static (10).

Following this approach, the authors present a systematic analysis of multifaceted aspects of Puerto Rican reality integrating political, social, and economic processes with cultural expressions in the arts, literature, music, etc. and linking the developments and vicissitudes of the insular society with those of Puerto Rican diaspora communities located in the United States. I should stress that this is a book in which connections between the multidimensional dynamics that shaped Puerto Rican society during the 20th century and the situation of Puerto Rican communities in the mainland are made. As the authors have stated: “...we have tried to tell the history of the diaspora as it unfolded in constant interaction with events on the island. Or to put it otherwise, we have tried to move toward a history of both the island and its diaspora as facets of a single historical process” (11).

The first four chapters of their work focus on the early decades of the 20th century. The question of limited political participation of Puerto Ricans in decision-making processes after the establishment of the Foraker Act in 1900 and the rapid transformation of the island economy after 1898 are discussed at length. In addition, legal controversies regarding the legitimacy of keeping colonial possessions within the frame-
work of the US Constitution are examined. The reader is told that the same members of the Supreme Court that legalized Puerto Rico’s and the Philippines’ new colonial conditions were the ones who declared racial segregation constitutional in the infamous Plessy v. Ferguson decision of 1896. It is important to note that the authors document convincingly the connection between the racist policies and segregationist social practices widespread in American society at that time and the legal justifications used to establish colonial regimes in the new acquired territories. In brief, US imperialism and racism have been historically intermingled.

Chapter two focuses on the transformation of the colonial economy during the first three decades of the 20th century. As it is known, coffee production declined under the new colonial regime while sugar, tobacco, and needlework industries expanded tremendously after 1898. Within this context, economic and trade dependence between the colony and the metropolis increased to a point that by 1930 almost 95 percent of Puerto Rico’s external trade was with the United States. The capitalist transformation of the island economy had repercussions in different domains. Changes in land tenure, income distribution, patterns of internal migration, and demographic rearrangements of the population seem to be correlated to structural changes in the economic sphere. However, not all economic changes can be associated with the aftermath of 1898.

The authors deconstruct one of the traditional nationalist myths about what kind of society Puerto Rico was before 1898. Hence, Ayala and Bernabe reject the vision of Puerto Rico as a land of small property holders who—allegedly—were disposed of their land by the US sugar corporations. In contrast, they argue:

Thus, concentration of landownership in a few hands was a legacy of Spanish rule, not the result of the impact of the U.S. occupation on a mass of small property holders. The vision of a nation of yeoman farmers was a retrospective idealization, not a realistic description of Puerto Rican society before 1898 (48).

Another important historical refinement that this interpretation brings in is the critical reassessment of the complex connection between the so-called azucareros (sugar producers) and the early pro-statehood movement. The authors agree with the view that many azucareros supported the Partido Republicano favoring close political connections between the United States and the island given that they wanted unrestricted access to the US market. But, as they document, a segment of
the group of *azucareros* also belonged to the *Partido Unión* which favored insular self-government but not statehood. Previous interpretations using class-based analyses had conceptualized the social support to these parties in a more deterministic way, wrongly assuming that almost all *azucareros* backed the *Republicanos* while the hacendados (coffee producers) were the only supporters of the *Partido Unión*.

Though it would be an error to say that Puerto Rico’s economy was exclusively concentrated on sugar production the truth is that sugar became the dominant product for exportation and that its rapid expansion mostly was due to new economic dynamics that unfolded after 1898. With the development of sugar capitalist plantations a new rural proletarian class expanded and other social strata associated with this mode of production also unfolded. Structurally dependent of the rising sugar *centrales*, the *colonos* emerged as key players in the sugar economy as well as other social groups and wage earners who replaced the *agregados* and *jornaleros* of the preceding hacienda economy. Within this capitalist economy the labor and the socialist movements became significant political and social actors. In effect, Ayala and Bernabe’s book examines these processes in detail highlighting important events and historical junctures in the history of the early Puerto Rican labor movement.

