

The 1.5 and Second Generation in Northwest Arkansas:

Negotiating the Roles of Assimilation,

Transnationalism, and Ethnic Identity

by

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ABSTRACT

The children of immigrants who arrived in the United States in the 1980s now make up one of the fastest growing components of American society. They face unique and interesting pressures as they incorporate aspects of their parents' heritage into their contemporary American lives. The purpose of this dissertation is to offer an in-depth look at the 1.5 and second generation by examining how the immigrant descendants negotiate assimilative pressures, transnational practices, and ethnic identification.

Using ethnographic research methods, such as participant observation and in-depth interviews, I researched the children of immigrants, ages 18-30, living in northwest Arkansas, who have at least one immigrant parent from Latin America. This research is important because non-traditional receiving towns, especially more rural localities, are often overlooked by scholarly studies of migration in favor of larger metropolitan centers (e.g., Los Angeles, Chicago). Studying immigrant descendants in smaller towns that are becoming increasingly populated by Hispanic/Latinos will create a better understanding of how a new generation of immigrants is assimilating into American society and culture.

To increase awareness on the Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation living in small town America and to offer potential solutions to facilitate an upwardly mobile future for this population, my dissertation explores a number of research questions. First, how is this population assimilating to the U.S.? Second, are members of the 1.5 and second generation transnational? How active is this transnational lifestyle? Will transnationalism persist as they grow older? Third, how does this population identify themselves ethnically? I also pay particular attention to the relationships among assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity.

My dissertation documents the lived experiences of the 1.5 and second generation in northwest Arkansas. The children of immigrants are one of the fastest growing groups nationwide. To understand their world and the lives they lead is to understand the new fabric of American society. I anticipate that the results from this research can be used to facilitate easier transitions to the U.S. among current and prospective immigrant generations, ensuring a brighter outlook for the future of the newest members of U.S. society.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: THE CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS

Purpose and Significance of Study

The children of the immigrants who arrived in the United States in the 1980s now make up one of the fastest growing segments of American society. They face unique and interesting pressures as they incorporate aspects of their parents' heritage into their contemporary American lives. The purpose of this dissertation is to offer an in-depth understanding of the 1.5 and second generation by examining how the children of first generation immigrants negotiate assimilative pressures, transnational practices, and ethnic identification.¹ Particular attention is paid to the relationships among these three processes.

Using ethnographic research methods, such as participant observation and in-depth interviews, I researched the children of immigrants, ages 18-30, living in northwest Arkansas, who have at least one immigrant parent from Latin America. This research is important because non-traditional receiving towns, especially smaller, more rural localities, are often overlooked by traditional scholarly studies of migration in favor of larger and more urban centers (e.g., Los Angeles, Chicago, or New York). By studying the children of immigrants in smaller towns that are becoming increasingly populated by Hispanic/Latinos, I hope to create a better understanding of how a new generation of

¹ The term *first generation* describes foreign-born individuals who immigrated to the United States at or after the age of 18. The term *1.5 generation* describes foreign-born youth who immigrated to the United States at or before the age of 17. The term *second generation* describes U.S.-born individuals with at least one first generation immigrant parent. See pages 24-25 for additional clarification regarding the 1.5 and second generation.

immigrants is assimilating into American society.² I anticipate that the results from this research can be used to facilitate easier transitions to U.S. society and culture among current and future immigrant generations.

The children of immigrants are one of the fastest growing groups nationwide. To understand the world of the 1.5 and second generation and the lives they lead is to understand this new fabric of American society. Documenting the lived experiences of the 1.5 and second generation in northwest Arkansas by paying particular attention to how they negotiate assimilative pressures, transnational practices, and ethnic identity will provide migration scholars with a new perspective and a better understanding of such populations living in non-traditional receiving towns. This research advances theoretical and practical knowledge about the intersections of assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity among the 1.5 and second generation. Often addressed separately in the literature, this project instead bridges these topics to examine their inter-relatedness. This research is valuable not only for the 1.5 and second generation and the larger northwest Arkansas community, but it is useful for comparative purposes. Establishing the similarities and differences between this 1.5 and second generation in small town America and other 1.5 and second generations throughout the U.S. will produce a greater

² *Latino*, at this moment, appears to be the most politically correct term to use to denote individuals of Latin or South American descent. Instead, however, I purposely use *Hispanic/Latino* to describe persons of Latin or South American descent because of the way in which my study participants expressed their own thoughts and feelings about the terms. A majority of the respondents identify as either Hispanic or Latino, while some individuals indentify as both. As such, some participants prefer Hispanic to Latino while others prefer Latino to Hispanic. Those that prefer Hispanic to Latino explained that Latino is too open-ended and it does not represent Mexico. Those that prefer Latino to Hispanic explained that Hispanic is too broad and Latino better signifies Mexico and Central America. Interestingly, the reasons for preferring one label to another are all but identical. Clearly, Hispanic and Latino have different meanings for the respondents; because of this, it is important that I use both Hispanic and Latino to describe my study population. I employ *Hispanic/Latino* to signify the separate nature of the two words, but to also recognize that some participants identify with both the Hispanic and Latino labels.

knowledge base that academics, community leaders, and teachers alike can use to hopefully provide a promising future for the newest and fastest growing members of U.S. society.

I chose to research the 1.5 and second generation for a number of reasons. Most importantly, I wanted to learn how the children of immigrants were creating lives for themselves in non-traditional receiving towns, for which northwest Arkansas was perfect. I also wanted to be sure to interview people close to my age because I have always been able to build a seemingly good rapport with others similar in age and with those slightly younger than me, so those between the ages of 18-30 were an ideal group for me to study. Additionally, much of the literature that focuses on the Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation population points to a bleak future for many (e.g., Kasinitz et al. 2004; López and Stanton-Salazar 2001; Portes et al. 2009; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993; Telles 2006). This is an unfortunate truth for some, but not for everyone. I set out to do this dissertation research because I thought, and hoped, the situation for the children of Hispanic/Latino immigrants living in northwest Arkansas might prove different. I was not totally convinced I would be able to breathe life into the suffocating negativity surrounding the future of Hispanic/Latino 1.5, second, and later generations, but I did enter the field cautiously optimistic. I believed that the conditions in northwest Arkansas might provide a much better chance of success, both economically and socially, for the emerging Hispanic/Latino population for three main reasons: first, northwest Arkansas fares well economically with a low level of unemployment, even during the recession beginning in 2007; second, a true underclass does not exist in northwest Arkansas; and third, the presence of a large state university and a smaller community college within the

area puts a college education within reach for many (Capps et al. 2013; Koralek et al. 2010).

From an anthropological perspective, my primary objective was to discover the ways in which immigrant descendants navigate assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity. Therefore, my dissertation explores the following questions: first, following segmented assimilation theory, posited by Portes and Zhou (1993), how is this population assimilating to the U.S., or rather, what path of assimilation are they following? Second, are members of the 1.5 and second generation transnational? How active is this transnational lifestyle? Will transnationalism persist as they grow older? Third, how does this population identify themselves in terms of ethnicity? Since I wanted to pay particular attention to the ways in which these processes intersect with one another, my dissertation also addresses these research questions: a) How does transnational participation among members of the 1.5 and second generation vary across the three possible outcomes of immigrant integration?; b) How does the self-ascribed ethnic identity of members of the 1.5 and second generation vary across the different paths of integration?; and, c) What is the relationship between the transnational participation of members of the 1.5 and second generation and their self-ascribed ethnic identity?

On a more personal level, I wanted to learn about how these children of immigrants with no past ties to the state thought of Arkansas (i.e., is it home to them and do they like living there?). I also was curious about their presence in the state. For example, are these 1.5 and second generation individuals productive citizens to the city and state, do they feel allegiance to Arkansas or to their ethnic homeland, and how are they being accepted into the area? In addition to these subject matters, many other topics

and themes became significant to this study throughout my time in the field and each will be discussed extensively.

Finally, any interaction I ever had with a Hispanic/Latino individual or with the Hispanic/Latino population as a whole in northwest Arkansas was a positive one and I feel compelled to share this with the larger community. I am aware that discrimination, hate, and fear guide the thoughts and actions of many. However, much of that can be reduced if more people took the time to learn about each other and understand each other's ways. The final goal of my research, and perhaps the most important, is to start to erase the divisive lines that fuel such negativity. Accordingly, this dissertation aims to increase awareness on the Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation living in small town America and offer potential solutions to facilitate an upwardly mobile future for this population.

Throughout this dissertation, I address the popular depictions of Hispanic/Latino immigrant youth found in both academic literature and mass media and critically evaluate if such characterizations define my study population. Often portrayed as pawns in a game of chess because they have little control over their own life choices as a result of their receiving contexts that produce unfavorable outcomes, the 1.5 and second generation is often seen as individuals that lack agency (Portes and Zhou 1993). Many fall victims to the preexisting conditions in the U.S. and then quickly fade away into the underclass from where it is hard to escape (Portes and Zhou 1993). I challenge such conclusions and instead present the stories of 45 Hispanic/Latino college-going students who continue to persevere. Their eagerness to succeed is very much present, however, many still face an uncertain future. My dissertation advances knowledge and understanding of the 1.5 and

second generation by examining their educational experiences and their life prospects in relation to their everyday dealings with assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity choices.

Connecting Assimilation, Transnationalism, and Ethnic Identity

Recent scholarship suggests that assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity are more interconnected and important to understanding immigrant experiences than previously thought (e.g., Foner 2002; García 2004; Jones-Correa 2002; Kearney 1995a; Kibria 2002; Levitt and Waters 2002; Min 2002; Smith 2006). I evaluate the extent to which these three processes are connected by carefully examining how assimilation, transnational participation, and ethnic identification influence one another and the roles each play among the 1.5 and second generation. Portes and Zhou's (1993) segmented assimilation theory will be used to trace the effects transnationalism and ethnic identification have on individuals integrating into American social life.

Segmented assimilation theory proposes three potential outcomes for how children of immigrants assimilate into American society. First, they may adopt an upward mobility pattern of acculturation and parallel economic integration into the white middle- or upper-class; second, they can employ a downward mobility pattern through acculturation and economic integration into the minority underclass; and third, they can invoke an ethnic or bicultural approach that leads to upward mobility through selective acculturation and economic integration into the middle-class, while remaining affiliated with, and often relying on, their original immigrant group. This theory is appropriate to use because its three possible outcomes of integration recognize variation among individuals and offer a more accurate portrayal of current immigrant experiences. It

further provides an organizational framework that allows the rigorous comparison of assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity, which in turn will provide a more nuanced approach to the study of immigrant experiences in comparison to classical straight-line assimilation (Alba and Nee 1997, 2003; Gordon 1964; Nee and Alba 2004; Portes and Zhou 1993). I explore which of these outcomes are occurring among the children of immigrants residing in northwest Arkansas, how they might overlap with one another, and how transnational participation and ethnic identification vary across each path of immigrant integration.

In recent years, scholars have highlighted a number of problems in the study of transnationalism, many of which are related to the sheer number of terms or phrases used to describe it and the resulting ambiguity this creates (Kivisto 2001; Mahler 1998; Portes et al. 1999; see also Appadurai 1991; Aranda 2007; Castles and Miller 2003; Fitzgerald 2000; Fulcher 2000; Kearney 1995b; Pries 2001; Smith and Guarnizo 1998). To avoid such uncertainty, in line with Basch et al. (1994), I use transnationalism to describe the processes immigrants and their children take part in or employ to create linkages between themselves (while residing in the U.S.) and their home communities in Latin America. Transnational practices can range from the individual or familial level to the national level across sociocultural, political, and economic realms. They include celebrating national holidays, participating in cultural festivals, belonging to hometown associations, sending remittances and goods, and investing in the ethnic economy (Basch et al. 1994; Glick-Schiller 1999; Goldring and Krishnamurti 2007; Itzigsohn et al. 1999; Levitt 2003; Portes 1996).

The relationship between assimilation and transnationalism is debated. Some consider the transnational practices of recent nonwhite immigrants to be, in part, a response to the negative reception they might experience in the United States (i.e., downward assimilation resulting in marginal status and menial jobs) (Faist 2000; Portes 1997; Smith 2006; Waters 1999). In effect, being transnational is thought to allow these immigrant descendants to resist racial categorization and avoid the negative aspects of downward assimilation (Smith 2002; Waters 1999). Transnationalism as a response to downward mobility does not, however, explain why some immigrants and their descendants take part in transnational activities, while others in similar situations do not. Nor does it explain why there are clear instances of transnationalism among second generation individuals who are fully incorporated into the white middle-class (Itzigsohn and Giorguli-Saucedo 2005). What is missing, then, is exactly how transnational behavior varies across the three possible paths of immigrant integration based on segmented assimilation theory and the effects it has on the individuals assimilating along these paths. This is something my research looks to answer.

Ethnic identity, as defined by Jones (1997), is “that aspect of a person’s self-conceptualization which results from identification with a broader group in opposition to others on the basis of perceived cultural differentiation and/or common descent” (14). Researchers emphasize that ethnic identities are socially constructed and are shaped through the interactions people have with the host country and with their co-ethnics (e.g., Jensen et al. 2006; Nagel 1994; Omi and Winant 1994; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Waters 1990). Nagel (1994) explains that ethnic identity is a product of individual selection and reaction to external forces and it is capable of changing and adapting (see also Barth

1969; Bentley 1987; Eriksen 2002; Jones 1997). Ethnic identity is flexible, multi-layered, negotiated, and contingent; it also can be voluntary or involuntary as it can be self-ascribed or externally imposed by others (Eschbach and Gómez 1998; García 2004; Macias 2006; Purkayastha 2005). Ethnic identity, as used here, refers to the ethnic term(s) children of immigrants ascribe to themselves.

The relationship between assimilation of the 1.5 and second generation and ethnic identity formation is not extensively documented, but the existing research does highlight some potential connections (García 2004; Kasinitz et al. 2001, 2004; Vertovec 2001). For example, years of residence in the receiving country is shown to influence immigrants' ethnic identity. Upon arrival to the host country many immigrants retain their national identity (identification with a culture and nation of origin or heritage). Over time, as the assimilation process eases, it is more likely a hybrid identity (identification that merges two cultural referents) will develop (Golash-Boza 2006; Jensen et al. 2006; Lubbers et al. 2007). Interestingly, for the second generation a hybrid or home country identity may be more likely to develop as the individual grows older and starts to better understand their identity in relation to their heritage versus their country of birth (Gonzales-Berry et al. 2006; Stepick and Stepick 2002).

Additionally, the ethnic or bicultural path suggests that the children of immigrants can become upwardly mobile by identifying with the majority population while preserving their minority identification and using the resources provided by their ethnic community. Thus, the 1.5 and second generation can assimilate to the white middle-class while retaining their ethnic identity (Goveia et al. 2005; Portes and Zhou 1993). Anthropologically speaking, someone that identifies with both the U.S. and the ethnic

homeland carries a transnational identity. Contrary to straight-line assimilation theory, therefore, successful integration does not assume the obligatory shedding of cultural and ethnic characteristics or identities (Goveia et al. 2005; see also Alba and Nee 1997, 2003; Gordon 1964; Nee and Alba 2004). Children of immigrants who attribute successful adaptation to the association with and support from their ethnic community may deploy a hybrid identity (Portes and Zhou 1993).

Lee and Zhou (2004) also suggest that for the second generation, assimilation may give rise to a pan-ethnic identity (a broader identification that encompasses a number of similar or related ethnic groups), rather than leading to a diminished ethnic distinctiveness. As members of the 1.5 and second generation integrate into the majority society they may begin to identify with similar ethnic groups of other national origins as a way to express their commonality with one another. Finally, downward assimilation, or perceived discrimination from the host society, may lead to a reactive identity (identification with the nation of origin or heritage), such that children of immigrants identify more closely with their ancestral nation of origin by reacting against the majority host country (Lubbers et al. 2007; Portes et al. 2005; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Rumbaut (1994) argues that ethnic identity formation, like assimilation, is segmented because it takes different forms and is reached by different paths. Therefore, it appears that successful integration of the 1.5 and second generation can involve a variety of potential identity choices. The question of how ethnic identity varies across the different paths of integration is thus significant. Detailing individual experiences to understand how such identity choices vary and are affected by assimilation into American society can offer critical insights.

Scholars recognize the increasing importance of transnationalism for understanding identity formation and recommend looking at transnational involvement to understand identity construction among the children of immigrants in the United States (Kibria 2002; Levitt and Waters 2002). In fact, a number of migration researchers suggest that transnationalism actually creates ethnic identities (e.g., Kearney 1995b; Kibria 2002; García 2004; Levitt and Waters 2002; Smith 2006). Identities emerge through a versatile and multidimensional process and transnational participation can certainly influence ethnic identity formation (García 2004). The relationship, then, between the level of transnationalism among members of the 1.5 and second generation and their self-ascribed ethnic identity becomes important. This study addresses these issues by specifically examining the intersections of assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity.

The Children of Immigrants: Current Research

A little over fifteen years ago, Alejandro Portes (1996) wrote “the growth and adaptation of the second generation have not been subjects of great concern for researchers in this field [of immigration] during the recent past”; instead “scholarly attention in this field has remained focused on adult immigrants, who are more visible and whose progress through the labor market and through the immigration bureaucracy can be traced more easily” (1). Thus prior to the mid-1980s, and as Portes pointed out, even into the 1990s, “immigration research looked at the first generation’s immigration and settlement in the United States” and ignored the second generation because of their relative youth and “the difficulties studying it on the basis of census and other official data” (García 2004:xii; Portes 1996:1; Min 2002). Portes and his colleagues expressed the need to focus on the new second generation as their future in the U.S. is riddled with

uncertainty. In recent years, attention has indeed moved to the new second generation as the number of second generation immigrants continues to grow (García 2004; Levitt and Waters 2002; Min 2002; Portes 1996).

Research on the new second generation addresses a number of different issues. Some are broader in scope, while others are more specific, but the most frequently discussed topics focus on socioeconomic adjustment, school performance, ethnic identity, assimilation to American society compared to earlier generations of immigrant descendants, and more recently, their transnational ties and attachments to their ethnic homelands (Levitt and Waters 2002; Min 2002; Perlmann 2005; Portes 1996; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Smith 2006; Telles and Ortiz 2008). There are three main books that have addressed the new second generation Mexican American experience and each come to different conclusions.

Alejandro Portes and Rubén G. Rumbaut (2001) in *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation* provide a much needed glimpse into this new population. Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS), Portes and Rumbaut examine the concept of segmented assimilation, language, ethnic identity, academic performance, parent-child conflict and cohesion, and socioeconomic adaptation (among immigrant parents) of the emerging second generation.³ The basic assumption of segmented assimilation theory, developed by Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou (1993), is that societies are structured by inequality

³ The Children of Immigrant Longitudinal Study (CILS) is one of the largest and most extensive surveys of the new second generation still to this date. In 1992 the study was launched and it surveyed youth in San Diego, Miami, and Fort Lauderdale (eighth and ninth graders) and represents 77 nationalities in these high immigrant receiving areas of southern California and southern Florida. Four years later a second survey was administered to most of the students that completed the first survey regardless of whether they had remained in school (Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

according to a racialized social class hierarchy. As a result, there are diverse outcomes for immigrant integration in that not everyone assimilates to the same strata of society.

Segmented assimilation theory explains “what determines the segment of American society into which a particular immigrant group may assimilate” (Zhou 1999). Portes and Zhou (1993) make clear that they are not debating whether assimilation is happening among today’s second generation immigrants because they agree it is, but are rather attempting to explain to which segment of society they will assimilate, as it is not always to the white middle-class (Zhou 1999).

The situations and the dilemmas this new second generation face influence their process of adaptation and the outcomes “will largely determine the chances for social stability and economic ascent of this population as adults” (Portes and Rumbaut 2001:22). Although the authors explain that their findings on the second generation Mexican American population are more general in nature and do not necessarily apply to each individual, the projected outcomes are not positive for this growing group; Portes and Rumbaut (2001) expect the children of Mexican immigrants will experience downward assimilation. Second generation immigrants that are prone to downward assimilation are expected to have parents with low human and social capital, are typically received negatively by both the U.S. government and the majority population, are likely a part of a disadvantaged immigrant community, and are also thought to have a weak family structure. Downward assimilation can stem from any one or all of the above factors. Furthermore, not only do the aforementioned determinants play an important role in the direction to which immigrants assimilate, but there are additional challenges today’s second generation face that past immigrant generations did not that often create

vulnerability to downward assimilation; they are race, location, and the lack of mobility ladders (Portes 1998; Portes and Zhou 1993). Because many second generation Mexican Americans face such impediments, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) conclude that downward assimilation is the likely path for much of this population as there is little hope of entering the middle-class. Rather than assimilating like their European predecessors, it is probable that they will become stigmatized, much like African Americans (Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

In contrast to the pessimistic conclusions reached by Portes and Rumbaut (2001), in their book, *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration*, Richard Alba and Victor Nee (2003) claim that Mexican Americans and the descendants of today's Latin American immigrants are and will continue to assimilate, as did earlier European immigrants, despite racial differences (Alba and Nee 1997; Nee and Alba 2004). Alba and Nee (2003) suggest that rather than dismissing assimilation as an outdated and inadequate model, it should be redefined to make it useful in the study of current immigration. In short, Alba and Nee's (2003) new definition of assimilation implies a reduction of ethnic and cultural differences between two groups and it still assumes the existence of a dominant majority culture, similar to a melting pot (Alba and Nee 1997; Nee and Alba 2004).

Alba and Nee (2003) recognize that existing racial distinctions and the inequalities rooted in them can impede successful integration into U.S. society, but they believe it can be overcome. In fact, the authors suggest that the social boundaries that separate groups of people will eventually disappear. However, Alba and Nee (2003) stress that assimilation is not inevitable nor will it be the trend for all immigrant

minorities such as it was for those in the past. Different outcomes are expected; thus, while some contemporary second generation individuals will climb the economic ladder, others will face limited or no socioeconomic mobility. In contrast to segmented assimilation, Alba and Nee (2003) insist that downward mobility into the underclass is not widespread. Interestingly, although Alba and Nee (2003) admit that the second generation is not following the same assimilation path as the descendants of earlier waves of immigration, they nevertheless contend that their amended definition of assimilation should at the very least “remain part of the theoretical toolkit...especially [among] those who are concerned with the new immigration” (Alba and Nee 1997:863).

Edward E. Telles and Vilma Ortiz (2008) in *Generations of Exclusion* address the integration experiences of second, third, and fourth generation Mexican Americans by exploring the history of Mexican Americans, intergenerational change from parents to children, socioeconomic assimilation, social relations of Mexican Americans with other groups, cultural integration, Mexican American identities, and politics. The data used for their research comes from two sets of surveys; the first set of surveys were completed by a random sample of nearly 1,200 Mexican Americans living in Los Angeles County and San Antonio in 1965 and the second set of surveys were completed in a follow up study of over half of the original respondents in the late 1990s (Telles and Ortiz 2008). Telles and Ortiz (2008) stress that the experiences of Mexican Americans are much more “mixed rather than unambiguously assimilated or racialized” and they suggest that one must consider more than just traditional assimilation versus race theories when analyzing the integration processes of the children of immigrants (5). They find that among the Mexican American population there are wide variations in the degree to which they are

assimilated despite their generation. They also discover that the slow assimilation of Mexican Americans is related to poor and low education levels, more than any other variable (Telles and Ortiz 2008). Telles and Ortiz (2008) ultimately support the racialization hypothesis as their data reveals “Mexican Americans are disproportionately sorted into the low socioeconomic strata, mostly via the educational system” (284).

Racialization is a sociological process in which people are designated by race, which implies their position in a social hierarchy. The racialized images or stereotypes that are created about people are perpetuated by the process because such labels are used to evaluate a people and guide social interactions with them (Telles and Ortiz 2008).

Telles and Ortiz (2008) explain that discrimination and racialization practices at the institutional level, such as “under-financing of public schools which mostly Mexican origin students attend” and “the stigmatizing of Mexican Americans as inferior, lazy, or less worthy students by society in general”, severely limits the educational attainment of Mexican Americans (285). Studies have shown that higher levels of education often result in better job opportunities, but with little chance of succeeding in terms of education there is also little chance of moving up the ladder in terms of economic mobility. Finally, they believe that the integration pattern of Mexican immigrants is a “consequence of the witting and unwitting actions of the American state” (Telles and Ortiz 2008:286).

In addition to the three books discussed above, there are a number of other researchers who have also studied the new second generation of Hispanic/Latinos.⁴ Peggy

⁴ For additional theoretical discussions pertaining to the adaptation and integration of the new second generation, see Richard Alba and Victor Nee, “Rethinking Assimilation Theory for a New Era of Immigration”, *International Migration Review* 31(4) (1997): 826-874; Herbert Gans, “Second Generation

Levitt and Mary C. Waters (2002) in *The Changing Face of Home* explain that there is an ongoing debate among researchers as to how the new second generation will progress. The main questions being asked are will this second generation follow a similar path of assimilation of that of the Irish, Italian, and Jewish immigrants, who arrived in the early 1900s, that was marked by a gradual ascent up the socioeconomic ladder, or are there important differences in the new second generation immigrant experience today that will alter integration patterns in significant ways (Levitt and Waters 2002). Levitt and Waters (2002) explain that answers to these questions often derive from two subfields of migration scholarship, but the researchers on either side do “not always [see] themselves as taking part in the same conversation” (2).

The first body of scholarship concentrates on immigrant incorporation in which straight-line assimilation and segmented assimilation are debated (Alba and Nee 1997; Levitt and Waters 2002; Portes and Zhou 1993; Zhou 1999). The other body of research focuses on transnational practices among today’s immigrants; researchers pay attention to “the kinds of attachments that contemporary migrants maintain to their homelands” (Levitt and Waters 2002:2). Transnational practices falls under the rubric of transnationalism, which has emerged as a new analytical framework in recent years (Castles and Miller 2003). Transnationalism describes the processes in which migrants

Decline: Scenarios for the Economic and Ethnic Futures of the Post-1965 American Immigrants”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 15 (1992): 173-192; Charles Hirschman, Philip Kasinitz, and Josh DeWind (eds), *The Handbook of International Migration: The American Experience* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1999); Tamar Jacoby (ed), *Reinventing the Melting Pot* (New York: Basic Books, 2004); Alejandro Portes and József Böröcz, “Contemporary Immigration: Theoretical Perspectives On Its Determinants And Modes Of Incorporation”, *International Migration Review* 23(3) (1989): 606-630; Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou, “The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and Its Variants”, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 530 (1993): 74-96; Peter H. Schuck and Rainer Münz (eds), *Paths to Inclusion: The Integration of Migrants in the United States* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998).

take part that create linkages to and with their home country and place of residence (Kearney 1995a). These linkages between societies are created by, or based on, transnational migration, which “is a pattern of migration in which persons, although they move across international borders and settle and establish social relations in a new state, maintain social connections [as well as economic and political connections] within the polity from which they originated” (Glick-Schiller 1999:96). Thus, transnationalism entails living life across two (or more) international borders (Glick-Schiller 1999). Transnationalism is not simply an event, but is rather a process that develops over time and can change course as well (Levitt 2002; Levitt and Glick-Schiller 2004; Smith 2006). Although some believe it is unlikely that transnational activities will persist through the second and on-going generations with such frequency and intensity as it does with the first generation, “the extent to which they will engage in transnational practices is still an open question” (Levitt and Waters 2002:2).

