

Spring 2015

## Hispanics in America A Report Card on Poverty, Mobility, and Assimilation





### Pathways a magazine on poverty, inequality, and social policy

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### **Table of Contents**

2 Editors' Note

### FEATURE

**The Real Hispanic Challenge** 

Douglas S. Massey

The simple aim of recent immigration and border policy: Reduce the inflow of undocumented migrants. Has the policy worked? Were there unanticipated consequences?

Why Isn't the Hispanic Poverty Rate Rising?

Marybeth J. Mattingly and Juan M. Pedroza

It is often assumed that, as the size of the undocumented population grows, poverty rates among Hispanics will increase. But in fact poverty rates have proven to be stable. Why?

13 The "Chilling Effect" of America's New Immigration Enforcement Regime

Francisco I. Pedraza and Ling Zhu

Are TANF enrollments declining because Hispanic immigrants are afraid that enrollment will lead to deportation? Find out here.

18 Revisiting the "Americano Dream"

VAN C. TRAN

Is Latino assimilation stalling out because of the recent recession, rising deportation rates, and the growing popularity of rural destinations?

24 The Waning Hispanic Health Paradox

Fernando Riosmena, Elisabeth Root, Jamie Humphrey,

EMILY STEINER, AND REBECCA STUBBS

It is well known that Hispanics have been more healthy than other groups in the U.S. with a similar socioeconomic position. Is this "Hispanic Health Paradox" alive and well?

### RESEARCH IN BRIEF

RYAN T. LEUPP

New evidence that conventional analyses of social mobility may overstate actual opportunities; the effects of long work hours on the gender gap; and more.

### INTERVENTIONS

Reducing Poverty in California...Permanently

Conway Collis, David B. Grusky, Sara Kimberlin, Courtney Powers, and Sandra Sanchez (in collaboration with Marion Coddou, Erin Cumberworth, Jonathan Fisher, Jared Furuta, Jasmine Hill, Molly King, Yana Kucheva, Ryan Leupp, Ana Matosantos, Natassia Rodriguez, and Rachel Wright)

What if we decided to go beyond the usual lip-service commitments to reducing poverty and actually tried to do something big? Learn more about a new plan to reduce poverty—substantially and permanently—in California.

Spring 2015

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### **Editors' Note**

**Even among the most cynical of Americans,** there's probably no avoiding that warm patriotic rush when visiting the Statue of Liberty and reading Emma Lazarus's sonnet, with its now-famous invitation to "your tired, your poor, your huddled masses." Although the country's open-border policy ended long ago, the ideal of a nation that openly welcomes immigrants is still far from empty.

But we've arguably reached a moment in history in which the gap between this welcoming ideal and the country's existing immigration policy seems especially large and glaring. For some Americans (although certainly not all), it has become difficult to reconcile this ideal with immigration policies that, rightly or wrongly, have increasingly focused on deportation. With the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act in 2001, the number of deportations surged to an all-time high of 438,000 in 2013, a roughly 15-fold increase from the average of approximately 29,000 per year from 1975 to 1995.

The key policy question of our time, and the one taken on in this issue, is whether this focus on deportation has compromised other policy objectives, especially that of ensuring that immigrants can fully exploit their talents and succeed in the labor market. It may well be asked, as Doug Massey indeed does in our lead article, whether a deportation-focused policy can even succeed in its stated objective of reducing the number of unauthorized immigrants. As important as that question is, most of the articles in this issue focus on the unintended consequences of our country's current immigration policy, with the recurring worry being that an aggressive deportation policy may slow down immigrant assimilation and incorporation.

Does our immigration policy undermine, for example, the safety net's capacity to address poverty? The main function of the safety net is of course to reduce poverty by providing opportunities to return to school, secure vocational training, receive childcare or housing assistance, or otherwise make ends meet. These objectives may be compromised, however, when a country is running a "deportation net" as well as a safety net. As Francisco Pedraza and Ling Zhu show, many eligible Latinos opt against using public support, presumably out of concern that any involvement with the state would expose their friends or family to deportation.

The safety net is not the only institution that may be affected by the long reach of immigration policy. For the children of immigrants, the standard pathway to integration has been to attend school and secure a mainstream job, a pathway that's difficult to achieve for those who are undocumented and cannot qualify for financial aid or pass a background check. It is unsurprising in this context that Van C. Tran reports that immigrant groups with many undocumented members (e.g., Mexicans) are faring more poorly. Likewise, Marybeth Mattingly and Juan Pedroza show that poverty rates among Hispanics, although not increasing, are nonetheless higher than they likely would be if our immigration policy didn't suppress citizenship rates. In an especially perverse result, Fernando Riosmena and his colleagues note that stricter enforcement has reduced return migration to Mexico, thus increasing immigrant exposure to unhealthy behaviors in the United States.

This is all to suggest the standard social science result that big-reach policies, like ramped-up deportation, tend to have multifarious effects that can be unanticipated. The simple purpose of this issue is to lay out the current science on these effects and thereby allow for as informed policy as possible. As always, no one would pretend that policy is based on evidence alone, but it can and should at least be informed by it.

—David B. Grusky, Charles Varner, and Marybeth Mattingly



WITH PRESIDENT OBAMA'S recent announcement that long-term unauthorized immigrants will be allowed to remain in the country "without fear of deportation," the debate on immigration has, predictably, ramped up. In the course of this debate, several disturbing myths about Hispanic immigration have come to circulate, myths that misrepresent the facts about what is and is not special and distinctive about Hispanic immigration. The simple purpose of this piece is to confront these myths with the available evidence on Hispanic immigration.

BY DOUGLAS S. MASSEY

TABLE 1. Estimated percentage undocumented within selected immigrant groups in the United States.

Latin American nationalities 2010		Asian nationalities 2011		
Mexico	56.7	China	12.5	
El Salvador	51.1	Philippines	14.9	
Guatamala	62.2	India	12.9	
Honduras	63.1	Korea	21.2	
Ecuador	40.6	Vietnam	13.5	
Total	56.3	Total	14.4	

Source: Hoefer, Michael, Nancy Rytina, and Bryan Baker. 2011. Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2010. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Immigration Statistics; Hoefer, Michael, Nancy Rytina, and Bryan Baker. 2012. Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2011. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Immigration Statistics.

### Myth #1: There Are Profound Cultural Obstacles to Hispanic Incorporation

The first myth has it that Hispanic incorporation has been stymied because, unlike the European immigrants of the past, there is a profound cultural divide between Hispanics and other Americans. This myth has a long heritage. Ten years ago, the late political scientist Samuel P. Huntington published an infamous article in *Foreign Affairs* entitled "The Hispanic Challenge," in which he argued that "the persistent inflow of Hispanic immigrants threatens to divide the United States into two peoples, two cultures, and two languages...forming their own political and linguistic enclaves—from Los Angeles to Miami—and rejecting the Anglo-Protestant values that built the American dream."

Subsequent research has refuted the idea that Hispanics constitute a cultural and linguistic threat to American society. Like other immigrants before them, Hispanics display a rapid shift into English with time and with generations spent in the United States,<sup>2</sup> and the music, food, literature, and art they have created and introduced have enriched, rather than diminished, American culture.<sup>3</sup> Because the evidence on this point is so clear, there's little need to belabor the point. Over the course of U.S. history, the cultural threat hypothesis has been repeatedly issued for one immigrant group after another (including many European immigrant groups), but it's never held true.

### Myth #2: There's Nothing All That Special about Hispanic Incorporation

Does it follow that Hispanic incorporation has proceeded and will continue to proceed smoothly? Not at all. It's not that Huntington was wrong to worry about Hispanic incorporation. But the challenge, far from arising from intrinsic cultural differences, is instead of our own making. The principal barriers to progress lie in our own immigration and border policies, which have placed a large share of the population outside of the law, deprived of the most elemental social, economic, and civic rights. Of the more than 11 million unauthorized migrants liv-

ing in the United States today, the vast majority—around 80 percent—are from Latin America, with a hugely disproportionate share coming from Mexico and Central America.<sup>4</sup>

Putting together estimates of the number of undocumented migrants from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security<sup>5</sup> with estimates of the number of foreign-born from the U.S. Bureau of the Census<sup>6</sup> yields estimates of the proportion undocumented in various immigrant groups. These are summarized in Table I. Homeland Security publishes undocumented population estimates for only the top 10 national origins, five of which are Latin American (Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Ecuador) and five of which are Asian (China, the Philippines, India, Korea, and Vietnam).

As shown in the table, whereas only 14 percent of Asian immigrants from the nations listed are present without authorization, the corresponding figure is 56 percent for those from Latin America. Among Latin American immigrant groups, the percentage undocumented ranges from 41 percent among Ecuadorans to 63 percent among Guatemalans and Hondurans. In between are Mexicans at 57 percent and Salvadorans at 51 percent. When ranked in terms of size, Mexico is by far the largest national origin group among Latin American immigrants, at some 11.7 million persons, followed by Salvadorans at 1.2 million. Cuba and the Dominican Republic are in third and fourth place with 1.1 million and 879,000 persons, respectively, followed by Guatemala at 831,000, Colombia at 637,000, and Honduras at 523,000.7 Thus in four of the seven largest Latin American immigrant populations, a clear majority are undocumented.

Mass illegality is thus a characteristic structural feature of Latin American immigration, setting Latino immigrants distinctly apart from their Asian counterparts. Overcoming the barrier of illegality is the single most important challenge facing Latinos today. The roots of this challenge date to 1965 when Congress acted to eliminate the national origins quotas that had discriminated against Southern and Eastern Europeans and repeal bans on immigration from Asia and Africa. In doing so, however, it also imposed the first-ever numerical limitations of legal immigration from the Western Hemisphere while scrapping a guest worker agreement with Mexico that had been in place for 22 years. §

Whereas in the late 1950s annual entries by Mexican guest workers ran at 450,000 per year, while legal permanent immigration averaged 50,000 per year, by the late 1970s, the guest worker program was gone, and legal immigration was limited to 20,000 visas per year. Given ongoing labor demand in the United States and the existence of well-developed networks connecting migrants in Mexico to employers and communities in the United States, the inflow of half a million Mexicans per year did not cease after 1965. It simply reestablished itself under undocumented auspices. By 1979, roughly the same number of Mexicans were entering the country each year, but the overwhelming majority were now undocumented and technically "illegal."

### Myth #3: Restrictive Border Policies Reduce the Size of the Hispanic Population

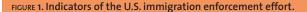
Unfortunately, the rise of undocumented migration led to the spread of a Latino threat narrative propounded by politicians and officials in the immigration bureaucracy, a narrative in which migrants from south of the border were framed as a grave threat to the nation. After all, since they were "illegal," they were by definition "criminals" and "lawbreakers." During the Contra War of the 1980s, they came to be seen as communist infiltrators; during the later War on Terror, they became labeled as potential terrorists; and most recently, they were portrayed as potential carriers of Ebola. The framing of undocumented migrants as a grave threat to the nation gave rise to increasingly restrictive immigration and border policies that ultimately militarized the Mexico-U.S. border and institutionalized the largest deportation regime in American history.

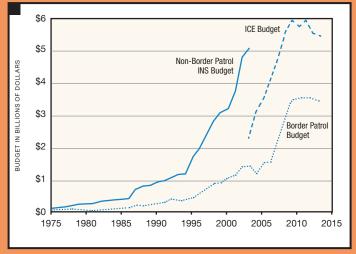
The simple—albeit misguided—logic was that the perceived grave threat was best met by restrictive border policies. As will be shown below, these policies failed to appreciate that return migration, which had once been substantial, would also be affected by bolstering border defenses. Before making that point, however, it's important to first document the spectacular rise of restrictive border policies.

Figure 1 shows three indicators of the U.S. immigration enforcement effort from 1975 through 2013: the budget of the Border Patrol, the budget of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) up to the point where it was absorbed into the Department of Homeland Security, and the budget of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) from its inception to the present. The INS budget, which does not include funds allocated to the Border Patrol, rose from \$63 million in 1975 to \$426 million in 1986. After the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), it began to accelerate and reached \$1.2 billion in 1994 and \$5.1 billion in 2003, whereupon ICE assumed many of the agency's duties. The ICE budget, in turn, began at just \$2.3 billion in 2003 but rose rapidly, to peak at \$5.9 billion in 2009.

The Border Patrol budget also began to rise rapidly after the passage of IRCA in 1986, to reach 1.4 billion in 2001. It then shot up exponentially following the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act, to peak at \$3.6 billion. From 1986 to 2013, the budget for internal enforcement rose by a factor of 13, and that for border enforcement grew by a factor of 23.

But what about the effects of this policy? Did it work as intended? The militarization of the border clearly backfired: Rather than reducing the inflow of undocumented migrants, it curtailed the outflow. As border enforcement increased, so did the costs and risks of unauthorized border crossing, and in response, migrants minimized border crossing—not by remaining in Mexico, but by hunkering down in the United States once they had experienced the risks and paid the costs. As a result, during the 1990s, the net rate of undocumented migration more than doubled, causing the undocumented population to





Source: Office of Immigration Statistics, U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

grow exponentially, not because more people were arriving, but because fewer were going home.

Figure 2 shows the size of the undocumented population from 1970 to 2012.13 As can be seen, the population slowly increased from 1975 to 1986, when it reached 3.2 million persons. In the wake of IRCA's legalization program, the population dropped to around 1.9 million in 1988 before rebounding and returning to trend from 1990 to 1996, growing by around 350,000 persons per year during that interval. After the 1993 launch of Operation Blockade in El Paso and the 1994 debut of Operation Gatekeeper in San Diego, however, the pace of undocumented population growth more than doubled, rising by 861,000 persons per year from 1996 to 2001. Although the volume of undocumented migration slowed thereafter, the population continued to grow until the Great Recession in 2008. Between 2008 and 2009 the undocumented population fell from 12 to 11 million persons, where it has remained ever since. Undocumented migration has plateaued largely because of Mexico's demographic transition, which reduced the rate of labor force growth and increased the average age of the population, not because of enforcement or because of changes in labor demand, which is now met by legal migration both temporary and permanent.14

Mexicans will soon surpass African Americans to be the largest single minority group in the United States. The key difference between these groups: Some 22 percent of all persons of Mexican origin are presently undocumented, and among those of Central American origin, the vast majority are unauthorized. Moreover, between 2 and 3 million of those without documents entered the country as minors, speak English, and have no possibility of improving their lives unless the burden of illegality is removed from their shoulders.

Rather than lifting the burden of illegality, however, U.S.

FIGURE 2. Estimated size of the undocumented population.



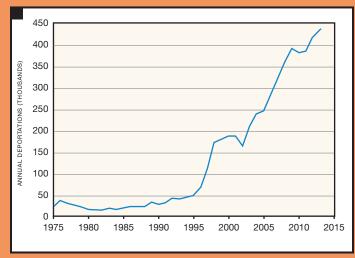
Source: Wasem, Ruth E. 2011. Unauthorized Aliens Residing in the United States: Estimates Since 1986. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service; Baker, Bryan, and Nancy Rytina. 2013. Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2012. Washington, D.C.: Office of Immigration Statistics, U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

policy has steadily and quite dramatically increased its weight. Figure 3 shows the annual number of deportations from the United States. From 1975 to 1995, deportations averaged just 29,000 per year. With the passage of the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, the annual number rose rapidly, to plateau at around 189,000 circa 2001. The passage of the USA PATRIOT Act in that year led to another surge to an all-time record of 438,000 deportations in 2013. As of 2010, two-thirds of all Latino immigrants surveyed said they worried about deportation, and even among native-born Latinos, the figure was one-third. Some 84 percent saw discrimination as a problem for Hispanics and 61 percent felt discrimination was holding them back. When asked about the cause of discrimination against Hispanics, 36 percent said immigration status, as compared with 21 percent who said skin color.<sup>15</sup>

### What Does It All Mean?

The marginalization of Hispanics has thus been *created* by aggressive border enforcement and deportation policies. It is no coincidence that trends in Hispanic poverty and income, after occupying a middle position between blacks and whites for many years, have recently fallen to converge on the low level historically occupied by African Americans (see the article by Mattingly and Pedroza in this issue). It is no coincidence that Mexicans in new immigrant destinations, where undocumented migrants predominate, are relatively more disadvantaged compared with those in old destinations (see article by Tran in this issue). And it is no coincidence that Hispanics live a larger share of their lives in poor health than other groups, and that Mexicans, although being self-selected on the basis of good health, are more prone to develop Type 2 diabetes (see the article by

FIGURE 3. Annual deportations from the United States.



Source: Office of Immigration Statistics, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (available at http://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/immigration-statistics/vearbook/2013/ENF/table39.xls).

Riosmena et al. in this issue).

So what's to be done? It is precisely because the threat of deportation is the principal barrier to incorporation that President Obama acted recently to reduce this threat. Although obviously a limited response, it properly appreciates that the real "Hispanic challenge" stems not from the resistance of Latinos to English or their opposition to American culture. Indeed, 92 percent of all Hispanics see the United States as a land of opportunity,16 and 67 percent speak English very well or exclusively.<sup>17</sup> Instead, the barriers to Hispanic social and economic integration stem from misguided policies that not only failed to limit immigration, but actually accelerated net undocumented migration to create a marginalized, vulnerable, and eminently exploitable population of unprecedented size. The precariousness of undocumented status not only constrains opportunities for those without documents, but for all those tied to them through close networks of family and friendship, regardless of legal status.