The unfolding of colonial politics after 1898 is a subject discussed in chapter three. In this part the authors look at the development of political parties and social movements that intervened in the public arena during the first decades of the 20th century. An interesting element worth mentioning is the way the authors analyze the women’s suffrage movement and its relation to the socialist movement. Another important contribution that should be underlined is the way Ayala and Bernabe examine figures such as Rosendo Matienzo Cintrón and Eugenio María de Hostos and their views regarding the United States. These pro-independence supporters had positive views regarding democratic aspects associated with Americanization regardless of the fact that they were highly critical of US colonial policies in Puerto Rico. The issue of Americanization and its discontents is the focus of the following chapter.

How Puerto Rican cultural expressions and practices and national identity changed after 1898 has been a hot topic of public debates and political controversies. Nationalist writers and other defenders of Puerto Rico’s independence have denounced Americanization and cultural imperialism as two harmful consequences of 1898. Incidentally, Ayala and Bernabe bring back Rosendo Matienzo Cintrón and discuss some of his ideas about Americanization. According to the authors, Matienzo
Cintrón defended Americanization as a way to reshape Puerto Rican culture in a democratic and modern direction. However, by the time of Matienzo Cintrón’s death in 1913 the idea of Americanization as a democratic force had lost much of its meaning becoming instead a strategy to reshape Puerto Rican life and culture according to the political preferences of the colonial administrators. Within that context, the imposition of English as the language of instruction in public schools and other colonial cultural policies generated opposition and distrust among Puerto Rican intellectuals and writers. How prominent writers and cultural figures responded vis-à-vis US cultural policies is one of the topics being discussed. In addition, literary works and ideas about culture of writers such as Luis Lloréns Torres, Nemesio Canales, Manuel Zeno Gandía, and Miguel Guerra Mondragón, among others, are examined in this part of the book. The cultural expressions of working class authors such as Ramón Romero Rosa, Luisa Capetillo, and José Elias Levis are mentioned as well.

In general, chapter four addresses interrelated aspects of Puerto Rican high and popular culture from different angles. Moving beyond literature, theater, and poetry the authors integrate into their analysis other cultural forms, including musical expressions related to the evolution of Afro-Puerto Rican popular culture. Within that context Ayala and Bernabe indicate:

One of the innovations whose influence would prove more lasting was the emergence of the plena, a danceable musical form in which panderos (tambourine-like-drums) and sometimes other instruments accompany the interaction between a singer and chorus (constituted by the drummers and instrumentalists) (86).

The rest of the chapter attempts to link cultural questions and debates that unfolded in the island with the emerging cultural expressions of the nascent Puerto Rican community in New York. The role played by Arturo A. Schomburg in the development of a different kind of Afro-Boricua culture is highlighted and how this black Puerto Rican public intellectual actively participated in the Harlem Renaissance. To conclude with this part, I should state that this is one of the best constructed chapters of the entire book. The way in which cultural expressions and intellectual currents are discussed by Ayala and Bernabe shows a high sensibility vis-à-vis culture as an autonomous sphere and a non-deterministic understanding of ideas that is relatively independent from the economic infrastructure. Considering that this is a “Marxist” inspired
interpretation, one should say that it conceptualizes culture as a domain governed by its own logic, a realm that cannot be reduced to the logic of what Marxists call “relations of production.” The political and economic crises of the 1930s and the cultural debates about Puerto Rican identity that unfolded during that decade are the subject of chapters five and six. It is well known that the Partido Nacionalista (PN) led by Pedro Albizu Campos played a significant role during that decade. The authors examine the contradictory dynamics of Puerto Rican nationalism and its repression by the colonial regime. Taking a critical posture Ayala and Bernabe frame Albizu Campos’ movement in its appropriate context stressing that his political radicalism coexisted with a deep conservative cultural vision of Puerto Rico, including negative views regarding women rights and an idealization of the previous Spanish past before 1898. On the other hand, the modernizing figure of Luis Muñoz Marín is presented in opposition to the Catholic traditionalism of Albizu Campos. The authors argue that:

While Muñoz Marín held only general religious views, favoring birth control, for example, Albizu Campos was a devout Catholic and looked askance on the loosening of traditional gender roles and morality (106).

To understand the conditions that nurtured the creation of the Partido Popular Democrático (PPD) in 1938, the authors look at specific colonial policies that the United States implemented in the island during the New Deal under President Roosevelt’s administration. Questions such as the repression against the PN, political and social upheavals that intensified class cleavages, and the economic depression that deeply affected Puerto Rican society are linked to the cultural and literary debates in which figures such as Antonio S. Pedreira, Emilo S. Belaval, Tomás Blanco, and Luis Palés Matos were engaged at the time.