Levitt and Waters (2002) and the other authors in their book attempt to connect the two dialogues as the two subfields and their answers to the pressing questions about the new second generation immigrants may be more intertwined than some think. As the new second generation is increasing in size and also growing older, there is a need for researchers “to understand the relationship between transnational practices and assimilation among the first generation and examine how the character, intensity, and frequency of these activities might change among their children” (Levitt and Waters 2002:3). The contributors to this volume examine the transnational practices taking place among the second generation (including Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, and West Indian Americans) and discuss its content, meaning, and consequences. The

conclusions vary among researchers about how prevalent transnationalism really is and on the impacts participation in transnational activities might have. Although Levitt and Waters (2002) stress that their “volume cannot resolve questions...about how widespread or long-lasting transnational practices among the second generation are likely to be” it does highlight the synergy between assimilation and transnationalism (5).

Robert C. Smith (2006) writes about the second generation Mexicans from Ticuani, Mexico that live in New York City in *Mexican New York: Transnational Lives of New Immigrants*. Although his book’s primary focus is on the first generation, Smith (2006) does discuss the lives of the second generation quite well and offers some insightful conclusions. He argues that the Ticuanenses in New York live transnational lives because many are intimately involved with Ticuani life and community in Mexico, while living in the United States. He contends that a transnational lifestyle persists into the second generation and that such a lifestyle is compatible with socioeconomic integration into the U.S. mainstream. Smith (2006) also stresses that assimilation among the second generation is a key aspect that plays a role in immigrant identity formation and often times they overlap with each other. Moreover, assimilation, as Smith (2006) demonstrates, is often influenced or affected by transnational activities.

With regards to assimilation, Smith (2006) says that the three paths posited by segmented assimilation theory are the reality for many second generation Mexican immigrants. Ticuanenses experience different types of assimilation and often times their identity is affected or determined by the path they take. For example, the path of assimilation often depends heavily on how those in the nearby surroundings accept the immigrant. Smith (2006) claims that there is clearly a strong desire for Ticuanense

immigrants to remain Mexican and participation in transnational life facilitates this process. Transnational involvement is also a way to avoid downward assimilation and the pressures of the inner-city as it allows for the Ticuanense immigrants to retain some pride in their ethnic and immigrant heritage. It seems that many Ticuanense immigrants engage in transnational practices, in part to reaffirm their Mexican-ness (Smith 2006).

Alma M. García (2004) writes about the new second generation Mexican Americans focusing exclusively on young women in her book *Narratives of Mexican American Women*. García (2004) uses the information collected from 25 in-depth interviews she conducted with undergraduate second generation Mexican Americans from California “to explore the social construction of ethnic identity among [her] respondents” and to discover “the ways in which Mexican American women recreate, reinvent, and reimagine themselves as they look back to the world of their parents and forward to their lives as college-educated Mexican American women” (x, xi). García (2004) finds that for the women whom she interviewed ethnic identity consists of multiple layers; these layers are where past identities can fade away or reemerge over time, where past identities can converge with new identities, and where new identities can continue to form. A person’s identity and the layers of which it consists are “contingent and emergent, capable of changing over a lifetime of collective memories” (García 2004:186). García’s (2004) research highlights the saliency of ethnicity, “a social construction that matters and will continue to matter” and of ethnic identities, which are full of meaning, malleable, and variable even between individuals with similar backgrounds (185).

A lot of the research that has been conducted on the 1.5 and second generation that analyzes their patterns and processes of assimilation, socioeconomic mobility, educational attainment, and ethnic identity choices is on a much grander scale than is the data I collected. Examples of such large-scale projects include the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey (Portes and Rumbaut 2001, 2006), the Immigrant Second Generation Study of Metropolitan New York (Kasinitz et al. 2008), Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles (Rumbaut 2008), and the Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaption study (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2001). Although this data and its results are extremely valuable, such research fails to capture individual experiences.

Of course, research that is more similar to mine exists. Tovar and Feliciano (2009) look at ethnic self-identification shifts in 21 children of Mexican immigrants in southern California as they transition from high school to college or the working world. Ko and Perreira (2010) explore the Latino youth (aged 14-18) immigration and acculturation experiences living in what has become an emergent Latino community in southeast North Carolina. Gonzales-Berry et al. (2006) examine the integration experiences and challenges faced by 12 1.5 generation individuals of Mexican origin (aged 20-28) living in Oregon. Massey and Sánchez R. (2010) study immigrant identity construction among 159 Hispanic/Latino members of the 1.5 and second generation (majority aged 18-35) living in the metropolitan northeast. Additionally, both Smith's (2006) and García's (2004) work, already discussed, share similarities to my dissertation research. However, it is clear that few studies examine the 1.5 and second generation

during their post high school years and even fewer explore the children of immigrants growing up in newly emerging Hispanic/Latino immigrant destinations.

Filling the Gaps

Now, literature focusing on the new second generation is burgeoning, but there is still much research to be done as it is not a homogenous group. Since most of the scholarship on the new second generation is fairly recent, there are undoubtedly still some holes. In order to further understand the experiences of the second generation and what the future might hold for this population, researchers should look to fill the spaces that others have left open. There are at least five major gaps in the existing literature today.

To begin, a majority of the research based on the new second generation focuses on those in junior high and high school. Now, however, this population is getting older and the experiences of those in their late teens to late twenties may differ from their younger counterparts. My dissertation provides a new look into the lives of the 1.5 and second generation living in a recent immigrant gateway state. Rather than focusing on the younger children of immigrants' cohort, I instead examine the children of immigrants that are immediately facing new realities as they become young adults. These children of immigrants, ages 18-30, are becoming active citizens in their everyday lives; they are enrolling in higher education, getting jobs, participating in the political arena, and in so doing are weaving themselves ever more thickly into the fabric of America.

A second concern with the current literature is that it most often concentrates on socioeconomic mobility related issues among the second generation. Although socioeconomic mobility deserves attention so too do additional subject matters with

which the second generation often deals. For example, topics such as transnationalism and ethnic identity should be addressed more frequently as they are emerging themes that can play a large role in the life of a second generation immigrant. In fact, a transnational lifestyle and ethnic identity choice may influence socioeconomic mobility. Additionally, although differences among gender in the current literature are indeed mentioned at times, it often seems to be glossed over. Both the similarities and differences between males and females need to be considered when addressing the experiences of the second generation as they could yield important findings.

Another tendency of current research is to study the new second generation in traditional immigrant receiving cities and states, such as Los Angeles, San Diego, and Chicago, and states such as Texas, Florida, and New York. Now more than ever the second generation is growing in non-traditional receiving towns and states throughout the mid-west and south; the immigrant population is booming in such states as North Carolina, Iowa, and even Arkansas, to just name a few (Zúñiga and Hernández-León 2005). These new places in which second generation immigrants are living and working are excellent locations for original research. As mentioned, the new second generation is far from being a homogenous group and the lived experiences of those growing up in small town America might vary significantly from those residing in large urban centers.

This dissertation will offer critical insights into the Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation population living in small, more rural communities. By focusing on this emerging small town population my research contributes to assimilation theory by shedding light onto whether place affects integration outcomes. The three paths of integration as defined by segmented assimilation theory are the reality for many

Hispanic/Latino children of immigrants living in traditional immigrant receiving cities and states, but this may only be the case for those residing in the inner-city or large metropolitan areas. Segmented assimilation may not hold true in smaller locales where the Hispanic/Latino population is recent and where there is not an established underclass. This research also pushes the theoretical boundaries that often separate assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity by instead showing that the three processes can, and are often, interconnected and may in fact work better in conjunction to produce positive outcomes.

Lastly, much of the research that focuses on the children of immigrants does not differentiate between the 1.5 generation and the second generation, but rather groups them all under the second generation umbrella (Allensworth 1997; García 2004; Levitt and Waters 2002; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut 2004). Members of the 1.5 and second generation are often spoken about in the same sentence because of their likeness in age and also because they frequently share similar experiences. Complicating the issue even further are the discrepancies related to the exact composition of the second generation. Levitt and Waters (2002), for example, define the second generation as those who “were born to immigrant parents in the United States”, or those who were born in the parent’s home country and then arrived in the U.S. when they were still very young; Massey and Sánchez R. (2010) define the second generation similarly (1). Others, however, make a distinction between those who were born to immigrant parents (the second generation) and those who came to this country when they were still young (the 1.5 generation) (Min 2002; Rumbaut 2004; Rumbaut and Ima 1988; Portes and Zhou

1993).⁵ For the purposes of this research, a foreign-born individual who was brought to the United States to live at or before the age of 17 is a part of the 1.5 generation.⁶ A member of the second generation is an U.S.-born individual raised in the U.S. with at least one first generation immigrant parent.

Although many researchers use the phrase *second generation* in a broad sense to include the 1.5 generation, it is nevertheless important to recognize that the 1.5 and second generation are individual groups. Though the 1.5 and second generation has a number of commonalities, differences undoubtedly exist. Thus, present and future scholars should pay attention to the patterns that emerge among the 1.5 generation that do not necessarily hold true for the second generation and vice a versa (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). As a general rule, I refer to the 1.5 and second generation together, but never together under the second generation umbrella, and I will always make the distinctions among them clear when warranted. More of the latest research, in fact, tends to acknowledge the 1.5 and second generation separately, just as I do.⁷

⁵ The term *1.5 generation* was first used by Rubén Rumbaut and Kenji Ima (1988) to describe “foreign-born youth who immigrated to the U.S. before the age of 12” (Allensworth 1997:388; Rumbaut 2004:1162). Rumbaut (2004) makes a further distinction among the immigrants who arrive to the U.S. as children: 1.75 refers to those arriving between 1-5 years old, 1.5 includes those that arrive between 6-12 years old, and 1.25 are those who arrive between the ages of 13-17. In my research and in this dissertation, the term *1.5 generation* refers to foreign-born youth that arrived to the U.S. at or before the age of 17.

⁶ I believe that 17 is the appropriate age delineation because at this age an individual is likely to be placed into school upon arrival. Although many of the individual’s formative years by the age of 17 will have been spent elsewhere, being exposed to a school environment places them in immediate contact with U.S. society and culture (this is at least the case for the public schools in northwest Arkansas). If arrival occurs at age 18 or older there is no guarantee the individual will be placed into school, but may rather enter the workforce where contact with a wider demographic may be limited.

⁷ For studies that address the 1.5 and second generation, see Elaine Allensworth, “Earnings Mobility of First and ‘1.5’ Generation Mexican-Origin Women and Men: A Comparison with U.S.-Born Mexican Americans and Non-Hispanic Whites”, *International Migration Review* 31:2 (1997):386-410; Monica Boyd, “Educational Attainments of Immigrant Offspring: Success of Segmented Assimilation?”, *International Migration Review* 36:4 (2002):1037-1060; Mark Ellis and Jamie Goodwin-White, “1.5 Generation Internal Migration in the U.S.: Dispersion from States of Immigration?”, *International Migration Review* 40:4 (2006):899-926; Jamie Goodwin-White, “Emerging Contexts of Second-Generation Labour Markets in the United States”, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35:7 (2009):1105-1128;

My study sample consists of 45 children of immigrants, it is equally weighted between the 1.5 and second generation, and it is strictly made up of college students or recent college graduates living in northwest Arkansas. Much of what I learned in the field stems directly from the in-depth, semi-structured interviews I conducted with the immigrant descendants. Additional research data was gathered from participant observation and semi-structured interviews with a number of community leaders in the area. The findings of this research will be discussed in multiple ways. I will first offer a general picture into the life of the 45 study participants in the form of their demographic characteristics and will discuss any relevant patterns among them that emerged from the data. I then delve deeper into the children of immigrants' dialogue to discover the relationships, if any, between assimilation, transnational practices, and ethnic identity. I also explore the meanings that participants give to their experiences and make sense of them in relation to other influencing factors. It is their point of view that I am after. Even though my research only represents a small number of 1.5 and second generation children of immigrants, it is their stories that will provide us with a glimpse into the struggles and triumphs they, and likely many others, face today.

Outline of Dissertation

In Chapter 1, I introduced my dissertation project, outlined the purpose of it, and explained its theoretical and practical significance. In Chapter 2, I provide a brief overview of immigration to the United States from the nineteenth century through present

Philip Kasinitz, John H. Mollenkopf, Mary C. Waters, and Jennifer Holdaway, *Inheriting the City* (New York: Russell Sage, 2008); Cecilia Menjivar, "Living in two worlds? Guatemalan-origin children in the United States and emerging transnationalism", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 28:3 (2002):531-552; Jody Vallejo and Jennifer Lee, "Brown picket fences: The immigrant narrative and 'giving back' among the Mexican-origin middle class", *Ethnicities* 9:1 (2009):5-31.

day. I then address how changing immigration patterns have affected the south and southeast regions of the U.S. over the past thirty years with particular attention given to the state of Arkansas. In Chapter 3, I discuss my fieldwork experiences, detail the methodologies used to conduct this dissertation research, and explain how all of the data is analyzed.

The topic of Chapters 4 and 5 is assimilation. In Chapter 4, I examine the scholarly work on assimilation and address its relevance to my research. Here, I also detail the different levels of assimilation among the members of the 1.5 and second generation living in northwest Arkansas. Continuing the discussion about assimilation, in Chapter 5, I use ethnographic detail to illuminate how and in what ways the study population is assimilating across the U.S. economic, cultural, and social domains. I then consider how the assimilative patterns of the children of immigrants are characteristic of segmented assimilation.

Similar to Chapter 5, Chapters 6 and 7 are also ethnographic in nature. Chapter 6 focuses on transnationalism. In this chapter, I review the literature on transnationalism and then I look at transnational activity among the immigrant descendants and discuss its propensity to continue into the future. I also address the ways in which this population maintains their ethnic heritage and explain how these behaviors are not necessarily transnational in nature. In Chapter 7, I concentrate on ethnic identity. I provide a brief discussion on how it is commonly studied, then I examine the ethnic labels with which the members of the 1.5 and second generation identify, and I elaborate on the importance attached to the self-labels they use to identify ethnically. Lastly, in Chapter 8, I summarize my dissertation findings and suggest potential avenues for future study.

CHAPTER 2

HISPANIC/LATINO IMMIGRANTS IN AMERICA: NEW DESTINATIONS

EMERGE

Chapter Introduction

The United States, for the most part, is a country of immigrants. Immigrants began arriving to the land mass in the early seventeenth century with intent to colonize it. Since then there have been large waves of immigration that often initially cause much distress to those already residing in the country. In this chapter, I first provide a brief overview of immigration to the United States over the past hundred years.⁸ Next, I discuss the significant increase in the number of immigrants in the south and southeast over the past thirty years and then focus on how this shift in immigration patterns has affected the state of Arkansas, in particular. I explain how the immigration boom in the 1990s to the early 2000s impacted the state then and now, both economically and socially, and I also detail the public reaction to the immigrants' change in destination. It will become clear that as the Hispanic/Latino population in Arkansas continues to grow in number, their presence becomes increasingly more significant as the future success of the state lie partly in their hands.

Immigration to the United States

From the mid-1850s through the earlier parts of the 1900s, one of the most notable waves of immigration to the U.S. occurred when large numbers of Italians, Polish, and Irish arrived on the east coast. The influx of Italians, Polish, and Irish peoples

⁸ For a more detailed history of immigration to the United States, see Roger Daniels, *Coming to America* (second edition) (New York: First Perennial, 2002) and Paul Spickard, *Almost All Aliens* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

created a panic. Many feared that the new arrivals would not assimilate to the American ways. The Italians, Polish, and Irish were routinely ostracized by those already living in the United States. Jobs were there to be filled, but it was often grueling labor for the men and housework for the women.

During this same time and continuing through the 1940s, thousands of Jews fled their home countries to escape the Nazis and many arrived on U.S. shores. Although they escaped the Nazi regime, they were not met with open arms as anti-immigrant sentiments remained high. Eventually though, as time passed, those who arrived through Ellis Island became as American as had anyone else. The fears of many that they would not assimilate were unfounded and life continued. Although there are still signs of the Italian, Polish, Irish, and Jewish immigrant population scattered throughout the entire U.S., like Little Italy's and authentic Irish pubs, their presence is not seen as a threat to the American identity. Those descended from the first generations of the 1850s-1940s no longer face racial persecution their parents experienced upon arrival to this country. However, the 1.5, second, and even third generations of today's more recent immigrant arrivals to the U.S. face not only a similar situation to those arriving a hundred years ago, but also a future that remains to be seen.

In 1965, the Immigration and Nationality Act was passed that opened the doors to the United States for hundreds of thousands of people. The act eliminated national quotas of entrants and allowed those from Asia and Africa access to the U.S. through employment/skills visas. Those from Latin American countries, most notably Mexico, also began arriving in large numbers soon after the act was passed. Although immigration

from Mexico to the U.S. was not novel, the sheer amount of newcomers to the country marked a significant change in how the U.S. looks today.

The early 1980s saw an increase of Hispanic/Latino immigrants. Individuals, primarily males from Mexico and smaller numbers from other Latin American countries, often entered the U.S. for seasonal agricultural work. As work in the U.S. was readily available and while Mexico dealt with a debt crisis, many immigrant workers crossed the border illegally or overstayed their work visas to continue earning money as day laborers on farms or in construction. The increasing numbers of undocumented workers eventually forced the U.S. government to enact new immigration laws, which resulted in the passing of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

The 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) had a significant impact on immigration of which the effects are still evident today. IRCA granted amnesty to immigrant workers who could prove they lived and worked in the United States since 1982. As a result, the status of over three million individuals, many of whom were Mexican or from other Latin American countries, across the U.S. was regularized. Soon after IRCA passed, the families of the newly legalized residents began flocking to the U.S., many of them arriving without the proper documentation, but hopes that under the family unification provisions of the act future regularization would be possible. This unintended consequence of IRCA resulted in hundreds of thousands of new immigrants to the U.S., many of whom were women and young children. These once young children are now young adults living and working in the only place they know as home, the United States. However, not all have been granted legal residency despite their previous

hopes and many still face the same difficulties their parents once did as undocumented immigrants (Gonzales-Berry et al. 2006).

As the U.S. economy continued to grow, Hispanic/Latinos continued to immigrate north. Day labor and manufacturing jobs were easy to find and although working conditions were often significantly less than ideal, they nevertheless paid slightly more an hour than many could make in a day in their home countries. Then, in 1994, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) took effect. NAFTA, enacted by Mexico, the United States, and Canada, reduced or eliminated tariffs against imports to increase the cross-border movement of goods and services among the three countries (Amadeo 2013; Wallace et al. 2007). Although Mexican officials claimed NAFTA would create an economic stimulus and would result in the “export of goods, not people”, this was far from the case (Ensinger 2011:1). Instead, NAFTA stimulated considerable Mexican immigration to the United States. Millions of Mexican farmers lost their jobs when the U.S. began to import corn to Mexico and since NAFTA was passed into law, nearly 30,000 small businesses in the country have also been eliminated (Ensinger 2011; Wallace et al. 2007). With few opportunities available to the displaced workers, immigration to the U.S., often illegal, has been their only option (Ensinger 2011).

Also in 1994, the Mexican peso was devaluated by half and the country of Mexico faced economic disaster. After the devaluation of the peso, inflation soared and a severe recession hit the Latin American country. This recession, combined with the consequences of NAFTA, led to massive out migration from Mexico to the U.S., which continued at a feverish pace through the early 2000s. Thus, the effects of IRCA, NAFTA, the peso devaluation, and the subsequent economic collapse in Mexico, coupled with a

strong U.S. economy and sheer availability of jobs in manufacturing, construction, and agriculture, caused the U.S. to see unparalleled Hispanic/Latino entrants, both legal and illegal, in the late 1980s through the 1990s and into the early 2000s.

The Hispanic/Latino population has more than tripled in size from approximately 14.6 million to approximately 52 million between 1980 and 2011; incredibly, this accounts for almost 40 percent of the more than 81 million people added to the U.S. population in the last thirty years (Saenz 2010; U.S. Census Bureau 2012). The Hispanic/Latino population makes up almost one sixth of the U.S. population today and it is still growing; conservative estimates predict that by 2050 the Hispanic/Latino population will make up just over thirty percent of the entire U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). This unprecedented Hispanic/Latino population growth has changed the face(s) of America, throughout both the heartland and the south.

A Change in Destination

For many native-born Americans, immigration was something only understood in terms of a textbook. The American Dream and the U.S. as a melting pot were notions understood, but not often seen firsthand. Only those living in a few cities in the traditional immigrant destination states of Texas, Florida, California, Illinois, and New York were exposed to immigrants. Even when immigration into the U.S. started to increase again in the late 1960s, a majority of newcomers continued to choose Miami, Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York City (O'Neil and Tienda 2010). In fact, the 1980 U.S. Census reveals that 64 percent of immigrants and 88 percent of all Mexican immigrants arriving between 1975 and 1980 settled in one of the five major immigrant gateway states (O'Neil and Tienda 2010). Immigration for those living in the rest of the

United States was much a thing of the past. However, the immigrant abstraction would soon become a new reality.

Beyond the typical gateway cities and states, many small-sized towns and rural communities have experienced large immigrant flows as “the geographic spread and demographic impact of Hispanics has accelerated nationwide” (Lichter and Johnson 2009:497). In particular, six southern states’ immigrant population grew two hundred percent or more between 1990 and 2000 (Kochhar et al. 2005). “North Carolina (394%), Arkansas (337%), Georgia (300%), Tennessee (278%), South Carolina (211%), and Alabama (208%) registered the highest rate of increase in their Hispanic populations of any states in the U.S. between 1990 and 2000,” apart from Nevada (217%) (Kochhar et al. 2005). Although these changes in percentages are considerable, the number of immigrants in these states before 1990 was quite small, but such a rapid demographic change is nevertheless significant.

This substantial increase of the Hispanic/Latino immigrant population in the south is related to two factors: the limited numbers of Hispanic/Latino immigrants residing there before 1990 and then the pace at which the population grew throughout the decade. Although each of the six states (North Carolina, Arkansas, Georgia, Tennessee, South Carolina, and Alabama) were ranked top in the nation for their Hispanic/Latino growth, the actual population increases were quite low when compared to other more common immigrant destinations. For example, more than a million Hispanic/Latinos were added to the population in New York and New Jersey in the 1990s, while the six southern states combined added a mere 900,000 Hispanic/Latino individuals to theirs. From almost no

presence at all to a recognizable one now, it is the speed at which this new population grew in the south that is incredible (Kochhar et al. 2005).

The Hispanic/Latino growth in the south is distinctive not only for its speed, but also for its population characteristics. Recent immigration fueled the increase in population at a higher level than traditional gateway destinations. This growth primarily consists of young male Mexican immigrants that arrive with little education and little to no English, of which each are common features of Mexican labor migration. However, instead of returning to Mexico after a number of months spent earning wages, it is evident that the recent immigrants choose to stay, marry, and raise their children in the United States. Since much of the Hispanic/Latino growth in the south is attributed to recent immigrant arrivals, over half of the population is foreign-born (57%), compared to less than half of the Hispanic/Latino population nationwide (41%) (Kochhar et al. 2005). Moreover, in 2000, over half of the foreign-born Hispanic/Latino population in the six recent growth southern states had been in the U.S. for just five years or less (52%), drastically different than the nationwide foreign-born Hispanic/Latino population at just over a quarter having lived in the U.S. for five years or less (27%) (Kochhar et al. 2005).

Conditions must be conducive to the type of population growth the south experienced in the 1990s and indeed they were. The economy was booming during this time and the opportunities were available to everyone, not simply the immigrants. Many rural towns in the south were adding manufacturing and food-processing plant jobs as they were declining in other regions throughout the rest of the country. Furthermore, the larger cities and metropolitan areas experienced economic growth fueled by the service and financial sectors and also by the construction, transportation, and public utility

industries. Thus, as the non-Hispanic/Latino population moved into the white-collar jobs, Hispanic/Latino job seekers filled the construction, manufacturing, and other factory jobs recently made available. As the traditional immigrant receiving states fell below the national average in income and employment, the six southern states continually beat the national average in unemployment rates from 1990-2004. This robust economy clearly made these areas in the south an attractive destination for Hispanic/Latino immigrants (Kochhar et al. 2005).

The economic downturn in the U.S. starting in 2007, combined with the increase in negativity and anger towards the immigrant population and the subsequent tightening of immigration laws and their enforcements, has created a harsher climate that both recent and established Hispanic/Latino immigrant populations have to face everyday. Thus, while the Hispanic/Latino population in the south continued to grow through the 2000s, it is not increasing at the rapid pace it once was. Interestingly, however, the native born Hispanic/Latino child population is growing relatively quickly. Those that immigrated to the U.S. in the 1990s are now having and raising their children in these once non-traditional receiving southern states. The Hispanic/Latino population will no doubt continue to grow as these immigrant families continue to raise their children in the United States. Additionally, although immigration directly from Mexico and other Latin American countries to these southern states has slowed, some Hispanic/Latino immigrants already residing in the U.S. have moved from California and other traditional settlement areas to these more recent growth states. The low cost of living, smaller populations, and job prospects make the south an attractive destination for many immigrant families looking for new and better opportunities.