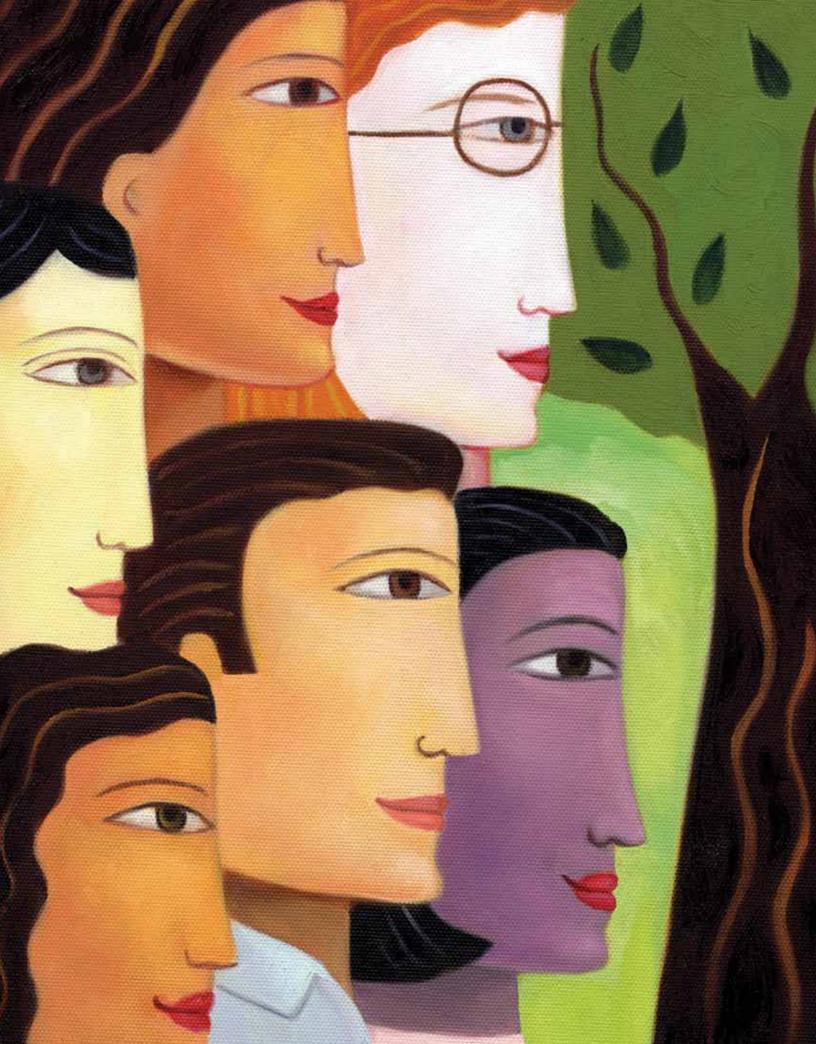
The ongoing marginalization of the Latino population is among the most important policy issues facing the United States in the 21st century, since barriers to Hispanic social and economic progress are barriers to the progress of America. As of 2013, Latinos constitute 17 percent of the U.S. population, up from 4.7 percent in 1970, but they represent 20 percent of all persons under age 5 and a quarter of all births. According to Census Bureau projections, Hispanics will comprise nearly a third of the U.S. population by the year 2050. The future of the United States is increasingly Latino, and the disinvestment and exclusion of Hispanics inevitably triggered by mass illegality represents the true threat to the prosperity and health of the nation.

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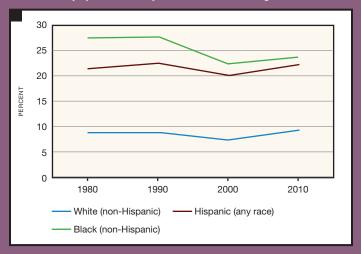


# HISPANII

MARYBETH J. MATTINGLY AND JUAN M. PEDROZA

We all know that poverty within the Hispanic population has increased substantially over the last several decades, as changing immigration laws increased the size of the economically vulnerable unauthorized population. Right? Although many would agree with this characterization of trends in Hispanic poverty, it is, in fact, very wrong indeed. The Hispanic poverty rate in 1980 was 21.4 percent, and it was only slightly higher in 2010, registering at 22.1 percent. As shown in Figure 1, black (non-Hispanic) poverty declined during this period, while that of Hispanics and white non-Hispanics has been quite stable. What accounts for the surprising stability in the Hispanic poverty rate, despite a substantial rise in the number of unauthorized Hispanics?

### FIGURE 1. Poverty by race-ethnicity (heads of household, age 25 & older).



Source: Analysis samples limited to heads of household age 25 years and older. 1980 Decennial Census (5% state sample); 1990 Decennial Census (1% sample); 2000 Decennial Census (5% sample); 2010 ACS (1% sample). Retrieved from https://usa.ipumsorg (Ruggles et. al., 2010).

There can be no denying that, by virtue of changes in federal law and enhanced border enforcement, the Hispanic population has increasingly become an unauthorized one. As noted in Massey's contribution in this issue, these changes interrupted long-standing patterns of cyclical migration, effectively "trapping" millions of unauthorized workers, primarily from Mexico, in the United States. These workers had once regularly moved back and forth between the two countries, but after the changes in immigration law and border enforcement, they usually decided to remain permanently in the United States; otherwise, they ran the risk of being unable to return. As a result, the population of noncitizens has risen from nearly one-quarter of all Hispanics in 1980 to almost one-third in 2010 (data not shown).

There is also no denying that the unauthorized population is more vulnerable to poverty because their access to education and work opportunities is compromised. Given the rising numbers of unauthorized and noncitizen Hispanics, and given the special challenges facing these groups, we would accordingly have expected Hispanic poverty to rise during this period.

But it didn't. And the main purpose of this article is to understand why it didn't. We know that, beneath the legal forces making for an increase in Hispanic poverty, there are evidently some important countervailing protective forces. If immigration law is ultimately reformed and has the effect of improving the economic situation of noncitizens, these countervailing forces could then operate unimpeded and may bring about a substantial reduction in Hispanic poverty. The plausibility of such a scenario depends, however, on precisely what these countervailing forces are. We turn now to the task of uncovering them.

### How to Proceed?

We take on this question by examining trends in poverty among heads of household, age 25 and over, within the 1980 Decennial Census and the 2010 American Community Survey data. The approach that we apply to these data is a resolutely demographic one. We ask two related questions about the size of compositional effects on poverty rates:

Assessing the effects of the changing composition of the Hispanic population: First, we take a given trait, like citizenship, and ask what the 2010 poverty rate would have been had the proportion of the Hispanic population with that trait remained unchanged since 1980. In the case of citizenship, we know that there's been a decline in the proportion of the Hispanic population that is a U.S. citizen, and we further know that citizens have a lower poverty rate than noncitizens. If we were to raise the citizenship rate in 2010 to the 1980 level, then of course poverty would be lower (because citizens are less likely to be in poverty). But exactly how much lower? We use the methods of standardization to answer that question.

Assessing the effects of white-Hispanic differences: In a second set of analyses, we apply the same standardization technique again, but now do so by assigning the 2010 composition of the (non-Hispanic) white population to the 2010 Hispanic population. We do so sequentially for a host of different traits (e.g., citizenship, marital status, educational attainment), each time asking to what extent compositional differences between the Hispanic and non-Hispanic white populations account for differences in the poverty rates between those two populations.

The results from these two exercises are presented in Tables 2 and 3. By way of illustration, let's start by considering the effects of citizenship, as it's the declining rate of citizenship that led us to expect a rise in Hispanic poverty in the first place. What if that change in citizenship composition hadn't happened (see Table 2)? Not surprisingly, had the Hispanic population maintained its 1980 citizenship composition (when 24 percent were noncitizens), poverty would have been 0.9 percentage point lower in 2010 (when 32 percent were noncitizens) than it actually is. Although we knew that the Hispanic poverty rate would be lower under this particular exercise, it's perhaps surprising that it wouldn't have been all that much lower (just 0.9 percentage point). This is largely due to the dramatic rise in the poverty rate among Hispanic noncitizens: an 8.5 percentage point increase from 1980 to 2010. By contrast, we can drive the Hispanic poverty rate down to 18.6 percent if instead the very high white citizenship rate (96 percent in 2010) is applied, with the reduction in this case equaling a full 3.5 percentage points (relative to the actual Hispanic poverty rate in 2010). The balance of the discussion below examines the effects of other compositional changes and differences.

### The Puzzle Gets More Difficult

There have also been quite substantial changes in the national origins of Hispanics. This matters for the poverty rate because

different Hispanic origin groups have very different poverty rates. For example, Puerto Rican and Mexican poverty rates are highest among Hispanics (see Table 1), although in this case the compositional effects are potentially offsetting, as the relative size of the Mexican population (with a rising poverty rate) has increased, while that of the Puerto Rican population (with a high but falling poverty rate) has decreased.

Which of these offsetting compositional effects is more important? As shown in Table 2, our standardization indicates that poverty would have been no different if the 1980 composition remained in force, a result that suggests that the growth of the Mexican origin group was offset by the decline of the Puerto Rican group. This result is consistent with the relatively flat Hispanic poverty rate observed between 1980 and 2010. What we're looking for, however, is a compositional effect that offsets the rise in poverty generated by the decline in citizenship among Hispanics. We have not yet found that offsetting effect.

It gets even more puzzling when we next consider the compositional effects of marital status. The key point here is that Hispanics who are married and living with their spouses have poverty rates well below those who are separated, divorced, widowed, or never married (see Table 1). As the share of Hispanics living with their spouse falls (as it did between 1980 and 2010), the Hispanic poverty rate should increase. We see precisely this result in Table 2. That is, when we assume that the share of Hispanics living with their spouse remains unchanged (since 1980), the implied poverty rate is 20.2 percent, which is 1.9 percentage points lower than what is actually observed in 2010. It follows that changes in Hispanic marital practices, along with changes in citizenship, are working to increase Hispanic poverty. This is all to suggest, yet again, that there were good reasons to have anticipated a substantial increase in Hispanic poverty over the last 30 years.

### Resolving the Puzzle

We now turn to consideration of other compositional changes that have counteracted these effects and that explain why the Hispanic poverty rate has—seemingly against all odds—in fact remained stable. The main counteracting force, as shown in Table 2, is that Hispanics have increasingly been investing in education. Whereas more than three-quarters of Hispanic heads of households in 1980 had 12 years of education or less, more than one-third of all Hispanic heads of households in 2010 had attended some college (or graduated from college). This increase in college attendance protected Hispanic households against poverty. Our standardization shows that, had Hispanics continued to invest in education at their very low 1980 levels, poverty would have been as high as 26.7 percent in 2010 (see Table 2). This investment in education, which is a profound measure of ongoing assimilative forces, is a main reason why we haven't witnessed a substantial increase in Hispanic poverty.

It is not, however, the only reason. There are two other trends in play, both pertaining to household composition, that have had poverty-reducing effects. The first, a decline in the number of

TABLE 1. Hispanic poverty rates (heads of household age 25 & over; any race or nationality).

1980   2010   21.4%   22.1%					
Citizenship Status           Birthright citizen         21.5%         18.5%           Naturalized citizen         17.4%         15.3%           Noncitizen         23.3%         31.8%           Hispanic Origin Groups           Mexican         20.8%         23.2%           Puerto Rican         33.0%         25.4%           Cuban         15.5%         18.6%           Other         17.3%         18.6%           Married (2 spouses present)         13.6%         14.8%           Married (1 spouse present)         34.7%         29.1%           Separated         47.8%         38.1%           Divorced         29.0%         23.7%           Widowed         37.6%         28.7%           Single (never married)         29.6%         31.2%           Educational Attainment           Less than high school         9.8%         13.9%           High school         29.0%         34.6%           Some college         14.4%         21.8%           College+         7.2%         7.2%           Number of Children           No children         15.1%         16.1%           One ch		1980	2010		
Birthright citizen	Overall	21.4%	22.1%		
Birthright citizen					
Naturalized citizen         17.4%         15.3%           Noncitizen         23.3%         31.8%           Hispanic Origin Groups           Mexican         20.8%         23.2%           Puerto Rican         33.0%         25.4%           Cuban         15.5%         18.6%           Other         17.3%         18.6%           Married (2 spouses present)         13.6%         14.8%           Married (1 spouse present)         34.7%         29.1%           Separated         47.8%         38.1%           Divorced         29.0%         23.7%           Widowed         37.6%         28.7%           Single (never married)         29.6%         31.2%           Educational Attainment           Less than high school         9.8%         13.9%           High school         29.0%         34.6%           Some college         14.4%         21.8%           College+         7.2%         7.2%           Number of Children         15.1%         16.1%           No children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%           Number of Adult Workers	•				
Hispanic Origin Groups         23.3%         31.8%           Mexican         20.8%         23.2%           Puerto Rican         33.0%         25.4%           Cuban         15.5%         18.6%           Other         17.3%         18.6%           Married (2 spouses present)           Married (1 spouse present)         34.7%         29.1%           Separated         47.8%         38.1%           Divorced         29.0%         23.7%           Widowed         37.6%         28.7%           Single (never married)         29.6%         31.2%           Educational Attainment           Less than high school         9.8%         13.9%           High school         29.0%         34.6%           Some college         14.4%         21.8%           College+         7.2%         7.2%           Number of Children         15.1%         16.1%           No children         15.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%           Number of Adult Workers in the Household					
Hispanic Origin Groups           Mexican         20.8%         23.2%           Puerto Rican         33.0%         25.4%           Cuban         15.5%         18.6%           Other         17.3%         18.6%           Married (18.6%           (2 spouses present)         13.6%         14.8%           Married (1 spouse present)         34.7%         29.1%           Separated         47.8%         38.1%           Divorced         29.0%         23.7%           Widowed         37.6%         28.7%           Single (never married)         29.6%         31.2%           Educational Attainment           Less than high school         9.8%         13.9%           High school         29.0%         34.6%           Some college         14.4%         21.8%           College+         7.2%         7.2%           Number of Children           No children         15.1%         16.1%           One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%					
Mexican       20.8%       23.2%         Puerto Rican       33.0%       25.4%         Cuban       15.5%       18.6%         Other       17.3%       18.6%         Married (19.20 pouses present)         Married (1 spouse present)       34.7%       29.1%         Separated       47.8%       38.1%         Divorced       29.0%       23.7%         Widowed       37.6%       28.7%         Single (never married)       29.6%       31.2%         Educational Attainment         Less than high school       9.8%       13.9%         High school       29.0%       34.6%         Some college       14.4%       21.8%         College+       7.2%       7.2%         Number of Children       15.1%       16.1%         No children       15.1%       16.1%         Two children       17.5%       21.3%         Three or more children       29.3%       36.2%	Noncitizen	23.3%	31.8%		
Mexican       20.8%       23.2%         Puerto Rican       33.0%       25.4%         Cuban       15.5%       18.6%         Other       17.3%       18.6%         Married (19.20 pouses present)         Married (1 spouse present)       34.7%       29.1%         Separated       47.8%       38.1%         Divorced       29.0%       23.7%         Widowed       37.6%       28.7%         Single (never married)       29.6%       31.2%         Educational Attainment         Less than high school       9.8%       13.9%         High school       29.0%       34.6%         Some college       14.4%       21.8%         College+       7.2%       7.2%         Number of Children       15.1%       16.1%         No children       15.1%       16.1%         Two children       17.5%       21.3%         Three or more children       29.3%       36.2%					
Puerto Rican 33.0% 25.4%  Cuban 15.5% 18.6%  Other 17.3% 18.6%  Marrital Status  Married (2 spouses present) 34.7% 29.1%  Separated 47.8% 38.1%  Divorced 29.0% 23.7%  Widowed 37.6% 28.7%  Single (never married) 29.6% 31.2%  Educational Attainment  Less than high school 9.8% 13.9%  High school 29.0% 34.6%  Some college 14.4% 21.8%  College+ 7.2% 7.2%  Number of Children  No children 15.1% 16.1%  One child 21.1% 18.7%  Two children 17.5% 21.3%  Three or more children 29.3% 36.2%  Number of Adult Workers in the Household					
Cuban         15.5%         18.6%           Other         17.3%         18.6%           Married (2 spouses present)           Married (1 spouse present)         34.7%         29.1%           Separated         47.8%         38.1%           Divorced         29.0%         23.7%           Widowed         37.6%         28.7%           Single (never married)         29.6%         31.2%           Educational Attainment           Less than high school         9.8%         13.9%           High school         29.0%         34.6%           Some college         14.4%         21.8%           College+         7.2%         7.2%           Number of Children         15.1%         16.1%           One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%           Number of Adult Workers in the Household					
Other         17.3%         18.6%           Marital Status         Married (2 spouses present)         13.6%         14.8%           Married (1 spouse present)         34.7%         29.1%           Separated         47.8%         38.1%           Divorced         29.0%         23.7%           Widowed         37.6%         28.7%           Single (never married)         29.6%         31.2%           Educational Attainment           Less than high school         9.8%         13.9%           High school         29.0%         34.6%           Some college         14.4%         21.8%           College+         7.2%         7.2%           Number of Children         15.1%         16.1%           One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%           Number of Adult Workers in the Household	Puerto Rican	33.0%	25.4%		
Marital Status         Married (2 spouses present)       13.6%       14.8%         Married (1 spouse present)       34.7%       29.1%         Separated       47.8%       38.1%         Divorced       29.0%       23.7%         Widowed       37.6%       28.7%         Single (never married)       29.6%       31.2%         Educational Attainment         Less than high school       9.8%       13.9%         High school       29.0%       34.6%         Some college       14.4%       21.8%         College+       7.2%       7.2%         Number of Children       15.1%       16.1%         No children       15.1%       18.7%         Two children       17.5%       21.3%         Three or more children       29.3%       36.2%	Cuban	15.5%	18.6%		
Married (2 spouses present)       13.6%       14.8%         Married (1 spouse present)       34.7%       29.1%         Separated       47.8%       38.1%         Divorced       29.0%       23.7%         Widowed       37.6%       28.7%         Single (never married)       29.6%       31.2%         Educational Attainment         Less than high school       9.8%       13.9%         High school       29.0%       34.6%         Some college       14.4%       21.8%         College+       7.2%       7.2%         Number of Children       15.1%       16.1%         One child       21.1%       18.7%         Two children       17.5%       21.3%         Three or more children       29.3%       36.2%	Other	17.3%	18.6%		
Married (2 spouses present)       13.6%       14.8%         Married (1 spouse present)       34.7%       29.1%         Separated       47.8%       38.1%         Divorced       29.0%       23.7%         Widowed       37.6%       28.7%         Single (never married)       29.6%       31.2%         Educational Attainment         Less than high school       9.8%       13.9%         High school       29.0%       34.6%         Some college       14.4%       21.8%         College+       7.2%       7.2%         Number of Children       15.1%       16.1%         One child       21.1%       18.7%         Two children       17.5%       21.3%         Three or more children       29.3%       36.2%					
(2 spouses present)       34.7%       29.1%         Separated       47.8%       38.1%         Divorced       29.0%       23.7%         Widowed       37.6%       28.7%         Single (never married)       29.6%       31.2%         Educational Attainment         Less than high school       9.8%       13.9%         High school       29.0%       34.6%         Some college       14.4%       21.8%         College+       7.2%       7.2%         Number of Children       15.1%       16.1%         No children       15.1%       18.7%         Two children       17.5%       21.3%         Three or more children       29.3%       36.2%		1	1		
Separated         47.8%         38.1%           Divorced         29.0%         23.7%           Widowed         37.6%         28.7%           Single (never married)         29.6%         31.2%           Educational Attainment           Less than high school         9.8%         13.9%           High school         29.0%         34.6%           Some college         14.4%         21.8%           College+         7.2%         7.2%           Number of Children           No children         15.1%         16.1%           One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%           Number of Adult Workers in the Household		13.6%	14.8%		
Divorced         29.0%         23.7%           Widowed         37.6%         28.7%           Single (never married)         29.6%         31.2%           Educational Attainment           Less than high school         9.8%         13.9%           High school         29.0%         34.6%           Some college         14.4%         21.8%           College+         7.2%         7.2%           Number of Children         15.1%         16.1%           One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%           Number of Adult Workers in the Household	Married (1 spouse present)	34.7%	29.1%		
Widowed       37.6%       28.7%         Single (never married)       29.6%       31.2%         Educational Attainment         Less than high school       9.8%       13.9%         High school       29.0%       34.6%         Some college       14.4%       21.8%         College+       7.2%       7.2%         Number of Children         No children       15.1%       16.1%         One child       21.1%       18.7%         Two children       17.5%       21.3%         Three or more children       29.3%       36.2%	Separated	47.8%	38.1%		
Single (never married)         29.6%         31.2%           Educational Attainment           Less than high school         9.8%         13.9%           High school         29.0%         34.6%           Some college         14.4%         21.8%           College+         7.2%         7.2%           Number of Children         15.1%         16.1%           One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%           Number of Adult Workers in the Household	Divorced	29.0%	23.7%		
Educational Attainment           Less than high school         9.8%         13.9%           High school         29.0%         34.6%           Some college         14.4%         21.8%           College+         7.2%         7.2%           Number of Children           No children         15.1%         16.1%           One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%           Number of Adult Workers in the Household	Widowed	37.6%	28.7%		
Less than high school       9.8%       13.9%         High school       29.0%       34.6%         Some college       14.4%       21.8%         College+       7.2%       7.2%         Number of Children         No children       15.1%       16.1%         One child       21.1%       18.7%         Two children       17.5%       21.3%         Three or more children       29.3%       36.2%	Single (never married)	29.6%	31.2%		
Less than high school       9.8%       13.9%         High school       29.0%       34.6%         Some college       14.4%       21.8%         College+       7.2%       7.2%         Number of Children         No children       15.1%       16.1%         One child       21.1%       18.7%         Two children       17.5%       21.3%         Three or more children       29.3%       36.2%					
High school       29.0%       34.6%         Some college       14.4%       21.8%         College+       7.2%       7.2%         Number of Children         No children       15.1%       16.1%         One child       21.1%       18.7%         Two children       17.5%       21.3%         Three or more children       29.3%       36.2%         Number of Adult Workers in the Household	Educational Attainment				
Some college         14.4%         21.8%           College+         7.2%         7.2%           Number of Children           No children         15.1%         16.1%           One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%           Number of Adult Workers in the Household	Less than high school	9.8%	13.9%		
Number of Children         15.1%         16.1%           No children         15.1%         18.7%           One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%           Number of Adult Workers in the Household	High school	29.0%	34.6%		
Number of Children         15.1%         16.1%           One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%           Number of Adult Workers in the Household	Some college	14.4%	21.8%		
No children         15.1%         16.1%           One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%    Number of Adult Workers in the Household	College+	7.2%	7.2%		
No children         15.1%         16.1%           One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%    Number of Adult Workers in the Household					
One child         21.1%         18.7%           Two children         17.5%         21.3%           Three or more children         29.3%         36.2%           Number of Adult Workers in the Household	Number of Children				
Two children 17.5% 21.3%  Three or more children 29.3% 36.2%  Number of Adult Workers in the Household	No children	15.1%	16.1%		
Three or more children 29.3% 36.2%  Number of Adult Workers in the Household	One child	21.1%	18.7%		
Number of Adult Workers in the Household	Two children	17.5%	21.3%		
	Three or more children	29.3%	36.2%		
0 workers 54.8% 52.8%	Number of Adult Workers in the Household				
	0 workers	54.8%	52.8%		
1 worker 17.7% 22.0%	1 worker	17.7%	22.0%		
2 workers 6.7% 6.7%	2 workers	6.7%	6.7%		
3+ workers 4.4% 2.9%	3+ workers	4.4%	2.9%		