Like chapter four, this part of the book presents an excellent analysis of the cultural and intellectual landscape in which books such as Pedreira’s Insularismo and Tomas Blanco’s Prontuario histórico de Puerto Rico were written. The national interpretations of the thirties addressed the question of Puerto Rican national identity and the search for meaning and affirmation of Puerto Ricanness. The strengthening of these public sentiments and the political stalemate of the 1930s led to the emergence of the PPD under the leadership of Luis Muñoz Marín.

The 1940s was a decade of significant social change in Puerto Rico. The PPD became the dominant political party and its program of land reform and redistribution of resources aimed at poor peasants, landless
agricultural workers, and urban middle and working classes created a positive dynamic on the island. Muñoz Marín, the party’s paramount leader, enjoyed the support of colonial Governor Rexford G. Tugwell and had good relations with Washington. After a period of favoring independence Muñoz Marín’s views changed, apparently under the influence of the model for independence that the United States put into effect for the Philippines.

While in traditional interpretations Muñoz Marín’s political repositioning has been seen as a “betrayal” to the pro-independence movement, for Ayala and Bernabe his ideological changes need to be examined in a broader context. Though Muñoz Marín had been associated with patriotic sentiments, he also was actively involved with the New Deal and with liberal politicians supporters of the Democrats and of President Roosevelt. He denounced US absentee capital and economic policies that had an impoverished effect on the working masses; however, he was not anti-American in the sense the nationalists were. Thus, I agree with the authors’ analysis when they argue that:

Indeed, underneath the many twists and turns, there is an evident continuity to Muñoz Marín’s trajectory. It can be described as an unshakeable attachment to the North American state as the only possible guarantor of Puerto Rico’s progress (151).

At the end of the 1940s a new political formula was manufactured, which in 1952 became the *Estado Libre Asociado* (ELA) or Commonwealth. At the same time, the immigration of Puerto Ricans to the mainland accelerated and a new economic model called *Manos a la Obra* (Operation Bootstrap) was put in place. The PPD experienced significant internal changes and Puerto Rico entered a new phase leading to its postwar transformation.

During the 1950s and 1960s the new economic model relied on foreign capital to support the government industrialization program. Concomitantly, thousands of Puerto Rican workers left the island settling in urban centers in the Northeast and in the Chicago area. Regarding this connection Ayala and Bernabe indicate:

The ‘Golden Age’ of Operation Bootstrap was actually characterized by the shrinking economy in terms of employment. But, as indicated, the limits of the PPD’s industrial miracle were partly hidden by the other side of the postwar expansion: the massive relocation of Puerto Ricans to the United States (194).
Between 1950 and 1970, about 27 percent of the population of the island moved to the United States becoming part of the growing Puerto Rican diaspora communities of the mainland. The majority of these immigrants joined the ranks of the working poor and suffered discrimination and social rejection. Chapter 10 addresses some of these questions attempting to frame the immigration experience in its appropriate socioeconomic and political context. Controversial issues such as the culture of poverty, underclass theories, and the social science literature about the so-called “Puerto Rican problem” are discussed. Rejecting culturalist pseudo-explanations, the authors stress structural factors that for them better account for the persistent high rates of poverty that Puerto Ricans suffer in US society that are the result of the exploitation and oppression inherent to capitalism. Within that context, literary works produced by Puerto Rican writers in the United States are examined. One of the literary pieces cited by Ayala and Bernabe is an amazing short story written by the late José Luis González. According to their reading:

González avoided transforming migrants into emblems of cultural degeneration. Instead, his stories such as “La noche que volvimos a ser gente,” link the situation of Puerto Ricans in New York to the exploitation they share with other working people and to the vision of a remaking of the capitalist metropolis—literally paralyzed in the story during one night, due to the New York blackout of 1965 — in a more human and egalitarian direction (214).