Thus, beginning in the 1980s the volume of immigration began to rise and with this movement came a change in destination patterns (O'Neil and Tienda 2010). The availability of unskilled jobs and inexpensive housing attracted immigrant workers to communities where the presence of immigrants had been minimal (O'Neil and Tienda 2010). Slowly beginning in the 1980s and then rapidly continuing through the 1990s into the 2000s, non-traditional receiving southern towns and states experienced unprecedented immigrant growth; a majority of these new immigrants were from Mexico or Latin America. The nationwide Hispanic/Latino population grew by 42 percent between 1980 and 1989 and then increased by another 58 percent between 1990 and 1999, accounting for 40 percent of the total U.S. population growth in the nineties (Lichter and Johnson 2009; U.S. Census Bureau 2012). The Hispanic/Latino population grew another 55 percent between 2000 and 2011 (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). Moreover, nearly half of all immigrants and half of all Mexican immigrants arriving between 2000 and 2005 settled outside of the five traditional immigrant receiving states, a stark difference from twenty-five years earlier (O'Neil and Tienda 2010). It is clear that these non-traditional receiving states were, and still are, becoming favored destinations of recent immigrant arrivals and more experienced immigrants looking to relocate. In fact, recent data suggests that without Hispanic/Latino population growth more than two hundred non-metropolitan counties would have declined in population between 2000 and 2006 (Lichter and Johnson 2009). Therefore, this growth has afforded many small and dying towns new life.⁹

⁹ For research on non-traditional migrant receiving towns in the United States, see Caroline Brettell (ed), *Constructing Borders/Crossing Boundaries: Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007); Elzbieta Gozdziaik and Susan Martin (eds), *Beyond the Gateway: Immigrants in a Changing America* (New York: Lexington Books, 2005); Karen Johnson-Webb, *Recruiting Hispanic Labor: Immigrants in Non-Traditional Areas* (New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing,

Arkansas: A New Immigrant Destination

As the usual immigrant gateways started to change, some southern states, such as Arkansas, became new immigrant destinations essentially overnight. Arkansas is a new immigrant growth state that historically was not a favored destination in the past, but one that saw dramatic increases to its foreign-born population throughout the 1990s and 2000s. In the 1980s, a small number of Hispanic/Latino immigrants were drawn to northwest Arkansas because of a commercial and residential construction boom that created a demand for new workers. In the 1990s, the expanding poultry industry required unskilled workers willing to occupy grueling, low-paying factory jobs. Shortly thereafter, the once predominantly white working- and middle-class towns in the region, Springdale and Rogers in particular, became the favored destinations for immigrant arrivals (Leidermann 2010).¹⁰

Between 1990 and 2000, Arkansas was second among all fifty states in Hispanic/Latino immigrant population growth and then recorded the fastest growing Hispanic/Latino immigrant population nationwide between 2000 and 2005 (Capps et al. 2007; Cossman and Powers 2000). In total, from 1990-2010 the number of immigrants in Arkansas increased by a staggering 429 percent, a number only surpassed by North Carolina and Georgia (Capps et al. 2013). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2006

2003); Daniel Lichter and Kenneth Johnson, "Immigrant Gateways and Hispanic Migration to New Destinations", *International Migration Review* 43:3 (2009):496-518; Douglas Massey (ed), *New Faces in New Places: The Changing Geography of American Immigration* (New York: Russell Sage, 2008); Heather A. Smith and Owen J. Furuseth (eds), *Latinos in the New South: Transformations of Place* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006); Victor Zúñiga and Rubén Hernández-León (eds), *New Destinations: Mexican Immigration in the United States* (New York: Russell Sage, 2005).

¹⁰ For additional research on Arkansas as a new immigrant destination, see Andrew Schoenholtz, "Newcomers in Rural America: Hispanic Immigrants in Rogers, Arkansas", in Elzbieta Gozdziaik and Susan Martin (eds), *Beyond the Gateway: Immigrants in a Changing America* (New York: Lexington Books, 2005):213-238 and Steve Striffler, *Chicken: The Dangerous Transformation of America's Favorite Food* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

close to 150,000 Hispanic/Latinos resided in Arkansas, but many believe the official numbers do not include the estimated 40,000 undocumented persons living in the state (Leidermann 2010). Finally, between 1990 and 2000, the number of children in immigrant families in Arkansas grew 276 percent, a rate exceeded only by North Carolina (Capps et al. 2007).

Northwest Arkansas is home to approximately fifty percent of the state's Hispanic/Latino population (Capps et al. 2007; Leidermann 2010). Fayetteville, Springdale, Rogers, and Bentonville are the four largest towns in northwest Arkansas spreading across Washington and Benton counties; they are locally known as the 'big four'. Fayetteville, the largest of the four, is home to the University of Arkansas. Just to the north is Springdale and it is mostly known for its poultry processing plants, including Tyson Chicken and Cargill. Further to the north lies Rogers and a few more miles north is Bentonville, home to Wal-Mart's corporate headquarters. Fayetteville and Springdale are located in Washington County while both Rogers and Bentonville are part of Benton County.¹¹ Hispanic/Latinos now make up just over thirty percent of the population in both Springdale and Rogers, a significant change from 1980 when both counties together were home to a mere 1,500 persons of Hispanic/Latino descent (Figures 1 and 2) (Cossman and Powers 2000; U.S. Census Bureau 2014b,c,d,e).

¹¹ For a map of Arkansas, see A.1. in Appendix A.

	Fayetteville	Springdale	Rogers	Bentonville
Population total	73,580	69,792	55,964	35,301
Population of non-Hispanic whites	59,379	36,780	34,697	27,181
Population of Hispanic/Latinos	4,709	24,706	17,628	3,071
Saturation of non-Hispanic whites	80.7%	52.7%	62.0%	77.0%
Saturation of Hispanic/Latino	6.4%	35.4%	31.5%	8.7%

Figure 1. Non-Hispanic White and Hispanic/Latino Population Characteristics in Northwest Arkansas Towns in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau 2014b,c,d,e)

Year	Washington County		Benton County	
	1980	2010	1980	2010
Population total	100,494	203,065	78,115	221,339
Population of Hispanic/Latinos	916	32,084	568	34,750
Saturation rate of Hispanic/Latinos	0.9%	15.8%	0.7%	15.7%
Hispanic/Latino growth 1980-2010	3402.62%		6017.96%	

Figure 2. Washington and Benton County Population Characteristics from 1980 and 2010 (Cossman and Powers 2000; U.S. Census Bureau 2014b,c,d,e)

The Hispanic/Latino population residing in northwest Arkansas is predominately from Mexico; 74.3 percent are of Mexican origin, 13.8 percent are of Salvadoran descent, and the remaining 12 percent are from other countries throughout Latin and South America (Migration Policy Institute Data Hub 2013). Many of those who arrived in the state in the 1980s and 1990s emigrated from their home country. More recently, however, approximately half of foreign-born arrivals to Arkansas have come from other states (Appold et al. 2013a). Although recent data suggests that immigration from Mexico and other Latin American countries has slowed considerably in the U.S. over the past couple of years, the flow of immigrants to Arkansas does not reflect this same pattern. Instead,

there is a relatively constant stream of foreign-born Hispanic/Latino immigrants to the region, with a growing number arriving from different states, most notably from California.¹²

Northwest Arkansas attracted a small number of Hispanic/Latino immigrants in the early 1980s because of an increase in commercial and residential construction that created readily available jobs for newcomers. In the 1990s, as the poultry industry expanded, low-skilled jobs were plentiful (Schoenholtz 2005). In fact, so many workers were needed throughout northwest Arkansas that some companies recruited along the U.S.-Mexico border to ensure the positions would be filled. Those willing to work in factories for long hours, for much better pay than in the home country, is what drove many immigrants to the state. Recruitment, coupled with the word of mouth about widely available jobs and low cost of living, fueled new immigrant arrivals. The presence of a strong economy, continued low costs of living, and the high quality of life found in northwest Arkansas are primary reasons immigrants remain in the area and they also contribute to why the immigrant flow still exists today (Capps et al. 2013).

A majority of the Hispanic/Latino immigrants moved to Arkansas to work (Capps et al. 2013). Most leave their home country with little in hand, but a hope that their decision to leave their family and friends will result in a better life for all involved. Those from Mexico most often leave their country because of a poor economy, lack of jobs and low pay, poor educational opportunities for their children, and fear of drug cartels and government corruption. Immigrants from El Salvador, traveling much longer distances to reach the U.S., often fled because of the civil war that spanned three decades

¹² For the flow of migration of the immigrant descendants' parents, see A.3. and A.4. in Appendix A.

(approximately 1979-1992) or from the effects of the war that resulted in a feeble economy with very few jobs and little chance of success. Many of the first foreign-born immigrant arrivals to Arkansas were young males often immigrating alone. Once a reliable income was established, the wives and children of these young men came to live in Arkansas. The more recent arrivals to northwest Arkansas are still often men, but as immigrant networks become established, the initial move to Arkansas is not as daunting as immigrants use these connections to get jobs and locate housing in prompt fashion. Moreover, families usually follow the husband within weeks now, rather than waiting for an indefinite period to be reunited.

Arkansas: The Impact of Immigration

Economic and Social Impacts

On the surface, the demographic effect of the Hispanic/Latino immigrant population is quite visible, especially in towns such as Springdale and Rogers, while slightly less in Fayetteville and Bentonville. In what other ways do the new arrivals impact Arkansas and the cities and towns where they live? What are the economic and social impacts on the communities in which they call home and on the state as a whole? Moreover, how are the native-born Arkansans reacting to the emerging Hispanic/Latino population?

The usual anti-immigrant rhetoric is present among many native-born Arkansans. Many think that the emerging Hispanic/Latino population is bad for their communities; they are overcrowding the job market, not paying their taxes, burdening the healthcare and education systems, raising crime rates, most are here illegally, and they are not learning English. However, these negative sentiments are rarely warranted. Capps et al.

(2007) provide an in-depth look into the immigrant population in Arkansas. Their work, commissioned by the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation in Little Rock, Arkansas, offers some compelling insights. Building upon the original report, three additional volumes were published six years later (Appold et al. 2013a; Appold et al. 2013b; Capps et al. 2013). Because the later volumes compare the more recent findings with those presented in the earlier publication, I will only present what is discussed in the 2013 reports.

The economic impact of the Hispanic/Latino immigrant population in Arkansas is substantial. This population is a key contributor to the manufacturing, construction, and agricultural fields in Arkansas. The report findings indicate that “for the most part, the growth of the immigrant population in Arkansas has been a form of labor replacement” (Appold et al. 2013a:39). During the 1990s, the manufacturing sector was losing its native Arkansan workers more quickly than the calls for labor demanded. In fact, in 1993 at least three poultry plants in northwest Arkansas were within two to three months of closing their doors because employee turnover costs were at an all time high and vacant jobs simply could not be filled (Schoenholtz 2005). Fortunately, large numbers of Hispanic/Latino immigrants began moving to the area and have ever since filled the vacancies (Appold et al. 2013a). The demand for low-skilled immigrant labor increased in the past two decades as more native Arkansans moved into white-collar occupations, leaving the blue-collared jobs open to the recent arrivals. Other manufacturing companies in the region, such as Superior Industries (produces car parts) and Danaher Tool Group (produces agricultural tools), now largely employ immigrant workers. Many construction and landscaping companies also rely heavily on the newly arrived. Despite the recession and a decline in the blue-collar industries, immigration to Arkansas has remained strong.

The immigrant population in Arkansas has continued to demonstrate a willingness to work in manufacturing and food-processing plants that often detour native-born Arkansans from employment because of the low wages, poor working conditions, and little hope of upward mobility (Appold et al. 2013a).

It is clear that Hispanic/Latino immigrant population is in Arkansas to work. Immigrants account for seven percent of the total workforce in Arkansas, but only comprise five percent of the total population (Appold et al. 2013a). These numbers can be attributed to the younger ages of the immigrant workforce, while the native-born Arkansan workforce is older (Appold et al. 2013b). It is also important to point out that between 2008-2010 Hispanic/Latino immigrant males had the highest percentage (88%) of employment of any group in Arkansas and the lowest unemployment rate of all males at just five percent (Capps et al. 2013). The Hispanic/Latino immigrant workers clearly are integral to many employers statewide and as the Arkansas native-born workforce continues to age “maximizing economic opportunities may depend critically on investing in the skills of the immigrant workforce” (Appold et al. 2013a:5).

Apart from filling vacant jobs, the immigrant population benefits the state economically in other ways as well. In 2010, immigrant consuming spending was \$3.9 billion (Appold et al. 2013a). They paid \$237 million in state taxes as well as another \$294 million in federal taxes (Appold et al. 2013a). Arkansas spent an estimated \$555 million providing essential services (e.g., K-12 education, healthcare, and corrections) to immigrant households and although the roughly \$524 million of direct and indirect taxes from immigrants largely offset those costs, the state still incurred a negative fiscal impact on the state’s budget of approximately \$31 million, equal to about \$127 per immigrant

household member (Appold et al. 2013a). However, the statewide economic impact is different from the fiscal impact. “Subtracting the cost of essential services (\$555 million) from immigrants’ combined consumer expenditures and tax contributions (\$3.9 billion) yielded a net economic benefit to the state of \$3.4 billion in 2010. On a per capita basis, immigrants’ contributions (\$16,300) exceeded the fiscal cost of essential services (\$2,300) by \$13,900. That is, the state received \$7 in immigrant business revenue and tax contributions for every \$1 it spent on services to immigrant households” in 2010 (Appold et al. 2013a:4). Thus, in terms of the bottom line, the immigrant presence is beneficial to the state.

Indicated by the above numbers, neither the healthcare system nor the education system is being depleted by the foreign-born immigrant population in Arkansas. Crime statistics do not chart Hispanic/Latino involvement, so it is impossible to say whether crime is being affected by the immigrant population. However, there are no major reports of gang violence in northwest Arkansas and overall violent crimes have remained fairly static over the past two decades. Moreover, in a local newspaper article from 1997, it was reported that immigration and crime are not tied together. Sergeant David Clark, public-information officer with the Springdale Police Department explained that the city does not have a large problem with the Hispanic/Latino population. He states “the vast majority of the people we arrest are non-Hispanics. We also don't seem to have a large number of repeat offenders among Hispanics. We just don't have a large problem with Hispanics and crime” (Hillier 1997:B6). The article also states that Sergeant Clark’s assessment in Springdale parallels data from the Rogers Police Department, the Benton County sheriff’s office and the Fayetteville Police Department (Hillier 1997).

Similar to other southern states experiencing large influxes of immigrants, Arkansas' undocumented immigrant population is relatively high and the number of naturalized U.S. citizens in the state is relatively low (Capps et al. 2013). An estimated 42 percent of the state's immigrant population in 2010 was undocumented, but that number has not risen since 2006 (Capps et al. 2013). It appears that most, if not all, illegal immigration into Arkansas has stopped. This decrease in unauthorized immigration can be attributed to the U.S. recession and the increases in border control at the U.S.-Mexico country lines (Capps et al. 2013). While there are a number of undocumented Hispanic/Latino immigrants in the state, it would seem that they are here to work rather than to cause trouble. In spite of the recession, the manufacturing and food-processing plants have been able to continue production by largely employing an immigrant workforce and there is no indication crime has risen upon new immigrant arrivals.

It is hard to gauge to what extent the Hispanic/Latino population is learning English, but it is clear that at least some immigrants are choosing to do so. There are a number of businesses owned by Hispanic/Latino immigrants and both the owners and their employees are often fluent in both English and Spanish. Several local churches and the community centers throughout northwest Arkansas offer free English classes to those that want to learn. Learning English is a choice people make and as long as there are options that make that a possibility, the more likely it is that English will become the second language of many.

The large number of immigrant arrivals to northwest Arkansas over the past thirty years is impressive. Whether the emerging Hispanic/Latino population in northwest Arkansas is integrating into the local communities is a concern of many living in the area.

There are certainly mixed opinions regarding this matter, but certain trends indicate that they are. First, the foreign-born population in Arkansas is becoming more long-term (Capps et al. 2013). In 2010, 57 percent of immigrants in the state had lived in Arkansas or somewhere else in the U.S. for at least ten years, an increase of six percent from 2000 (Capps et al. 2013). Additionally, the average length of residence in the U.S. in 2010 was 14.9 years compared to 13.6 years in 2000 (Capps et al. 2013). Not surprisingly, as time spent in the U.S. increases, the Hispanic/Latino immigrant population is “more likely to form families, buy their own homes, advance in the labor market, and contribute more to the tax base” (Capps et al. 2013:22).

Second, half of all Hispanic/Latino immigrants in Arkansas own their own homes (Capps et al. 2013). In fact, 88 percent of my study population reported that their parents owned their own home in Arkansas. Purchasing a home not only benefits the local economy, it also demonstrates a long-term commitment by the owners. Owning a home gives an individual or a family a sense of belonging and indicates to the community that they want to be a part of it and plan to be a part of it for some time to come. Home ownership is a strong indicator that the Hispanic/Latino population is permanently settling in Arkansas.

Third, although northwest Arkansas is still predominantly white, the Hispanic/Latino population has made a visual mark on not only the demography, but onto the built landscape as well. Their presence is clearly visible as businesses, restaurants, and large billboards advertise in both English and Spanish and the Mexican flag can be seen hanging in many windows throughout the Springdale and Rogers. Though

manufacturing and food-processing plants continue to be the largest immigrant employed industries, a number of Hispanic/Latino immigrants have advanced in the labor market.

From 2002-2007, the number of Hispanic/Latino owned businesses increased by 160 percent, the largest increase in the nation (MBDA 2011). In Springdale alone it is estimated that there are over 300 minority-owned businesses, a majority of them owned and operated by members of the Hispanic/Latino population (Nelson 2005). In fact, because of the significant increase in both the Hispanic/Latino population and immigrant owned businesses in northwest Arkansas, the Chamber of Commerce of Springdale initiated a program to recruit Hispanic/Latino businesses in the early 2000s. Following their lead, the Chamber of Commerce of Rogers started a similar program that not only recruits Hispanic/Latino businesses, but encourages the owners to expand by marketing to non-Hispanic customers as well (Nelson 2005). Both programs have been successful.

As mentioned, many of the initial immigrants to arrive in the U.S. were younger men eager to work so they could provide financial support to their families still living in the home country. Characteristically, many immigrant men worked seasonally; when the job ended they would return to the home country with their earnings. However, many manufacturing and food-processing plants employ year round. Many seasonal workers become attracted to the more permanent employment and once an income is established many of these workers send for their families to come live with them. The most common scenario is that the wife and her young child or children will come join her husband in the United States. Once having reached Arkansas, these immigrant families choose to stay. Many then send for their elderly parents and other relatives to come live with them in the state as well. Importantly, this Hispanic/Latino immigrant population is consciously

choosing to raise their children (either born in the home country or in the U.S.) in these local Arkansas communities.

The number of children of immigrants in Arkansas grew substantially over the past two decades. From 1990 through 2010, Hispanic/Latino children under the age of eighteen with at least one immigrant parent more than quadrupled. In 1990, there were a mere 2,000 children of at least one Hispanic/Latino immigrant parent and by 2010 there were over 48,000 children in immigrant families (Capps et al. 2013). The rapid increase in immigration in the state saw the Hispanic/Latino share of Arkansas children grow from one percent to ten percent between 1990 and 2010 (Capps et al. 2013). In 2010, of these more than 48,000 children of immigrants living in Arkansas 82 percent were U.S.-born citizens. The remaining 18 percent were foreign-born and typically noncitizens; many were, and still remain, undocumented like their parents (Capps et al. 2013).

The Hispanic/Latino population in Arkansas is relatively young and fortunately it continues to grow. Although the national average of Hispanic/Latino children is 23 percent and Arkansas' just reached ten percent, if not for the growth of Hispanic/Latino children from 2000 to 2010 the child population in the state would have decreased (AACF 2012). In addition, in 2010, the public high schools in both Springdale and Rogers had an enrollment of 30 percent or higher of Hispanic/Latino children, exceeding the 23 percent national average (IES 2013; Springdale School District 2012). The Hispanic/Latino immigrant population also contributes substantially to growth among young adults in the state. They contribute the most to growth in the 26 to 35 and 36 to 45 age groups (compared to the native-born) and both Hispanic/Latino immigrants and native Arkansans contribute significantly to growth among youth ages 18 to 25 (Capps et

al. 2013). Thus, as the Hispanic/Latino children of immigrants grow into young adults, they are still contributing large numbers to the state's growth, indicating that as they graduate from local high schools they are choosing to remain members of their Arkansas communities.

Immigrant families arrive in Arkansas for opportunity, to work, and to become part of the communities (AACF 2012). These families and their children are here to stay. The children of immigrants are not only the fastest growing segment of the child population in Arkansas, but also in the U.S. (AACF 2012). They undoubtedly will play a critical role in our nation's future and to the state of Arkansas as well. As the native Arkansan population ages, immigrants and especially their children, will be vital to sustaining a strong workforce and their success will be imperative to the state's long term economic outlook (AACF 2012). The opportunity for the children of immigrants to learn and flourish must be readily available as it is central to the state's interests (AACF 2012). The future of Hispanic/Latino children of immigrants is thus Arkansas' future.

Public Reaction Towards Immigration

It has been made very clear that the Hispanic/Latino immigrant population is becoming an integral part of northwest Arkansas as their time spent in the country lengthens. They are contributing substantially to the tax base, some are advancing in the labor market, many are purchasing their own homes, and families are reuniting or forming throughout the state with a majority of them choosing northwest Arkansas to call home. As these new members of the local communities continue to settle down, the reactions of the native Arkansan population have been mixed. Any large influx of persons to an area unfamiliar with the newcomers can cause disruptions, such as distrust, distaste,

and distance, among both the native and incoming populations. Such times can also call for understanding, acceptance, and approval; unfortunately it is often the former that occurs first.

From what I have learned from many local residents, it seems that the Hispanic/Latino immigrant population in northwest Arkansas grew so fast in the 1990s (and of course it continues to grow today) that no one really understood the extent of the growth until the late 1990s. Interestingly, because this surge occurred so quickly it gave native Arkansans little time to adjust to the communities' new demography. In one sense this was good because the locals could not organize against it, but in another sense the speed at which the immigrants arrived caused concern because there was no real transition period. For many of those who had lived in northwest Arkansas for numerous years, the new arrivals were an unwelcomed change (Bradley et al. 2003).

Once the native population became more aware of the rapid immigrant population growth some problems arose. Incidents of discrimination became more frequent and what was once quiet anti-immigrant chatter among neighbors became louder concern voiced at local town halls. The Hispanic/Latino children attending local public schools also began to feel the anti-immigrant sentiment as confrontations with native Arkansans increased. The general tone in Springdale and Rogers, and to some extent in Fayetteville and Bentonville, towards the immigrant population changed for the negative.

In the 1998 Rogers mayoral election the seventeen year incumbent, "known for his hospitable and accepting attitude toward immigrants", lost to the present U.S. House of Representatives member Steve Womack, who remained mayor of Rogers until his recent 2010 election to the House (Schoenholtz 2005:223). Womack won on a campaign

that promoted a zero-tolerance stance towards illegal immigrants, an insistence that the new arrivals speak English, and that immigrants need to conform to community standards (Schoenholtz 2005). By many accounts, this mayoral change exacerbated ethnic tensions and anti-immigrant sentiment. For example, anti-immigrant organizations in northwest Arkansas felt empowered and the Hispanic/Latino population became wary of participating in larger community activities (Schoenholtz 2005). In fact, their absence became increasingly obvious as local church pews sat emptier week after week because Hispanic/Latinos were afraid to leave their homes for fear of discriminatory experiences.

Then, in 2001 the Hispanic/Latino residents of Rogers, represented by the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, filed a lawsuit against the police department claiming that officers were racially profiling drivers of cars, intentionally pulling over Hispanic/Latinos or those that look Hispanic/Latino, and asking them to verify their immigration status (Schoenholtz 2005). Although the city eventually settled with the residents, the Hispanic/Latino community lost all trust with the Rogers police department. Tensions would remain high throughout northwest Arkansas, but as time passed the community as a whole started to be more receptive to the Hispanic/Latino immigrants (Koralek et al. 2010).

The cities of Springdale and Rogers became actively involved in diversity work and a number of programs aimed at the Hispanic/Latino immigrant population were initiated by local community members. As mentioned, the two towns created programs to specifically assist Hispanic/Latino business start-ups. Many local churches initiated free English learning classes that primarily cater to adults with little to no English skills. The Jones Center, a community center in Springdale that opened in 1995, has been

instrumental in helping and advising immigrant families throughout northwest Arkansas. The Northwest Arkansas Workers' Justice Center, located in Springdale, was created to improve the employment standards of low-wage workers in northwest Arkansas and to promote their well-being. In addition to these centers and programs and to others that are similar, the Hispanic/Latino community has also organized itself. They formed a northwest Arkansas chapter of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), they created the Hispanic Women's Organization of Arkansas (HWOA), and more recently have developed a campaign to support and promote post-secondary education among the Hispanic/Latino population called iDREAM Arkansas Campaign; these are just three examples of such community organization among many others that are present in northwest Arkansas today.

In addition to the programs directed at the Hispanic/Latino population and their community activism, the Hispanic/Latino influence is seen elsewhere too. For example, the local newspaper now writes its own Hispanic/Latino Spanish language section in the form of a weekly publication, multiple Spanish speaking radio stations are available on air, local cable channels include a number of Spanish speaking television stations, cultural events specific to the Hispanic/Latino population occur throughout the year, soccer leagues grow larger each year, and local public schools and banks offer pamphlets in both English and Spanish.

As the years went on racial tensions in the area died down, and apart from individual experiences of discrimination, the Hispanic/Latino and native populations at a very general level seemed more at ease with one another. However, this would soon change. In 2007, the immigration debate became even more divisive, both nationally and

in many states throughout the south and southwest. As Congress repeatedly delayed action regarding the status of more than 11 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. and frustration with federal immigration laws increased along with worry about the immigrants' impact on states and local communities most affected intensified, a backlash against the Hispanic/Latino immigrant population resulted (Capps et al. 2013).

A number of state governments created and passed their own very restrictive immigration bills, of which Arizona and Alabama have received the most national attention. Their laws restrict “the access of unauthorized immigrants to government services and [facilitate] partnerships between the federal authorities and state and local law enforcement agencies to identify, detain, and deport unauthorized immigrants” (Capps et al. 2013:11). This hostile response towards immigrants in the form of law also passed in Oklahoma and Georgia, with other states still considering similar bills.

Although Arkansas has not passed such laws, in 2007 four jurisdictions in the state, consisting of Springdale and Rogers and Washington and Benton counties, entered into 287(g) agreements with the United States Department of Homeland Security (Capps et al. 2013; Koralek et al. 2010). Through these agreements, law enforcement officials from the two police departments and the two sheriff's offices in northwest Arkansas were trained to enforce federal immigration laws (Koralek et al. 2010). This allows the local authorities of these jurisdictions “to identify immigrants who have committed crimes or immigration violations and to remove them from the country” (Capps et al. 2013:11).

Many local residents felt that 287(g) “sent an inhospitable message to immigrants and affected the community's receptiveness toward immigrants” and indeed this seemed, and still seems, to be the case (Koralek et al. 2010:9). Since the inception of 287(g),

several hundred immigrants living and working in northwest Arkansas have been deported, sparking not only controversy, but fear as well (Capps et al. 2013). In 2010, the local police and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) expanded their joint efforts with the Secure Communities program. The Secure Communities program “identifies unauthorized immigrants when they are fingerprinted in local jails during routine booking” (Capps et al. 2013:11). Nearly 2,800 mostly undocumented immigrants have been identified for deportation under the Secure Communities program in Arkansas since August 2010; approximately 500 of them have been deported (Capps et al. 2013). The partnerships between the local and federal immigration authorities in both Washington and Benton counties have been very active; they are responsible for 43 percent of Secure Communities deportations in the state (Capps et al. 2013).

Such restrictive laws and regulations that target the immigrant population, like 287(g) and Secure Communities, “can create a ‘culture of fear’ and other perceptions of anti-immigrant sentiment within the community” (Koralek et al. 2010:9). This culture of fear and perceived anti-immigrant sentiment is becoming the norm for many Hispanic/Latino immigrants living in northwest Arkansas. Although a number of community leaders report less racial tensions in the area compared to ten years ago, the aggressive enforcement of immigration laws has created a distrust of not only the local law enforcement, but too of the local native citizens among the Hispanic/Latino immigrant community. The context of immigrant integration and reception under these circumstances presents a much larger challenge to both the state and the nation as a whole. Some in the area welcome the Hispanic/Latino immigrant population, their children, and their extended families, but others see them only as non-English speaking

illegal immigrants competing for employment. Despite the obstacles, many Hispanic/Latino immigrants in northwest Arkansas and throughout the state are making significant contributions to their communities, which will hopefully be the trend for years to come.