Source: Analysis samples limited to heads of household age 25 years and older. 1980 Decennial Census (5% state sample); 1990 Decennial Census (1% sample); 2000 Decennial Census (5% sample); 2010 ACS (1% sample). Retrieved from https://usa.ipums.org (Ruggles et. al., 2010).

TABLE 2. Standardized poverty rates (household heads age 25+): Hispanics then and now.

If we assume the 1980 Hispanic composition	Then the 2010 poverty rates suggest overall Hispanic poverty in 2010 would be
Citizenship	21.2%
Hispanic origin	22.1%
Marital status	20.2%
Educational attainment	26.7%
Number of children	23.4%
Number of workers in the household	22.7%

Source: Analysis samples limited to heads of household age 25 years and older. 1980 Decennial Census (5% state sample); 2010 ACS (1% sample). Retrieved from https://usa.ipums.org (Ruggles et. al., 2010).

TABLE 3. Standardized poverty rates (household heads age 25+): Hispanics compared with whites.

If we assume the 2010 white composition	Then the 2010 poverty rates suggest overall Hispanic poverty in 2010 would be
Citizenship	18.6%
Marital status	21.0%
Educational attainment	15.9%
Number of children	19.7%
Number of workers in the household	26.3%

Source: Analysis samples limited to heads of household age 25 years and older. 1980 Decennial Census (5% state sample); 2010 ACS (1% sample). Retrieved from https://usa.ipums.org (Ruggles et. al., 2010).

children within Hispanic households, is consequential because Hispanic families with three or more children have poverty rates (36.2 percent in 2010) twice as high as those of Hispanic families with no children (16.1 percent in 2010). If Hispanic families had not reduced their fertility since 1980, poverty would come in at an estimated 23.4 percent, which is 2.1 percentage points *higher* than in 1980. The second trend, a decline in the proportion of Hispanic households with no workers, is obviously likewise a poverty-reducing change. If the number of workers had remained the same, the poverty rate would be somewhat higher at 22.7 percent in 2010. Although these two forces had a less important protective effect than education, they are nonetheless also part of the reason why the Hispanic poverty remained stable. It bears noting that these trends, like rising educational investments, suggest that Hispanic households are becoming more similar to white (non-Hispanic) households.

### What Does the Future Hold?

The foregoing assimilative forces, although already important in protecting against a rise in poverty, could prove yet more important in the future. If ongoing legal issues are resolved and citizenship rates increase, the continuing effects of these forces could bring about substantial declines in Hispanic poverty. This point is demonstrated by recalculating the poverty rate under the assumption that Hispanics invest in education at the same level as non-Hispanic whites. Although educational investments have already increased substantially among Hispanics (as discussed above), they still remain much lower than those of non-Hispanic whites. What if the investments were the same? As shown in Table 3, the poverty rate under this assumption would be as low as 15.9 percent, the most dramatic reduction in any of our standardization exercises. This result shows that, for all the educational progress Hispanics have made, the effects of further educational investments would be substantial.

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## THE "CHILLING EFFECT" OF AMERICA'S NEW IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT REGIME

BY FRANCISCO I. PEDRAZA AND LING ZHU

ince the welfare reforms of the mid-1990s, the number of families receiving cash assistance from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program dropped from 4.5 million in 1996 to 2.0 million in 2013. Although some of this decline arises from changes in eligibility rules, including restrictions based on work criteria, length of residence, and immigration status, another important source of the decline is the simple underutilization of available services. That is, despite the sting from the latest economic downturn, benefits and services available through TANF are not always fully exploited. A report by the Urban Institute estimates a take-up rate of about one in three eligible TANF participants—meaning that most people who qualify for TANF pass on the opportunity to use the benefit. Why do those who are eligible for social safety-net programs opt not to enroll?

We take a closer look here at one explanation known as the "chilling effect." This account attributes declining welfare use among eligible immigrants and their children to confusion about who is eligible for benefits and to fears relating to the application of the public charge doctrine. Public charge laws are century-old policies that regulate entry into the United States by excluding people who officials believe are likely to draw from public relief programs. Because Hispanic immigrants to the United States might believe, based on such laws, that TANF enrollment would lead to detection and deportation, there is reason to believe that TANF enrollment among Hispanics might be accordingly "chilled."

Below, we highlight key findings from our study of whether the deployment of a new immigration enforcement system in the United States impacts participation in TANF differently for Hispanics and non-Hispanics. Our analysis provides new evidence on the provocative claim that the "chilling effect" is deterring those who are entitled to public benefits and services from in fact using them.

### **Recession and Enforcement through Latino Eyes**

The possibility of a chilling effect is especially troubling during a recessionary period in which Hispanics face additional economic stresses. It is well known that downturns widen unemployment gaps between racial minorities and non-Hispanic whites. The effects of the recession on Latinos also go well beyond job loss. By 2008, one in 10 Latino homeowners missed a mortgage payment or were unable to make a full payment. Analyzing data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Pew Research Center reports that, between 2005 and 2009, household wealth—the inflation-adjusted accumulated sum of assets (houses, cars, savings and checking accounts, stocks and mutual funds, retirement accounts, etc.) minus the sum of debt (mortgages, auto loans, credit card debt, etc.)—fell by 66 percent for Latinos and 53

FIGURE 1. Total apprehensions from the border and interior of the country.

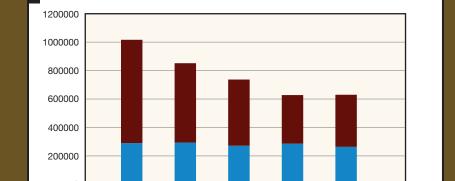
percent for African Americans, compared with just 16 percent among non-Hispanic whites. By 2010, the number of Hispanic children in poverty eclipsed the number of white children in poverty. Surveying Latinos nationwide, a Pew Hispanic Center survey in 2011 finds "[a] majority (54 percent) believe that the economic downturn that began in 2007 has been harder on them than on other groups in America."

Preceding and coinciding with these economic developments are two key policy innovations in immigration law. First, federal legislation, such as the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act and the 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, expanded U.S. immigration enforcement powers by removing key components of due process for noncitizens, increasing the set of deportable crimes, and allowing retroactive application of deportation proceedings for crimes previously adjudicated. Although these laws widen the gap in constitutional rights and privileges between noncitizen and citizen, they offer little improvement in the capacity of federal authorities to identify unauthorized immigrants living in the United States. Second, unlike the old Immigration and Naturalization Services, the new Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) features an unprecedented degree of coordination between federal and local authorities. Improvements in information-sharing technologies increase the efficiency and geographic reach of interior immigration enforcement operations.

The core of the new immigration enforcement and removal system is Secure Communities (hereafter sComm), the program responsible for an increasing share of deportations from the interior of the United States. The sComm program is directed by ICE officials, but involves a set of procedures that begins with local law enforcement authorities (LEA). In the course of booking a person into custody, LEA collect fingerprints and other identifying information to pass electronically and cross-

reference against databases managed by federal authorities. When federal authorities are alerted to a match by computer systems, they notify the LEA holding an unauthorized immigrant in custody and request a detainer. Detainers are requests to keep a person for up to 48 hours, pending custody transfer. Through sComm's information sharing and coordination procedures, immigration authorities are funneling millions of people to detention centers, immigration court proceedings, and removals from the country.

Figure 1 tracks interior apprehensions relative to operations at ports of entry and the U.S. borders with Mexico and Canada. Although the United States is deporting record levels of newcomers, there is a general decline in the total number of apprehensions. Economic downturns typically reduce in-migration, leaving fewer



2010

Border Patrol

2011

2012

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Immigration Statistics.

2008

■ ICE Interior Enforcement

persons for Border Patrol officials to apprehend. The figure also reveals that an increasing share of apprehensions, about 40 percent by 2012, are due to interior enforcement operations. This pattern suggests that, since the debut of sComm in 2008, interior immigration enforcement and removal efforts are more proximate in the day-to-day lives of immigrants.

Given that 75 percent of immigrants living without authorization in the United States are from Latin American countries, we might anticipate that deportations are similarly concentrated by country of origin. In fact, ICE reports indicate that in 2012 and 2013, 97 percent of sComm deportations were immigrants from Latin America. Roughly corresponding with the distribution of actual deportations is the perception by 72 percent of Hispanics that police primarily target people who are Hispanic when making inquiries about immigration status, according to Latino Decisions, a survey research firm.<sup>4</sup>

The foregoing suggests that, just as the recession increased the need for safety-net assistance, there were ongoing changes in immigration enforcement that might have convinced some Hispanics that they were being targeted for deportation and would therefore be wise to forgo using TANF and other programs. This is, then, the rationale for the "chilling effect" hypothesis.

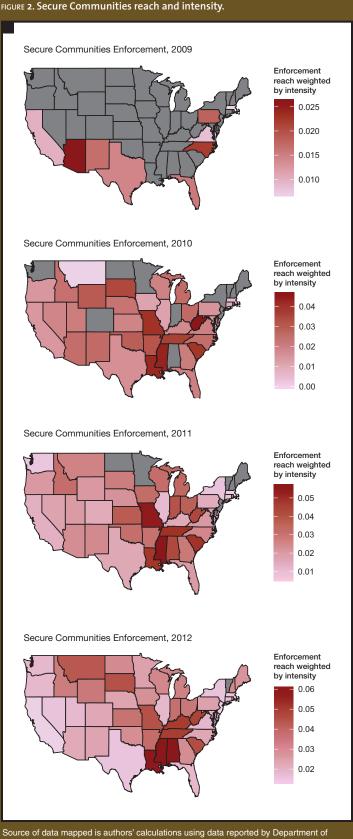
Is there any *direct* evidence that Hispanics are reluctant, by virtue of deportation worries, to use government services? Indeed there is. In the month before the onset of the 2008 recession, and nearly a year prior to the rollout of sComm, a Pew Hispanic Center survey finds that 22 percent of Latinos say that "as a result of increased public attention to immigration issues they are less likely to use government services." Importantly, this figure does not vary by nativity, meaning that the perception is held in equal proportion by immigrant and U.S.-born Latinos.

This survey implies that, even before the effects of the recession were fully felt, some Latinos anticipated a reduction in service use. But does the "chilling effect" appear in actual behavior?

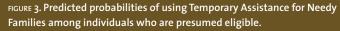
### An Actual "Chilling Effect"?

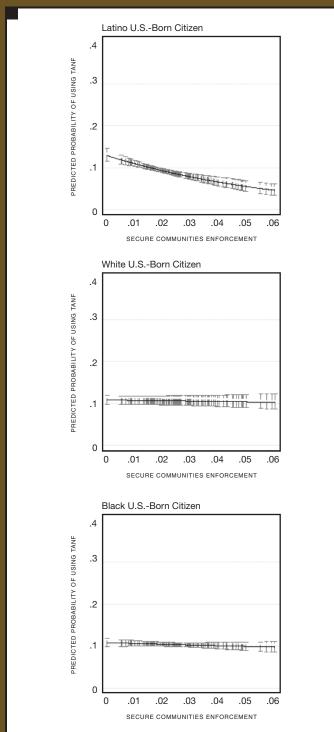
We answer this question using cross-sectional data from the Annual Social and Economic Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS-ASEC) for the years 2009 to 2012. The survey tracks individual-level participation in programs like TANF for a separate and independent, nationally representative sample each year. Apart from providing crucial information about enrollment in TANF, the CPS-ASEC is valuable because it allows us to examine the impact of the full geographic reach of sComm enforcement across the country.