The decline of the PPD, the creation of a new populist pro-statehood party in the late 1960s, and the radicalization of the pro-independence movement at that time are examined in relation to the crisis of the desarrollista model that Operation Bootstrap had triggered two decades before. The authors analyze the development of new social movements during the 1960s and 1970s during a time when the United States was involved in the Vietnam War, and when the Puerto Rican labor movement was revitalized by a new socialist leadership that sought the reorientation of trade unions away from traditional business unionism. In Chapter 11, Ayala and Bernabe attempt to link the social struggles that unfolded in Puerto Rico during this period with new forms of political and social activism developed by Puerto Rican organizations in the United States, but they do not articulate coherently both dynamics. Most likely, this is the weakest chapter of the entire book.
The remaining three chapters address important questions, bringing the discussion of Puerto Rican reality up to the end of the 20th century. Linking cultural debates and political and economic issues from the 1960s up to the 1990s with questions examined previously, the authors show how the traditionalist Hispanophile ideas of Pedreira and the so-called Generación del treinta have been challenged and superseded by contemporary writers and intellectuals who recognize that cultural hybridity and the Nuyorican culture are positive and productive elements of contemporary Puerto Rican culture. In addition, Ayala and Bernabe stress the cultural significance of Puerto Rican Afro-Caribbean forms mentioning the cultural contributions not only of writers and scholars but also of singers and musicians such as Ismael Rivera, Rafael Cortijo, Ray Barreto, Cheo Feliciano, Ismael Miranda, and other salsa artists.

In the last part of Puerto Rico in the American Century: A History Since 1898, Ayala and Bernabe deal with current issues affecting Puerto Rico and the diaspora. The popular mobilizations against the Navy presence in Vieques, the crisis of the left, the pro-statehood offensive led by former Governor Pedro Roselló, the relationship between neo-liberal economic policies and new social and class conflicts, and other relevant public issues are among the topics discussed.

Finally, a critical reassessment of nationalism and the complexities of Puerto Rican society and culture are topics examined in the last chapter. Ayala and Bernabe focus on current intellectual debates and the so-called postmodernist critiques vis-à-vis traditional political projects of the nationalist and socialist left. They point out that the cultural and political landscapes have been polarized around two opposed sensibilities. In effect, they state that:

For some, the rise of a heightened sense of Puerto Rican identity was a welcome development. It represented the coming to fruition of years of cultural resistance. For others, such nationalism was a conservative reaction to the growing erosion of fixed identities in a context shaped by the passage to an increasingly globalized post modernity (332).

As a final point, it should be stated that this book makes enjoyable reading. Moreover, Ayala and Bernabe’s interpretation of Puerto Rican contemporary history is probably one of the most significant scholarly publications available. They have accomplished a unique scholarly work, which provides an unequaled historical synthesis of complex and fluid
human processes that have reshaped Puerto Rican society during the last
century. For those in academia doing research or teaching Puerto Rican
studies and courses related to Puerto Rico, this book represents an awe-
some resource for both students and scholars.

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Notes

1 Manuel Maldonado-Denis’ Puerto Rico: Una interpretación histórico-social
was published in Mexico by Editorial Siglo XXI in 1969. An English

2 Among the memorable publications written by some of these authors I
should mention: Angel Quintero Rivera, Conflictos de clase y política en
Puerto Rico (Río Piedras, PR: Huracán, 1976); Gervasio L. García and
Angel G. Quintero Rivera, Desafío y solidaridad: Breve historia del
movimiento obrero puertorriqueño (Río Piedras, PR: Huracán, 1982); Angel
Quintero Rivera, José Luis González, and Ricardo Campos, Puerto Rico:
Identidad nacional y clases sociales (Río Piedras, PR: Huracán, 1979); José
Luis González, El país de cuatro pisos y otros ensayos (Río Piedras, PR:
Huracán, 1980); Fernando Picó, Libertad y servidumbre en el Puerto
Rico del siglo XIX (Río Piedras, PR: Huracán, 1979); Frank Bonilla and
Ricardo Campos, Industry & Idleness (New Y ork, NY: Centro de Estudios
Puertorriqueños, 1986); Juan Flores, Divided Borders: Essays on Puerto
Rican Identity (Houston, TX: Arte Público, 1993) and the collective work
produced by the Center for Puerto Rican Studies/History Task Force,
Labor Migration Under Capitalism: The Puerto Rican Experience (New York,