The future impact of immigration on Arkansas remains to be seen, but it is for certain that it rests firmly on the shoulders of the children of immigrants that are being raised in the state as they now make up the newest pattern in the ever changing fabric of American society. The 1.5 and second generation Hispanic/Latino immigrants living in northwest Arkansas are the primary focus of this dissertation. Moreover, the 1.5 and second generation Hispanic/Latino immigrants should be the primary focus in the state of Arkansas as they will play an intricate role in the future success of the state as their increasing population indicates.

CHAPTER 3

WHY ARKANSAS? SITE SELECTION, FIELDWORK, AND METHODS

Chapter Introduction

This dissertation is primarily based on the fieldwork in Arkansas that I conducted in 2011 over the course of the entire year. In this chapter, I detail the time I spent in the field with as much transparency as possible. I elaborate on how I selected northwest Arkansas as the location to carry out my research and then discuss both my successes and difficulties I experienced while entering the site, recruiting participants, and conducting interviews. Next, I review the research methods I employed in the field and explain how I analyzed all of the data I compiled throughout the study. First, however, I introduce ethnography as a fundamental aspect of anthropological fieldwork and highlight how my research is ethnographic in nature.

Ethnographic Research Study

The goal of ethnography is “to understand another way of life from the native point of view”; it is the “work of describing a culture” (Spradley 1979:3). Ethnography means learning from a people, rather than simply studying them (Spradley 1979). Anthropologists, such as Bronislaw Malinowski (1932) and Franz Boas (1940), are famous for their fieldwork of unfamiliar people and cultures presented in the form of ethnography. Years after the pioneers of ethnography laid its groundwork, ethnographic fieldwork and its major tenets are present still today. The fieldwork I conducted with the Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation immigrants living in northwest Arkansas is ethnographic in nature. I attempt to understand a way of life from the participants’ point of view and then describe it in this dissertation.

This ethnographic research study is primarily qualitative; I learned from the participants by interacting with and observing them in their daily lives. This qualitative approach allowed me to discover how the immigrant descendants define their world and what is important to them. I explore the meanings that participants give to their experiences and try to understand them in their terms. It was important that I try to make sense of the meanings each person shared with me and understand them through their lens; their point of view is what I continually tried to grasp. While observing, speaking with, and writing field notes about the study population, I stayed aware that my own experiences and my position within the Hispanic/Latino community and outside of it may influence my observations and interpretations (Martinez 2011).

My understandings of the time I spent in the field, the excitements, struggles, successes, and failures, are exactly as I describe. My experiences are undoubtedly subjective, but each day I consciously conducted my fieldwork as objectively as possible. The objective lens through which I viewed the study population was certainly blurred by my subjective bias at times. In fact, if my research was entirely objective then it might have been too robotic. Acknowledging and accepting that I am not immune to being subjective at certain times provides for a more realistic account of fieldwork. The subjective view should never cast a shadow over the objective, but an occasional cloud is reasonable and often unavoidable.

Ethnographers often use the word *informant* to describe the individuals with whom they interact in the field who are influential in providing the cultural knowledge for which they seek. Instead, I choose to use the word *participant* to describe those individuals that took part in my research. I employ this word because the respondents

chose to be interviewed and thus willingly participated in my dissertation research. Using the term *informant* can suggest something more clandestine in nature, so I choose not to use it. In addition to *participant*, at times I use *respondent* or *interviewee*. To identify the group as a whole I often use a combination of terms, including but not limited to *children of immigrants*, *child of immigrants*, *immigrant children*, *immigrant descendants*, *Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation*, or *1.5 and second generation children of immigrants*.

Site Selection

The sheer increase in the Hispanic/Latino population in northwest Arkansas is stunning. Although Fayetteville was familiar with a small number of minority faces throughout the town, drawn to the university as either professors or students, for the most part northwest Arkansas was, and still is, extremely homogenous demographically. Washington and Benton counties are close to 90 percent white and this number was even higher thirty years ago (U.S. Census Bureau 2014a,f). The rapid growth of an unfamiliar ethnic population in such a small homogeneous area provides for an excellent study site. Moreover, the 1.5 and second generation population of northwest Arkansas is growing quickly, and as the number of children of immigrants living in non-traditional receiving towns and states continues to rise, this emerging population represents an important area of scholarly concern.

With this in mind, I also chose to research the Hispanic/Latino population in Arkansas because of my personal relationship with the area and its people. I was born and raised in Fayetteville, Arkansas and witnessed firsthand the beginnings of this change in local demographics. Fayetteville has the smallest Hispanic/Latino population of the ‘big

four' in northwest Arkansas. There are a number of locally owned Mexican restaurants and small grocery stores that cater to the population, so some growth and change is evident, but the major transformations are in Springdale and Rogers.

From Fayetteville, the main road into Springdale travels under a bridge that holds a railroad track. When I was a child, the visible sides of that railroad bridge were spray painted 'N_____s must be out by sundown' (or something similar). By the late 1980s the railroad track no longer displayed such a racist statement, but those sentiments did not necessarily disappear along with it. Although I rarely visited Springdale, apart from school sporting events, I remember being shocked at the changes of scenery up and down the main road of the town in the late 1990s when Springdale was becoming a hotbed of Hispanic/Latino arrivals. Springdale, and Rogers as I would later discover, were transformed completely; the small country towns as I knew them in the past were no longer there. The large influx of Hispanic/Latino immigrants is visible as businesses and restaurants publicize in both English and Spanish, brightly colored buildings signify Hispanic/Latino ownership, and the Mexican flag can be seen waving through many windows in the two towns.

While growing up in the area I did not have a lot of contact with the new immigrant arrivals. Fayetteville did not receive a lot of initial immigrants to the area and since it was, and still is, the largest city in the region, there was no real urgency to visit the other towns. Apart from occasionally driving through Springdale and Rogers it was not until I graduated from high school that this new population started to peak my interest. I attended college out of state, but I returned to my hometown each summer as many college students do.

Starting in the summer of 2001, I worked at a local restaurant that was located on the edge of Fayetteville, right next to Springdale. It was here where I forged an important friendship and a long lasting interest with Mexican immigrants. The two dishwashers employed by the restaurant were both from Mexico and had been living in Springdale for about two years; one man was in his early twenties and the other man was in his mid-thirties. They were the only nonwhite employees in the restaurant at that time and their English was limited. Fortunately, I had just completed a year of studying abroad in Spain, so I could speak Spanish pretty well.

After working there for a little while, I started making friends with my co-workers, including the two dishwashers, whom did not often speak to the other employees. I am certain that this lack of communication between them and the other employees was not out of fear or discrimination from either side, but was primarily related to the language barrier. I started talking to the dishwashers on a daily basis and eventually became good work friends with both of them. They both were surprised to find out that I spoke Spanish, but thought it was great that I did. The man in his mid-thirties told me a lot about his life, but the one thing that has stuck with me is why he moved to the U.S. in the first place.

He lived in Mexico City with his wife and two children and he had a well paying job as a policeman. He told me that he became a policeman because he wanted to help the people around him, but that in the couple of years before he immigrated, which was in 1998, the occupation had become too corrupt. He said he had to intentionally pull over 'speeding' cars to the side of the road and request money from the drivers in lieu of a ticket. The corruption in his unit continually got worse. His team would raid a house in

search of drugs and when the search yielded nothing, they would just take the expensive items out of the house instead. He explained that if he did not steal something from the house then he was the bad guy. When he could not take the blatant corruption anymore, he made the difficult decision to quit his job and then immediately moved his wife and two children across the border into Arkansas, where he had heard from a few friends he could find a job.

I was forever changed by what he told me. Pure corruption drove him away from the job he had always wanted, away from his home country, and away from his friends and extended family. Then, all of a sudden, he was working as many hours a week as he could scrubbing dishes in the basement of a fancy restaurant in northwest Arkansas. To this day I still find his story fascinating.

That summer of 2001 was also the same time I started hearing people talk about ‘illegal immigrants’ and their perceived negative impact on northwest Arkansas. Occasionally I would hear friends joke about ‘illegals’ or I would hear my friends’ parents saying that they did not understand why the immigrants would come without proper papers. Anytime I ever heard this kind of talk I would tell my friends or their parents the story of the dishwasher with whom I was working and that would at least stop them from making discriminatory comments in front of me. I must stress that I did not hear a lot of negativity, but there was the occasional derogatory comment, which I had never noticed in the past; thus, it was clear that people were starting to notice this new wave of immigrants to the area.

After my next year of college, I returned to Fayetteville to spend the summer of 2002. I started working at the same restaurant again, but the dishwashers with whom I

had befriended were no longer working there. I asked around to figure out where they had gone, but I never found out and unfortunately never saw the two men again. Instead, there were two new dishwashers, both Hispanic/Latino, and although we became friendly with one another and spoke in Spanish to each other, they were both a bit more shy and reserved, so we never talked about how or why they were in Arkansas.

Springdale was on the verge of total transformation in the early 2000s and word got out of this dramatic change. One of the first things I heard upon my initial return to Fayetteville was ‘have you tried any of the new Mexican restaurants in Springdale yet?’ Of course, at that time I had not, but that soon changed. My parents knew of a couple great little Mexican restaurants owned by recent immigrants to the area, so we ate at them a number of times. In these restaurants the menus were often written in Spanish with a vague English translation beneath each Spanish description and either a radio or a small television somewhere in the background quietly played Mariachi music or Spanish speaking sports announcers commentating on the most recent soccer match. Even my Dad’s new favorite bakery was a Mexican bakery in Springdale owned by a family from southern Mexico who had immigrated to the town in 2000. The owners and the employees in each of these Mexican owned businesses spoke fluent Spanish with one another and could converse conversationally in English with customers such as myself. I would speak with the owners of the places I began to frequent and although these ethnic restaurants and businesses clearly catered to the Hispanic/Latino population, they had their occasional white customers as well. The Hispanic/Latino community in the area continued to grow through the 2000s and into today and although the once small Springdale seemed to be reemerging as a bicultural town, I always wondered how this

new population fit into the area. Were they accepted by the native Arkansan population or not?

After the summer of 2005 I did not return to Arkansas for any significant period of time and when I did travel back to the state, I only went to Fayetteville. For the better part of five years I did not see Springdale or Rogers at all. Then, in January of 2011, I returned to northwest Arkansas to conduct my dissertation fieldwork on the children of Hispanic/Latino immigrants living in the area.

Entering the Site, Participant Recruitment, and Interview Process

My initial entry into the local area was quite easy. Since I had grown up in Fayetteville I was familiar with the town and to some extent with the university. Although I did not go to Springdale, Rogers, or Bentonville very often while growing up, and had not been in the towns since 2005, I still felt quite comfortable throughout northwest Arkansas. This familiarity afforded me a confidence I do not think I would have had anywhere else in the country. Even though my research is about the Hispanic/Latino population, of which I am not a member, I felt that because I am from the area my research was legitimate. Because I had witnessed first hand the rapid growth of the Hispanic/Latino population in northwest Arkansas, I felt like I was an appropriate person to be conducting such research. As I began my research that insider status I had with northwest Arkansas proved to be significant at times.

I had planned on living in either Springdale or Rogers since their Hispanic/Latino populations were quite high, but in the end, my connections led me to an apartment in Fayetteville close to the university. As it happened, living close to the university proved to be very beneficial. Once I was settled, I began to make possible contacts around

northwest Arkansas. Since I did not know any Hispanic/Latino individuals in the area, I thought it was best to begin by reaching out to adults working with the population and to Hispanic/Latino adults that were well known in the community. The internet was my primary resource for locating potential leads.

I examined everything from newspaper articles to community centers to staff and professors at the University of Arkansas (U of A) and the local community college (NWACC). I wanted to find anyone and everyone that had some type of connection to the Hispanic/Latino population in northwest Arkansas. I sent out emails to numerous people whom I thought may be able to lead me in the right direction. I had decent success when contacting community members involved with or a part of the Hispanic/Latino community. I emailed thirty people, heard back from twenty-one, had email conversations with fourteen, and actually spoke in person with five of them. Of the five community leaders with whom I was able to schedule meetings, four were of Hispanic/Latino descent. At each meeting I explained in detail what I was doing in northwest Arkansas, I conducted a short semi-structured interview, and I asked for their help in putting me in contact with children of Hispanic/Latino immigrants.¹³ Each person was very informative and more than willing to introduce me to potential contacts. Clearly, I had trouble making face to face contact with some people after they replied to my initial emails and I account most of this to busy schedules, although this is pure speculation.

Researchers often face many challenges when conducting studies, especially when it is focused on a minority population. Apprehension and distrust from those being

¹³ A copy of the informational letter to the community leaders is listed as B.2. in Appendix B; a copy of the community leader interview guide is listed as B.3. in Appendix B.

researched is not uncommon, but it can often be eased if the person gathering the data is a member of the study population in some way (Spradley 1979). As I met with adult community members that were either involved with or a part of the Hispanic/Latino population, I was continually well-received. However, I am fairly certain that I was well-received because although I had not lived in the state for a number of years, I was still a native; therefore, I was not just a random person coming to research Hispanic/Latinos. Although I am white and not of Hispanic/Latino descent, I am from Arkansas and thus, not a complete outsider. After explaining my research intentions and stressing that my primary goal was to be the voice of those often unheard, the community leaders with whom I met expressed interest in my research and offered their support.

Although just one of the leads I received from the community leaders resulted in an actual study participant, the information gained from their interviews was invaluable. I learned of a future conference in the area that was going to focus on the Hispanic/Latino population, centers that promoted the well-being of Hispanic/Latinos living and working in the community, and multiple cultural events to be held in both Fayetteville and Springdale that were sponsored by the U of A in their promotion of Hispanic Heritage Month. It was this information, rather than their individual leads, that helped make my research possible.

I attended a majority of the Hispanic Heritage Month events at the U of A, around Fayetteville, and in Springdale. It was during this time I met almost all of the study participants. The first event I attended was the pre-Hispanic Heritage Month Mixer called Manos Unidas (United Hands) held at the U of A in a large ballroom in the campus union in the late afternoon. I arrived promptly at 4:00pm and was surprised at the crowd of

people already there. It was an informal event; many students were carrying their backpacks, presumably having come straight from class, and professors were scattered about the room talking with students and colleagues alike. There was a stage that held a number of short musical performances put on by the local student groups that were participating in the event. There was also a large buffet table with ample amounts of food, including chips and salsa, tamales, taco fixings, fruit, and dessert. I was impressed with the amount of food that was available because this implied to me that significant funds were allocated to the event. There were at least 100 students in attendance and another 25-30 staff and professors as well. Interestingly, a majority of the students appeared to be of Hispanic/Latino descent, while the remaining few were of Asian or African descent. I was the only young white person in the crowd. The staff and professors on the other hand varied in ethnicity; many of them were white, but some were of Hispanic/Latino descent and a couple of others were African American.

I introduced myself to a number of professors and explained my research. Each professor was very friendly and offered their help if I needed it in anyway. I also introduced myself to a number of students whom had been identified as Hispanic/Latino to me by some of the professors with whom I had spoken. I simply walked up to groups of students standing in small circles, as well as a few individuals that were seated at tables enjoying the food and music, to introduce myself and explain my research to them. I asked if any of them were interested in taking part in my study and handed out my business cards. A number of students seemed genuinely interested and I was excited to check my phone and inbox for their calls and emails. Unfortunately, I never received a single call or email.

Initially I was very discouraged that I never heard from anyone about participating in my research, especially because most of those with whom I spoke expressed excitement about what I was doing. However, I was not to be deterred and I decided that the best way to ensure contact with potential participants is to ask for their contact information (name, number, and email) instead of only giving them my business card. Fortunately, this way of sharing information proved much more successful.

The following week I attended another Hispanic Heritage Month activity, called *Viñetas Latinas: Daily Life in Northwest Arkansas*, which was held at a local museum in Springdale. This event was much more intimate with about twenty people taking part. A moderator led a panel of four Hispanic/Latino adults who were active in the local community; each spoke about how they arrived in northwest Arkansas and their subsequent lives. After the panel finished speaking each attendee introduced themselves and explained their interest in the event. Everyone in the audience was of Hispanic/Latino descent apart from three of the attendees, including me. A majority of those there were adults, but there were three college students with whom I was able to discuss my research and their possible participation. Each of those students expressed their interest and willingness to take part, so I asked for their contact information and said I would be in touch in the next few days. In the course of that two hour event I went from having no potential research candidates to three and I made contacts with many of the other attendees. Fortunately for me, the students that I met that day became participants in my research as I conducted interviews with each of them shortly thereafter.

After every interview I conducted, I explained to the respondents that I need many more participants so if they know of anyone who might want to take part to please let me

know. I expressed my interest in interviewing both college students and those who were not in college as well. I also asked each person to help me spread the word of my presence in the area and the research I was conducting. I wanted to be sure my name and research intentions were as well known as I could make them. Gabriela, one of my initial interviewees whom I met at the Viñetas Latinas event, was single-handedly responsible for putting me in contact with over fifteen of my would be future research participants and in directly responsible for another seven respondents. If not for meeting her and without her kind support I often wonder if I would have been as successful with participant recruitment; the answer is most likely no.

Gabriela, a 22 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, is a student at the U of A. She plays a large role in the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) U of A chapter and she suggested I come to one of their meetings to recruit other respondents. I of course jumped at the opportunity and went to their next meeting. At the beginning of it, she introduced me to the large group of about twenty-five Hispanic/Latino students and gave me a few minutes to introduce myself and explain my research interests. I also was giving the time to field any questions anyone had for me. Because Gabriela had already been interviewed, she was able to share her experience with the group, and since she established “it wasn’t bad and didn’t take that long”, many students seemed keen in taking part. I passed around a piece of paper on which any individual interested in the project could write their contact information for me to use in the coming weeks. Twenty students gave me their contact information and fifteen of them became study participants. The fifteen students whom I first met at the LULAC meeting and subsequently interviewed led me to five other research participants. Finally, Gabriela

sent out an email I had written explaining my research to the entire LULAC listserv; two students responded and I conducted interviews with both of them.

During a few of my informal conversations with adults either involved with or a part of the Hispanic/Latino community that took place at many of the Hispanic Heritage Month activities, I continually was given the name of an admissions advisor that works at the U of A as a person with whom I should make contact because of his large role he plays with the on-campus Hispanic/Latino student population. When I spoke with him, he was very friendly and willing to meet with me to discuss my research. Jorge, a child of Mexican immigrants himself, works to enroll the Hispanic/Latino children of immigrants population living in Arkansas at the U of A. His job is an important one because he facilitates informational meetings at high schools and junior high schools throughout the state in both English and Spanish. He tries to ensure that anyone who is qualified to be a student at the U of A gets a fair chance at succeeding. He serves as a mentor to many students enrolled and will no doubt continue influencing many young Hispanic/Latinos to attend college. In addition, he helped create a Latino Fraternity on the U of A campus.

During our meeting together he generously offered to put me in contact with potential research candidates, all of whom were a part of the Latino Fraternity. After Jorge spoke with the Fraternity members about my research and asked for volunteers to take part, he emailed me the contact information and available meeting times for seven individuals; I conducted interviews with each of them. Moreover, two of the interviews resulted in six additional ones because the respondents suggested the names of some of their friends that were willing to participate too.

The other twelve study participants were found by community members giving me contact information for potential respondents, word of mouth spreading on the U of A campus, or by me simply walking up to someone whom I hoped was of Hispanic/Latino descent and explaining my research. A majority of the children of immigrants that I interviewed said they would put me in contact with some of their friends, but this did not happen very often. It is always much easier said than done and I was just appreciative of their individual involvement with the project. However, when a respondent led me to another study participant I could not express my gratitude enough. Finally, as it is quite clear, both Gabriela and Jorge proved to be incredible contacts; without their help my research would have suffered.

Once an individual chose to participate in my study, we scheduled a time to meet. Most of this communication was over email, but occasionally someone would text or call me. I was available to meet each respondent at their preferred time and location, although I would always offer a couple of suggestions of meeting times and places to better ensure the interview would actually happen. All interviews but two were conducted on the U or A or NWACC campus, usually in the union, outside the union when the weather permitted, or in the library. One interview was conducted at a public park in Rogers near the participant's home and another interview was conducted in the Springdale Public Health Office, where the participant's mother works. She suggested this workplace to her son as a good place to meet me because of its central location and the availability of a large open room where I was able to conduct the interview.

Rapport is important to build and it does not necessarily develop immediately. However, I needed to build comfortable relationships with the immigrant descendants

quickly, since in most cases I had little verbal contact with them before the actual interview. Almost all of my interviews took place on a college campus, so instead of dressing up as I did when I conducted interviews with community leaders, I always wore a plain non-descript t-shirt and jeans. I wanted to dress like any other college student in hopes that the participants would feel comfortable with me and be able to relate to me as a peer. This was not too difficult to pull off since I am a graduate student and still look quite young.

After introductions, if they were necessary, I always asked each respondent how their day was going, I inquired about their classes, and I grumbled with them about an upcoming paper or mid-term due. I did my very best to show that we were equals, even though I was the researcher conducting the interview. Once the interview started, I would often interject with a couple of personal stories as a way to humanize myself and to ensure I was giving the interviewees some personal information so I would not feel like a total stranger to them. I would also try to tell an embarrassing story about myself towards the beginning of the interview and that often reduced any lingering awkwardness between us.

Before beginning the interview, I gave each participant an informational letter describing the research study; it explained how the gathered data will be used, that a digital recorder will be used to accurately document the interview, that real names will be kept strictly confidential, and it provided my contact information and that of my advisor on this project.¹⁴ As indicated, the names of all study participants have been changed, but this is to maintain a high standard of research integrity rather than out of total necessity.

¹⁴ A copy of the informational letter to the immigrant descendants is listed as B.4. in Appendix B.

After explaining that their real names will never be used at any time, many of the immigrant descendants said that it would be fine if I were to use their name in my dissertation and three males specifically asked for me to use their real names. I explained why I would not be able to oblige and they each understood. Institutional Review Board approval was granted through Arizona State University before any of my fieldwork began.¹⁵

Each participant indicated verbally that they understood the contents of the informational letter, that answering each question was voluntary, and that they could stop the interview at anytime at no consequence to anyone. Once consent was obtained, I began recording the interview. I asked each immigrant descendant the same series of questions and all interviews were conducted in English.¹⁶ Language was not a barrier because every respondent spoke fluent English and understood it without difficulty. Each interview lasted approximately one hour, although some interviews were closer to an hour and a half, and all were completed in one sitting. Participants were compensated for their time in the amount of \$25. Many refused the money initially, but I was able to convince anyone who did not want it at first by reminding them that they are college students and extra cash is always a good thing. To ensure my attentiveness, I limited myself to conducting two interviews per day, although once I did conduct three interviews in a single afternoon because of a participant reschedule.

When my fieldwork was complete I had conducted in-depth, semi-structured, one-on-one interviews with 45 individuals consisting of 24 females and 21 males. This includes 21 members (13 males, 8 females) of the 1.5 generation, 22 members (7 males,

¹⁵ A copy of the IRB exemption status letter is listed as B.1. in Appendix B.

¹⁶ A copy of the immigrant descendant interview guide is listed as B.5. in Appendix B.

15 females) of the second generation, 1 female member of the third generation, and 1 male member of the fourth generation. Seven males and 18 females are either 18 or 19 years old, five males and four females are 20-22 years old, seven males and two females are 23-25 years old, and two males are 26-30 years old. Of the interviewees, 35 are children of Mexican immigrants, six are children of Salvadoran immigrants, two are children from both a Mexican immigrant parent and a Salvadoran immigrant parent, one is a child of Bolivian immigrants, and one is a child of Honduran immigrants.¹⁷

Interestingly, although I had not predicted this to happen, all of the immigrant descendants I interviewed were either enrolled in college at the U of A or NWACC or had recently graduated from the university.

Although one participant is third generation and one participant is fourth generation I still refer to the study population as a whole as the 1.5 and second generation because a majority of these children of immigrants are a part of it.¹⁸ The third and fourth generation individuals are included with the second generation since they are also born in the United States. The third and fourth generation individuals will be distinguished separately only if the data warrants.

Sampling Strategy and Research Methods Employed in the Field

Although a randomly selected, unbiased sample is often ideal for research a representative random sample is difficult to obtain with small populations; research focusing on small groups often uses snowball sampling instead (Itzigsohn and Giorguli-

¹⁷ For additional demographic data on the immigrant descendants, see C.1. in Appendix C and A.2. in Appendix A.

¹⁸ A member of the third generation is an U.S.-born individual with at least one first generation immigrant grandparent; a member of the fourth generation is an U.S.-born individual with at least one first generation immigrant great-grandparent.

Saucedo 2005; Jensen et al. 2006; Levitt and Waters 2002). Respondents for this research were found by nonprobability sampling; a combination of purposive and snowball sampling was used. In purposive sampling, the perimeters of a study population are predetermined and then subjects that fit the particular role are sought out to participate (Bernard 2002). Snowball sampling is a technique used when one or more study participants are located and then are subsequently asked to name others who would be potential candidates for the research at hand (Bernard 2002). Nonprobability samples are sufficient under certain research circumstances; for example, purposive sampling is appropriate to use when the study population needs to fit certain criteria and it is useful for maximizing representation and heterogeneity; snowball sampling is useful in situations where a population is difficult to find and/or is limited in numbers (Bernard 2002). Thus, purposive and snowball sampling were the appropriate methods to use to identify likely participants.

In-depth, semi-structured, one-on-one interviews not only allow people to articulate in their own words how they make sense of their lives, their actions, and their circumstances, they also provide an important contrast to observational data. The interviews I conducted allowed me to inquire about the process of assimilation, meanings of transnational practices, and ethnic identification choices, and to ask in great detail about personal aspirations, experiences of discrimination, how these children of immigrants believe they are perceived by others (i.e., by their peers and the greater population of northwest Arkansas), and how this affects their everyday lives. These interviews are extremely important because the respondents are able to describe in their own words how they understand and negotiate assimilative pressures, transnationalism,

ethnic identification, and other everyday life experiences. The in-depth interviews provided rich, qualitative descriptions and narratives that illustrate the children of immigrants' subjective experiences. These interviews also enabled me to ask about the shared or divergent experiences of their friends that were not involved in the research study.

In conjunction with the semi-structured interviews with five community leaders and the in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted with the children of immigrants, I also used participant observation to collect data. Participant observation is the foundation of cultural anthropological fieldwork. Participant observation is a research method that requires the researcher to not only participate in the daily activities of the people or culture one is studying, but to also observe all situations as an objective outsider.