Our comparison focuses on individuals who are presumed eligible for TANF benefits. Using information about individual-level income, assets, household size, labor market attachment, immigration status, length of residency, and state of residency, we craft a precise indicator of presumed eligibility for TANF from 2009 through 2012. Our method accounts for different TANF eligibility rules by state, assuring that we limit our analysis to the most appropriate cases for comparison. Applying our method to those who did report receiving TANF benefits, we accurately identify 97 percent of respondents reporting TANF participation in the



Source of data mapped is authors calculations using data reported by Department or Homeland Security, Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Monthly IDENT/IAFIS Interoperability Statistics (available at www.ice.gov), weighted by the foreign population in a state as reported annually in the CPS-ASEC (available at www.census.gov/cps/data).





Source: Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2010–2013.

data. A key advantage of the data is the sample size. After setting aside individuals who are not likely to qualify for TANF, we are left with over 160,000 cases for comparison, which provide more than sufficient statistical power to estimate differences in a regression analysis.

We measure immigration enforcement with metrics reported by ICE about sComm operations at the state level. Consistent with ICE's stated goal to prioritize serious criminals, sComm classifies three types of unauthorized migrants. High priority, "Level 1" (L1) immigrants, are those charged or convicted of an aggravated felony. Next, "Level 2" (L2) immigrants include those convicted of misdemeanors. Finally, "Level 3" (L3) corresponds to offenses punishable by less than one year. Reports furnishing our data collapse L2 and L3 into a single "low priority" category.

Our enforcement measure has two parts. First, the ratio of low priority removals (L2 and L3) to total removals in a state captures the reach of sComm enforcement. Next, we multiply reach by intensity of sComm enforcement, calculated as the ratio of the volume of LEA submissions to federal databases and the state foreign-born population. Since the foreign-born are not evenly distributed across states, it is crucial to account for both reach and intensity. The "chilling effect" of sComm on TANF participation is likely to be greater for Latinos who live in states where sComm enforcement is broader and more intensive.

Figure 2 displays our measure of sComm enforcement from 2009 to 2012. The maps show two features. First, states in gray have yet to activate sComm. The sComm program was initiated in the Southwest and some Eastern-corridor states. Second, Arizona and North Carolina stand out in the debut year of sComm, but are eclipsed by Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama by 2012. The South, in general, scores the highest once sComm is activated in the region.

We next apply a multilevel statistical regression model designed to estimate the likelihood that a person uses TANF benefits. The model lets us account for various individual socioeconomic characteristics as well as state-level contexts pertaining to where a person lives, including the proportion of the population that is foreign born, the unemployment rate, the degree of anti-immigrant sentiment expressed by state residents in public opinion polls, the general extent of welfare program generosity, and of course, the reach and intensity of sComm enforcement. The multilevel strategy allows us to model individual TANF participation differently for each state, which is appropriate given that states are allowed great flexibility in setting rules for TANF implementation. A model that groups individuals according to the state where they live also corresponds nicely with the broader patterns in sComm rollout and enforcement since 2008.

In light of the discussion above, our main theoretical expectation is that the "chilling effect" of sComm enforcement is greater for Hispanics. We test this expectation in Figure 3, where each panel traces the predicted probability of a U.S.-born citizen reporting TANF participation in the 12 months prior to being interviewed in the CPS-ASEC. We show separate panels for Latinos, non-Hispanic whites, and African Americans. The *x*-axis for each panel represents the full range of values for our sComm enforcement measure, and the *y*-axis represents model

prediction. We include 95 percent confidence bands for each probability trace.

The top panel shows that sComm enforcement indeed has a chilling effect on U.S.-born Latinos. The second and third panels indicate that no "chilling effect" is observed for non-Hispanic whites or non-Hispanic blacks. For Latino U.S.-born citizens, the probability of using TANF drops approximately 5 percent in states with extremely high intensity of immigration enforcement (as compared with those with very low intensity).

In another result from our analysis, one that is not illustrated in the panels, we find no evidence of a "chilling effect" for naturalized citizens, whether Hispanic or non-Hispanic white. It is possible that lessons about civil rights and liberties, and the civic transformation that accompanies the naturalization process, empower new citizens to access public services no matter the extent of immigration enforcement where they live. By contrast, noncitizens (which include undocumented immigrants, legal permanent residents, or other authorized immigrants) do appear sensitive to sComm enforcement, especially non-Hispanic whites. However, this evidence of a "chilling effect" is much weaker and more uncertain.

In sum, in states with broader and more intense immigration enforcement, eligible Latino citizens, and to a lesser extent noncitizens in general, are "chilled" away from public support to which they are entitled. What is provocative about the analysis here is that the "chilling effect" appears most pronounced and certain for U.S.-born Hispanics.

### Implications for Public Policy

The analysis here corroborates survey responses from Latinos, indicating that they are less likely to use government services because of increased attention to the issue of immigration. Our investigation suggests that TANF usage is affected, which is problematic given that the latest economic recession hit Latinos especially hard. Our study shows the "chilling effect" on TANF participation is most pronounced for U.S.-born Latinos. We find no evidence of a "chilling effect" for U.S.-born non-Hispanic whites or African Americans. It follows that the surge in interior

immigration enforcement may have undermined the capacity of Hispanics to stay out of poverty or to keep from slipping further into poverty.

Why might U.S.-born Latinos be so responsive to a deportation threat? After all, they are under no threat themselves of deportation, hence one might imagine they would be unaffected by changes in immigration policy. Although we cannot of course answer that question definitively, it is at least possible that Hispanics who are personally connected to a person who is undocumented take extra precaution not to expose them to any undue risk of deportation.

Whatever the mechanism might be, this evidence of a chilling effect highlights one of the largely unintended consequences of our immigration policy. To be sure, some supporters of more aggressive enforcement would welcome reduced service use by unauthorized immigrants, but this was surely not a main objective for most of the supporters.

If indeed it's not an objective, there are two ways forward. We could of course rethink our deportation-focused immigration policy, and indeed, President Obama has signaled he'll do just that (for at least some immigrants). Regardless of whether deportation continues to be aggressively pursued, a second and supplementary approach is to attempt to reduce its effects on service use by revisiting application procedures. At a minimum, social workers may do well to emphasize to immigrants, especially Latinos, that they are entitled to safety-net programs when needed.

This is especially important insofar as we have only uncovered the tip of the "chilling effect" iceberg. TANF makes up only one part of a broader American welfare state, and it's not a very large part at that. Participation in other means-tested programs like Medicaid, as well as safety-net programs like workers' compensation and unemployment insurance, should be evaluated for a comparable "chilling effect." These programs, which serve to smooth household economic risk for all Americans, are an important part of the safety net. If they too are subject to a chilling effect, the combined implications for Hispanic poverty may prove to be especially large and costly.

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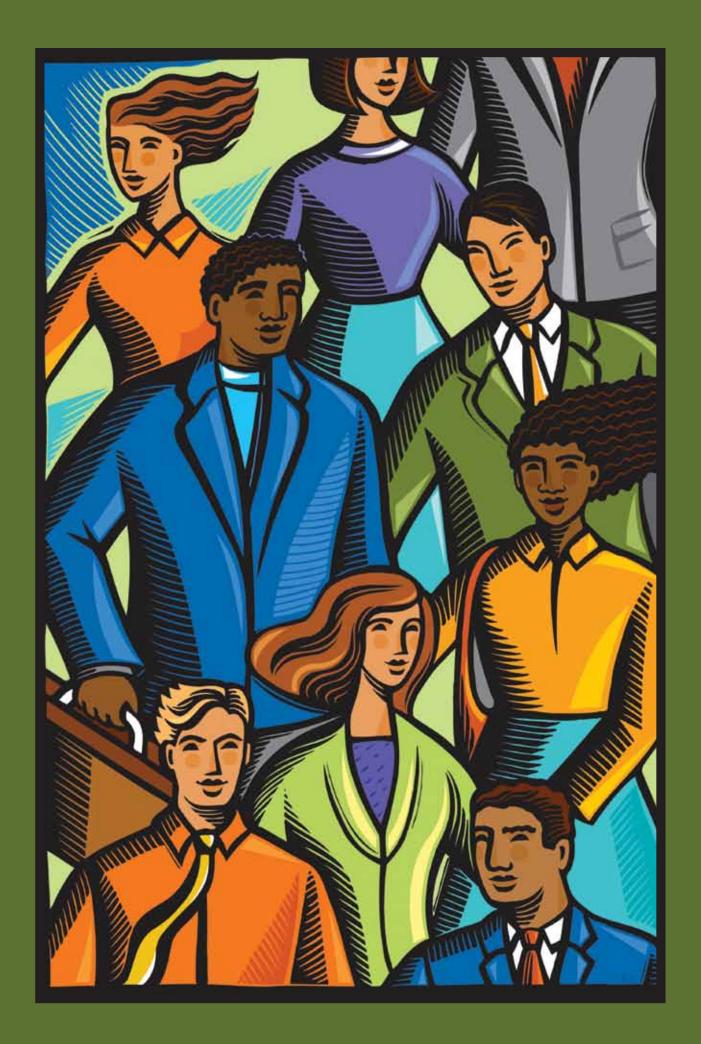
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## REVISITING THE TANKS ELER CARRIED DRECAR TO THE TO

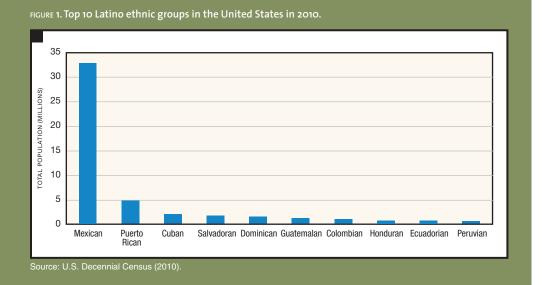
BY VAN C. TRAN

A DECADE AGO, the late political scientist Samuel Huntington concluded his provocative thought piece on Latinos' failure to assimilate into American society by emphatically noting that "[t]here is no Americano dream. There is only the American dream created by an Anglo-Protestant society. Mexican Americans will share in that dream and in that society only if they dream in English" (Huntington 2004). Although targeting Mexicans, the article, "The Hispanic Challenge," and Huntington's subsequent book, Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity, raised broad concerns that Latinos' concentrated presence in certain regions of the United States threatened the social fabric of local communities because many Latinos lack English proficiency, have no legal status, and concentrate in low-wage work.

The conventional view, rooted in much careful research, has been that Huntington got it wrong. Very wrong. In the aftermath of the book's publication, Huntington's argument came under serious attack by scholars of immigration, who noted that much of the empirical evidence pointed to clear intergenerational progress among Latinos, despite the many barriers that they face. The simple consensus coming out of this research: Latinos have (slowly) assimilated over time and across generations.

Why, then, is it important to revisit this debate? Wasn't it resolved long ago? Although perhaps it has been, it's troubling that some of the relevant evidence is now about a decade old. In the intervening decade, there are three key developments that give pause and raise the possibility that Huntington may partially be right, at least as regards the speed with which Latinos are assimilating. The most obvious concern, as laid out by Massey in his article in this issue, is that the growing threat of deportation may have slowed down the rate of economic incorporation. Although Massey notes that deportations averaged only 29,000 per year from 1975 to 1995, they have since surged and reached an all-time record of 438,000 deportations in 2013. Because employers can exploit this threat, and because many Latinos may accordingly feel obliged to lower their profile, one might anticipate a resulting slowdown in economic assimilation.

But that's not the only reason why it's important to revisit the evidence. Equally important, the Great Recession may have hit Hispanics unusually hard, not only because they work disproportionately in industries (e.g., construction) that fared poorly in the downturn, but also because they may have a more tenuous hold on their jobs by virtue of seniority or status. At the same time, Latinos are increasingly settling in "new



immigrant destinations" in smaller towns and rural regions, a development that may work to dead-end Latinos in local economies that are isolated and discriminatory, and mainly offer low-wage jobs lacking pathways for upward mobility. Although these mobility-reducing forces are different from those profered by Huntington, they nonetheless lead to renewed concerns that the prospect of Latino incorporation could be undermined.

This article thus focuses on recent trends in Latino incorporation by exploiting the pooled 2008-2012 Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS ASEC). It is important to carry out this comparison with multiple reference groups. As Kasinitz and his colleagues (2008) have observed, there are two related questions in the assessment of second-generation progress: "Assimilation into what?" and "Progress compared with whom?" A century ago, the European immigrants who arrived were integrated into an American society that was predominantly white in racial composition, with African Americans in a position of extreme disadvantage. Today, Latino immigrants and their children encounter an American society in which the mainstream is much more diverse, a development that motivates me to compare socioeconomic outcomes among young second-generation Latinos (a) with their non-Latino native peers of the same age group, (b) with their proxy first-generation parents, and (c) by immigrant destinations. Moreover, because the Latino population is very heterogeneous, most of the comparisons will focus on outcomes among the top 10 Latino groups (see Figure 1).

### Latino Assimilation in Young Adulthood

It is useful to begin by assessing how second-generation Latinos fare in terms of their educational and occupational attainment. Figure 2 presents predicted probabilities from multivariate models pertaining to (a) the likelihood of an especially good outcome (having a graduate degree or more; holding a professional occupation), and (b) the likelihood of a less desirable outcome (having no high school education; holding a service occupation). Although it's conventional to focus on group averages, this

approach is sensitive to the increasing heterogeneity within each ethnic group by examining the two extreme ends of the distribution. The three explicit reference groups are native whites, native blacks, and third- and higher-generation Puerto Ricans.

The educational results reveal that second-generation Mexicans fare worst. As Figure 2 shows, they have the highest probability of being a high school dropout and the lowest probability of being a graduate degree holder, in both cases registering outcomes worse than those of all three native reference groups. In contrast, second-generation Cubans, Central Americans, South Americans, and CEPs (Colombian, Ecuadoran, and

Peruvian) have achieved educational parity with native whites, whereas second-generation Dominicans and SGHs (Salvadoran, Guatemalan, and Honduran) register better educational outcomes than native blacks and Puerto Ricans, although they are still disadvantaged compared with native whites.

Are the occupational results materially different? No. Here again, second-generation Mexicans fare poorly, registering the highest probability of being in a service occupation and the lowest probability of being in a professional occupation. At the other extreme, Cubans report the best outcomes, with a lower concentration in service work and a higher concentration in professional occupations, even compared with native whites. Although the other ethnic groups have yet to achieve parity with native whites, they have all surpassed native blacks and Puerto Ricans in terms of their occupational profile.

That many Latino groups have achieved parity with native whites within the course of two generations is remarkable. This suggests a rate of assimilation that compares well to the historical record among European groups (especially when one takes into account the many disadvantages that Latinos have faced). The comparatively poor outcomes among Mexicans are likely due to their legal status and to the relatively low levels of human capital among the immigrant first generation. The occupational disadvantages of Mexicans may also reflect, in part, the effects of the recent recession.

### **Latino Assimilation across Immigrant Generations**

Although second-generation Mexicans fare poorly relative to other second-generation groups, it is still possible that they are doing better than their parents (given that their parents often have low levels of human capital). The next set of analyses, which pertain to intergenerational mobility, allows us to ask how second-generation Mexicans fare relative to first-generation Mexicans.

It is possible to take on this question only indirectly and imperfectly. That is, given the cross-sectional nature of CPS data, the first-generation Mexicans in the sample are not the

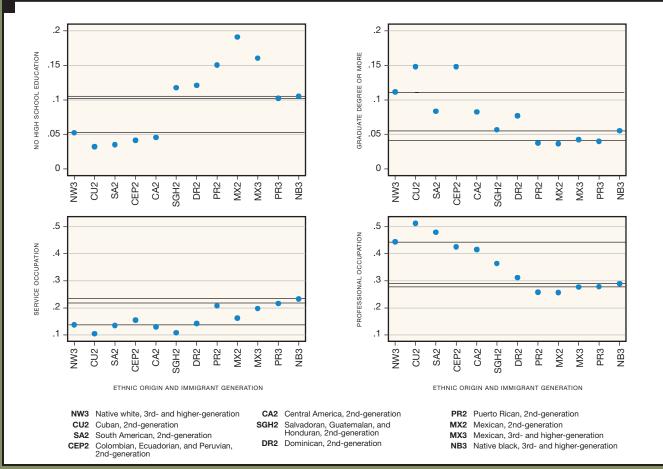


FIGURE 2. Predicted probabilities of socioeconomic attainment in young adulthood.

Source: Pooled CPS ASEC 2008–2012

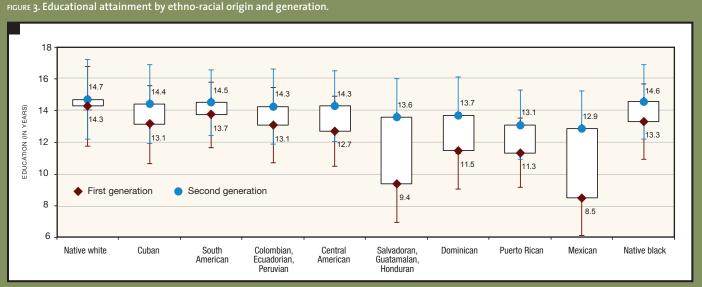
actual parents of second-generation Mexicans. This makes it impossible to speak directly to the matter of intergenerational mobility. Following other scholars, I use the lagged birth-cohort method to compare *cohorts* of first-generation Latinos with *cohorts* of second-generation Latinos who are 25 years younger. This method assumes that a 25-year period approximates one immigrant generation. It allows us to compare first-generation Latinos to cohorts of Latino individuals who are most likely to be around the age of their own children (second generation). This comparison will be based on the 1945–1965 birth cohort of first-generation respondents, and the 1970–1990 birth cohort of second-generation respondents.