3 Since the early 1990s a significant number of books have been published
in the social sciences, history, and cultural studies. Because of space
limitations I can only mention some of these works. Jorge Duany’s, The
Puerto Rican Nation on the Move: Identities on the Island and in the United
States (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), links the
diaspora communities with the island and is a good example of the new
kind of publications that I have in mind. Other examples include, Ramón
Grosfoguel, Colonial Subjects: Puerto Ricans in a Global Perspective
(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Arlene Dávila, Sponsored
University Press, 1997); Frances Negrón-Muntaner, ed., None of the
Focusing on the Puerto Rican diaspora communities a remarkable book
worth mentioning is Edna Acosta-Belén and Carlos Santiago, Puerto
Ricans in the United States: A Contemporary Portrait (Boulder: Lynne
Rienner Publishers, 2006).
A Growing Loss

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In the year 2000, ecological activist Vandana Shiva produced a text that challenged some of the most commonly-held misconceptions about industrial agriculture. Corporate agribusiness, Shiva states, has convinced societal institutions “that industrial agriculture is necessary to grow more food and reduce hunger” (1). “But in agriculture,” Shiva continues, “the growth illusion hides theft from nature and the poor, masking the creation of scarcity as growth” (1). López draws upon ten years of extensive ethnographic study in west-central Mexico and central California to illustrate the impact of modern agricultural systems upon the lives of subsistence farmers and farmworkers. Like Shiva, she exposes the contradictions of “progress” that produce record corn harvests (Mexico celebrated the bounty of 18 million tons in 1996) while the phrase “aguantando hambre” (enduring hunger) is upon the lips of local farmers (López 51).

*The Farmworkers’ Journey* begins in two homes in Jalisco and Michoacán, Mexico. Two families give López parallel accounts of their anxieties while waiting to hear from loved ones journeying to the United States with hired coyotes. López uses their stories, and the migration stories of others like them, as an entry point for a comprehensive examination of the political, economic, and social factors shaping the farmer/farmworker experience. The geographic parameters of her region of study are shaped not only by the paths of an historic agricultural migration circuit, but by what López defines as a “binational system of integrated complementary capitalist enterprises” (37). Corporate agribusiness, in concert with Green Revolution development, Mexico’s repeal of Constitutional Article 27, and NAFTA, has compromised the viability of subsistence farming in Mexico (27) and continues to drive men and women toward family and job opportunities north of the border.
After a brief examination of traditional Mexican farming practices, López turns her attention to the impact of NAFTA, powerfully challenging the assumptions of treaty planners. Her interview respondents reported selling between one-third and one-half of their annual corn harvest in the market, contradicting claims that subsistence producers operate outside of arenas of exchange and thus would be unaffected by NAFTA (39). López’s findings are supported by the work of other scholars such as Deborah Fahy Bryceson, who observes that peasant farmers around the globe, “far from being ‘primarily subsistence producers’... combine commodity and subsistence production to varying degrees” (299). Bryceson’s brilliant analysis in Disappearing Peasantries attributes the vulnerability of a peasantry to ongoing struggles over 1) “access to productive resources,” 2) “external extractive claims on their labour product,” 3) “the terms and conditions of production, notably the level of externally provisioned social and productive service infrastructure,” and 4) “the amount of production risk they shoulder.”

Analyzing López’s research on campesino communities in west-central Mexico in terms of Bryceson’s four factors indicates a serious threat to livelihoods. López convincingly demonstrates how access to resources have been compromised by the privatization of ejido lands (36-37), rising prices of inputs such as fertilizer and chemicals (48), and corporate dependency produced by costly patented technologies like “Terminator” and Roundup Ready seeds (195, 202). If labor is in fact Mexico’s “strength” and “comparative advantage” as NAFTA proponents claim (39), then US-owned agribusiness makes an “extractive claim upon their labor power” (Bryceson 299). In Chapter 8 and Chapter 12, López explores how the health of farmworker families in California and Mexico, respectively, is threatened by exposure to toxic pesticides, poor medical care, inadequate nutrition, and emotional stress. This deprives the farmworker of his or her quality of life and longevity, as well as marketable labor power. Compounding the strain from these unfavorable production conditions are a lack of economic safety nets. The passage of NAFTA brought an end to fixed prices and subsidies for Mexican farmers (López 40), while in the United States, New Deal-era “agricultural exceptionalism” still denies farmworkers the basic protections afforded to other wage laborers (López 100). Finally, all of these elements together constitute “production risks” that have not yet been adequately addressed on either side of the border.