As a participant observer, I interacted with the 1.5 and second generation living in northwest Arkansas by participating in their daily activities and I also observed them in multiple situations. I engaged in the activities of the children of immigrants, frequented ethnic businesses and social establishments (primarily restaurants) of Hispanic/Latino immigrants, and was present at community centers that offer their services to the immigrant population. I regularly hung out in the U of A union so I could interact with those that I had already interviewed and in hopes I could find more study participants. I attended the soccer fields in Springdale, where games are played all day on Sunday and the majority of the players and spectators are of Hispanic/Latino descent. I also made it a point to frequent common social spaces like the malls, the U of A sporting events, and the county fair to observe who is spending time where and who is not as the interactions or the lack thereof among the Hispanic/Latino population and the native Arkansan

population are important to recognize. Participating in local activities and within the immigrant community as a whole allowed me to understand better the daily lives and the experiences of the 1.5 and second generation.

While living in the community I was careful to continue to negotiate the role of insider and outsider with the study population by maintaining a balance between participation and observation throughout my entire time in the field. To supplement the participant observation, and to ensure against forgetfulness, I also wrote field notes to systematically record observations and experiences of daily occurrences, including one time events, such as cultural festivals or town hall meetings, the routines of everyday life, and spontaneous interactions, such as conversations and informal interviews.

Research Difficulties

After I made the decision to move to Arkansas to conduct this fieldwork I had two major reservations; first, I was concerned that being a non-Hispanic white person might be an issue for the study population. I feared that my credibility and legitimacy could be questioned because I was an ethnic outsider. However, these worries never materialized. In fact, being white might have been the reason three students decided to participate in the study. I was told that more research on the Hispanic/Latino population should be done by others like me (i.e., white academics). A few of my respondents stressed the point that as a white person what I say has more clout among the white population as a whole than does the same statement from someone of Hispanic/Latino descent. As disconcerting as this is because it accentuates the lack of power and influence many Hispanic/Latino individuals feel they have in the community, I was grateful for the opportunity to hear so candidly how my respondents felt. Thus, being a non-Hispanic white did not act as a

barrier between me and the children of immigrants as I thought it might. Of course, if there were potential candidates that specifically chose not to participate in this research because of my skin color, I was not made aware of this.

Second, I was unsure how the children of Hispanic/Latino immigrants would feel about being the focus of a research study. Fortunately, all of the participants were seemingly supportive and some applauded me for doing it. As will be discussed in later chapters, many respondents feel as if they are not seen as equals among the majority population and are sometimes starved for positive attention, so this research in which they spoke about their own lives, offered a way to put themselves front and center.

My dissertation research was not always as streamlined as it may have seemed, although I was fortunate in that I never had any huge setbacks nor did I encounter any significant problems with my study participants. Although my initial reservations were unfounded, other obstacles arose. My experiences in the field are described as I understand them. My analysis of my time in the field may be inaccurate to those with whom I worked, researched, and interviewed on a regular basis, but I hope that is not the case.

Initially, I had planned on interviewing only children of Mexican immigrants between the ages of 18-30, but I soon realized that the limitation was making recruitment much more difficult. Since I was already having a rather hard time finding participants I decided that I would interview any 1.5 or second generation individual of Hispanic/Latino descent ages 18-30. Although a majority of my respondents were of Mexican descent, widening the inclusion perimeters enabled me to reach my target sample size of 45 participants. Of the 45 interviews I conducted, I unknowingly began

two interviews with individuals that were not part of the 1.5 or second generation, and rather than canceling the interviews, I continued with my questions as both participants were willing to spend their time with me.

I was able to find a majority of study participants through snowball sampling whereby the initial respondents would put me in contact with other individuals they deemed as potential candidates. However, not all participants were introduced to me through the help of someone else. In order to broaden the pool of respondents and to ensure a decent sample size I tried a couple of times to simply walk up to a person, explain my research, and ask if they wanted to take part in it. Doing this though has some drawbacks. First, the person with whom I choose to talk may feel intimidated, not understand my true motives, or feel obligated to participate in the research even though it is completely voluntary. The other major issue with picking someone out like this is that it basically requires racial profiling. Having to essentially racially profile to recruit respondents, especially as a cultural anthropologist, is something I find difficult to accept. Yet, I did exactly that.

I went to a number of stores in Springdale and Rogers that catered to the Hispanic/Latino population in hopes of finding some willing participants. However, I had an extremely hard time working up the courage to go talk to total strangers going about their usual business. Interestingly, I had little difficulty introducing myself and discussing my research to groups of students or individuals on the university campus, but was intimidated to do this in other social spaces. After a number of failed attempts that entailed me picking out who I thought could be a potential research candidate, which I based entirely off of their looks (racial profiling) and my guess at their age, and then

watching them finish their shopping and walk out the door without hearing a word I had to say, I finally convinced myself to just do it. I was able to introduce myself to twelve different potential participants I located in local stores (both grocery and clothing) and although each person was very cordial, just three expressed their interest in taking part, which resulted in two interviews; I never heard back from the other individual who gave me his contact information. Since I was not acquiring many potential participants this way, I soon stopped this recruitment method.

I also had to racially profile whenever I was observing local events, town meetings, or college campuses to get a better idea of the Hispanic/Latino population involvement compared to the white population involvement. I was at odds with having to racially profile to find potential participants and when observing community life and I am still at odds with it today. However, it was something that I had to do throughout the course of my fieldwork.

I did get very discouraged after my initial attempt at recruiting participants failed. I was worried that I would never be able to find enough people willing to take time out of their busy schedules to answer a bunch of questions about their life. Luckily, I was wrong and although it was not easy to find 45 respondents, I nevertheless succeeded in doing so. Once I better understood how to properly recruit participants by asking for their information rather than just giving them mine, I was able to schedule interviews on a fairly regular basis. I sent out over seventy emails to potential research candidates and more than half responded. Their initial response did not always guarantee an interview though. However, once an interview was scheduled most participants showed up right on time or within 10-15 minutes of the meeting time. As to be expected, cancellations did

occur; six people canceled their interview last minute for one reason or another; of those six potential respondents four were willing to reschedule. The two other individuals that canceled chose not to reschedule their interviews for reasons unbeknownst to me. I also had two complete no-shows. After waiting over an hour and getting no response from the potential participant by either text or email each time, I gave up on the scheduled interview. A few days after the missed interview I was sure to email each person to inquire about their future participation, but I simply never heard back from either one of them. I was able to confirm at a later date from their friends that both were alive and well.

Although I asked each immigrant descendant the same questions, not every respondent was as informative as I would have hoped. None of the interviews I conducted was pointless; however, some interviews resulted in much more substantive answers than others. I had equally informative and not as informative interviews from both males and females and of all different ages, so the quality of the interviews did not seem to discriminate. Simply put, some interviews were just better than others. I always tried to behave the same way at each interview so that my actions would not influence the respondent, but I imagine I was not always successful.

My roles as a local insider and ethnic outsider played differently among the children of immigrants than it did with the community leaders with whom I had contact. For the most part, the participants seemed to relate to me quite well and I to them. However, certain aspects of my life that I thought would help create a connection between me and the respondents did not always work as I thought they would, and other aspects I thought might create some difficulties instead did the opposite. As mentioned, I thought that being from Arkansas was an advantage and would provide me with a certain

level of instant trust among immigrant descendants. I felt that this was indeed the case with each community leader with whom I spoke and with other community members I met while in the field that also contributed to this research. However, being from Arkansas did not seem to be as important to the children of immigrants. For most of my respondents, my ties to Arkansas, although they made sense as to why I was doing my research in that location, was not that important. At first I wondered why being from Arkansas was not very significant to most of the participants, but as I learned more about the study population, I discovered that many of the respondents had not grown up in Arkansas, but rather moved there in junior high or high school. Their connection to Arkansas was likely less developed than mine, so my relationship with the state did not have as much credence as I initially thought it would.

Although my research was welcomed with opened arms among the community leaders, it was the children of immigrants, on whom the research focused, that at times questioned my intentions. Though rare, some apprehension was apparent among a few respondents. I was always able to calm the interviewees and reassure them by answering all the questions they had about the research project. Participation was completely voluntary and because of this I never felt as though a respondent thought I had an ulterior agenda, but some individuals wanted me to clarify why I was doing this particular research. After re-emphasizing that I was raised in Fayetteville, saw the boom in the Hispanic/Latino population, and that I want the greater native Arkansan (i.e., non-Hispanic white) population to better understand the lives of the Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation, including their successes and their struggles, any sense of doubt seemed to vanish. Only a handful of respondents really questioned my research

intentions, but during those interviews it soon became clear that their main concern was not what I was doing, but rather they wanted to make sure I would actually do something productive and/or meaningful with all the data I collected. Fortunately, they thought this dissertation is a good start. In the end, almost every participant expressed how “cool” my research was and in fact, by the end of nearly half of the interviews I conducted, the immigrant descendant would thank me for doing this research. A few respondents even said that my research and actions will speak loudly because I am white.

In general, college students tend to be open to new things, accepting of others, likely to understand academic research, and prone to sympathize with another student (in this case, me). Since all participants were college students or recent graduates, commonalities between us (me and the respondents) existed right from the start. My age (29 at the time of research) and my status as a graduate student allowed for comfortable interactions. As mentioned, being from Arkansas did not grant me the insider status among the Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation for which I was looking. Rather, my keen interest in their population coupled with my age and student status provided the credibility I needed to gain their trust. Finally, my white skin immediately marked me as an ethnic outsider, but this position as an outsider proved not to be the barrier I assumed it would be, but rather, at least to a few, a distinct advantage.

I must make clear that though each of the Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation immigrants I interviewed were either enrolled in college or had recently graduated, this was not my intention. I wanted very much to interview children of immigrants that did not go to college, but my efforts failed. Since my initial interviews were with those in college, their connections led me to other college students and then

their friends with whom I was put in contact were also in college. I asked the respondents if they knew of any potential candidates I could interview and I would always stress that they do not have to be in college. I would emphasize that I wanted to get to know some of this population that was in the working world rather than continuing their education. I even started asking for the potential research participants' names and numbers so I could make initial contact, but my respondents always said they needed to ask their friends' permission first. Although many of the children of immigrants said they had plenty of friends who were not in school and that would be a good fit for my research, I was never able to get their contact information. I was fortunate enough to conduct interviews with college students and recent graduates, but I often wonder how the lives and the futures of those not in college would differ from those whom I interviewed.

Another struggle I faced during my entire time in the field is the 'you' versus 'me' and 'your' versus 'my' dichotomies. Ironically, a primary goal of my research is to erase the divisive lines that cause discrimination, hate, and fear. It seems, however, that in order to minimize such lines their existence has to be acknowledged first; only then can they be eliminated. During each interview I was uncomfortable with treating the respondent as 'the other', but I feel that such a distinction often had to be made. I discussed this issue with a majority of the respondents and explained my struggles with having to talk with them and with others in a 'you' and 'they' versus 'me' and 'us' format. All of those with whom I discussed this understood my concerns and also tried to ease them. Many respondents explained that they often do feel like an 'other' in the U.S. and do not like this status. Their hopes parallel mine in that they want the research I conducted to shed a positive light about the 1.5 and second generation onto those with

little understanding of the population. Although there may be cultural and social differences between the Hispanic/Latino population and the native white population, the differences should not act as barriers; rather, the similarities should be what unite the two populations.

Even with the support of the study participants my struggle with addressing those I interviewed as ‘the other’, or even more simply as ‘they’, is still something with which I have to come to terms while writing this dissertation. It is a barrier that I do not know how to completely break down, but I trust that this research is a start. Many of the respondents were optimistic that this research would put a large and much needed crack into the wall that is often hard to break through; I can only hope they are correct.

Data Analysis

Ideally, data analysis should occur in conjunction with fieldwork and interviews should be transcribed soon after they are conducted. However, while I was in the field I struggled to find the time to do either. It was not until my fieldwork was complete that I was able to begin data analysis and interview transcriptions. Upon return from the field all interviews with community leaders and study participants were fully transcribed. I personally transcribed each of the community leader interviews and half of the study participant interviews. In an effort to maximize time, the remaining interviews were transcribed by anthropology undergraduate student research assistants under my direct supervision.¹⁹

¹⁹ Each student was enrolled in ASB 484 at Arizona State University, which is an apprenticeship program in which highly qualified undergraduate anthropology students work as research assistants under the guidance of anthropology graduate students or professors; the undergraduate students receive hourly credit for their work.

The analysis of ethnographic data from semi-structured interviews and participant observation was guided by grounded theory. This method is used to identify categories and concepts that emerge from text and then link them into substantive theories, while continuously checking the theories against the data (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990). After all participant transcriptions were complete, I read through each transcript and kept a log of themes and ideas that arose. I moved between the larger theoretical case at hand (45 Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation children of immigrants) and the individual empirical cases of each respondent. I continued to move back and forth between interviews, field notes, and theories searching for general trends prevalent across the text and for the similarities and differences between the group level and individual levels of data. Particular attention was paid to the relationships among the emergent themes and concepts (e.g., assimilation, transnationalism, ethnic identification, etc.) and the connection between these emergent themes and other important factors such as gender, age, and the generational status of the participant. MAXQDA10 (2011) aided in the recognition, coding, and organization of data around emerging themes and concepts from interview transcripts and field notes. Coding was an ongoing process that required continuous revision and eventually meaning was derived from the data.

To identify the assimilation path of each study participant I employed both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. To begin, I consider the three paths posited by segmented assimilation theory as realistic options (Portes and Zhou 1993). The three potential outcomes for how children of immigrants assimilate into American society are as follows: first, they may adopt an upward mobility pattern of acculturation and parallel economic integration into the white middle- or upper-class; second, they

could employ a downward mobility pattern through acculturation and economic integration into the underclass; and third, they could invoke an ethnic or bicultural approach that leads to upward mobility through economic integration into the middle-class, while remaining affiliated with, and often relying on, their original immigrant group (Portes and Zhou 1993).

Taken as such, one way I established the paths of assimilation children of immigrants take is quantitatively. By tabulating the answers given by each respondent to thirteen specific questions that address important factors of assimilation, I am able to create a general picture of the assimilative trends of this population. This approach is discussed in detail in Chapter 4. I also gauge the path of assimilation from an outsider's standpoint. I use all of the information I learned about each respondent during the interview, any time spent with the respondent or the respondents' friends thereafter, and all other details I gathered from participant observation to determine the path of integration of each of the children of immigrants. As an outsider, it is often easier to step back and view the larger picture at hand than it is for someone who is an active participant, knowingly or not. In these cases, it was quite obvious that all of the respondents are assimilating to the middle-class via the third path as deemed by segmented assimilation, on which I further elaborate in Chapter 5.

Legal status is an important variable in the integration process. Having legal status affords one the economic and social welfare opportunities that can encourage integration, while undocumented persons are left without such options. In addition, legal status in the receiving country allows for permissible travel between the sending and host country, which may facilitate transnational behavior. Members of the second generation

are U.S. citizens, but because the 1.5 generation is born outside of the U.S., their legal status can vary. Although different immigration statuses confer different rights and such rights can affect the assimilation process, I did not explicitly ask the study participants about their legality. I chose not to ask the respondents about their legal status because whether someone has legal documentation to be in the U.S. is an intensely private matter. I did not want that single question to prevent me from finding research participants and I did not want to compromise the respondents' trust in me or their status in the community. However, I did become privy to many of the respondents' legal status during my time in the field, but it was under their terms rather than mine. It is worth mentioning that while being undocumented prevents 'legal' integration it certainly does not prevent or block all paths of assimilation.

Transnationalism, as used in this dissertation, describes the processes, including activities and behaviors, in which individuals take part that create linkages to and with their country of heritage and place of residence (Basch et al. 1994; Levitt 2003). I understand the children of immigrants' transnational involvement from a qualitative perspective. To determine the extent to which the members of the 1.5 and second generation are transnational, I asked a variety of questions that pertained to such activity during each interview and their involvement, or lack thereof, in such transnational activities was also elicited. Using the information they provided me coupled with the data I compiled during participant observation I am able to make conclusions about how active, or inactive, someone is transnationally, which I discuss in Chapter 6.

The ethnic identity to which an immigrant descendant self-ascribes is distinguished using Jensen et al.'s (2006) ethnic identity typology. Jensen et al. (2006)

identify three types of ethnic identities immigrants and their children in the U.S. may take: 1) “a specific identity that ties the individual to the culture and ancestral nation of origin” (e.g., Mexican), 2) “a hybridization that retains the specific cultural referent of the group merged with an Americanized identity” (e.g., Mexican American), or, 3) “a general pan-ethnic identity that extends across specific nations of origin to a general heritage that groups share” (e.g., Hispanic or Latino) (1094-1095). I also add a fourth identity option that ties the individual to the U.S. (i.e., American), which aligns with Rumbaut’s (1994) ethnic label categories. It is possible for someone to have different self-ascribed ethnic identities than in Jensen et al.’s typology (e.g., Chicano). In such cases an additional ethnic category is created and labeled ‘other’ with a line to define what the other is. Although that it is possible for an individual to not self-identify in ethnic terms, this was not the case for any of the respondents.

In line with Lubbers et al. (2007), to elicit ethnic identifications two open-ended questions were asked on the survey: ‘which word or phrase best describes your ethnic identity?’ and ‘is there another word or phrase that best describes your ethnic identity?’ (727). Often times, the respondents listed more than one ethnic term to which they self-ascribed. Once all interviews were complete, I categorized each respondent’s answer(s) following both Jensen et al.’s typology (2006) and Rumbaut’s (1994) classification. The ethnic identity categories are as follows: 1) home country, an identity that ties the individual to the culture and nation of heritage (Mexican, Salvadoran, or Honduran), 2) American hybrid, a hybridization that combines a specific cultural reference with an Americanized identity (Mexican American, Salvadoran American, Bolivian American, Tex Mex, or Chicano/a), 3) Hispanic/Latino, a general pan-ethnic identity that denotes a

heritage that groups across nations share, and, 4) American identity, an identity that ties the individual to the United States. I discuss the ethnic self-labels of the immigrant descendants and the meanings attached to the identities in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 4

ASSIMILATION IN THEORY AND IN PRACTICE

Chapter Introduction

The United States is often described as a country of immigrants and its history is simple: the immigrants arrived, they assimilated, and raised the future generations of America. Today's newcomers and their children face different obstacles that their predecessors did not; most recent arrivals are racially dissimilar from the majority population and many are poor, uneducated, unskilled workers unable to join the knowledge economy (Jacoby 2004). Moreover, they enter a U.S. that has become economically stratified, which makes the middle-class much harder to reach. Finally, the newly arrived are met by a people that adhere to American ideals that are still based in the past; thus, the immigrants are expected to assimilate and raise their children as Americans who love their country, just as it was done years ago.

Needless to say, today's immigrant absorption does not always follow that of the past. Assimilation is occurring of course, but the ways in which immigrants and their children do so is simply not 'a one size fits all' process. To better understand immigrant incorporation of present day, the following two chapters focus on the assimilation of the children of immigrants living in northwest Arkansas. In this chapter, I review the prominent literature on assimilation. Here, I focus heavily on segmented assimilation and then discuss its importance to my research. After that, I present the different levels of assimilation among the study population.

Review of Assimilation Literature

Straight-line Assimilation

Assimilation, as first conceived by Milton Gordon (1964) in the mid-sixties, “meant the entry of members of an ethnic minority into primary-group relationships with the majority group” (Alba and Nee 1997:829). What he was describing at that time was how immigrants to the United States were becoming part of the dominant American social structure and culture. Gordon (1964) made a distinction between ‘acculturation’ and ‘structural assimilation’; assimilation as described above refers to structural assimilation and acculturation is “the minority group’s adoption of the ‘cultural patterns’ of the host society, [which] typically comes first and is inevitable” (Alba and Nee 1997:829). The final outcome of this straight-line assimilation in Gordon’s terms was the loss of the home culture and traits, the adoption of the host country’s values, language, and finally, the eventual intermarrying with the majority host population (Edmonston and Passel 1994). Gordon’s (1964) assimilation theory was the dominant paradigm in understanding how immigrants became incorporated into the host society for some time, but over the last few decades assimilation has been thought of as a negative word and process as it is ethnocentric, patronizing, and creates an image of minority immigrants struggling to keep their cultural ways and ethnic integrity alive (Alba and Nee 1997; Edmonston and Passel 1994; Jacoby 2004).

The aspects of this classic assimilation model that are often criticized are that it assumes a hierarchy and a hegemonic dominant majority culture. Straight-line assimilation also presupposes that the minority immigrant culture is eradicated and that the majority group’s culture does not change, thus acting as a one-way process.

Furthermore, it implies a hegemonic project of the nation-state, the 'melting pot' ideal goes against current political ideology of multiethnic societies, and finally, assimilation theory cannot explain the whole story about immigrant incorporation, as important macro differences among immigrants persist (Alba and Nee 1997; Edmonston and Passel 1994; van Tubergen 2006). Despite these criticisms and substantial evidence that demonstrates not only does ethnic culture persist, but that straight-line assimilation is rare for recent immigrants, there are some scholars that claim assimilation is a process that is still occurring and that it should be considered a useful concept in understanding how immigrants become part of the receiving country (e.g., Alba and Nee 1997, 2003; Nee and Alba 2004).

Assimilation Redefined

Alba and Nee (1997) suggest that rather than dismissing assimilation as an outdated and inadequate model, it should be redefined to make it useful in the study of current immigration. Alba and Nee (1997) acknowledge the shortfalls of Gordon's assimilation trajectory and offer to broaden its definitional terms. To begin, they reject Gordon's two-group framework that claims the minority group will assimilate to the majority group. Instead, they suggest that a new understanding of assimilation should recognize that the minority group does not always assimilate to the majority group, but that they can assimilate to other minority groups instead. A second aspect of assimilation that Alba and Nee (1997) want to alter is the notion of straight-line assimilation that implies that all immigrants assimilate to the middle-class in a fairly timely manner. Instead, they make clear that not all immigrants assimilate to the middle-class, but instead can be concentrated in the poorer sector.

Alba and Nee (1997) also understand that Gordon's original definition was too static and homogeneous, as it assumed that assimilation only involved the change of the immigrant culture to the majority culture and the majority culture did not experience much, if any, change to its own culture. In place of this, Alba and Nee suggest that the new definition of assimilation "is best understood as the fading of such boundaries, i.e., individuals on both sides of the line come to see themselves as more and more alike", as the differences between the minority and majority cultures are reduced (Nee and Alba 2004:89). Furthermore, the elimination of ethnicity, as implied in Gordon's definition, is one of the boundaries that can fade, but does not necessarily disappear. Finally, Alba and Nee (1997) point out that Gordon's assimilation fails to address occupational mobility and economic assimilation, which they assert are key aspects of socioeconomic assimilation. In short, Alba and Nee's (1997, 2003) new definition of assimilation implies a reduction of ethnic and cultural differences between two groups. Their definition, although slightly more attuned to what is happening today, still assumes the existence of a dominant majority culture, similar to a melting pot, and they claim that immigrants today are assimilating and will continue to assimilate as the past generations did despite racial differences (Alba and Nee 1997, 2003; Nee and Alba 2004).

Segmented Assimilation

It is true that some type of assimilation is happening, at least to a certain extent, as it is fairly easy to tell when someone is 'American', but it is doubtful that every immigrant assimilates to the dominant, or even other minority cultures in the host society, as Alba and Nee claim (1997). Moreover, it is hard to believe that immigrants are assimilating as fast as their predecessors, as there are a number of different hindrances

that they face that were not necessarily issues in the past. Because of this scholars have pointed to other routes of immigrant incorporation; segmented assimilation theory is the most well known alternative to straight-line assimilation (Portes and Zhou 1993).

Portes and Zhou (1993) have been influential in developing segmented assimilation theory. Its basic assumption is that societies are structured by inequality according to a racialized social class hierarchy that results in diverse outcomes for immigrant assimilation in that not everyone assimilates to the same strata of society. Segmented assimilation theory “attempts to explain what determines the segment of American society into which a particular immigrant group may assimilate” (Zhou 1999). Portes and Zhou (1993) make clear that they are not debating whether assimilation is happening among today’s second generation immigrants because they agree it is, but are rather attempting to explain to which segment of society they will assimilate, as it is not always to the majority middle-class (Zhou 1999). Segmented assimilation is divided into three possible multidirectional patterns: the first is the time-honored upward mobility pattern “of growing acculturation and parallel integration into the white middle-class”, the second path is that of downward assimilation to the minority underclass, which leads to permanent poverty, and the third way is the “ethnic or bicultural path” towards eventual upward assimilation into the white middle-class (Joppke and Morawska 2003:23; Portes and Zhou 1993:82). This path “associates rapid economic advancement with deliberate preservation of the immigrant community’s values and tight solidarity” (Portes and Zhou 1993:82; Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

Major Determinants of Segmented Assimilation

Immigrants' Human and Social Capital

The direction or path to which the children of immigrants assimilate, upward, downward, or upward via the preservation of immigrant values, depends on a number of determinants; they are as follows: the immigrant parents' human and social capital, the context of reception or the modes of incorporation, and the family structure (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Immigrants' human and social capital plays an important role in determining to what strata of society their children will assimilate. Social capital, "the resources available to individuals and families who are part of tightly-knit immigrant communities", can play a role in the future success of 1.5 and second generation immigrants because a strong support group of friends and family can help guide behavior and values (Portes 2004:163). Immigrants' economic success is often linked to the amount of human capital, "the skills that immigrants bring along in the form of education, job experience, and language knowledge", with which they arrive (Portes and Rumbaut 2001:46). If immigrants arrive with a substantial amount of human capital they have distinct advantages over those who lack sufficient human capital. However, with that said, immigrant success is based on how that human capital is utilized and such "utilization is contingent on the context in which they are incorporated" (Portes and Rumbaut 2001:46).

Modes of Incorporation

The context of reception, also called modes of incorporation, refers to the way immigrants are received at the governmental, societal, and communal levels. At the governmental level the three "basic options are exclusion, passive acceptance, or active

encouragement” (Portes and Rumbaut 2001:46; Portes and Zhou 1993). Exclusion by the government either prohibits immigration or “forces immigrants into a wholly underground and disadvantaged existence” (Portes and Rumbaut 2001:46-47). Passive acceptance by the government allows immigrants to have legal access to the country, but does not go much further than that. The government does not assist the immigrants or compensate them in anyway for their lack of familiarity with the new country. Active encouragement by the government encourages immigrants to move to the host country and upon arrival the government often offers its support and assistance, which obviously provides advantages for the immigrants (often refugees) that arrive under these conditions (Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

Reception at the societal level is a continuum that ranges from prejudice to nonprejudice (Portes and Zhou 1993). A prejudice reception often entails the host society creating or already having preconceived negative stereotypes of immigrants and employers frequently view immigrants as only suitable for menial jobs (Portes and Böröcz 1989). A more favorable reception is one that is nonprejudice where there are no strong stereotypes of immigrants and immigrants are free to and do compete with the native-born for economic advancement; this is an ideal type of societal reception and occurs rarely (Portes and Böröcz 1989). It is understood that new minorities are more favorably received by the host society the more similar they are to society’s mainstream in terms of physical appearance, class background, and language, thus making a favorable and nonprejudice societal reception of today’s immigrants highly unlikely (Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

The third type of reception happens with the immigrant community; this is also the most immediate type of reception immigrants encounter upon arrival to the receiving country (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). It is possible that no immigrant community exists for some newcomers and in this case the immigrants must fend for themselves and learn to adapt on their own. In most cases however, immigrants arrive to “places where a community of their co-nationals already exists” (Portes and Rumbaut 2001:48). These communities can assist new immigrants in a number of ways; they can help ease the impact of adjusting to a new country, they can help immigrants find jobs, and they can also help with immediate living needs, such as housing and schools for children (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Although most immigrant communities are more than willing to provide assistance to their own, they can only do so within the limits of the resources and information available to them. The newcomers’ future of socioeconomic mobility often rests in the hands of the immigrant community that receives them. Immigrants arrive with a certain amount of human capital and whether it can be utilized often depends on whether the ethnic community is “mainly composed of working-class persons or contains a significant professional and entrepreneurial element” (Portes and Rumbaut 2001:48). If the newly arrived join a weak immigrant community that only has people employed in working-class jobs they will also be likely to follow that same path. However, if new immigrants are lucky enough to join a more advantaged ethnic community they will likely be able to move up the socioeconomic ladder. Thus, the immigrant community in which newcomers are received can have both positive and negative affects on their future.