Figure 3 presents the average educational attainment (in years) for each generation, while also showing the gap that has been closed between the first and the second generation. Among the first generation, Mexicans, along with Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Hondurans (SGH), fare worst. Among the second generation, these two ethnic groups still report the lowest educational attainment, but the gaps between them and the other Latino groups shrink. However, the pattern of intergenerational progress is clear. Between the first and second generation, these two ethnic groups also reported an average gain of four years

of education. Put differently, the children significantly outpace the parents in their educational attainment in young adulthood, despite their parents' modest educational profile. Or perhaps because of it: The parents have only 8.5 to 9.4 years of education on average, so their children simply cannot fare worse, given compulsory education until about age 16 in the United States. Across the other Latino groups, the adult children from every ethnic group report more education compared with their proxy parents, with the average gain being about one additional year of education.

### Latino Assimilation in Old and New Destinations

The rise of new immigrant destinations, one of the most prominent changes of late in immigrant experiences, may also work to undermine Latino incorporation. Although there is much demand for low-skilled workers within these destinations (in both the agriculture and manufacturing sectors), there have been concerns that immigrants in these destinations are not always faring well, in part because the native population can be hostile, in part because institutional resources that help integrate newcomers are unavailable (e.g., language classes, bilingual education), and in part because the jobs are especially low skill, dead



Source: Pooled CPS ASEC (2008-2012). Notes: Combined samples are limited to those between the ages of 25 and 85. The data are arrayed so that the results represent the average years of education for the first generation in the 1945/1965 birth cohort, along with the second generation born 25 years later in the 1970/1990 birth cohort, thus representing the assumption that the latter group is the second-generation children of the first-generation cohort. Gap bars between two data points for each ethnic group illustrate the extent of intergenerational progress by each ethnic group.

end, and sometimes exploitative.

Are these concerns warranted? How do second-generation Latinos fare across immigrant destinations? Figure 4 addresses this question by presenting predicted probabilities by ethnic origin and destination. The overall pattern is clear: The outcomes for second-generation Latinos are worse in new destinations than in traditional gateways. Here again, we find that Mexicans fare especially poorly in new destinations, with Figure 4 revealing that they have the highest probability of being a high school dropout, the lowest probability of being a graduate degree holder, and the lowest probability of holding professional occupations. There are, however, only very small differences across groups and destinations in the concentration in service occupations. This is hardly surprising given that new immigrant destinations are dominated by farming, meat packing, and construction (rather than service work).

It is striking that all groups, even native whites and blacks, fare poorly in new destinations, as compared with traditional ones. These are, in other words, equally bad destinations for everyone. If the main problem with the new destinations were the lack of immigrant-focused services (e.g., language classes and other services), then one might expect immigrants to especially bear the brunt of living in these destinations. But in fact we find that everyone—immigrants and natives alike—underachieves in these destinations. It follows that, rather than discriminating especially against immigrants, these locations seem to be unfavorable to every group quite indiscriminately.

### Latino Assimilation and the "Americano Dream"

The consensus view has long been that Latino immigrants are assimilating at a rate broadly consistent with that of previous immigrant groups. However, recent evidence on Latino assimi-

lation is in short supply, and there are accordingly new concerns that various new forces at work—such as the recent recession, the rise of new destinations, and rising deportation rates—may be slowing down Latino assimilation. Are these concerns warranted?

This article addresses that question with one of the first post-recession snapshots and the most recent profile of Latino assimilation. The evidence is not without its complications, and obviously, only a partial assessment is possible. But a simple conclusion emerges: Overall, significant progress over time across Latino groups is evident, although there is also a clear and persistent Mexican disadvantage. Compared with their native peers, second-generation Mexicans are among the most disadvantaged. Compared with their first-generation proxy parents, however, second-generation Mexicans are doing reasonably well, although here the evidence is necessarily ambiguous (as longitudinal data are unavailable). Compared with their counterparts in traditional gateways, second-generation Latinos in new destinations are also more disadvantaged.

It is not possible on the basis of the evidence provided here to identify why second-generation Mexicans are not faring as well as other Latino groups. This deficit is of course partly due to the relatively low human capital of their parents. Additionally, the analyses presented here suggest that immigrants in "new destinations" have lower socioeconomic outcomes, with the implication that Mexican assimilation may slow down insofar as their shift to new destinations continues apace. The contrast between Mexicans and the remaining Latino groups further suggests that the lack of legal status is hindering the assimilation process. The evidence for this claim is of course indirect: For example, Mexicans are more likely to be undocumented than Colombians, Ecuadorans, and Peruvians (CEPs),

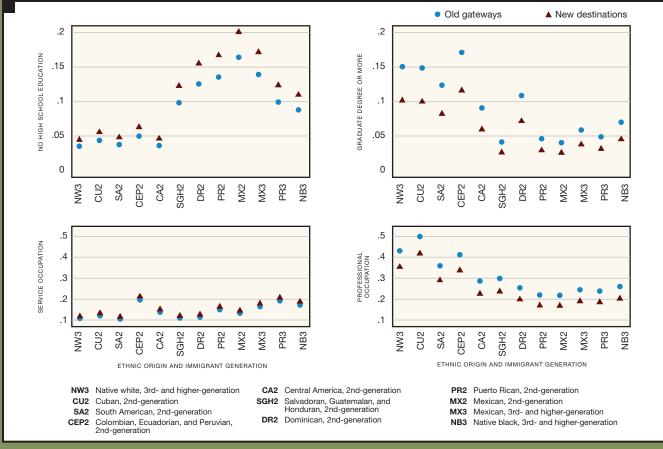


FIGURE 4. Predicted probabilities of socioeconomic attainment by immigrant destination.

Source: Pooled CPS ASEC 2008-2012.

and their socioeconomic outcomes are also worse (see Figure 2). Although the evidence is ambiguous, we cannot rule out the possibility that we're creating a new legally defined underclass by burdening so many Latinos with an undocumented status. In this sense, if no other, some of the concerns voiced by Hunting-

ton may in the end be on the mark, albeit for different reasons. Looking forward, President Obama's recent executive action on immigration may reverse the forces creating this new underclass, thus providing Latino families with a new opportunity to achieve their Americano dream.

### Endnote

I. The CPS does not contain the information to test this hypothesis.

### **Additional Resources**

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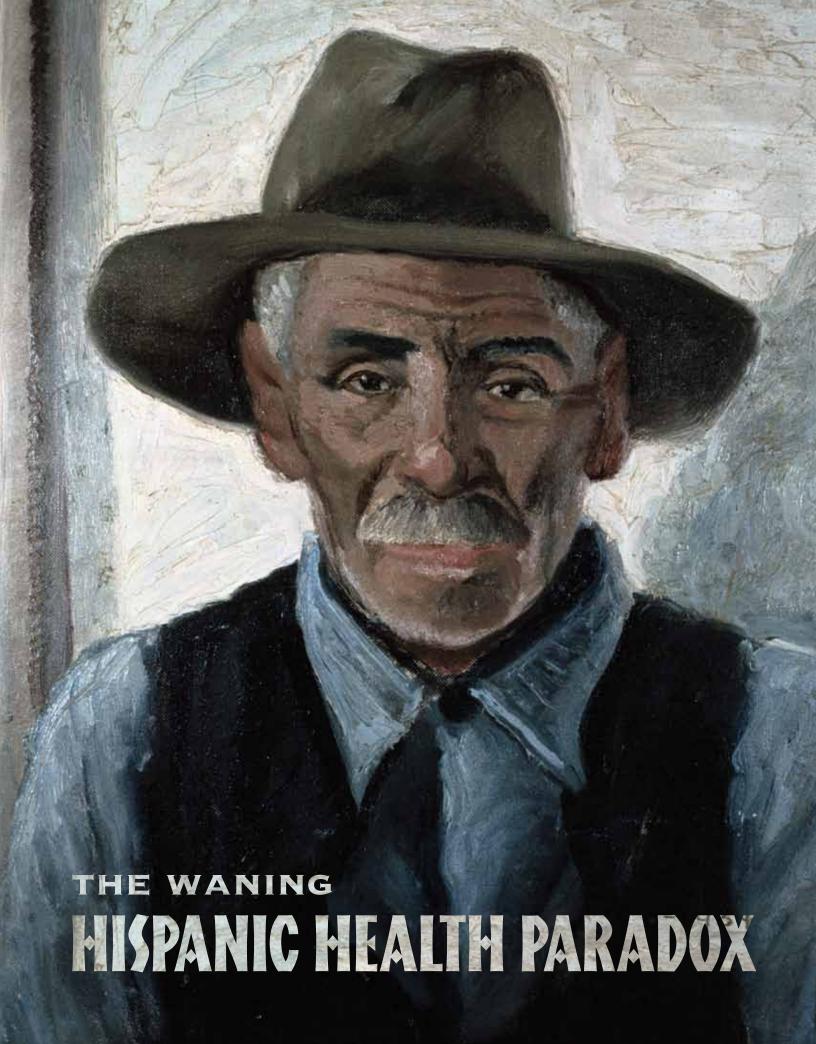
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FERNANDO RIOSMENA, ELISABETH ROOT, JAMIE HUMPHREY, EMILY STEINER, AND REBECCA STUBBS

ecause many people of color are socially and economically disadvantaged, U.S. health statistics generally show a racial and ethnic gradient in health and mortality. Yet Latinos defy this expectation in important ways. Most notably, some of the more disadvantaged Latino groups—such as Mexican Americans—have substantially *lower* mortality rates than other racial and ethnic groups with similarly low socioeconomic status (SES). More strikingly, Latinos have higher life expectancies *at almost every* age relative to groups with more favorable SES, such as non-Hispanic whites. Scholars have come to label these patterns as the "Hispanic Health Paradox" (HHP), a phenomenon that is particularly prevalent among Latin American immigrants, but also exists among U.S.-born Latinos.<sup>1</sup> The HHP can be explained by selective forces (immigrants are especially healthy relative to those they left behind) and by social and cultural buffering within Latino communities.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE 1: Prevalence of selected indicators related to chronic health for foreign and U.S.-born Mexican Americans and U.S.-born non-Hispanic whites and African Americans, 1999–2004 and 2005–2010.

Indicator		Mexican American		Non-	Non-	Mexican / NHW		Mexican / NHB	
		Foreign- born	U.S born	Hispanic white	Hispanic black	Foreign- born	U.S born	Foreign- born	U.S born
1999- 2004	Obesity	33.9	42.2	33.4	45.2	1.02	1.27	0.75	0.93
	Severe obesity	11.3	17.5	13.2	23.5	0.86	1.33	0.48	0.75
	High glycosylated hemoglobin	15.0	19.2	8.3	17.4	1.82	2.32	0.86	1.10
	High total cholesterol	20.1	17.8	21.4	19.3	0.94	0.83	1.04	0.92
	Low HDL cholesterol	25.8	24.7	20.1	13.8	1.28	1.23	1.87	1.79
	High systolic/diastolic blood pressure	22.6	26.8	26.0	37.1	0.87	1.03	0.61	0.72
	Current smoking	19.7	21.8	19.3	29.9	1.02	1.13	0.66	0.73
	Obesity	40.5	43.6	36.2	49.3	1.12	1.20	0.82	0.89
2005- 2010	Severe obesity	12.3	19.8	15.5	25.3	0.80	1.28	0.49	0.78
	High glycosylated hemoglobin	19.3	20.8	9.1	20.7	2.12	2.29	0.93	1.00
	High total cholesterol	19.4	16.1	18.1	14.2	1.07	0.89	1.36	1.14
	Low HDL cholesterol	25.4	19.3	18.6	11.6	1.37	1.04	2.19	1.67
	High systolic/diastolic blood pressure	17.9	23.2	20.2	31.8	0.88	1.15	0.56	0.73
	Current smoking	15.5	21.1	18.5	28.4	0.84	1.14	0.55	0.74
2005- 2010 1999- 2004	Obesity	1.20	1.03	1.09	1.09	1.10	0.95	1.10	0.95
	Severe obesity	1.09	1.13	1.18	1.08	0.93	0.96	1.01	1.05
	High glycosylated hemoglobin	1.28	1.08	1.10	1.19	1.16	0.98	1.08	0.91
	High total cholesterol	0.96	0.91	0.84	0.74	1.14	1.07	1.31	1.23
	Low HDL cholesterol	0.98	0.78	0.92	0.84	1.06	0.85	1.17	0.93
	High systolic/diastolic blood pressure	0.79	0.87	0.78	0.86	1.01	1.11	0.92	1.01
	Current smoking	0.79	0.97	0.96	0.95	0.82	1.01	0.83	1.02

Source: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, pooled 1999-2004 and 2005-2010 cycles.

The focus on the Hispanic mortality advantage distracts us from understanding the broader state of Hispanic health. The mortality advantage, which is partly generated by comparatively low rates of smoking and correspondingly better cardiovascular health, is obviously very important. That said, the benefit of a long life is diminished when it is not also a healthy life, which is often the case for Hispanics. Most notably, Hispanics have lower rates of health insurance and reduced access to steady and high-quality health care, complicating treatment by delaying detection, raising costs, and increasing the likelihood of disability. At the same time, because many Hispanics, especially undocumented immigrants, are engaged in hard manual labor, a larger share of their (longer) life spans is spent ill or disabled.

We illustrate this "mixed bag" of Hispanic health by showing that, although there are indeed some areas of Mexican-American health advantage, there are also important dimensions in which Mexican Americans are disadvantaged relative to other racial and ethnic groups. We provide this broad view by examining several indicators drawn from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES).<sup>3</sup> Because of increasing inequality, and because of important changes in the composi-

tion of the (foreign-born) Mexican population, we also present changes over time.

The key quantitative backdrop to our analyses is presented in Table I. Here, we summarize the prevalence of several health outcomes that are markers of cardiovascular and cardiometabolic conditions, including heart attacks and disease, strokes, and diabetes. While we present some graphic representations of prevalence in the figures below, Table I provides the prevalence estimates in detail. To illustrate the differences among racial and ethnic groups, Table I also shows the ratios between foreignand U.S.-born Mexicans compared with non-Hispanic whites and African Americans respectively (in the two rightmost columns). To illustrate changes in health in each group throughout the last decade, we further show the ratio of our estimates for each group in 2005–2010 relative to the same value in 1999–2004 (in the lower panel).

### The Mixed Bag of Obesity and Diabetes

We begin by considering the prevalence of overall and severe obesity (see Figure 1).<sup>4</sup> We concern ourselves with obesity because it as an important risk factor for cardiometabolic and

cardiovascular health conditions that are responsible for several major causes of death. Some of the patterns in Figure 1 conform to the stock HHP story, such as lower levels of obesity and severe obesity among Mexican Americans relative to African Americans during both periods. However, the data suggest not only a sizable obesity disadvantage for U.S.-born Mexicans relative to non-Hispanic whites, but also a growing disadvantage among Mexican immigrants relative to non-Hispanic whites between 1999–2004 and 2005–2010.

There are many indications that this slight but growing immigrant disadvantage in milder forms of obesity and some related chronic health conditions may worsen in the future. Mexico has experienced a rapid "nutrition transition," a transformation of eating and cooking habits, and economic and physical activity patterns, resulting in higher net calorie consumption and major weight gain. Because adult obesity rates are now as high in Mexico as they are in the United States, it follows that future Mexican immigrant cohorts may continue to exhibit obesity rates close to those observed in the United States.

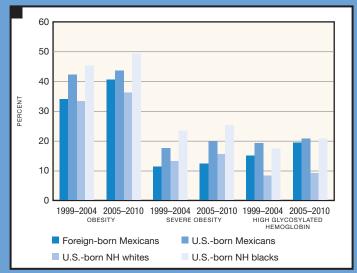
This suggests that we should expect ongoing increases in obesity and declines in overall health among immigrants. Further, immigrants tend to change their eating behaviors, gain unhealthy amounts of weight, and experience worsening health as they continue to live in the United States.<sup>6</sup> This tendency for health to worsen with time spent in the United States is especially troubling because there are forces at work increasing the time spent in the United States. That is, because of changing economic and enforcement dynamics, the Mexican immigrant population remains in the United States longer, on average, than at the turn of the 21st century. This in turn results in higher obesity rates as well as other declines in health at the population level.

One silver lining for Mexican Americans, despite these challenges, is that their levels of severe obesity are lower and have grown more slowly than those of whites. Increases in more severe forms of obesity were highest among non-Hispanic whites, followed by U.S.-born Mexican Americans, Mexican immigrants, and African Americans.

We turn next to type 2 diabetes. Complications from poorly controlling diabetes are an important cause of death, indeed particularly in Mexican and other Latin American—origin populations. We examine the extent of differentials in diabetes prevalence via levels of glycosylated hemoglobin, a proxy for poorly controlled type 2 diabetes.

Figure 1 clearly shows that diabetes incidence is an important aspect of *disadvantage* among Mexican Americans. Even though Mexican immigrants have comparable levels of obesity and lower levels of severe obesity, they have higher levels of glycosylated hemoglobin than non-Hispanic whites. To be sure, the Mexicanorigin population had slightly lower levels of poorly controlled diabetes than African Americans in 2005–2010. But the trend is worrying: As with the case of obesity, Mexican immigrants had disproportionately higher growth in diabetes levels between 1999–2004 and 2005–2010, putting foreign-born Mexicans at a higher disadvantage relative to non-Hispanic whites in the latter period.

FIGURE 1. Prevalence of obesity, severe obesity, and high glycosylated hemoglobin for selected race/ethnicity/nativity groups in the United States, 1999–2004 and 2005–2010.