The variety of topics covered in The Farmworker’s Journey, organized into short, readable chapters, reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the
Environmental Studies program at the University of California, Santa Cruz where the author conducted her research. The chapters are loosely grouped by geographic location and theme, with Chapters 6-9 covering farming and farmworker experiences in California and Chapters 10-13 returning to the west-central Mexican countryside.

Following a discussion of NAFTA and a chapter giving personal accounts of border crossings (Chapter 5), López directs her attention to a description of California agribusiness and its workers. While the industry produces more than $27-30 billion of food per year on large corporate farms (89), 52% of all farmworker families in the state earn less than $15,000 per year (146). These farmworkers are unlikely to use public assistance, collect tax benefits, or possess health coverage to supplement their limited incomes (147, 143). López reports that the United Farm Workers Union (UFW) encouraged worker solidarity while winning significant victories for increased worker compensation in the 1960s and ’70s (102-104), although David Gutierréz’s work serves as a reminder that the UFW criticized undocumented workers until the mid ’70s (1995, 197). Only seven of the thirty-three California workers interviewed by López held union contracts (123).

Returning to Mexico in Chapter 10, López paints a dismal picture of “Ghost Towns,” “Abandoned and Depressed Women,” and “Environmental Destruction.” Each of these headings introduces a subsection discussing various impacts of emigration on the personal and physical landscape of Colima, Guanajuato, Jalisco, and Michoacán. López, citing Ramírez 2003, notes that 49.7 percent of all migration departures from Mexico between 1990 and 1995 originated in Michoacán (53). Both the Mexican government and private industry have promoted modern agricultural methods as a way of increasing crop yield, leading to a situation where residents “view their traditional practices as being atrasados (backward) and perceive US agriculture as being avanzada (advanced) and modern” (204). In subsequent chapters, López explores the environmental threat posed by excessive chemical use and genetically modified crops (Chapter 11), the toll on human health exacted by US chemical, soft drink, and tobacco products (Chapter 12), and the “Institutional Oppression” observed by the author in Mexican political, military, religious, commercial, and gender systems (Chapter 13).

Under the weight of the burdens discussed by López, it is helpful to return to the aforementioned chapter by Deborah Bryceson. The four factors she outlines are essential ingredients for the success of a peas-
antry, but it is the constant struggle or “negotiation” over these factors that defines the character of the class (Bryceson 299). According to Bryceson, the peasantry has “an enigmatic dual character,” whereby it is sensitive to market fluctuations yet retains a degree of “autonomy” rooted in subsistence agricultural production (300). It is from this autonomy that the peasantry derives its power to negotiate and persist (Bryceson 310). López’s text is rife with examples of daily struggle and negotiation, as in the case of workers in the US who reported that they most frequently chose to leave employment positions of their own accord in search of better opportunities, in spite of (or because of) their limited rights as Mexican nationals and agricultural workers (115). At the same time, overt examples of campesino organizing and struggle, such as the campaigns under the umbrella of the Unión Nacional de Organizaciones Regionales Campesinas Autónomas (UNORCA), are not included in the scope of the text. Reading López’s multifaceted study of binational agriculture and farmer/farmworker livelihoods in conjunction with an examination of strategies of negotiation from grassroots local, regional, national, and transnational networks would yield a dynamic portrait of emerging responses to the post-NAFTA milieu.

The Farmworkers’ Journey offers a timely and relevant contribution to current debates over free trade, food security, and migration. López concludes her analysis with a brief series of recommendations, calling for “recognition of a common binational labor market,” US support for “sustainable agricultural development” (268) in Mexico, microlending programs, attention to the needs of subsistence producers in Mexican policy, increased corporate regulation, and benefits ensured at the state level for farmworkers employed within the United States (268-270). Additionally, she calls upon readers to engage in efforts to address the needs of a farmworker community spanning the US-Mexico border (276), closing with the message, “It’s up to you.” Recognizing the scope of issues raised by the text, that call will in fact be answered by a multivocal, cross-sectoral, and transnational “us.”

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