Family Structure

Finally, the structure of the immigrant family is important for 1.5 and second generation adaption to the receiving country, even after accounting for parental human and social capital and modes of incorporation (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Put simply, immigrant children fair better when both parents are present than do immigrant children whose family is not intact (Gonzales-Berry et al. 2006). It is believed that a large amount of human capital is expected to positively affect immigrants' status and if accepted by the government, society, and an advantageous ethnic community, immigrant socioeconomic attainment and family structure are positively affected. Clearly, a lack of human capital and difficulties faced upon arrival are expected to negatively affect socioeconomic success and the family structure.

Three Types of Acculturation: Consonant, Dissonant, and Selective

Parental human and social capital, modes of incorporation, and family structure are linked to three different types of acculturation the 1.5 and second generation experience. Consonant acculturation occurs when the immigrant parents and their children slowly abandon the language and culture of the home country while adopting English and American ways of life. Importantly, this type of acculturation occurs at the same pace for both the parents and children, which often prevents the children of immigrants from undermining parental authority. Consonant acculturation is most likely to occur when human capital of the immigrant parents is high (Portes et al. 2009).

Dissonant acculturation, on the other hand, happens when the immigrant parents and their children adjust to their new environment at a different pace. While the immigrant parents are slow to let go of their native language and culture, their children

move through this process much more rapidly. In so doing, the children often reject their culture of heritage and parental-child communication becomes isolated. Dissonant acculturation is most common among the children of immigrants whose parents have low human capital. This type of acculturation frequently leads to low educational attainment and it can lead to downward assimilation among the 1.5 and second generation (Portes et al. 2009).

Selective acculturation takes place when both generations learn English and American ways, but at a slower pace than those that acculturate consonantly, while also retaining the home language and some elements of the immigrant culture. Selective acculturation occurs when the immigrant family is surrounded by other co-ethnics in their community, which enables them to preserve the home culture and native language even as they are learning the new language and culture (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Furthermore, parental and children roles are not challenged. Selective acculturation is often a characteristic of those following the third path of segmented assimilation (Portes et al. 2009).

Three Paths of Segmented Assimilation

Path 1: Upward Assimilation

As posited by Portes and Zhou (1993), segmented assimilation is divided into three types: upward, downward, and upward coupled with biculturalism. As discussed, there are a number of factors that determine the direction or path to which immigrants assimilate. Each type of assimilation is often each governed by the immigrants' human and social capital, the context of reception or the modes of incorporation, and their family structure (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). If human and social capital are both high, and it is

utilized to its full extent, which is often determined by the context of reception by the government, society, and their ethnic community, and the structure of the family is maintained, it is likely that 1.5 and second generation immigrants will be upwardly mobile and assimilate into the mainstream.

Path 2: Downward Assimilation

The 1.5 and second generation immigrants that are prone to downward assimilation are expected to have parents with low human and social capital, to be negatively received by the government and host society, to be part of a disadvantaged immigrant community, and are also thought to have a weak family structure (Portes et al. 2009). Downward assimilation can stem from any one or all of the above factors. Furthermore, not only do the aforementioned determinants play an important role in the direction to which immigrants assimilate, but there are additional challenges today's 1.5 and second generation face that often create vulnerability to downward assimilation; they are racism, location, and the lack of mobility ladders (Portes 1998; Portes and Zhou 1993).

The prejudice that immigrants often encounter is usually due to the appearance of their skin color and physical features that are different from the white majority. Immigrants of the past were for the most part white, so they simply had to let go of their culture and embrace the American ways to fit in, but recent immigrants now have to deal with the racial barrier that exists in American society. This barrier is of course not warranted, but is nevertheless something that pervades societies worldwide.

The 1.5 and second generation immigrants, when compared to their non-immigrant native counterparts, are over concentrated in urban areas, and often in the

inner-city (Portes 1998). Unfortunately, immigrants and their children that live in these inner-city locations face high outcomes of poverty due to the exposure to domestic minorities and the lack of resources, such as good public schools that excel in educating students (Portes 1998). It is often here that immigrant children are exposed to “alternative deviant lifestyles grounded in gangs and the drug trade”, which lead to downward assimilation (Portes et al. 2009:1080). Those that assimilate downward become embedded in the underclass from where it is incredibly hard to escape. The underclass is a sector of the population that occupies the lowest position on the social hierarchy; poor domestic minorities and nonwhite immigrants are the most common members.

Finally, the absence of mobility ladders hinders immigrants’ abilities to escape downward assimilation. Economic opportunities of the past were more abundant, in that immigrants could slowly move up the economic ladder by continuing to move towards better paid occupations while still a part of the working-class (Jacoby 2004). However, this type of movement is much harder to accomplish now. Today’s bifurcated labor market has created an hourglass economy in which there are few opportunities between the low paying jobs immigrant parents often accept and the high-tech and professional careers that require college degrees (Portes 1998; Portes et al. 2009). The high paying jobs that immigrant parents desire for their children are attainable only with a university education; the expense and legal status of some immigrant children prevent even the most ambitious from achieving their goals. Many 1.5 and second generation individuals are thus trapped at the bottom of the hourglass with few options to climb out. Clearly, and unfortunately, there are many roadblocks immigrant parents and their children face as newcomers to the United States. Although upward assimilation into the mainstream is a

possibility, there are many factors that can affect the process and often times the challenges are too difficult to overcome. Thus, downward assimilation is the outcome of many 1.5 and second generation immigrant children (Portes et al. 2009).

Path 3: Upward Assimilation via Ethnic Participation/Biculturalism

The third outcome posited by segmented assimilation is the ethnic or bicultural path that associates rapid economic advancement with the preservation of the immigrant culture and its ethnic values and continued ethnic solidarity. Although it is often thought that assimilation today is hindered by belonging to an ethnic community, it may be to the contrary; assimilation is “actually helped by making common cause with one’s fellow ethnics and belonging to a strong, tightly knit ethnic community” (Zhou 2004:139). As discussed, a strong and advantageous co-ethnic immigrant community can help recent arrivals adjust to the new country and assist new immigrants in a variety of tasks, such as finding a place to live, enrolling children in school, and finding jobs. The members of an advantageous immigrant community are likely to have jobs that are higher on the ladder than the menial low-paying jobs immigrants often are forced to take. If this is the case, then the newcomers are exposed to this workforce and can hopefully find a job that will provide decent pay and a chance for advancement.

Alternatively, and also an example of an advantageous immigrant community, is the ethnic enclave economy. Sometimes immigrants who have trouble moving forward in the dominant culture instead become mobile in their ethnic community by creating some type of ethnic business, ranging from a small grocery store that sells goods from the homeland or a restaurant that serves food native to the ethnic community. The ethnic enclave economy can expand so that many immigrants are working or managing their

own businesses within the community they wish to serve. In northwest Arkansas, the ethnic economy consists of a number of Hispanic/Latino specialty businesses that are owned and commonly employed by immigrants or immigrant descendants. They include grocery stores, butcher shops, barber shops, discotecas, and a banquet hall that exclusively advertises space for quinceaneras and other fiestas. Eventually, the ethnic economy becomes “economically diversified, including all types of business, trade, and industrial production” (Schmitter Heisler 2008:88). In much larger cities, Chinatowns and Little Saigons are examples of such economies, but of course it is on a much lesser scale in northwest Arkansas.

Ethnic economies serve as an alternative to the secondary labor market in which many immigrants work. Additionally, it is a way for co-ethnic immigrants to forge lasting cultural ties with each other and even with the homeland if the businesses become transnational. When new immigrants arrive in such communities that have a thriving ethnic enclave economy, job placement within the community is often easily facilitated and sometimes there is even room for advancement as well (Alba 1998; Portes 1998; Schmitter Heisler 2008; Zhou 2004).

However, with that said, there are some researchers that argue ethnic economies are not as beneficial as the literature claims. For example, Tarry Hum (2001) explains that while ethnic economies do provide jobs to the unemployed they are often highly exploitative, they reinforce racial and ethnic isolation and segregation, and the earnings return on human capital is negatively affected (Zhou 2007). While employment in an ethnic economy may not be the greatest option for immigrants, it is often the only available opportunity. I would argue that working in an ethnic economy is the best

alternative to having no job at all. Furthermore, there is ample room for economic advancement within an ethnic economy and this is not always the case in other menial jobs with which immigrants are associated (Zhou 2007).

The immigrant community can also provide support when new arrivals face external difficulties, like discrimination and prejudice, and the community can help facilitate selective acculturation. Selective acculturation, as mentioned, is when both the immigrant parents and children learn English and American cultural ways at the same pace while also retaining the native language and preserving some aspects of the heritage culture. It most often occurs when the immigrant family is surrounded by other co-ethnics in their community, which can encourage foreign language and cultural maintenance while acquiring English skills and becoming familiar with American traditions (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). The ethnic or bicultural path towards upward assimilation is advantageous in that the host society does not strip the immigrants' culture away from them as was implied by previous assimilation theories. Rather, the heritage culture can continue to be a part of the immigrant identity even as they acculturate to the host society and gain the ability to participate in it with relative ease.

It is clear that "immigrants and their children can draw socioeconomic advantages from ethnic solidarity, social affiliation with and cultural loyalty to the ethnic group" (Alba 1998:22). A strong ethnic community can be very influential in immigrants' abilities to succeed in the host society. Although some might argue that retaining the home culture and working in an ethnic economy either hinders or prevents assimilation, it is quite the opposite (Zhou 2004). Immigrants that work in an ethnic economy can be upwardly mobile within the community itself, but can also move into the mainstream

workforce with the experience gained from working in the ethnic economy. The ethnic community can provide support in dealing with external challenges, help maintain certain cultural ways and values, and can also promote and encourage the success of the 1.5 and second generation children into mainstream society (Portes and Zhou 1993). Thus, ethnic economies and selective acculturation create a third path immigrants can take to assimilation and also towards it (Portes and Zhou 1993).

Evaluating Segmented Assimilation

The theory of segmented assimilation is of course not without its critics. Although many researchers suggest that their study populations assimilate to different segments of society and that certain determinants influence the likely paths of many 1.5 and second generation immigrants (e.g., Kroneberg 2008; Massey 2007; Portes and Rumbaut 2001, 2006; Telles and Ortiz 2008), others have attempted to disprove the theory altogether (e.g., Alba 2009; Alba and Nee 1997, 2003; Foner 2000; Perlmann 2005; Waldinger et al. 2007). Perlmann (2005), for example, in his book *Italians Then, Mexicans Now*, evaluates the assimilation processes of the second generation Mexican immigrants of today compared to the second generation Italian immigrants of the past. His analysis is actually consistent with segmented assimilation; he explains that the high dropout rates for the contemporary second generation Mexican immigrants can lead to downward assimilation and he concludes that “Mexican economic assimilation may take more time—four to five generations rather than three to four” (Perlmann 2005:124). However, rather than saying that segmented assimilation is occurring, he instead claims that for the theory to be valid “a more dire outlook, namely stagnation and even a downward slide” must be the ultimate outcome (Perlmann 2005:124). Perlmann (2005) fails, however, to

provide enough evidence that the contemporary fourth and fifth generation Mexican immigrants will be fully assimilated into the American economic mainstream.

In their article, “Bad Jobs, Good Jobs, No Jobs?”, Waldinger et al. (2007) fall into a similar trap as Perlmann (2005). Waldinger et al. (2007) explain that their empirical study on the employment experiences of the Mexican American second generation yields no support for segmented assimilation theory, yet they state quite clearly that second generation Mexicans are more likely to have low-paying jobs that offer no fringe benefits than their white counterparts. Waldinger et al. (2007) certainly do not challenge segmented assimilation theory, as they claim, when they conclude that “the prospects for narrowing that gap are at best uncertain, as disparities in educational attainment between whites and Mexican Americans seem to be deeply entrenched” (32). Both Perlmann (2005) and Waldinger et al. (2007) fail to provide adequate arguments against segmented assimilation and instead actually present evidence that is aligned with the theory.

Despite the arguments made against segmented assimilation, it is undoubtedly a sufficient lens through which I choose to view the integration process of the 1.5 and second generation children of immigrants. This theory is appropriate to use because its three possible outcomes of integration recognize variation among individuals and offer a more accurate portrayal of current immigrant experiences. Much of the literature that employs segmented assimilation theory clearly shows evidence of downward assimilation and unfortunately many Hispanic/Latinos, particularly those of Mexican heritage, are routinely the group most at risk of such a path (e.g., López and Stanton-Salazar 2001; Portes et al. 2009; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993; Stepick and Stepick 2010; Telles 2006). The research that leads to these analogous conclusions are often

based on similar study perimeters, most notably location (i.e., traditional receiving city and states with large immigrant populations). My research is significantly different in geographic location, but the population and age range remains the same. It is important to use segmented assimilation in this case because any divergent outcomes may provide critical insight into the intricacies of the theory.

The Future of Assimilation

At this point in time two schools of thought dominate the discussion about the future of the 1.5 and second generation in this country (Massey and Sánchez R. 2010). The pessimistic school, characterized by segmented assimilation, points to a poor context of reception, on-going racialization, and a bifurcated economic market as major determinants prohibiting many from becoming upwardly mobile. The optimistic school of thought, in contrast, sees parallels between past European immigrant generations to the 1.5, second, and future Hispanic/Latino immigrant generations of today. Even in the face of discrimination, racialization, and a difficult labor market, today's children of immigrants will become incorporated into mainstream America, essentially adhering to the major tenets of straight-line assimilation.

The future of assimilation theories is of course unknown. Additional research is warranted especially among 1.5, second, third, and fourth generation children of immigrants, as they are the ones assimilating into the different stratas of society. Too often though the focus of assimilation theories and the immigrants' success is based on socioeconomic assimilation into the mainstream, but the process of assimilation needs to be thought of as a collective process; one where the economic, cultural, and social processes of assimilating are fundamentally interactive (Freeman 2007). Alba and Nee

(1997) argue that their amended definition of assimilation should at the very least “remain part of the theoretical toolkit...especially [among] those who are concerned with the new immigration” (863). Although I agree that straight-line assimilation should remain a viable concept, it seems to me that segmented assimilation theory fits better with current immigrant experiences that are occurring today.

Segmented assimilation theory attempts to explain why some immigrants, namely the 1.5 and second generation, assimilate to a certain strata of society and why others do not (Portes and Zhou 1993). It does so on a collective level, but fails to explain it on an individual level. The theory also seems to pay too much attention to external structural factors and not enough to human capital and agency. Although, with this said, I do think that external factors are extremely limiting for today’s immigrants; even if an immigrant arrives with an abundance of human capital, has a strong will, and is determined to ‘make it’, the existing external factors still must be overcome to guarantee eventual success within mainstream society.

The most important aspect of assimilation that must be kept in mind is that to where an immigrant assimilates is dependent on a multitude of factors including but not limited to access to human and social capital, the modes of incorporation, and family structure. Assimilation not only must become, but also thought of, as a two-way process; the host society needs to be more accepting of immigrants and willing to change (Barkan 2007; Jacoby 2004; Kasinitz et al. 2008; Massey and Sánchez R. 2010; Singer 2004). If change becomes something that is not to be feared, then both the host society and the immigrants entering it will have a much easier time adjusting to and accepting one another. It is difficult to predict which scenario will play out in the future, but a good way

to start is to understand the present. Thus, the experiences of the children of immigrants living in northwest Arkansas are of great significance.

Study Participants: Levels of Assimilation

One way to understand assimilation patterns of the 1.5 and second generation is quantitatively; this was done by tabulating the answers given by each respondent to thirteen specific questions that address important factors of assimilation.²⁰ Each question is weighted equally and the answer to each question is worth 0-6 points. Points were totaled and then divided by the number of questions answered by the respondent. The final totals are between 0-6 (the lowest actual number is 2.67 and the highest is 5.72).²¹ I then assigned a point value to assimilation; 0-1.99 indicates a low level of assimilation; 2.0-3.99 indicates a medium level of assimilation; and, 4.0-6.0 indicates a high level of assimilation. Although these point values are somewhat arbitrary, they nevertheless reflect the respondents' level of assimilation as I understand it.

Using the answers to just thirteen different questions to determine how assimilated a person is or is not can be problematic. In addition, the point values assigned to the different levels of assimilation are not theoretically based, but rather determined by my rationale. This tabulation is not meant to provide concrete answers that are absolute. Instead, these calculations are used to offer a general picture of what is likely occurring among the study population in terms of assimilation. It is possible that this specific use of this data is faulty; however, I do not believe that to be the case. Rather, after the qualitative analyses of all of the data I collected in the field, I am confident that the

²⁰ A copy of the specific questions is listed as D.1. in Appendix D.

²¹ A copy of the tabulated data for the level of assimilation of the immigrant descendants is listed as D.2. in Appendix D.

questions used here and the tabulated point values represent the general trend of this population. Quantifying this data is simply another way to present this research.

The thirteen questions on which this quantitative analysis is based were specifically chosen because they are each strong indicators of assimilation. Although respondents answered a wide variety of questions pertaining to assimilation, the ones highlighted here are the best markers with which to gauge assimilative patterns. The questions cover aspects about both cultural and social assimilation while economic assimilative characteristics are intentionally excluded in this tabulation for two main reasons. First, I assess economic assimilation using a separate quantitative method, and second, every respondent appears to be assimilated into the U.S. economy, so any question about economic assimilation included in this group would have no impact on the final results.

A low level of assimilation, in this tabulation, indicates that a person is not very well integrated into the cultural and/or social realms of the majority population in the U.S. A medium level of assimilation suggests a working understanding of how the cultural and/or social fields function in the United States. A person with a medium level of assimilation, for example, may be fully integrated into the cultural domain of the U.S., but not yet completely integrated socially. Someone with a high level of assimilation is well versed in the on-goings of the U.S. and has the ability to function seamlessly (or close to seamlessly) in a majority or all aspects of the U.S., including culturally and socially. It does not, however, necessarily indicate a loss of a person's ethnic heritage or their ability to function equally as well in another culture or country.

Of the 45 individuals I interviewed, 29 have a high level of assimilation and 16 have a medium level of assimilation; no one has a low level of assimilation. No one has a score of 6.0 (the highest possible score) and the average assimilation score is on the lower end of a high level of assimilation at 4.17. The average score of those in the high level of assimilation group is 4.61, which indicates that although most of this population is fully functioning in a majority of aspects in the U.S., they are not necessarily shedding their ethnic heritage as they become adept in American ways. These numbers suggest that these children of immigrants are following the third path of segmented assimilation.

I also gauge the immigrant descendants' path of assimilation from an outsider's standpoint. I used all of the information I learned about each respondent during the interview, any time spent with the respondent or the respondents' friends thereafter, and all other details I gathered from participant observation to determine the path of integration of each of the children of immigrants. As an outsider, it is often easier to step back and view the larger picture at hand than it is for someone who is an active participant, knowingly or not. Accordingly, in Chapter 5, I will discuss the assimilation patterns of the immigrant descendants informed by the qualitative data I gathered in the field and will assess their experiences in relation to segmented assimilation.

CHAPTER 5

SMALL TOWN USA (OR IN THIS CASE, ARKANSAS): DIFFERENT DETERMINANTS OF SEGMENTED ASSIMILATION

Chapter Introduction

In Chapter 4, I review the important assimilation literature, discuss its relevance to my research, and reveal the levels of assimilation among the members of the 1.5 and second generation. Stemming from that, I begin Chapter 5 by first explaining how and in what ways the study population is assimilating. I focus specifically on their assimilation across the U.S. economic, cultural, and social domains, which complements the quantitative data presented in the previous chapter. Next, I analyze the assimilative patterns of the children of immigrants in terms of segmented assimilation, the theory that I discussed extensively in Chapter 4. I finish the chapter with my conclusions about the immigrant descendants' assimilation trajectories.

In this chapter, it will become apparent that the members of the 1.5 and second generation that participated in this research project are assimilated to the U.S., but the extent to which they are assimilated does vary. The assimilation paths these children of immigrants are taking, however, are remarkably similar to one another and as they make abundantly clear, assimilation is not simply a one-way street. Importantly, the assimilation trajectories of these immigrant descendants diverge from the majority of findings that focus on the same population. Much of the literature that concentrates on the Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation points to their bleak future that is characterized by downward assimilation (e.g., López and Stanton-Salazar 2001; Portes et al. 2009; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993; Telles 2006). Such research is

commonly based on the immigrant children that live in places with traditionally large immigrant populations, such as Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago, and New York City. The downward assimilation of children of immigrants can stem from parental human and social capital, negative modes of incorporation, and a lack of family structure; racism, geographic location, and lack of mobility ladders can influence descent as well.

In contrast, the conclusions that I am able to draw from the members of the 1.5 and second generation living in northwest Arkansas suggest that the determinants of segmented assimilation may differ for the children of immigrants living in smaller, more rural locales compared to those living in more traditional receiving cities and states. Selective acculturation, supportive parents and intact families, geographic location, and access to education are the four factors that differentiate this group from other Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generations that are predicted to assimilate downward. Thus, the assimilative experiences of this population have important implications for the future of assimilation.

It must be pointed out that I only interviewed college students or recent college graduates, which makes this study sample biased. However, identifying the variables that may have played a role in the current success and probable upward mobility of this group is critical. A better understanding of what factors lead to a greater propensity to attend college and influence movement towards the middle-class is needed, so that other immigrant children in similar situations can have a chance to succeed as well.

Study Participants: Economic, Cultural, and Social Assimilation

Assimilation is a collective process and is best viewed as a continuum where individuals are integrated to a certain point across the different facets of life that

encompass the economic, cultural, and social realms (Jacoby 2004). Since the pace of assimilation to each of them can vary, the points on the continuum are in a continuous flux until full assimilation is reached. Economic assimilation to the U.S. occurs almost immediately as immigrants must find work and a place to live. Cultural assimilation begins quickly too as the new arrivals have to familiarize themselves with American ways enough to be able to register their children for school, be able to shop for food, and pay their bills. Social assimilation, on the other hand, usually happens more gradually. It occurs when the immigrants feel more at ease with their surroundings and become part of community organizations and other mainstream activities. In fact, it is more likely that this type of assimilation will not occur with the first generation immigrants, but rather with their 1.5 and second generation children (Jacoby 2004). Full assimilation, as used here, does not imply the loss of one's ethnic heritage or cultural background, but rather it signifies a complete understanding of the new country (the U.S. in this case), its culture, and the ways of the people and an ability to function at the same level at which a native can.

Obviously, over the course of each interview I was able to learn a lot from my respondent. I not only learned from the questions I asked, but I was able to ascertain a significant amount of information from the anecdotes and personal stories they told me during our time together as well. I also jotted down notes about each interviewee that I thought might be of importance. For example, I noted what each person was wearing and paid attention to the type of accent they used when speaking. I asked some direct questions, such as do you think you are integrated into the U.S. and do you feel like you fit into U.S. society, and a variety of more general questions that helped me to understand

the daily life of each person I interviewed. This data informs how and in what ways the children of immigrants are assimilating to the U.S.; assimilation spans the economic, cultural, and social realms and it will be discussed as such.

Economic Assimilation

Throughout each interview I asked a number of questions that relate to assimilation, some directly and others indirectly. Although these children of immigrants are still fairly young (most are 18 or 19 years old and all but two are under 25 years of age), their economic assimilation, including their current and future impact on the economy, is important to understand. Each respondent is already economically assimilated to both the state of Arkansas and nationally. Of course, this is not a surprise since economic assimilation occurs quickly (Jacoby 2004). To begin with, nearly everyone has a job, which means that almost everyone is already paying taxes. Food service, retail, and work study on the U of A campus are the most common jobs reported, which are all very typical for college students everywhere. The important point here is that these immigrant children are working the same part time jobs as their non-Hispanic native Arkansan counterparts work, rather than a job more similar to their parents (e.g., manufacturing or construction), which suggest they are on par with the average wage level of the standard college student.

All of the respondents also attend college and thus have to pay for it. Many students have received scholarships, some have education loans, and some pay for it entirely out of pocket. Regardless of the manner in which school is paid, the state of Arkansas is benefitting two fold. First, the state is making money from their college

enrollment, and second, once these students graduate they will enter into the workforce and become valuable members to the labor economy.

Attending college and working both contribute to the economy, but so do other aspects of daily life. Many students no longer live in their parents' home and instead live in apartments and rental houses throughout Fayetteville. Paying rent, furnishing the apartment or rental house, and buying groceries is another type of economic assimilation. Moreover, common activities like shopping at the mall, seeing a movie at the theatre, eating in a restaurant, or going to a club to dance, which all respondents say they do one of these things at least once a week, further integrate them into the U.S. economy.

Each person is undoubtedly assimilated to the economy and as of now their economic involvement is certainly not of the lower stratum of society, but is at the very least more similar to those in the middle-class; however, their future impacts can vary. Economists often measure economic assimilation in terms of wage level; its comparability to the average wage level in the U.S. is the standard marker, so although it is likely that most of these children of immigrants earn the same at their part time jobs as does the average college student in the U.S., their future earnings will be a better indicator of where they will fall in terms of economic assimilation.

Another way to discover the extent to which these 1.5 and second generation individuals are assimilating economically is to determine their socioeconomic status. During each interview respondents were asked about their current job and level of education. The answers were used to determine their current position in the status structure using Hollingshead's Index of Social Position (Miller and Salkind 2002).²² Both

²² A copy of Hollingshead's Index of Social Position is listed as D.3. in Appendix D.

occupational and educational scales consist of seven points; occupation is given a weight of seven, while education is weighted at four. The two-factor index was scaled and calculated accordingly, establishing an individual socioeconomic position for each respondent.²³ The current socioeconomic status for those interviewed is quite low overall. Although no one falls into the lowest category, 24 are considered lower-middle, 19 fall into the middle, one is considered upper-middle, and one is upper.