Source: Authors' calculations using 1999–2010 pooled National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys.

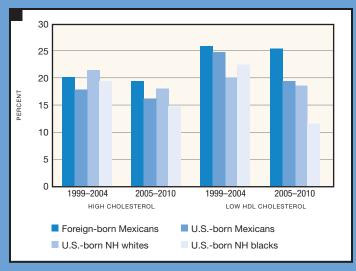
The worsening of conditions in Mexico and the lengthening of U.S. stays among Mexican immigrants may explain these results. If so, it bodes ill for the future, given that both of these sources are likely to remain in play. There is, moreover, yet another troubling factor: Latinos, particularly immigrants, have poor access to health care, which can result in less awareness of conditions like diabetes and reduce adherence to and follow-up on recommended treatments. Late detection related to lack of awareness and adherence to treatment can cause severe health complications, increase costs in the health care system, and take a nontrivial human toll.

### The Mixed Bag of Factors Leading to Heart Disease and Stroke

One of course should also care deeply about heart disease and stroke because both are major chronic diseases and causes of death. It is accordingly important to examine the sources of the Hispanic advantage in cardiovascular mortality and to inquire if it is supported by different biomarkers of cardiovascular health. To do so, we examine total levels of cholesterol, a rough indicator of the amount of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, the main type of buildup that leads to artery blockage and cardiovascular disease. Because another type of cholesterol—high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol—helps remove some of this blockage, *low* HDL levels are considered risky. We therefore examine HDL levels as well.

As shown in Table 1 and as illustrated in Figure 2, non-Hispanic whites and Mexican immigrants have higher levels of total cholesterol than U.S.-born Mexican Americans and, especially, African Americans. This is a mixed-bag story insofar as Mexican

FIGURE 2. Prevalence of risky levels of cholesterol and high-density lipoprotein (hdl) cholesterol for selected race/ethnicity/nativity groups in the United States, 1999–2004 and 2005–2010.

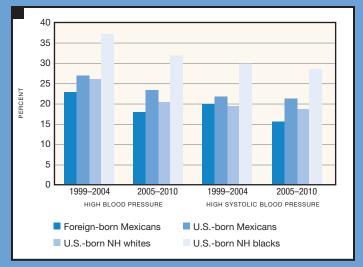


Source: Weighted estimates using 1999–2010 pooled National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys.

immigrants are doing poorly—especially in 2005–2009—whereas U.S.-born Mexican Americans (and African Americans) are doing comparatively well. There is, by contrast, absolutely no evidence of a paradox with respect to HDL cholesterol. In this case, both immigrants and U.S.-born Mexican Americans have riskier HDL levels than whites and African Americans. Moreover, although risky levels of total and HDL cholesterol decreased for all groups between 1999–2004 and 2005–2009, they decreased only very slightly for Mexican immigrants, suggesting again that the health status of the average foreign-born Mexican deteriorated over the last decade.

Despite the preceding challenges to conventional wisdom, other indicators of chronic health are indeed more favorable among Mexican Americans than among both whites and African Americans, just as the strong-form HHP would have it. As shown in Figure 3, Mexican immigrants have comparatively low levels of hypertension,7 an important risk factor for heart disease and stroke, whereas U.S.-born Mexican Americans have slightly lower or comparable levels to those of whites, and African Americans have the highest levels of risk associated with blood pressure. Even though these conditions for the most part improved (i.e., declined) between 1999-2004 and 2005-2010, they did so at a slightly lower pace for Mexican immigrants relative to non-Hispanic whites, suggesting a slight reduction of the HHP, similar to other outcomes in which the Mexican immigrant disadvantage increased. At the same time, note that smoking did decrease more rapidly among Mexican immigrants over the prior decade, resulting in a clearer HHP with respect to this risk factor (see Table 1 for results on smoking).

FIGURE 3. Prevalence of high blood pressure and smoking status for selected race/ethnicity/nativity groups in the United States, 1999–2004 and 2005–2010.



Source: Weighted estimates using 1999–2010 pooled National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys.

### **Conclusions**

A broad examination of different dimensions of chronic health and its major risk factors provides a more mixed picture of Hispanic health than is apparent from an examination of mortality or specific chronic health outcomes alone. Even though Mexican Americans live longer than expected given their low SES, they spend a higher share of their lives in more fragile and unhealthy states than non-Hispanic whites.

Recent socioeconomic and epidemiological trends also question the continued relevance of the HHP in characterizing Hispanic health. Although Mexican immigrants and U.S.-born Mexican Americans still exhibit better than "expected" health in some dimensions, particularly relative to African Americans, it is notable that immigrant health either worsened more quickly or improved more slowly than that of non-Hispanic whites and, to a lesser extent, African Americans. While it may be too early to conclude that all good things, including the HHP, must ultimately come to an end, there are surely signs that the HHP is under threat.

The key question, when it comes to the future of the "Hispanic Health Paradox," is whether Mexican Americans will continue to live longer than expected despite spending their lives in more fragile and unhealthy states than non-Hispanic whites.<sup>8</sup> Because we're seeing troubling results for some chronic diseases and risk factors, one has to worry that it may ultimately translate into less favorable mortality rates as well.<sup>9</sup>

### **Endnotes**

- I. For example, Hummer, Robert A., Richard G. Rogers, Charles B. Nam, and Felicia B. LeClere. 1999. "Race/Ethnicity, Nativity, and U.S. Adult Mortality." *Social Science Quarterly*, 80(I), 136–153.
- 2. For further reading, see Riosmena, Fernando, Rebecca Wong, and Alberto Palloni. 2013. "Migration Selection, Protection, and Acculturation in Health: A Bi-National Perspective on Older Adults." *Demography*, 50, 1039–1064.
- 3. The NHANES is a nationally representative data source that takes several types of physical measurements, including blood samples. These kinds of indicators are preferred over those derived from self-reported (diagnosis) data that is more commonly available in national surveys. We present figures for adults between the ages of 40 and 74, as it is roughly after age 40 that chronic health conditions manifest among most people. We restrict our analyses to people younger than 75 to avoid the possibility that mortality selection affects our assessments. To show changes in racial, ethnic, and nativity differentials over the previous decade, we present data from two different periods, 1999-2004 and 2005-2010.

- 4. Following conventional procedures, we classify people as obese and severely obese if they have body mass index levels (a measure of "weight-for-height") of more than 30 kg/m2 and 35 kg/m2, respectively.
- 5. See Popkin, Barry M., and Penny Gordon-Larsen. 2004. "The Nutrition Transition: Worldwide Obesity Dynamics and Their Determinants." *International Journal of Obesity*, 28, S2–S9.
- 6. Akresh, Ilana Redstone. 2007. "Dietary Assimilation and Health among Hispanic Immigrants to the United States." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 48(4), 404–417; Antecol, Heather, and Kelly Bedard. 2006. "Unhealthy Assimilation: Why Do Immigrants Converge to American Health Status Levels?" *Demography*, 43(2), 337–360.
- 7. High blood pressure consistent with hypertension is indicated by high levels of systolic or diastolic blood pressure. Systolic refers to the amount of blood the heart forces while pumping, while diastolic refers to a baseline level of blood pressure between heart beats. High-risk levels of systolic pressure are those above 140 mm/Hg, while high-risk levels of diastolic blood pressure are those of 90 mm/Hg or higher (see http://www.nhlbi.

- nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/hbp/). As customary in the literature, we classified people as having high blood pressure when either of these thresholds had been surpassed using an average of up to three blood pressure measurements in the NHANES.
- 8. See Beard, Holly A., Majd Al Ghatrif, Rafael Samper-Ternent, Kerstin Gerst, and Kyriakos S. Markides. 2009. "Trends in Diabetes Prevalence and Diabetes-Related Complications in Older Mexican Americans from 1993–1994 to 2004–2005." *Diabetes Care*, 32(12), 2212–2217; Markides, Kyriakos, and Kerstin Gerst. 2011. "Immigration, Aging, and Health in the United States," in *Handbook of the Sociology of Aging*, edited by J. L. Angel and R. A. Settersten, Jr. New York: Springer.
- 9. Hummer, Robert A., and Mark D. Hayward. Forthcoming. "Hispanic Older Adult Health and Longevity in the United States: Current Patterns and Concerns for the Future." *Daedalus*.

### **Further Reading**

Antecol, Heather and Kelly Bedard. 2006. "Unhealthy Assimilation: Why Do Immigrants Converge to American Health Status Levels?" *Demography*, 43(2), 337–360.

Beard, Holly A., Majd Al Ghatrif, Rafael Samper-Ternent, Kerstin Gerst, and Kyriakos S. Markides. 2009. "Trends in Diabetes Prevalence and Diabetes-Related Complications in Older Mexican Americans from 1993–1994 to 2004–2005." *Diabetes Care*, 32(12), 2212–2217.

Derose, K.P., B.W. Bahney, N. Lurie, and J.J. Escarce. 2009. "Review: Immigrants and health care access, quality, and cost." *Medical Care Research and Review*, 66(4), 355–408.

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Riosmena, Fernando, Rebecca Wong, and Alberto Palloni. 2013. "Migration Selection, Protection, and Acculturation in Health: A Bi-National Perspective on Older Adults." *Demography*, 50, 1039–1064.

### Is Social Status Inherited as Reliably as Height?

n conventional studies of social mobility, a single aspect of overall status is singled out (e.g., education, income, occupation), and intergenerational correlations are then calculated with respect to that single aspect. The typical mobility study is carried out, for example, by examining parent-child correlations for education, income, or occupation.

Is it possible that these studies underestimate the true amount of intergenerational persistence because children sometimes trade off one type of status (e.g., occupational prestige) for another (e.g., income)? Or because random shocks may undermine the inheritance of one type of status without necessarily undermining the inheritance of other types?

This possibility is addressed by Gregory Clark and Neil Cummins by comparing the average status of those with the same surname with the corresponding average of that same-surname population a generation later. The correlation between these same-surname averages proves to be very high and suggests far less intergenerational mobility than conventional studies based on individual-level correlations. When, for example, education status is measured by attendance at either Oxford or Cambridge and calculated for surname groups (separated by 30 years), Clark reports an average intergenerational correlation in status in the range of 0.70 to 0.90. This result, which is remarkably stable over recent centuries, suggests that social status may be even more reliably inherited than height.

Clark, Gregory and Neil Cummins. 2014. "Surnames and Social Mobility in England, 1170–2012." *Human Nature* 25, 517–537.

### The Gender Gap in Overwork

Why is the gender gap in wages still so large? After falling precipitously in the 1970s and 1980s, the gender gap in wages declined only slowly in the 1990s and remained steady through the mid 2000s. This slowdown is especially puzzling because the gender gap in educational attainment and other forms of human capital is still narrowing. If women and men are continuing to become more similar in their human capital, why isn't the gender gap also continuing to narrow?

In a new study, Youngjoo Cha and Kim Weeden show that this puzzle is partly explained by changes in "overwork," where this refers to working 50 or more hours per week. Because the wage returns to overwork are growing, and because men are more likely than women to engage in overwork, the wage-equalizing effects of the narrowing gender gap in education have been offset. This offsetting effect is especially large in occupations, like the professions, in which long hours have become the norm.

Cha, Youngjoo, and Kim A. Weeden. 2014. "Overwork and the Slow Convergence in the Gender Gap in Wages." *American Sociological Review*, 1–28.

### Does a Strong Housing Market Make Us Selfish?

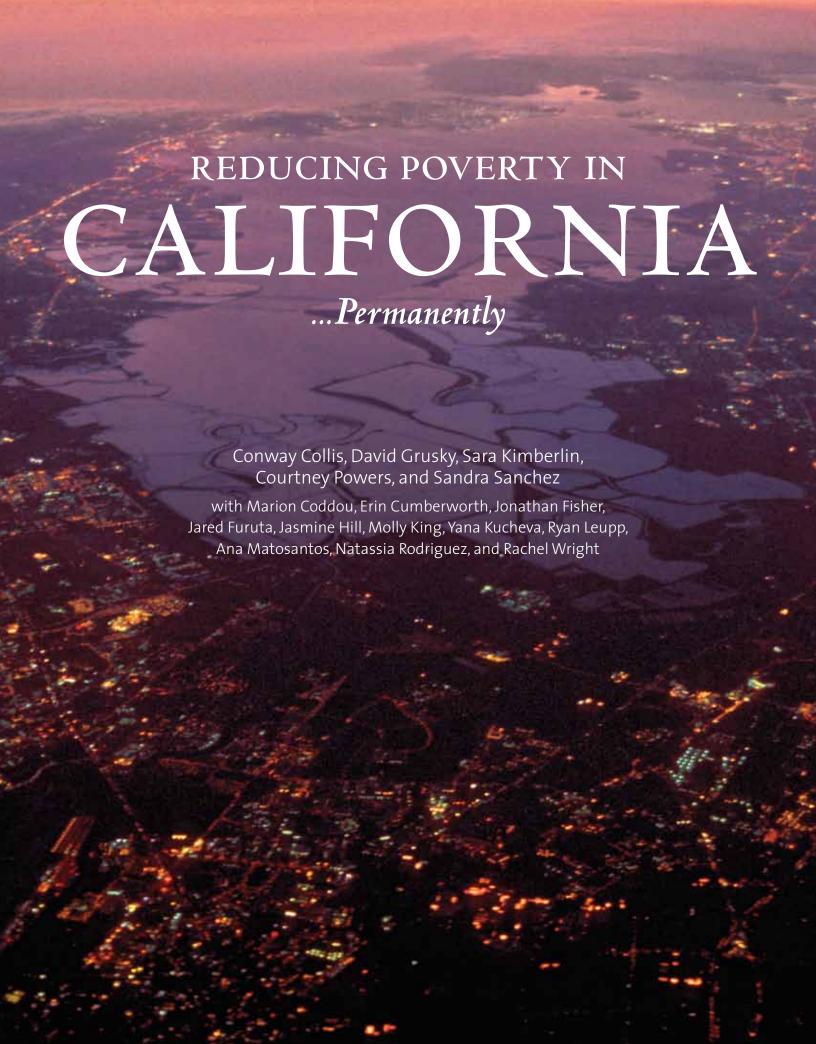
Over the last decade, the housing market first surged and then collapsed, with corresponding and well-known effects on family assets. The simple but important question: Do major economic changes of this sort affect political attitudes and behavior?

It might be expected that those experiencing price appreciation would be less supportive of redistributive policies because they are increasingly self-insured against possible income loss. In boom markets, homeowners will

have more home equity upon which to draw, thus allowing them to better weather job losses or other negative income shocks. This should in turn reduce their self-interest in supporting redistributive and social insurance policies.

In a comprehensive analysis of national surveys and national spending data, Ben Ansell finds that support for redistributive and social insurance policies indeed declined as the housing market took off and asset prices increased. Obversely, when homeowners experienced price declines, they became more supportive of such left-leaning policies. This analysis suggests that, insofar as some regions and states continue to be hard hit by the housing crisis, the Great Recession may have a long-lasting political fallout.

Ansell, Ben. 2014. "The Political Economy of Ownership: Housing Markets and the Welfare State." *American Political Science Review*, 1–20.



### REDUCING POVERTY IN

### CALIFORNIA

### ...Permanently

Conway Collis, David Grusky, Sara Kimberlin, Courtney Powers, and Sandra Sanchez

with Marion Coddou, Erin Cumberworth, Jonathan Fisher, Jared Furuta, Jasmine Hill, Molly King, Yana Kucheva, Ryan Leupp, Ana Matosantos, Natassia Rodriguez, and Rachel Wright

## If California were to seriously commit to equalizing opportunity and reducing poverty, how might that commitment best be realized?

This is of course a hypothetical question, as there is no evidence that California is poised to make such a serious commitment, nor have many other states gone much beyond the usual lip-service proclamations. There are many reasons for California's complacency, but an important one is that most people think that poverty is intractable and that viable solutions to it simply don't exist.

When Californians know what needs to be done, they tend to go forward and get it done. When, for example, the state's roads are in disrepair, there are rarely paralyzing debates about exactly *how* to go about fixing them; instead we proceed with the needed repairs as soon as the funds to do so are appropriated. The same type of sure and certain prescription might appear to be unavailable when it comes to reducing poverty. It is hard not to be overwhelmed by the cacophony of voices yielding a thick stream of narrow-gauge interventions, new evaluations, and piecemeal proposals.<sup>1</sup>

Although the research literature on poverty is indeed large and may seem confusing, recent advances have in fact been so fundamental that it is now possible to develop a science-based response to poverty. In the past, the causes of poverty were not well understood, and major interventions, such as the War on Poverty, had to be built more on hunch than science. It is an altogether different matter now. The causes of poverty are well established, and the effects of many possible policy responses to poverty are likewise well established. The simple purpose of this essay is to assemble these advances into a coherent plan that would, if implemented, reduce poverty in California substantially.

### A High-Poverty State

In any discussion of poverty in California, perhaps the most important point to be made is that we have much of it, indeed likely more than in any other state in the United States.<sup>2</sup> The California Poverty Measure (CPM), a measure that improves on the Census Bureau's supplemental poverty measure, indicates that 22.0 percent of all Californians are living in poverty.<sup>3</sup> This poverty is often very extreme. In fact, 6.1 percent of California's population lives in "deep poverty," meaning that their family income is less than 50 percent of the poverty threshold.<sup>4</sup>

Does it follow that California's current poverty policy, understood narrowly as the many programs making up the safety net, has failed us? Not at all. The "mechanical" effects of state and federal benefits in pushing family income above the poverty threshold are in fact quite large. If all safety-net benefits were suddenly eliminated (CalFresh, CalWORKs, tax credits, school meals, housing subsidies, SSI, Social Security), the percentage of California's population in poverty would increase by a full 12.9 points (from 22.0 percent to 34.9 percent).5 This result makes it clear that, despite the many criticisms leveled against the safety net, it is doing real and substantial poverty-reducing work in its current form. To be sure, the state's poverty population remains the largest in the country even after our state's safety net is applied, but that should not obscure the equally important point that, absent the safety net, the poverty population would be far larger.

### The Role of Evidence and Values in Poverty Policy

What, then, might be done to reduce California's unusually high poverty rate? We have no interest in issuing an academic report about policies that will never be undertaken. We have much interest, by contrast, in laying out policies and programs that would reduce poverty substantially and garner public support. In the plan presented here, we have accordingly taken very seriously the key values and commitments that are widely shared within the United States, values and commitments that affect the types of programs that we are likely to embrace and call our

own. There is little point, for example, in attempting to incorporate programs or policies that rest on a wholly foreign set of values, even if those programs or policies are proven poverty-reducers. It is not simply that such programs would likely be opposed by many Californians and therefore never come to fruition. Even if they were somehow implemented, the resulting policies would never feel like our own, would not mesh well with our existing institutions, and would likely be mired in controversy from the start.

This line of reasoning suggests a set of reforms that express our shared commitment to the principles of *equal opportunity* and the *value of work*. Although the United States is a heterogeneous country with many competing commitments, there is much evidence indicating that these two commitments are widely accepted and would accordingly serve well as the foundation for safety-net reform. <sup>6</sup> We review each in turn below.

Equal opportunity: However difficult to achieve, the principle of equal opportunity has long figured prominently in American discourse, indeed it is even laid out in drafts of the country's founding documents. This principle implies that *all* children, those from rich and poor families alike, should have a meaningful opportunity to develop their talents and capacities. The equal opportunity plan, which we lay out below, accordingly comprises a comprehensive sequence of interventions that level the playing field by allowing poor children the same access to opportunities (e.g., opportunities for high-quality preschool) that are readily available to their better-off counterparts.

Making work pay: If the commitment to equal opportunity is deeply cherished, so too is the principle that everyone should work (insofar as they are able to do so) and that hard work should pay off. In 1996, the U.S. welfare system was revamped to encourage employment and reduce welfare dependency, a reform that was followed by a substantial decline in the size of the nonworking poor population. If a new round of safety-net reforms is consonant with this commitment to work and making work pay, it will again express our deepest values and garner widespread support. We will propose below a set of legal and tax reforms that may be understood as a particular rendition of this commitment.

There is of course a wide range of interventions on offer within the context of these two constraints. At the behest of GRACE Inc., a comprehensive review of these interventions was recently undertaken, with the objective to identify those for which the evidence was unusually clear and compelling.8 For the most part, the resulting proposals entail building on California's existing safety net, in effect ramping up those programs for which the evidence is strong. That is, rather than assembling some haphazard collection of programs that have been shown to work, our objective is to choose from among such successful programs only those that integrate well with California's existing programs. We have also sought to build on and exploit various reforms under way in California (e.g., health care reform, Local Control Funding Formula).9 The goal, in short, is to build a comprehensive reform package that rests on programs backed by the best science, that integrates seamlessly with the existing safety net, and that builds on initiatives already in play.

This essay presents in summary form the package of reforms that emerged out of this review and that, taken together, offer an unprecedented opportunity to reduce poverty in California now and into the future. The package is motivated by a commitment to equalize access to investments in skills and to ensure that those who work hard will not be in poverty.

### Reducing Poverty by Equalizing Opportunity

The literature on poverty reveals a growing consensus that costeffective policy should (a) identify the key junctures in the life course that determine the development of skills and capacities and (b) intervene at those junctures in ways that offset the disadvantages facing low-income children. The resulting reforms are founded on a commitment to ensure that opportunities to develop capacities and invest in skills ("human capital") are available to all children. It is of course difficult to equalize opportunities fully and completely because children born into middle-class families will inevitably have access to better health care, better child care, better schools, and all manner of other advantages that will ultimately assist them in the labor market. The cumulative effect of such advantages can nonetheless be reduced with compensatory programs targeted to key junctures when capacities are being formed or decisions are being made. Although this approach naturally leads one to early interventions, there are also critical junctures in the later life course that are cost-effective to target.10

We briefly review this approach by laying out cost-effective interventions at each successive stage of the life course. We start with home visiting programs that intervene very early in the life course (even prenatally); we then turn to early education for preschool children; we follow with a targeted set of interventions for school-age children and young adults; and we conclude by discussing a set of legal and tax reforms that reduce discrimination and (partly) compensate for barriers to opportunity confronted early in life.

### **Home Visiting Programs**

We begin, then, by discussing home visiting programs oriented toward improving child and adult health practices, improving parenting, and providing referrals to available social services. These programs are built around home visits by nurses or trained staff who provide at-risk mothers with guidance on (a) diet and other prenatal practices, (b) the child's health and development, and (c) parenting. The main rationale for such programs is that they identify at-risk children early on, intervene before problems cascade into much larger ones, and thereby lead to improved health, parenting, and cognitive development in ways that have substantial long-term benefits.

These programs emerge from the growing evidence that prenatal and early childhood experiences affect neural functions and structures that in turn shape future cognitive, social, emotional, and health outcomes. Even at 18 months old, children from poorer households are much slower at identifying pictures of simple words, such as "dog" or "ball." By kindergarten, there is a substantial gap between poor and middle-class children in reading skills (e.g., recognizing letters), math skills (e.g., count-

ing), and behavioral regulation.<sup>13</sup> Because the effects of poverty register so early in children, and because these effects then have long-lasting consequences, there is a compelling argument to intervene early in ways that will reduce these consequences. The home visiting approach rests on precisely this argument.

The case for home visiting programs is backed by a large body of randomized controlled trials and other high-quality research that demonstrates their effectiveness. <sup>14</sup> The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has designated a number of home visiting models as evidence-based, but we focus here on research evaluating the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) and Healthy Families America (HFA), as these two programs have already been adopted by the California Home Visiting Program.

The health benefits of NFP and HFA are clear. Although the specifics of the results differ across NFP and HFA, the general pattern is one of reduced child abuse, increased home safety, reduced emergency medical care, and improved developmental outcomes.<sup>15</sup> The research evidence on cognitive development and school readiness is also strong. The children participating in home visiting programs are more attentive, regulate their behavior better, and develop better language skills. In a well-known randomized controlled trial, 6-year-olds enrolled in an NFP program "demonstrated higher intellectual functioning and receptive vocabulary scores...and had fewer behavioral problems," when compared with children treated with minimal support services.<sup>16</sup>

The home visiting landscape in California is complicated, however, by virtue of a large number of overlapping providers, funding sources, and target populations. The current tapestry of programs is a patchwork affair that misses some at-risk families and is often focused on narrowly delineated health problems rather than the larger family situation. The home visiting program might accordingly be reformed by expanding coverage and providing a broader range of family services (e.g., linking families to social services). Although an exact estimate of unmet need is unavailable, the best data suggest that approximately 465,000 California families with children up to age 5 are in CPM poverty, have young children, and are not currently being served by the California Home Visiting Program or the Early Start Program.

The skeptic might worry that home visiting programs address symptoms rather than causes and therefore do not cut to the heart of California's poverty problem. In evaluating this claim, it is useful to distinguish between (a) the poverty arising from problems with labor supply (e.g., underinvestment in human capital) and (b) the poverty arising from problems on the demand side (e.g., shortage of jobs, excess of low-wage jobs). The home visiting program of course addresses the supply side of the problem. That is, insofar as poverty in its unchecked form leads to various health, cognitive, and other developmental problems, a home visiting program has protective effects that can ultimately improve the capacity of at-risk children to make human capital investments (e.g., investments in a college education). If there are enough high-quality training slots to accommodate this new capacity for investment (e.g., enough college scholarships), then home visiting programs will work

to reduce the number of low-skill workers and increase the number of high-skill workers. The poverty rate will accordingly be reduced, not just because the children from home visiting programs are more likely to develop the skills that bring about higher wages, but also because there will be fewer low-skill workers and hence less in the way of wage-reducing competition among them. It follows that a home visiting program can be understood as a systemic response to California's poverty.

We are of course assuming here that a ramped-up home visiting program is ultimately paired with a ramped-up commitment to providing the education (e.g., vocational training, college) that the new demand for human capital investment will make necessary. Put differently, a successful home visiting program will create a new bulge at the bottom of the training pipeline, a bulge that some 15 years later will need to be met by increasing opportunities at the top of that pipeline (e.g., high-quality college slots, high-quality vocational training slots). The more proximate need, of course, will be to develop the new capacities that will emerge in the *middle* of this pipeline. If an expanded home visiting program yields the expected health and cognitive gains for very young children, the logical follow-up is to cultivate those gains by increasing opportunities to participate in early childhood education. We therefore turn next to a discussion of early childhood education programs and how they might indeed be "ramped up."

### **Early Childhood Education**

The home visiting program arguably takes the early-intervention approach to its logical limit by intervening prenatally (and then continuing services up to age 5). Although early childhood education (ECE) programs of course start after birth, they are still chiefly understood as a classic early intervention approach. The empirical rationale for these programs is much the same as that for home visiting: The available evidence suggests that key cognitive and behavioral inequalities are typically established before children begin formal schooling and sometimes do not increase all that much thereafter. The income gap in achievement tests, for example, is already very large when children enter kindergarten and remains much the same size as children progress through elementary school.<sup>19</sup> The purpose of ECE is to take up where home visiting programs left off by providing the early experiences, stimulation, and training that can prevent such a large gap from emerging before children enter kindergarten.

The evidence on behalf of ECE is strong, but not without some complexities. In discussing this literature, the standard and natural starting place is the now-famous evidence on two intensive and small-scale programs, the Perry Preschool and Abecedarian programs.<sup>20</sup> The Perry Preschool study was based on an experiment with random assignment of low-income African-American children to either the experimental condition (attending the Perry Preschool) or a control group that entered kindergarten at age 5. In the experimental condition, children attended preschool from ages 3 to 5, with classes meeting 2.5 hours per day for five days per week. The program included weekly home visits with the children and their parents (and in this regard may be understood as an amalgam of home visit-

ing and conventional preschool programs). The key result: The members of the treatment group increased their cognitive and noncognitive skills as well as earnings, were less likely to be arrested, and were less dependent on social programs. The Abecedarian program, which was similar in treatment intensity, yielded roughly comparable results.

Are such positive results found only in small-scale programs? Absolutely not. The best-known study of a public preschool program, the Chicago Child-Parent Centers, showed effects similar in size to those of the Perry and Abecedarian programs. <sup>21</sup> There have likewise been very promising results in the Boston Public School Pre-K Program. <sup>22</sup> The average effect across all programs is sizable: In a recent meta-analysis of 123 quasi-experimental and experimental studies of ECE programs, the long-term effects on cognitive outcomes (e.g., test scores), school progress (e.g., high school graduation), and socio-emotional development were all found to be quite large. <sup>23</sup>

The case for expanding California's ECE program rests on these very positive results.<sup>24</sup> The two key problems with California's existing ECE program are that (a) there aren't enough slots in California for low-income children,<sup>25</sup> and (b) the available slots are not all of adequate quality. If one were to craft an ECE reform, it should accordingly address both deficiencies at once by increasing the number of ECE slots and improving the quality of ECE slots. These reforms, if undertaken, would equalize opportunities by allowing low-income children to develop their skills and capacities in ways that would ultimately position them to opt for high-quality vocational training, attend college, or otherwise increase their human capital.

### **Late Interventions**

We have to this point presented the home visiting and early childhood education programs as high-return exemplars of the early-intervention approach. Although the evidence behind them is compelling, there is also strong evidence on behalf of some later interventions, evidence to which we will now turn. The life course is studded with a series of critical junctures, some of which occur very early in life (e.g., early brain development), but others of which occur later on (e.g., college entry). <sup>26</sup> If we do not address these later critical junctures, as well as the early ones, we will not fully exploit the increased capacity for human capital investments secured by improving early childhood experiences. The task before us, therefore, is to identify the late childhood junctures at which children are blocked from acquiring human capital.

There are many programs and institutions designed to assist the state's low-income children as they negotiate primary and secondary school, including (a) Title I programs that improve opportunities for academic success in low-income schools, (b) dedicated extracurricular and summer-school activities for low-income children, (c) programs for disseminating information about preparing for and applying to college, and (d) financial aid and loans for low-income children attending college or vocational schools. The relevant evidence suggests that many of these programs for children in primary and secondary school are effective and should be expanded. We will not attempt to weigh in on these

programs here. As the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) is implemented in California, children from disadvantaged families may have increased access to many of these programs, thus equalizing opportunities within the later life course.

This is not to suggest that California should rely exclusively on the changes that the LCFF should bring about. The State would do well to additionally exploit a newer class of interventions that, by building on existing programs, offer further opportunities for substantial returns at very low cost. The simple insight behind these interventions is that many key investments (e.g., going to college) require students to overcome entrenched impediments to good decision making and follow-through.<sup>27</sup> These impediments can be overcome with informational and social-psychological interventions that have been rigorously tested and can now be incorporated into California's existing programming at low cost:

A social-psychological intervention: A series of brief training exercises can reverse debilitating beliefs about capacities and lead to sizable and long-lasting gains in academic achievement.<sup>28</sup>

*Informational support:* By providing better information and waiving application fees, low-income students with a record of superior achievement will apply to and attend colleges that are well matched to their capacities and talents.<sup>29</sup>

*A text-messaging intervention:* A low-cost program of personalized (but automated) text messages can increase college attendance among low-income students.<sup>30</sup>

Although our natural instinct is to assume that big problems require big institutional reforms, this class of interventions instead proceeds from the recognition that big problems are sometimes amenable to highly targeted and narrow-gauge solutions.

The payoff to the foregoing interventions (per dollar invested) is likely as large as the payoff to high-quality early childhood education.<sup>31</sup> To be sure, there is no disputing that early childhood education yields a higher payoff than many late interventions (e.g., conventional job training programs), but it does not follow that it yields a higher payoff than all of them.<sup>32</sup> It also bears noting that, while the late interventions mentioned here have compelling evidence behind them, a host of others also hold promise and might be developed into a fuller suite of late interventions.<sup>33</sup>

We have to this point discussed (a) the effects of the LCFF in equalizing school funding, and (b) some additional late interventions that may be usefully layered on top of LCFF-induced changes. These two classes of reforms work in the main to provide higher-quality schooling to disadvantaged children and thereby equalize access to college. It is of course also important to develop a third class of late interventions that equalize access to jobs that do not require a college education. Although job training programs are sometimes represented as the prototypic low-return investment, the latest evidence suggests that these programs can have high payoff when training is targeted to expanding sectors of the economy. Because community colleges have become the

center of contemporary workforce development, a shift to such "sectoral programs" may be best promoted by developing new funding formulas that incentivize community colleges to carry out training in high-demand fields.<sup>34</sup>

### **Making Work Pay**

The foregoing reforms, which focus on upgrading the skills and capacities of California's labor force, might be criticized for ignoring the role of low-paying jobs in generating poverty. After all, if the main problem is that jobs just don't pay enough, shouldn't we take the bull by the horns and find a way to increase pay directly?

This claim is misleading insofar as it implies that the pay attached to jobs can be affected only by directly legislating it. We can also affect pay indirectly by changing the relative supply of low-skill and high-skill labor. If a labor-supply approach were implemented and allowed children from low-income families to better develop their capacities and skills, a growing number of workers would exit the low-skill sector, thus increasing their own wages as well as tamping down wage-lowering competition among those still in that sector. As the low-skill sector thins out, employers will have to pay more for the remaining laborers, which will induce them to refocus on the "high road" of automation and allow California to move more fully into a high-skill niche.

This line of reasoning makes it clear that wages in the lowskill sector are unduly low because the sector is flooded with workers who have not had a full and open opportunity to secure higher skills. The approaches discussed in the prior sections are intended to equalize such opportunities: We need to expand home visiting programs because we want all children, no matter how rich or poor their parents, to be raised in environments that protect their health and develop their capacities; we need to expand early childhood education because we want all children, no matter how rich or poor their parents, to be raised in environments in which those capacities are cultivated and have an opportunity to flourish; and we turn to late childhood interventions because we want all children, no matter how rich or poor their parents, to have full and complete access to college or other training opportunities. It will of course take more time than we would like for these opportunity-equalizing programs to bear fruit. If tax credits are applied now, we can immediately raise the pay of low-skill workers and thereby compensate, if only partially, for the reduced opportunities that most of them faced earlier in their lives. Although the need for such wage support will lessen as soon as opportunities are equalized, there is a pressing need to prop up wages now given that the low-skill sector is flooded with workers who did not have many opportunities.

The two most obvious approaches to "making work pay" entail directly supplementing the income of low-wage workers via the minimum wage or the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Because there are ongoing efforts to further raise California's minimum wage, and because these efforts, even if wildly successful, will not reduce poverty by nearly the necessary amount, our comments below will focus on the possibility of a parallel effort to increase the EITC.<sup>35</sup> To date, 26 states have their own state-funded EITCs,

usually taking the simple form of a fixed percentage of the federal credit. If the federal EITC were supplemented by 10 percent, California would be a "middle-of-the-pack" state (relative to other states currently providing supplementation). Although a good case could be made for a yet more substantial supplement, the modest one recommended here rests on the likelihood that the federal EITC will be increased in the near future.