During the interview, I also inquired about each person's parents' jobs and education levels for comparative purposes. Data about 38 fathers was collected and the calculations showed one father in the low category, 23 are lower-middle, 13 are middle, none are upper-middle, and one is classified as upper.²⁴ Data about 41 mothers was attained and it revealed that 10 mothers are classified as lower, 24 are lower-middle, three are middle, four are middle-upper, and none fall into the upper category.²⁵ This information reveals that the children of immigrants as a group are in about the same or slightly better socioeconomic position as their parents, while some individuals are in a noticeably better position than their parents since 11 parents total are categorized as low, but none of the children are. What is more, the 1.5 and second generation is much younger than their parents so they have many more years to move up the socioeconomic ladder.

Additionally, the occupational and educational future goals of the respondent were elicited during the interview and the answers were used to gauge the future

²³ A copy of the tabulated data for the current social position of the immigrant descendants is listed as D.4. in Appendix D.

²⁴ A copy of the tabulated data for the current social position of the immigrant descendants' fathers is listed as D.6. in Appendix D.

²⁵ A copy of the tabulated data for the current social position of the immigrant descendants' mothers is listed as D.7. in Appendix D.

individual socioeconomic status of study participants. When the future scores are calculated it becomes quite clear that all respondents are climbing the socioeconomic ladder.²⁶ Everyone moves out of the lower-middle and middle tiers; 25 will be upper-middle and 20 will be upper. Of course, these scores use the future goals of the respondents, so some individuals may not reach their expected socioeconomic outcome as listed here. Importantly though, the predicted scores imply that the children of immigrants have a positive and optimistic attitude about their future socioeconomic advancement. Moreover, although these predicted scores may not parallel each individual's future reality, the scores do reveal that these children of immigrants are on the right path to improving their socioeconomic position. Rather than assimilating downwards where prospects are bleak, these members of the 1.5 and second generation are on a path towards upward socioeconomic mobility. Obtaining a college degree will undoubtedly make the future occupational goals of these individuals a more likely prospect (Allen 2006; Goodwin-White 2009).

Upon graduation, a majority of the respondents would like to stay in Arkansas to remain in close proximity to their family and friends, but many of them said it depends if they can find a good job. Although “the labor market careers of these immigrant descendents will depend, in part, on their educational achievements and skills acquisition...local demand conditions will also matter a great deal, as the job successes of the 1.5 and second generations will hinge on the structure and fortunes of the regional economies in which they remain, and on the receptivity of local employers to them” (Ellis and Goodwin-White 2006:921). The state of Arkansas and the companies there

²⁶ A copy of the tabulated data for the predicted social position of the immigrant descendents is listed as D.5. in Appendix D.

should be eager to hire these new Hispanic/Latino graduates because not only will they fuel the economy, they will replace the aging native-born Arkansan workforce that is retiring at such a fast rate that their positions are becoming hard to fill because of a lack of qualified applicants (Appold et al. 2013a).

For those that are undocumented, the situation is graver. They attend college knowing that once they graduate their job prospects could be as bleak as when they started, but they continue to hold out hope for their future. The undocumented members of the 1.5 generation are just as important to the future of the state and U.S. economy as are the members of the second generation and they should be treated as such.

Cultural Assimilation

Culture assimilation, or acculturation, is a process that all immigrants go through to at least a certain extent. The foreign-born children of immigrants, members of the 1.5 generation, navigate this process as well. They can do so in tandem with their parents or at very different speeds than their parents; the latter scenario may put the parents and children in opposition of each other. The U.S. born children of immigrants, the second generation, can also experience cultural assimilation because they often have to bridge the home culture of their immigrant parents with the U.S. culture that too surrounds them. I contend that the children of immigrants with whom I spoke are culturally assimilated to the U.S. and while it is difficult to quantify how acculturated a person is, especially compared to others, it nevertheless does seem that some individuals are further along than others on the assimilation continuum even though their situations are quite similar. Although each immigrant descendant is culturally assimilating at their own pace, they are all navigating this process by acculturating selectively. Importantly, selective

acculturation is often characteristic of those that are apt to follow the third path of assimilation.

During the interviews with the children of immigrants, I asked a number of questions that focused on the cultural aspects of their lives. I wanted to know what language is primarily spoken, what type of food is consumed at home, the type of clothes they wear, if they attend church, and the type of holidays they celebrate. Although only 15 respondents currently live with their parents, a majority of them still see their parents on a weekly basis; because of this some of the questions I asked were about what occurred in the immigrant parents' home.

Proficiency in English is a fundamental aspect of being able to function with ease in the United States. All respondents do speak fluent English. I detected foreign accents from 11 individuals and four of them mentioned to me that they were embarrassed of their English ability because of their accent. In fact, Camila, an 18 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, told me that she avoided speaking English as much as possible because she did not think it sounded very good. Here she explains to me her difficulties with speaking English while in high school:

Camila: I was afraid of my accent. I think that's one of the reasons I was always afraid at school of talking...I barely started talking to whites last year. And that was because I was forced to. Well, like my junior year I was forced to because all my years that I've been in school I was always in ESL because I was always afraid I was going to get like...they were not going to understand me. It was hard to talk English. And all my friends, they've been here for a while, and they're Hispanics I talk to them in Spanish but they would respond in English. And no matter what I would never talk to them in English. And then my teacher found out that I don't speak English. And I do my work and they're like 'how is it possible that you have straight A's in all your classes but in ESL you have a B or a C?' 'Because you don't want to get moved to regular English?'

Author: So you were playing the system?

Camila: Yes, and that's what most of us do because we were just in the same class for like forever. And then since high school split I was in another ESL class and I had to make new friends and then I just had to do my homework and everything I just had 100 percent. And so my teacher moved me to regular English and that's when I started talking in English. But really little. And then my senior year I was regretting it because I would have done so much better in high school if I would have just stepped up.

Although I noticed the accents, I was unable to find any flaws in Camila's or the others' English syntax. I was sure to let the respondents that were embarrassed of their accent know that their English was just as good as mine and also encouraged them to speak it more so they could gain confidence in it. As Camila makes clear, it seems that embarrassment and a lack of encouragement is why some people struggle with speaking English.

A large majority of respondents, 37 in total, said that the primary language spoken with their parents is Spanish, 5 said a mix of both English and Spanish is most common, and just 4 said that English is the language they speak with their parents. These numbers change drastically when the question is about the language primarily spoken with a sibling. Just 5 respondents said they only speak Spanish with their siblings, 9 said they speak a combination of English and Spanish, and 28 said they only speak English with their siblings; 3 respondents are only children. The primary language spoken with friends is Spanish for only 3 people, 16 said a mixture of English and Spanish is most common among friends, and 22 said English is the language they speak with friends. Spanish is the most prevalent language the respondents speak with their parents, but English becomes the most common language spoken with siblings and also with friends, although a mixture of English and Spanish among friends is popular as well.

Two-thirds of the respondents said that 75 percent or more of their meals they eat each week are their country of heritage's food (i.e., Mexican or Salvadoran). Many said that they grew up eating whatever their Mom made and it was almost always food from the home country. In fact, a few interviewees commented on how much they each miss their mother's cooking and expressed their dislike for having to eat mostly American food in the dorm cafeterias. Most of the immigrant descendants said that when they shop for food they go to Wal-Mart, rather than specific grocery stores tailored to the Hispanic/Latino population in the area. Wal-Mart is also the popular choice for their parents shopping, but sometimes, often for special events, their family will go to the Hispanic/Latino grocery store to find a certain cut of meat or spices they are unable to find anywhere else.

Although most of the respondents prefer Hispanic/Latino food, the style of clothing they prefer is not heritage based. Instead, everyone with whom I spoke wore the same type of clothes any average college student in the U.S. would wear. Popular name brand clothing, such as Abercrombie and Fitch, Polo, and American Eagle Outfitters, was the norm and all of the children of immigrants said they shop for their clothes at the local mall in town. Only one interviewee, Sofia, a 19 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, mentioned that she likes to wear clothing that is traditional to a village in Michoacán, Mexico, where her grandmother still lives. She said that sometimes she wakes up in the morning and feels like representing her culture, so she will put on the custom garb and wear it wherever she is going that day. This type of traditional clothing, like Sofia sometimes wears, is more commonly worn for special occasions or ceremonies in Mexico or even in the U.S.

Although influences of globalization have certainly created homogeneity among clothing worldwide, there nevertheless remains a visible difference between the clothing an average college student in the U.S. wears versus the average clothing someone of similar age wears in the immigrant descendants' countries of heritage. A number of the respondents told me that when they travel to Mexico or Salvador their cousins and their cousin's friends always tell them that they dress like an American. Moreover, many respondents say that their clothing style often makes them stand out in their home country. Clearly, the members of the 1.5 and second generation have adopted U.S. clothing trends rather than those popular in their country of heritage.

Most of the children of immigrants say that they are religious; 31 people are Catholic, 4 are Baptist, 3 are Pentecostal, and 1 is Protestant. Of those that go to church on a regular basis, 23 attend services in Spanish, 7 prefer a bilingual service, and 7 choose the English service. Catholicism is the predominate religion throughout Latin America, so it is no surprise that a majority of this group is also Catholic. It is apparent that the religion the immigrant parents practiced in their home country is being instilled in their children who continue to practice it today. What is more, a majority of the 1.5 and second generation study participants are attending Spanish or bilingual services; thus, their Church attendance reinforces their cultural heritage as they are practicing the same religion in the same language as their forefathers. Although I do not believe they are consciously making an effort to pay homage to their family members still living in the home country each time they attend a church service in Spanish, it should be pointed out that while it may not be a deliberate decision, choosing the Spanish service over an English service implies that there is still that want and need to practice their religion in

Spanish. No one said they mind going to an English service, but they prefer Spanish or bilingual because it is how they understand their religion.

Holidays, such as Thanksgiving and the Fourth of July, are widely celebrated throughout the United States. Both have significant meaning to the country as a whole; they encourage camaraderie and ‘proud to be an American’ ideals. Almost every respondent said that they celebrate U.S. holidays; just five people said they do not and one person did not answer. A lot of the respondents said that although they celebrate Thanksgiving and the Fourth of July, they do so more on their own terms, rather than how the typical American would do so. For example, Candela, a 19 year old member of the second generation with Salvadoran parents, explains “for the holidays we celebrate American holidays like Thanksgiving, but we actually kill the chicken, not turkey. And we don’t do the mashed potatoes. We do different stuff. We call it recaldo and it’s like this chicken in this thick soup kind of thing. And it’s really good and you eat it with fries and a salad and tortillas. Like, we tend to do things differently.” Although the selection of food may be different from a more typical Thanksgiving menu, she does say that the holiday is a time for the family to get together and to be thankful for where they are just like it is for other families across the nation.

The idea of doing things differently parallels what some other children of immigrants said about celebrating the Fourth of July. Three interviewees said that they have a big family get together where they listen to music, watch fireworks, set off some of their own, and eat a lot of food. Although this may sound familiar, the music they listen to is Mariachi and the food they eat is Mexican (or Salvadoran). Augustina, an 18 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, on the other hand, says

“yes, I was born here, but I don’t celebrate like, the Fourth of July. I mean, I feel a lot of people don’t really celebrate it for the right reasons either you know, just fireworks and things like that, but they don’t really like tend to think back to...oh you know, the whole independence factor and things like that.” A majority of those I interviewed do celebrate popular U.S. holidays; some do so by adding their family’s Mexican or Salvadoran flare while others observe holidays as traditional Americans.

I asked the respondents directly if they thought they fit into U.S. culture. I explained that I wanted to know if they felt in tune with American culture, if they were comfortable with it, and if they felt like they were a part of it. Most of the immigrant descendants said yes, 11 said sometimes, and just 1 said no. When I asked Rodrigo, a 21 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Honduran parents, this question, he smiled and said “definitely. I have to have my iphone.” Luna, a 23 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, replied “I would say so. Yeah, I’ve never felt really like...I wasn’t American. I mean I had a crush on Leonardo DiCaprio when Titanic came out.” Tomás, a 20 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Bolivian parents, said “I listen to Lil’ Wayne and I watch football.” Finally, Vanessa, a 19 year old member of the second generation with parents from Salvador and Mexico, says “I would say it’s my country too. Being born here, I just know everything there is, that any other person would know.” For those that said they sometimes fit into U.S. culture, they explained that in some aspects they fit in, and in some aspects they do not. A few mentioned that their appearance (e.g., their darker skin color and dark hair) makes them stand out while a few others said that they just do not feel like they fit in all the time.

The one individual who said he does not fit into U.S. culture said although he knows he can function fully and successfully in the U.S., he just does not feel like he fits in here. Ironically, I feel like this young man, Javier, a 23 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, is one of the most biculturally adept persons I met while in the field. He seems to easily navigate between his family life, which he describes as Mexican, and his life on-campus. He lives with his parents (both of whom immigrated to the U.S. from Mexico; his father works for a tractor company and his mother works in a local poultry processing plant) and younger brothers and sisters at their family home in a small rural town just a few minutes outside of Fayetteville. He is extremely friendly, well known on the U of A campus, was hired by a prominent local business upon his college graduation (after this research was complete), and has already returned to the U of A to pursue his MBA. But, for reasons he had a difficult time articulating, he just does not feel like he fits into U.S. culture.

I also asked everyone if they think the general population in Arkansas thinks they fit into U.S. culture; 25 respondents said yes, 10 said sometimes, 5 said no, and 5 said I don't know. The reasons given for those who said sometimes and for those who said no were the same. They each said that a lot of the non-Hispanic white population sees them as 'Mexicans' who do not fit in. Negative stereotypes about the Hispanic/Latino population pervade the minds of many native-born non-Hispanic whites and that is why these respondents feel that the general population does not think they fit into U.S. culture.

Diego, a 25 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, feels that his friends and acquaintances around his age would say he fits into U.S. culture, but he does not think that the older population feels the same way. Instead, he feels pressure

from this part of the general populace to assimilate and succeed, but these expectations are not backed by any support or encouragement from them. His perceptions are expressed in the following exchange we had during the interview:

Diego: To some people you do fit in especially when you're closer with people, like your peers your own age because, you know, they're at the university, they're experimenting with different things, and so they're seeing that you are more like them. You have the same kind of ideals or ideas and you're going through the same thing. I think the people who are older, especially the baby boomer generation, doesn't quite particularly understand [us]. They don't really think we fit in. You are made to assimilate into the culture, but they would never like do it back. It's not reciprocal. I hope this is clear.

Author: Yeah, I think it makes sense...it's basically like you're saying they're not doing anything to sort of facilitate their acceptance of you.

Diego: Right. They put the bar up really high and whether you get there or not it's on your own. And they never try to get you or guide you.

I am certain that this sentiment Diego expresses quite well is held by others with whom I spoke. A number of immigrant descendants told me that they just want to be given a chance by the majority population; they want people to realize that being Hispanic/Latino does not preclude one from being a part of or fitting into American culture.

Although not everyone feels like they fit into U.S. culture at all times and not everyone feels like the majority population thinks they always fit into U.S. culture, the overall sentiment of U.S. culture is high because every respondent said they like it. Many said that the freedom and opportunities are what they love about the country (some specifically mention how much they enjoy celebrating Thanksgiving and the Fourth of July because the two holidays represent exactly that: the freedom and opportunity they might not have living elsewhere), while others appreciate the country's diversity.

All of these aspects that relate to cultural assimilation discussed here point to a general pattern the respondents follow. Most people speak Spanish with their parents, but speak significantly more English with their siblings and friends. A majority continues to eat/cook Hispanic/Latino food in the home, but clothing style is completely American. When attending church, a majority choose the Spanish service. American holidays, like Thanksgiving and the Fourth of July, are celebrated by a majority of the respondents and their families, but some celebrate it in their own way by making typical Mexican or Salvadoran dishes in place of a turkey and stuffing, for instance. Finally, a majority of people think that they fit into U.S. culture and a majority (though slightly fewer) believe the non-Hispanic white population thinks they fit into the U.S. as well.

The general trend seen here is that the respondents are acculturating selectively; they have already learned English and are also learning American ways while retaining Spanish and some other elements of their culture of heritage. They are adapting to their environment by blending the best of their two worlds together (Ko and Perreira 2010). This correlates with previous studies that look at the Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation that “have shown that fluent bilingualism [among this population] is significantly associated with positive outcomes in late adolescence, including higher school grades, educational aspirations and self-esteem, and lesser intergenerational conflict” (Portes et al. 2009:1095; Hakuta 1986; Portes and Hao 2002; Rumbaut 1994). These members of the 1.5 and second generation make it quite clear that the preservation of many of the cultural values of their heritage culture is compatible with assimilation into mainstream culture.

Familial influences seem to play an important role in the maintenance of the heritage culture. A majority of the respondents told me that their immigrant parents have instilled in them many of the cultural values of their home country to which they adhere today. In addition, many say that their parents encourage all of their children to always remember their roots, but to also appreciate what the U.S. has to offer and to not take it for granted. It does not seem that any respondents (or their immigrant parents) have acculturated consonantly since all remain linked with their cultural heritage in at least a few ways. Although acculturation of some of the immigrant parents and their children is likely occurring at slightly different paces, there is no evidence that they are going through the process at such different speeds to cause parental-child isolation. In fact, parental and children roles are not being challenged and instead, the children of immigrants are embracing their cultural heritage, not rejecting it, which would be expected if dissonant acculturation is taking place. Not surprisingly then, selective acculturation is often typical of those following the third path of segmented assimilation as is the case with this population. The children of immigrants are culturally assimilating to American ways while also retaining aspects of their cultural heritage.

While everyone is certainly assimilating culturally, some are more accustomed to American ways than others. Although it is hard to quantify how culturally assimilated someone is, and it is hard to pinpoint why a person is more acculturated than someone else, I felt like I was able to make this type of determination after spending time with the respondents. Typically, it was the individuals that speak mostly Spanish throughout the day that I characterize as slightly less acculturated than many of the other immigrant descendants. It just seems that these select few relate better to their culture of heritage;

however, this does not preclude them from being in tune with American culture, because everyone I interviewed certainly is. Rather, they are just simply not as far along the assimilation continuum as are the majority of others.

Social Assimilation

Social assimilation is often gradual and occurs once the immigrant starts to feel more comfortable with their environment, becomes active in community organizations, and takes part in mainstream activities. Usually, this type of assimilation is more common among the 1.5 and second generation children and will not occur with their first generation parents (Jacoby 2004). Indeed, every immigrant descendant in the study population is assimilating to the U.S. societal realm, but as is the case with cultural assimilation, some children of immigrants are more socially assimilated compared to others. It will be made clear in what follows that although everyone can and surely does function in U.S. society, feelings of uncertainty and apprehension about the non-Hispanic white population are common among those that are seemingly less adept in certain realms of U.S. society. Unfortunately, this hesitation among the members of the 1.5 and second generation to involve themselves with the majority population is sometimes perpetuated by experiences of racial discrimination and stereotyping.

Each interviewee is enrolled in college or has recently graduated from there. A large number of students, 25 in total, are the first person in their family to go to college, 12 are first generation college attendees (an older sibling started college before them), and 8 students have at least one parent that has attended a post-secondary institution. Each immigrant descendant was able to navigate the college application system, be

accepted to a school, and able to secure some type of scholarship or loan assistance when needed; this capability is typical of a socially assimilated individual.

These students' propensity to enroll in college can be attributed to four main factors. First, each person said that their parents have always voiced the importance of getting an education and have always supported them to do so. Many respondents also said that going to college was a parental expectation they simply had to fulfill, so continuing their education after high school was never in question. Interestingly, although the immigrant parents want their children to get a university education, over half of these students expressed to me their frustration with their parents' high expectations because they feel that their parents do not understand how hard it is to get into college and then to do well once there. For example, many said that they filled out their college applications with little to no help from their parents and that they had to rely on their own ability, a friend's suggestions, or a high school mentor or college counselor's advice.

Another reason these students made it to college is their hard work. Each respondent told me that doing well in school was important to them and this individual determination resulted in their continuous hard work throughout high school and into today. For some students, instances of racial discrimination motivated them to succeed; they want to prove their naysayers wrong and have used this drive to get to college. Finally, the proximity of the U of A and NWACC to a majority of these study participants undoubtedly had an influence on their understandings of where they could go to college. Many respondents said they knew of the university because of previous exposure to it during high school field trips or hearing news about the sports team. NWACC was also in their mind frame because some high school classes offered college

credit through the community college. Thus, parental support and expectations, hard work, motivation fueled by discriminatory experiences, and close proximity to the U of A and NWACC are primary contributors to these children of immigrants gaining access to higher education.

Although everyone said that their parents wanted them to go to college, 10 respondents did experience some resistance from their parents; of those, 9 are females. The resistance was not about getting an education, but rather the points of contention centered on how much it would cost, where they would go to school, and where they would live while in school. It was only females who had parents that did not want them to go to school far away or to live in the on-campus dorms. Their parents, mostly the fathers, wanted their daughters to go to college, but to remain living in the family home. For example, Candela says she experienced resistance from her parents about living on-campus “because you are not supposed to leave the house until you’re married.” However, Candela, and the others alike, were eventually able to persuade their parents into letting them go to the university they wanted (as long as it was in the state of Arkansas) and/or to live in the residential dorms on-campus.

As a college student many are involved with activities on the campus; 39 students are members of groups on-campus, 11 students live in the dorms on-campus, and many can be routinely found hanging out with friends or doing homework in the student union. The most popular campus groups these students join largely consist of Hispanic/Latino members, so while many are active in on-campus organizations, they tend to be primarily associating with other Hispanic/Latino students. However, the members of these on-campus groups get many opportunities to interact with other on-campus organizations

when they hold events together or participate in campus-wide affairs, so exposure to the majority population is undoubtedly a part of any on-campus group membership. Many of the study participants who live in the dorms live with non-Hispanic white students and everyone reports that they get along well with their roommates. Finally, a majority of the respondents say that they enjoy their down time in the student union because they like being around other students and feel like it is a great way to forge and sustain friendships with those they meet at the university. Each of these things indicates that this study population is well adept socially.

Many of the children of immigrants are also involved in community groups and some are involved in the political arena as well. Several of them have volunteered their time to assist in voter registration, some volunteer at the Worker's Justice Center, and many have taken part in trying to get both the state government and U.S. government to pass the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. In short, the DREAM Act affords the 1.5 generation the right to attend their public university system (in the state in which they have grown up) at in-state cost, rather than out-of-state tuition cost simply because they are undocumented.²⁷ The ability to involve oneself in the community points once again to individuals that understand how to navigate the social arena, which suggests that these immigrant descendants are integrated along a number of societal facets.

As I previously mentioned, 21 of the 45 children of immigrants I interviewed are members of the 1.5 generation. Eight have become U.S. citizens, four are legal residents, and nine are undocumented. The nine undocumented individuals have each lived a

²⁷ For more on the DREAM Act, please refer to <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/DREAM-Insight-July2010.pdf>.

majority of their life in the U.S., feel like they belong here, and are desperate to have the same rights as their 1.5 and second generation counterparts with U.S. citizenship.

Unfortunately, those without documentation lack basic rights afforded to U.S. citizens and green card holders. Without legal documentation these children of immigrants will never be able to be a full member of U.S. society, despite their wants and hopes to do so.

Interestingly, these individuals are very involved politically even though they cannot vote in this country. Fortunately, a lot of their friends, including many I interviewed, are just as invested as they are to get them the rights they so deserve. However, although many volunteer and attend local, state, and national DREAM Act rallies and meetings, only 8 of 32 respondents that can legally vote say they do so, while 18 others say they plan to vote at the next major election. Surprisingly, the only reason that was given for why someone legally able does not vote was they did not want to have jury duty. Apparently, a majority of these students believe that when you register you are going to be immediately selected for jury duty. Rather than exercising their right to vote, they are actively choosing not to for fear of jury duty. When asked to elaborate on why jury duty is so unappealing, many just said they do not want to have to deal with it. I got the sense that they did not want to have anything to do with the U.S. court system period, whether it is jury duty or standing in front of a judge arguing a speeding ticket. This fear of the government may stem from the corrupt governments in Mexico and El Salvador about which many respondents spoke, but it can also be a sign that some of these members of the 1.5 and second generation are not as politically incorporated as they could be. It is important to encourage these children of immigrants to become active members in the U.S. political arena because “the ways that they civically engage will

greatly determine the nature of civil society in the United States over the next few decades” (Stepick and Stepick 2002:247).

Every single immigrant descendant said they like living in the U.S. when asked directly about it. Key words or phrases that were routinely used to describe why they like living in the U.S. were opportunity, safer/safety, easier life here, better government, and freedom. Miguel, a 19 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, says he likes living in the U.S. “because it’s the sense of security, I guess. Knowing that, like, you can pretty much find a job pretty easily. There is more opportunity here, education wise. And I guess the government...it’s better”, while Victoria, an 18 year old member of the second generation with parents from Salvador and Mexico, likes it because “it’s easier here, I realized that. Living in Mexico or anywhere else would be much harder.” Everyone seemed thankful and happy that they were living in the United States.

Although each respondent likes living in the U.S., the extent to how much they feel ‘at home’ in their hometown communities, and then also in Fayetteville, where a majority attends school, varies. When asked how comfortable they are in their hometown using the terms, ‘not at home’, ‘somewhat at home’, ‘at home’, ‘very much at home’, 23 reported feeling ‘very much at home’, 18 said ‘at home’, and 4 said ‘somewhat at home’. Therefore, over 90 percent of respondents feel at least ‘at home’ in their Arkansas hometown. This is pretty remarkable since not everyone was born and raised in these towns of which they speak.

The results did change, however, when asked how comfortable they feel in Fayetteville. Of the 36 respondents that were asked this question (nine individuals were

excluded because their hometown is or acts as Fayetteville), just 7 said 'very much at home', 14 reportedly felt 'at home', 17 said 'somewhat at home', and 4 said 'not at home'. Just 58 percent of respondents feel 'at home' or 'very much at home' in Fayetteville, while the other 42 percent feel either 'not at home' or just 'somewhat at home'. This difference is likely twofold; first, this uncomfortable-ness many of the respondents have with Fayetteville is similar to what many other students feel when entering an unfamiliar town to attend college. A number of them told me that they just are not used to Fayetteville yet, so do not feel 'at home' in the town. Second, a few students said that they do not feel comfortable in Fayetteville because there are not a lot of Hispanic/Latinos in the area. But, they said as time goes on they will get used to it and feel okay. Adjusting to college and a new town is difficult for many people and it seems like there is an added difficulty for those in the minority. Luckily, as time passes this adjustment gets a little easier, but as is evident, an 'at home' feeling is not always easy to come by.

When asked about the ethnicity of their friends, 17 people said a majority of their friends are Hispanic/Latino, 24 said they have an equal combination of Hispanic/Latino and non-Hispanic white friends, and just 4 said a majority of their friends are non-Hispanic whites. Interestingly though, whenever I saw my interview respondents hanging out together, whether on-campus or elsewhere in town, they were always with other Hispanic/Latinos. Those that grew up in Springdale and Rogers mostly report having a majority of Hispanic/Latinos as their friends, while those that grew up in towns with a relatively small or almost no Hispanic/Latino population are primarily those with a combination of Hispanic/Latino and non-Hispanic white friends or a majority of non-

Hispanic white friends. In fact, for those that grew up in an area with few Hispanic/Latinos, they say that they have really enjoyed making new Hispanic/Latino friends at the university because that opportunity did not exist before. Some respondents even said that they have become really interested in their Hispanic/Latino heritage while in college because there is a lot more exposure to other Hispanic/Latino students and Hispanic/Latino culture. Thus, it seems that college is a way for many children of immigrants to reinforce their background and commonalities with other Hispanic/Latinos as opposed to being a place where they create friendships with the majority white population.