This recommendation is grounded in the now-overwhelming evidence that the EITC increases employment and earnings.<sup>36</sup> When the EITC has been expanded, the increases in employment among families with children are quite substantial, especially among those with female family heads.<sup>37</sup> The downstream benefits of the EITC are likewise impressive: The EITC improves the mental and physical health of mothers, reduces the likelihood of low birth weights, improves performance on cognitive tests, and increases college enrollment.<sup>38</sup> The extra money that the EITC delivers to parents makes it into a supply-side intervention as well. When parental income is increased, children are raised in healthier and less stressful circumstances, which in turn positions them to make more substantial human capital investments. This is why Hilary Hoynes recently concluded that the EITC may "ultimately be judged one of the most successful labor market innovations in U.S. history."39

Does it follow that an expanded EITC could fully solve California's poverty problem? This seems unlikely. If an EITC supplement were adopted in California, many families in deep poverty would simply not benefit from it. From its inception, the EITC has been intended to incentivize work, which means that families without any employed workers will not directly benefit from it. The ongoing rise of nonworking poverty would therefore go unaddressed by an EITC-based reform. <sup>40</sup> It follows that, insofar as a state EITC were adopted, it should be coupled with other reforms (e.g., increased CalWORKs funding) that assist those in even more profound need.

This part of the equal opportunity plan, unlike the two foregoing parts (i.e., home visiting, early childhood education), thus relies on cash transfers or tax credits. Are such transfers or credits difficult to reconcile with core U.S. values? Absolutely not. The EITC is consistent with the country's values not just because it ensures that "work pays" but also because it compensates for the reduced opportunities that most recipients faced earlier in their lives. This is not, however, the only way in which income transfers are opportunity-equalizing interventions. The EITC and CalWORKs also equalize opportunities for the next generation: That is, by raising the income of poor families, the EITC and CalWORKs act to level the playing field for the children raised in these families. There is growing evidence that, when income is transferred to poor families, the children in these families ultimately grow up healthier, have higher earnings, and work longer hours.41

It also bears noting that any meaningful commitment to equal opportunity should go beyond such transfers and credits by addressing the legal and institutional sources of poverty. The careful reader will note that—to this point—our discussion has followed convention by conflating anti-poverty policy with safety net policy. This conflation, however conventional, is

deeply problematic. After all, wages and unemployment are also directly affected by a host of legal and institutional practices that are quite unrelated to the safety net itself, practices that lead to (a) an especially high risk of incarceration for children born into poverty (notably African Americans), and (b) employment discrimination against mothers, members of some racial groups, undocumented immigrants, and the formerly incarcerated. These various forms of discrimination, each of which is inconsistent with a commitment to equal opportunity, can be addressed through legal reform and improved enforcement (some of which can be implemented at the state level).

Although we have focused much of our commentary on safety net reform, this legal and institutional reform cuts to the heart of any commitment to equal opportunity and must accordingly be understood as central to any meaningful equal opportunity plan. The available evidence, which suggests such reform would dramatically raise employment and wages in high-poverty populations, speaks to the power of policies that address causes (e.g., discrimination) rather than symptoms (e.g., low pay, unemployment).<sup>42</sup>

### **Conclusions**

We started this essay by noting that California's poverty rate, which now stands at 22.0 percent, is higher than that of any other state. Worse yet, the poverty rate for high-school dropouts is a shocking 53.9 percent, a rate over five times higher than that for college graduates. The safety net has of course stepped up to the challenge by substantially reducing poverty relative to what would have prevailed in its absence. That said, even after the safety net has done all its important work, we are left with more than one in five Californians in poverty and the highest poverty rate in the country.

Why hasn't this dismal state of affairs led to concerted action and the development of a new antipoverty plan? There are, to be sure, many reasons why poverty hasn't been taken on, but an especially important one is that we haven't known how to do so in a way that's both backed by science and consistent with our beliefs about how a safety net should work. The state has therefore adopted a business-as-usual stance in which safety-net funding plods along, the poverty research industry plods along, and there is but a vague and distant hope that a magic-bullet solution will ultimately present itself.

We do not need to wait any longer. The main purpose of our essay has been to describe just how far the relevant science has come and to craft an antipoverty program rooted in that science. Although we do not mean to suggest that the evidence on all issues is clear-cut, there is a growing consensus around a two-pronged approach that combines opportunity-equalizing and wage-raising reforms.<sup>43</sup>

This approach is well-tested, yields returns in excess of the investments, is consistent with our beliefs about how safety nets should work, integrates well with existing programs in California, and can be delivered with a centralized or decentralized (e.g., Promise Neighborhood) approach. The resulting program is not about treating symptoms, not about providing short-term relief, and certainly not about charity. It is about building a training

system, labor market, and economy that provide opportunities for everyone and that ensure decent rewards for hard work. Because the proposed supply-side and tax-credit reforms treat the upstream causes of poverty, they will bring about a *permanent* reduction in the size of the poverty population and reduce future demands on the safety net. The poverty population will permanently shrink because low-income children will have new opportunities to develop capacities and make high-payoff investments in skills. By virtue of these opportunities, children from low-income families will no longer be mired in the low-wage sector, which not only raises their own wages but also reduces wage-lowering competition among the shrinking number of workers who do remain in that sector.

The evidence behind this program is strong, but it is not just evidence alone that recommends it. It is also attractive because, unlike some safety-net programs and interventions, it comports well with the country's long-standing commitment to equalizing opportunity and ensuring that hard work pays off. We too often embrace the latest flavor-of-the-day programs simply because they work and happen to have supporters. This is surely understandable: After all, only rarely does any poverty-reducing program have much support, so we're loath to be all that principled when one finally does. The great virtue, however, of a more principled approach is that it lays out our commitments clearly and allows us to build our institutions in defense of them. The equal opportunity plan reminds us that we're committed to opportunity for all children and that we'll intervene aggressively whenever that commitment is circumvented. When our safety net tells a simple story in this way, it becomes a cherished institution that we hold near and dear, an institution that makes sense to us and that we're especially willing to defend. ■

Conway Collis is the president and CEO of GRACE, Inc. David Grusky is the director of the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality and the Barbara Kimball Browning Professor in Stanford University's School of Humanities and Sciences. Sara Kimberlin and Yana Kucheva are postdoctoral scholars at the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality. Courtney Powers is the vice president and general counsel of GRACE, Inc. Sandra Sanchez is the vice president and chief operating officer of GRACE, Inc. Ana Matosantos is the former director of the Department of Finance for the State of California and is currently a consultant to Covered California. Jonathan Fisher is a research associate at the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality. Marion Coddou, Erin Cumberworth, Jared Furuta, Jasmine Hill, Molly King, Ryan Leupp, Natassia Rodriguez, and Rachel Wright are graduate students in the Department of Sociology at Stanford University. The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality is a program of the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (IRiSS) and is partly supported by Grant Number AE00101 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (and awarded by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration). Additional funding for this research was generously provided by GRACE Inc. The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the authors and do not represent those of the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or GRACE Inc.

### **Endnotes**

- 1. The Children's Defense Fund has recently laid out a comprehensive plan for reducing poverty. Although it's an attractive plan that deserves careful consideration, we are presenting here an alternative longrun plan that minimizes reliance on ongoing cash transfers. See http://www. childrensdefense.org/library/PovertyReport/ EndingChildPovertyNow.html. For a plan closer in spirit to that proposed here, see Sawhill, Isabel, and Quentin Karpilow. 2014. "How Much Could We Improve Children's Life Chances by Intervening Early and Often?" Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution. The Colorado Opportunity Project is likewise similar to the plan outlined here (see Winship, Scott, and Stephanie Owens. "Guide to the Brookings Social Genome Model." Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution).
- 2. Short, Kathleen. 2012. "The Research Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2011." *Current Population Reports*, P60–244. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce. http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/p60–244. pdf.
- 3. For more details on the CPM, see Wimer, Christopher, Marybeth Mattingly, Matt Levin, Caroline Danielson, and Sarah Bohn. 2013. "The California Poverty Measure: A Portrait of Poverty Within California Counties and Demographic Groups." The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality (in collaboration with the Public Policy Institute of California). http://www.inequality.com/poverty/cpm.
- 4. Bohn, Sarah, Caroline Danielson, Matt Levin, Marybeth Mattingly, and Christopher Wimer. 2013. *The California Poverty Measure: A New Look at the Social Safety Net*. San Francisco: The Public Policy Institute of California (in collaboration with the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality). http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R\_1013SBR.pdf. This report also shows that, when the official poverty measure is used, the overall poverty rate for California is 16.2 and the deep poverty rate is 6.1 (in 2011).
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- 6. McCall, Leslie. 2013. The Undeserving Rich: American Beliefs about Inequality, Opportunity, and Redistribution. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- 7. This decline in the population of the nonworking poor is not wholly attributable to welfare reforms. Because the reforms occurred during a period of economic expansion, some portion of the decline may be attributed to the increased demand for workers.
- 8. The mission of GRACE (Gather, Respect, Advocate, Change, Engage), a nonprofit organization sponsored by the Daughters of Charity, is to address the needs of people living in poverty and to make a positive difference in the lives of low-income families and their children.
- 9. The proposals advanced here do not directly address two key domains, those of housing and incarceration, in which major reform efforts are either being planned or are under way. The full set of reviews will be published at www.inequality.com.
- IO. Jackson, Michelle. Better Late than Never: Why Early Intervention Just Isn't Enough.
  Unpublished manuscript. For related approaches, see Strive Partnership. 20II. "Every Child, Every Step of the Way, Cradle to Career." http://www.strivetogether.org/; Portland State University Center for Student Success. 20IO. "Partnering for Student Success.—The Cradle to Career Framework, 20IO Report to the Community." http://www. CradleToCareer.wordpress.com; also see The Forum for Youth Investment. 20I4. "Ready by 2I Initiative." http://www.readyby2I.org.
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- 14. For a thorough examination of the evidence, see a recent review by Mathematica Policy Research. This review, which was carried out in conjunction with the National Institutes of Health library and under the auspices of the Department of Health and

- Human Services (see http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/default.aspx), includes program model reports (http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/programs.aspx), implementation reports (http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/implementations.aspx), and an executive summary (http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/HomVEE\_Executive\_Summary\_2013.pdf#exec\_summary).
- 15. The Pew Charitable Trusts. 2010. *The Case for Home Visiting: Strong Families Start with a Solid Foundation*. Issue Brief. http://www.pewtrusts.org/~/media/legacy/uploadedfiles/pcs\_assets/2010/MombriefWebfinalpdf.pdf. Olds, D. L., Jr., C.R. Henderson, R. Chamberlin, and R. Tatelbaum. 1986. "Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect: A Randomized Trial of Nurse Home Visitation." *Pediatrics* 78, 65–78.
- 16. Olds, David L., Harriet Kitzman, Robert Cole, JoAnn Robinson, Kimberly Sidora, Dennis Luckey, Charles R. Henderson, Jr., Carole Hanks, Jessica Bondy, and John Holmberg. 2004. "Effects of Nurse Home-Visiting on Maternal Life Course and Child Development: Age 6 Follow-Up Results of a Randomized Trial." *Pediatrics*, 114, 1550–1559.
- 17. The available evidence suggests that more extensive services can have substantial payoff (e.g., Meckstroth, Alicia, Andrew Burwick, Quinn Moore, and Michael Ponza. 2009. "Teaching Self Sufficiency Through Home Visitation and Life Skills Education." Issue Brief Number 3, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.).
- 18. This estimate equals the difference between the total number of families in CPM poverty and the total number currently served under the California Home Visiting program or the Early Start Program. It does not take into account that some proportion of these families would not opt to participate in any new services. Moreover, because it does not adjust for families served under other home visiting programs, it is likely an upper-bound estimate of unmet need. But even more conservative estimates reveal substantial need. See California Department of Public Health. 2011. California Affordable Care Act Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program: Supplemental Information Request for the Submission of the Statewide Needs Assessment. Sacramento, CA: Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Program Center for Family Health. http://www.cdph.ca.gov/ programs/mcah/Documents/MO-HVP-FinalCaliforniaStatewide-HV-NA.pdf.

39

- 19. Reardon, Sean. 2011. "The Widening Academic Achievement Gap between the Rich and the Poor: New Evidence and Possible Explanations." Whither Opportunity? Rising Inequality, Schools, and Children's Life Chances. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. See Figure 5.5 (p. 100).
- 20. See, for example, Heckman, James J., Seong Hyeok Moon, Rodrigo Pinto, Peter A. Savelyev, and Adam Yavitz. 2010. "The Rate of Return to the High/Scope Perry Preschool Program." Journal of Public Econ., 94(I-2), 114-128; Heckman, James J. 2008. "Schools, Skills, and Synapses." Econ Inq., 46(3), 289. For good reviews of the Perry Preschool and Abecedarian studies, see Barnett, W. S. 2011. "Effectiveness of Early Educational Intervention," Science, 333, 975-978; Heckman, James J. 2006. "Skill Formation and the Economics of Investing in Disadvantaged Children," Science, 312, 1900-1902. Heckman, James J. 2013. Giving Kids a Fair Chance. Boston Review.
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- 24. The main interpretive complexity is that randomized trial assessments of Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) have yielded less favorable results. Although HS and EHS initially have positive effects on various cognitive measures, these effects
- tend to disappear by the end of kindergarten. The rate of fadeout for present-day cohorts appears to be faster than has been observed for children who were in Head Start in the 1960s through 1980s. For this earlier cohort, the effect on test scores persists and long-term impacts on adult outcomes are approximately 80 percent as large as those for small-scale programs, like Perry Preschool and Abecedarian. There is much debate about why HS effects appear to be washing out more quickly now. The "catch-up hypothesis," which is very plausible, suggests that elementary schools are becoming increasingly successful at remediating deficits among children who enter kindergarten without the benefit of preschool. That is, rather than recent HS participants experiencing fadeout, we may be seeing recent non-participants "catching up" through increasingly intensive remediation in elementary schools. The catch-up hypothesis implies that this more aggressive remediation has only become possible because HS has reduced the number of under-performing students delivered to the schools. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). 2010. Head Start Impact Study. Final Report. Administration for Children and Families. Washington, D.C.: HHS; Love, John M., Ellen Eliason Kisker, Christine M. Ross, Peter Z. Schochet, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Diane Paulsell, Kimberly Boller, Jill Constantine, Cheri Vogel, Allison Sidle Fuligni, and Christy Brady-Smith. 2002. Making a Difference in the Lives of Infants and Toddlers and their Families: The Impacts of Early Head Start. Administration on Children, Youth, and Families. Washington, D.C.: HHS; Deming, David. 2009. "Early Childhood Intervention and Life-Cycle Skill Development: Evidence from Head Start." American Economic Journal: Applied Economics 1(3), 111-134; Gibbs, Chloe, Jens Ludwig, and Douglas L. Miller. 2013. "Head Start Origins and Impacts." Chapter 2, Legacies of the War on Poverty, edited by Sheldon Danziger and Martha J. Bailey. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- 25. There are approximately 332,000 children under age 4 who are in CPM poverty and are not served by existing subsidized child care programs. If we extend to children between ages 5 and 12 (with a corresponding focus on afterschool and summer programs), another 767,000 children are not served by existing programs. These numbers pertain to the total number of unserved children and do not take into account that only some pro-

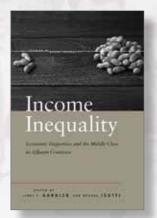
- portion of these children would participate in any new programs. For related (but different) calculations, see California Department of Education. 2011. 2011 Status Report on the Implementation of County Centralized Eligiblity Lists. http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ cd/ci/documents/cellegrpt11.pdf; California Department of Education. 2011. "Updated Child Development Income Ceilings." Management Bulletin 11.06. http://www. cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/mb1106.asp; San Mateo County Office of Education. 2014. California State Preschool Programs Eligibility. http:// www.smcoe.org/learning-and-leadership/ preschool-to-grade-3/california-sate-preschool-programs-eligibility.html.
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- 43. The recommendations advanced here do not encompass the full constellation of programs for which strong evidence of effectiveness can be found. For an excellent review of many programs not covered here, see Haskins, Ron, "Social Programs that Work," New York Times, December 31, 2014 (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/01/opinion/social-programs-that-work.html?\_r=o). See also Haskins, Ron, and Greg Margolis, Show Me the Evidence, 2014, Washington, DC, Brookings Institution Press. There are also any number of key questions about poverty programming that remain unresolved. The evidence is not clear, for example, on whether early and late childhood programs are best delivered by coordinating service delivery at the state or local level. Under a centralized approach, the coordination problem is solved at the state level, with representatives of state service agencies (e.g., the California Department of Social Services) endeavoring to build programs that integrate well with one another. This is of course an ongoing and imperfectly realized process. The obvious alternative is to approach the coordination problem at the local level. The best-known initiative of this sort, Promise Neighborhoods, may be understood as a particular rendition of the equal opportunity plan, predicated on the view that, in any given community, the constellation of service providers is quite variable and that community-specific plans for integrating them are likely to be most successful.

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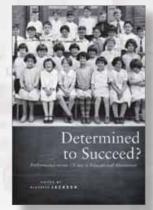
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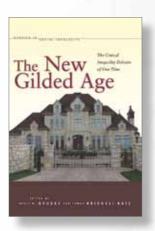
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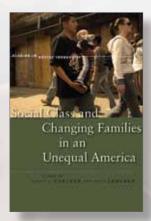
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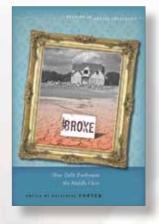
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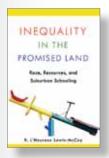
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