The 17 respondents whose majority of friends are Hispanic/Latino say that it is not that they are against having white friends, but that they feel more comfortable with their Hispanic/Latino friends because they understand each other well. Moreover, they say that some white people do not make an effort to become friends with someone who is of Hispanic/Latino descent because of negative Hispanic/Latino stereotypes. A few immigrant descendants said that when they start talking in class some white students will have a quick look of surprise because they are speaking fluent English. Miguel explains that he often has a difficult time finding someone with whom he can partner up in class because the other students are hesitant to choose him; he says “I feel like they don’t, like they don’t think I can do...like, I’m not up to par or something on things. I don’t know, I just feel like the way people look at me sometimes, I guess. I feel like maybe sometimes they don’t think I can speak enough English or something even though sometimes I can speak better than them, since they have thick southern accents.” Most stressed that a lot of white people look at them differently so that is why they do not have a lot of non-

Hispanic white friends. Rodrigo says he gets intimidated talking in front of, or when around, a large group of white people. He explains “I guess I feel like my voice is not going to be heard or I feel like, you know, like they’re going to make fun of me.”

In fact, it is not just those that have mostly Hispanic/Latino friends that say this. Over two-thirds of the interviewees say that the majority white population perceives them differently than they should. Many said that stereotypes govern the way many people see them, such as being a lazy worker, someone who does not speak English, or even as a criminal. Several mentioned that the white population thinks that Hispanic/Latinos lack intelligence and are not capable of great things. For example, Arturo, a 19 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, says “they [the white population] probably don’t think that I’m like as smart as them, or can speak perfect English” and Tomás expresses a similar sentiment; he says “I think that sometimes they [the white population] think I’m a little bit dumber than I am.” Ramiro, a 23 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, elucidates a stark difference of perception in terms of how he sees himself versus how others sometimes view him:

I see myself as someone that wants to contribute to my community. Some of the white community looks at me...as a criminal. Or, seeing your skin color they automatically think you are undocumented or, um, that you work somewhere at a stereotypical job [like construction]. And when you actually tell them that, like it’s a big shock, I tell them...I tell people I’m a nurse and they’re always surprised.

In the following account, Sofia talks to me about stereotypes and how they are often hard to change:

We all have stereotypes that we have about people. And I can tell sometimes...like now I go pick up my sister at school and there are other band Moms that are there picking up their children and they’ve asked me ‘so when did you get here from Mexico? Is that your daughter?’ And I’m

thinking ‘No! I’m at the U of A and that’s not my daughter.’ After I tell them that I get, ‘Oh, you go to college?’ And sometimes I’m like ‘how do I change that perception from people?’ But there’s not much you can do when somebody already has a certain way of seeing things.

Changing someone’s mindset is a difficult task, but it has to start somewhere. I encouraged Sofia to tell her story and we both hope that someone will listen.

Pilar, a 19 year old member of the second generation with parents from Salvador, points out that many white people simply overlook the commonalities they might have with Hispanic/Latinos. She explains that the non-Hispanic white population says “‘oh look, there is that Hispanic girl’, but, like, I feel like I’m more... not necessarily like one of them but I’m like...you know, I’m American too. You know? So rather than seeing me as American, they’d probably see me as something else.” A majority of those that I interviewed believe they are being perceived differently, often in a negative light, than they think they should be. Some say they just take these types of attitudes as a challenge to succeed, while others choose to ignore it. On the other hand, a few immigrant descendants say that it really bothers them to know they are not looked upon as equals simply because of their skin color and country of heritage.

Societal assimilation is not simply a one-way street. Although these children of immigrants are finding a place for themselves in U.S. society, the non-Hispanic white population is not necessarily doing the same thing. In fact, 27 study participants say that they have been discriminated against by a white person, 36 say that their friends have been victims of discrimination, and 29 say a member of their family has experienced some type of discrimination; all instances of discrimination are considered to be racially motivated. Just 6 of the 27 who reported instances of racial discrimination said that

nothing has happened recently, but when they were younger they were discriminated against by other students and a few teachers in high school. Name calling was frequent and getting in trouble for speaking Spanish in class was common. For those that experienced a form of discrimination more recently, the common occurrence is racial slurs that are directed to them. Instances of discrimination are less common on the college campuses, but frequently heard at gas stations or Wal-Marts in the area. The discriminatory comments most often come from white males ages forty and older. In fact, many report that elderly white males make some of the worst derogatory comments they hear.

Examples of discrimination experienced by the respondents' friends are similar to their own; hearing racial slurs and being talked down to are common. Instances of discrimination for family members seem more blatant. Of the 29 respondents that said a family member has been discriminated against, 9 said it was work related (wage discrimination and lack of job promotions). The other instances consisted of name calling and not getting assistance at local department stores or Wal-Marts after asking for it.

In addition to the examples given, many children of immigrants say that a lot of discrimination is very subtle, so it is hard to pinpoint specific instances of it. Thus, discrimination towards the Hispanic/Latino population is not limited to a few isolated events. Although it is not frequent, the respondents say they are not surprised when it does happen. When asked why this racial discrimination occurs, a majority of the answers was ignorance. The members of the 1.5 and second generation feel that a lack of education, a lack of cultural understanding, and a fear of acceptance are what fuels discrimination. Fortunately, many immigrant descendants told me that the younger non-

Hispanic white population does not seem as concerned with people's skin color and their country of heritage, but they do point out that because parents have a strong influence on how their children think of others, some discrimination will likely persist.

It is much more difficult to feel a part of a society if that society does not want you to be a part of it. The racial discrimination to which the children of immigrants are prone must stop. This situation is ironic because those that outwardly display their dislike or disapproval of the Hispanic/Latino population are the ones that are making it difficult for the population to assimilate. Many of the immigrant descendants commented that they are American, feel American, and want to feel a part of the U.S., but the people that make it hard for them continually leave no room for a type of assimilation that entails preservation of their Hispanic/Latino heritage. The lines that divide will blur much faster if and when discrimination towards the Hispanic/Latino population ceases to exist; northwest Arkansas is a good place to start.

Each respondent did not hesitate to say that they were well integrated into U.S. society when I asked. Mario, a 21 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, says "I mean, I grew up with it, so obviously [I'm integrated]. I know what is expected of us. It's just natural" and Fernando, a 23 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, says "I mean, I like to do what everybody likes to do here. And I don't do it because I try to fit in, I like to do it because it's the way I like it." Since a majority spent most of their lives living in the U.S., such responses are not a surprise.

Each of these immigrant descendants are in college or have recently graduated, a majority are involved in on-campus activities/group organizations, they all like living in

the U.S., a majority feel 'at home' in the town in which they grew up in Arkansas, more than half have an equal combination of white and Hispanic/Latino friends, and they all say they are integrated. I believe that these children of immigrants are well integrated into the U.S. societal realm, but as many of them said, they still stand out in a crowd (this is attributed to the color of their skin). Thus, although they are high functioning individuals, they still face challenges that a non-Hispanic white Arkansan does not. To begin with, not everyone exercises their right to vote because they are afraid to serve on a jury. A majority feel like they are perceived differently, and in a negative light, by the non-Hispanic white population and more than half have experienced some type of racial discrimination. Additionally, almost half do not feel 'at home' in Fayetteville and several respondents do not have many, if any, non-Hispanic white friends. Finally, some of the respondents are undocumented, which means they are not afforded the same rights as a U.S. citizen or legal resident. These issues do indicate that not everyone is completely socially assimilated, but they are all surely moving in that direction.

Typically, I found that those that have a majority of Hispanic/Latino friends appeared to me to be slightly less socially assimilated than many of the other respondents. It seems that these select few are more hesitant to do things that put them in more contact with the white population because they are more comfortable in their current pocket. They seem more reluctant to involve themselves in a life that requires them to overcome their feelings of uncertainty and uneasiness in and around the majority population. This tentative lifestyle benefits no one, but it is (unknowingly) being encouraged by the non-Hispanic white population in the form of racial discrimination and stereotyping.

Evaluating Economic, Cultural, and Social Assimilation

Neither generation nor citizenship is a significant variable of overall assimilation. There are a couple of reasons why a difference in generation and citizenship status among the immigrant descendants that comprise this study population does not produce considerable variations in their assimilation trajectories. To begin, the life experiences of each of these children of immigrants are quite similar; in short, they all have immigrant parents, they are exposed to the traditions and values associated with their culture of heritage, they are used to being in the minority population, and they are resilient as they each have overcome obstacles (such as racial discrimination) to get to where they are now. Moreover, half of the 1.5 generation arrived in the U.S. before the age of five and those that arrived between the ages of six and thirteen still spent their formative years in the U.S. Thus, these comparable lifestyles contribute to similar understandings and attitudes about the U.S. and their ethnic homelands, which in turn influence their assimilative patterns. Likely because of this, generational membership does not result in significant variations of assimilation among the immigrant descendants.

Citizenship status, at this time, does not dictate the assimilative trajectories of the study participants. The undocumented members of the 1.5 generation have been able to get as far as their second generation counterparts so assimilative patterns are also parallel. Of the nine undocumented respondents, six of them are highly assimilated while just three have a medium level of assimilation. Similarly, 21 members of the second generation have high levels of assimilation and 11 second generation individuals have a medium level of assimilation. The percentages are almost exactly the same, so clearly

citizenship status does not indicate level of assimilation. However, this may change in the near future.

Once these undocumented respondents graduate from college their continued economic and social assimilation may be up in the air. If they continue to live in the U.S. as an unauthorized citizen, their career prospects will not reflect their educational level and they will not be able to be a full operating member of U.S. society (i.e., lack the rights of a U.S. citizen such as voting ability). As of now, undocumented college students can apply for temporary legalization under the Deferred Action plan. Deferred Action allows the individual to remain in the U.S. for up to two years and that person is eligible for employment during this time.²⁸ However, this is not a permanent solution. Although citizenship is not a significant variable of assimilation among these respondents right now, citizenship may play a larger role in overall assimilative patterns in the years to come.

The only variable that proves significant in relation to assimilation is gender. Males are more likely to have higher levels of assimilation when compared to females.²⁹ It is possible that the males experience more freedom from their parents and this independence has resulted in accelerated assimilative patterns. It is typical, especially among traditional Hispanic/Latino families, for parents to be more conservative with a daughter's upbringing compared to a son's. This is evident in the struggle that Candela faced when her father told her she could not live on-campus and had to instead remain

²⁸ For more on the Deferred Action plan, please refer to www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/consideration-deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-process.

²⁹ See D.8. in Appendix D.

living in the family home until she convinced him otherwise. Six other females dealt with similar arguments, but no males had this problem.

These findings create a common image of these children of immigrants. They all are economically, culturally, and socially assimilated to the U.S., but some respondents are further along the continuum than others. For those that are taking a bit longer to assimilate, the reasons are similar. Often times, they have had higher hurdles over which to jump. For example, a few of them are embarrassed to speak English (despite speaking it fluently), some have been victims of racial discrimination, and some have to deal with the uncertainty of their legal status. The overwhelming sentiment nearly every immigrant descendant voiced was that they want to feel like they fit in all the time, but this is not the case right now. Instead, many feel uncomfortable with the non-Hispanic white population. This group wants to be a part of the U.S., but it has to be a two-way street; the majority population must accept the 1.5 and second generation Hispanic/Latino population. Moreover, it cannot be simply tolerance for them, but rather an active acceptance.

Paths of Assimilation

Each person is assimilating to the U.S., but along which path(s) is it occurring? The predicted socioeconomic position, the levels of assimilation in quantitative form, and the descriptions of the economic, cultural, and social assimilation of these children of immigrants suggests that they are following the third path of segmented assimilation, thus avoiding the second path of a downward trajectory. However, the major determinants that influence which path of segmented assimilation the 1.5 and second generation takes, as

deemed by Portes and Zhou (1993), must be discussed; they include parental human and social capital, modes of incorporation, and family structure.

In general, the human capital of the immigrant parents of this study population is quite low. A majority of the parents are uneducated, unskilled workers simply looking to better provide for their family. Since arriving in Arkansas, a few parents have been able to advance in the work place, but it is not common. The social capital with which they arrived was also minimal for many coming to Arkansas for the first time. For nine sets of parents, social capital was, and still is, extremely limited because they moved to a place that did not have an immigrant community. For the others, their social capital is greater now because the immigrant community in northwest Arkansas has grown considerably over the past twenty years and so have the resources available to those that are a part of it. The higher the parental human and social capital is, the better the children of immigrants fair on the paths of assimilation.

The modes of incorporation refer to how the immigrant parents and their children are received at the governmental, societal, and communal levels. Exclusion, passive acceptance, and active encouragement are the basic options at the government level. Exclusion, but most often passive acceptance, have been the ways in which the immigrant families have been recognized by the government while living in Arkansas. A few parents have been forced to return to their home country because they lack legal documents, but none of the children of immigrants with whom I spoke has been deported. More common is that of passive acceptance, whereby the government allows immigrants legal access to the U.S., but does not assist them in adapting to the new ways of the country. Active encouragement by the government does not occur for this immigrant

group. Clearly, a receptive government is more advantageous for newcomers than one that is intentionally excluding immigrant workers or simply allowing them to exist without support.

Societal level reception ranges from prejudice to nonprejudice. In northwest Arkansas, initial societal reception of Hispanic/Latinos was neutral, but as the immigrant population grew, so did negative stereotypes. Now, a majority of the immigrant parents and their 1.5 and second generation children face a prejudice reception from the local society, but there is slight reason for hope. Many of the children of immigrants said that the majority of discrimination they experience is from the senior population and that other kids their age seem more accepting. Of course, how society continues to receive this population into the future remains to be seen. A negative reception can cause discord within the community as a whole and can also create barriers to socioeconomic advancement.

It must be mentioned that not everyone in society receives the immigrant population in the same way. Despite a general presence of prejudice, many non-Hispanic whites do not condone such thoughts and actions. In fact, some respondents told me that they owe a lot to a few influential figures that became invested in their lives and provided unconditional support and encouragement whenever needed. They said they would not be in the same position they are today (i.e., in college and talking to me) if it were not for the positive impact some members of the majority population had on them. One of these influential people was a junior high school teacher turned high school teacher who continued to encourage the Hispanic/Latino student population. Sofia says “she was kind of like the one that motivated us to the extremes. She was like ‘you guys can do

anything.’ She would push us...I think she has been our big motivation that has pushed us a lot.” The presence of a significant other helped these students find and maintain their drive to be successful.

Reception at the immigrant communal level is important as well. Since an immigrant community did not exist at first for many of the immigrant parents, they had to learn how to adjust on their own. For those residing in northwest Arkansas, an immigrant community did begin to form. This community was helpful for both the already settled and newly arrived because they could assist each other in a variety of ways, such as sharing job opportunities and easing the impact of adjusting to a new country by being together. However, the immigrant community in northwest Arkansas lacks some strength in both human and social capital because a majority of its members are poorly educated and work in manufacturing or construction. With the development of the city programs aimed at funding Hispanic/Latino startup businesses this lack of human and social capital may change. Moreover, as these children of immigrants receive college degrees and secure a good job, their human capital will rise too. If they remain a part of the immigrant community, the collective human capital will rise as well.

The immigrant family structure can play an important role in the success of the children. The children of immigrants fair better when both parents are present and when they are actively engaged in their children’s lives (Hirschman 2001; Portes et al. 2009). Fortunately, for the immigrant descendants I interviewed, a majority of their families were two parent households. Some respondents did have divorced parents, but whenever this was the case, the parent by whom they were raised seemed to be a very strong parental figure. Additionally, nearly everyone reported that their parents have always

been supportive of them and many of the immigrant parents encouraged their children to go to college.

Parental human and social capital is low, government incorporation is at best that of passive acceptance, but sometimes exclusion, reception at the societal level is most commonly prejudice, though the immigrant community is receptive to newcomers its human and social capital remains low, and the familial structure of these children of immigrants is strong overall. These three factors are often used as markers that determine the path of assimilation for the 1.5 and second generation. Without knowing anything else about this group, the first conclusion would likely be that they are all destined to assimilate downward since it is only the family structure that is strong. However, it is important to also consider how racism, geographic location, and availability of mobility ladders may influence assimilation.

Hispanic is now a quasi-race; Hispanic color of skin can vary from white to black (Dominicans), but typical skin color is in between the two (Gans 2004). The children of immigrants with whom I spent time do report instances of discrimination precipitated by the color of their skin. Many of the respondents said that they know they stand out in a crowd because their skin color is darker than the majority non-Hispanic white population living in the area. Thus, this group of children of immigrants does face racial discrimination, but it is something that does not occur too frequently and when it does they have learned to ignore it.

Of the 45 Hispanic/Latinos with whom I spoke, just two of them had white skin (they perceive themselves as having white skin and I did as well). Interestingly, they both brought up having white skin multiple times during our time spent together. They said

that no one thinks that they are of Mexican descent and that they actually have a hard time convincing people they are really Hispanic/Latino. In fact, these respondents, both who happen to be female, say they get really offended when someone does not believe they are of Mexican descent because they are proud of their heritage. In accord with Golash-Boza (2006) who finds that Hispanic/Latinos who are perceived white will experience less racial discrimination, they both say they never hear discriminatory comments made towards them because their skin is white. However, they have been in conversations with non-Hispanic whites that talk badly of other Hispanic/Latinos not knowing that they are speaking with a Hispanic/Latino. When this has happened, both young women said they speak up and refute the negative comments made.

Immigrants living in the U.S. are over concentrated in large metropolitan areas and often in the inner-city. Those living in these inner-city locations are highly susceptible to poverty because of lack of resources available to them and because they are exposed to domestic minorities that remain disenfranchised from the majority population. It is often in the inner-city where the children of immigrants are exposed to an alternative lifestyle that consists of gangs and drugs, which can lead to downward assimilation. These ethnic ghettos, ethnically or minority segregated neighborhoods of sorts that are common to the inner-city, characterized by crowded and poor conditions, are hard to escape. The lack of good public resources, like schools and community programs, in the inner-city makes a deviant lifestyle inevitable for some. Hispanic/Latino children of immigrants face high outcomes of downward assimilation into the underclass in urban locales, particularly in the inner-city (Allen 2006; Portes et al. 2009; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). But, in less metropolitan, more rural areas, such as northwest Arkansas, an

underclass hardly exists, much less an inner-city. Crime rates are low, there are no known active gangs in the area, and while there is access to drugs, it is not pervasive. Public schools are accessible to anyone living within city limits and the dropout rate is quite low for the 'big four' high schools, ranging from just one to three percent (NWA Online 2014). Exposure to a deviant lifestyle that often leads to downward assimilation is far less likely to occur in northwest Arkansas than in Miami, Chicago, New York or Los Angeles, for example.

In fact, almost everyone agreed that if they grew up in a place like Los Angeles or Chicago their experiences would have been very different. Maite, a 19 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, says that although her parents would be pushing her to do well in school she thinks that the large metropolitan and urban environment influences people to not go to school. Maite understands this to be the case because of her uncles' experiences, as she describes here:

Especially in LA, I have had family members, like my uncles have decided to move out of LA because they know if they stay there no matter how much they tell their child you have to go to school or get an education the same environment that you are in pushes you not to because of the gangs and...like it's your way of survival basically and school is not going to make you survive in that environment.

Luna describes her possible future if she grew up in Los Angeles or Chicago and it is not an encouraging one. She says:

Statistically speaking, I wouldn't have gone to college, wouldn't have graduated from high school. I would have gotten pregnant by now. You know, so many bad things would have happened to me by now [if I lived elsewhere], statistically speaking. So a combination of living in Arkansas and my Mom's hard work or whatever...[it has] given me some opportunities that I wouldn't have had otherwise.

Miguel voices a similar opinion when he says “I think there would be less of a chance that I would be [in college in Los Angeles or Chicago], just because of the negative influences there.” In addition, 11 more respondents said they would probably not be in college if they grew up in a big city and this was continually attributed to negative influences they believe they would encounter there. However, 21 respondents said that although their lives would certainly be different, they still think they would be in college. Both parental support and parental expectations coupled with the individual drive to succeed are the reasons why each of these students thinks they would be in college no matter where they grew up.

The hourglass economy in which the 1.5 and second generation is growing up today leaves little room between the unskilled low paying jobs immigrant parents often work and the skilled professions that require higher education degrees. When trapped at the bottom of the hourglass the prospects of climbing out of it are grim. For “the children of immigrants, this stark bifurcation means that they must acquire in the course of a single generation the advanced educational credentials that took descendants of Europeans several generations to achieve. Otherwise, their chances of fulfilling their life’s aspirations would be compromised...without the costly and time-consuming achievement of a university degree, such dreams are likely to remain beyond reach” (Portes et al. 2009:1080-1081; Hirschman 2001; Massey and Hirst 1998).

The lack of mobility ladders wreaks havoc on even the highly ambitious that are unable to attend college due to expense and/or legal status. All of the respondents are very much aware that their college degree will be their best ticket to success. Each immigrant descendant told me that the only way they can do well and be able to provide

for their families as they grow older is to graduate from college and then find a good job. Getting a college degree helps ensure that they enter the upper level of the hourglass economy. Thus, for a majority of these children of immigrants their prospects are high because they are acquiring the necessary education and skills needed to advance in the labor market. However, for the nine undocumented individuals, this is not necessarily the case. Their futures remain up in the air, because even with a college degree without the proper documentation the high-skilled high paying jobs are out of reach. Instead, they may be forced to enter into the same low paying jobs where their immigrant parents are employed. As mentioned, enrolling in the Deferred Action plan can delay this unfavorable future, but only temporarily. However, if Congress passes the DREAM Act or includes amnesty as part of comprehensive immigration reform then these members of the 1.5 generation will have a path to U.S. citizenship and their futures will be bright.

More than half of the respondents did report some instances of racial discrimination, but they said they just try to ignore it. Some also said that discriminatory comments make them try harder in school just so they can prove the majority population that they are as smart and capable as anyone else. The geographic location of where these children of immigrants live is not the urban inner-city where immigrant populations living in the U.S. are often over concentrated. Instead, these members of the 1.5 and second generation are growing up in smaller towns in an area without an inner-city and no evidence of an underclass. Exposure to a lifestyle characteristic of gangs and drugs is simply not happening. Finally, although the bifurcated economy leaves few mobility ladders, a college education opens the most doors. As the economy is increasingly “based on knowledge and technology, gaining a good education beyond high school is

particularly important for the [1.5 and] second generation. Those who receive advanced education may be able to enter the top half of the hourglass economy” (Allen 2006:25). All enrolled in college, or recent graduates, this group is doing its best to climb towards opportunity. Even though racial discrimination is present and few prospects exist between the low-skilled, low paying jobs and the high-skilled, high paying jobs, these children of immigrants are not succumbing to a deviant lifestyle in the lower-echelon of society. Thus, the determinants of segmented assimilation may differ for members of 1.5 and second generation living in smaller, less metropolitan locales compared to those living in the traditional large urban receiving cities and states.

More recently, Portes et al. (2009) does find that in extraordinary cases immigrant descendants can achieve educational and occupational success; such achievement is associated with authoritative parenting coupled with the prevention of dissonant acculturation, the presence of significant others and external assistance programs, and the preservation of the culture of heritage in the form of selective acculturation. Although their conclusion does not parallel mine exactly, it does share similarities. For example, authoritative parenting could loosely fall under the supportive parent’s category, the presence of an influential other did positively impact a number of respondents, and everyone is selectively acculturating in this study population. Geographic location and access to higher education coupled with selective acculturation and supportive parents remain the key predictors of upward assimilation among this group of children of immigrants in northwest Arkansas.

Gonzales-Berry et al. (2006) conducted a research study with twelve members of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents that live in rural Oregon and now all attend

Oregon State University (OSU) to understand the factors that played a role in their integration into the country and their post-secondary education success. The students that were the focus of this study have a similar life history to those that I interviewed and the study's findings are similar to what I discovered in Arkansas. The researchers found that legalization, family support, and selective acculturation along with financial aid and academic support at OSU were critical to the success of these individuals. They also determined that the greatest obstacle to higher education was undocumented immigration status, which is likely true for those in Arkansas as well. Less than 25 percent of individuals in my study sample are undocumented, which indicates that undocumented status is a significant barrier to getting to college and of upward mobility. It seems that the assimilation trajectories of the Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation vary more than previously thought. Although downward assimilation is widely considered the outcome for a majority of children of immigrants, perhaps it is not as prevalent for those that live in more rural communities, like rural Oregon and northwest Arkansas (Gonzales-Berry et al. 2006; López and Stanton-Salazar 2001; Portes et al. 2009; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993; Telles 2006).

Based on all of the data discussed above, I am able to conclude that all study participants are assimilating into the majority middle-class while preserving certain aspects of their culture of heritage and maintaining solidarity with the Hispanic/Latino population. Each individual is following this third path of segmented assimilation at their own speed and some are moving faster than others. For this progression to continue, at least in northwest Arkansas, education must be accessible, parental support must remain strong, ethnic ghettos cannot form, and this group must be better accepted at all levels of

society. “There is little doubt that a university education will be the determining factor for whether or not the second generation will gain labor market position”, which means that education is crucial for this population (Goodwin-White 2009:1123; Allen 2006). Parental support plays a large role in the educational success of these immigrant descendants, so it must continue for both the younger siblings of those that I interviewed and into the next generations as well. Because the location of residence is strongly correlated with success or failure, an ethnic ghetto simply cannot begin to take shape (Allen 2006; Hirschman 2001). If it does, it may be hard for the immigrant parents and their children that live there to assimilate upwards. Finally, assimilation is not a one-way street; if U.S. “society is accepting of immigrants, newcomers will have the choice of being bicultural if they so desire and of proceeding at their own pace in the process of adaption to a new country” (Phinney et al. 2001:506; Jacoby 2004; Massey and Sánchez R. 2010).

To be sure, assimilation, as redefined by Alba and Nee (1997), is not what is taking place in northwest Arkansas among the 1.5 and second generation. The lines that separate the majority population from the minority population are not fading away and the similarities between the majority population and the immigrant descendant population are certainly not highlighted. Segmented assimilation, rather, more accurately details how the children of immigrants integrate into society.

Portes et al. (2009) contend that upward assimilation along the ethnic or bicultural path is often the exception rather than the rule, especially for the Hispanic/Latino children of immigrants. However, this does not necessarily appear to be the case in northwest Arkansas. Ethnic or bicultural assimilation that leads to upward mobility in the majority

middle-class is the path many children of immigrants are taking. While I cannot say with certainty how prevalent it is, it does not appear to be the exception. With that said though, downward assimilation may still be a possibility for those living in these locales, but in a slightly different form than Portes and Zhou (1993) conclude.

The group that I believe is the most at-risk are the children of immigrants following in the footprints of their parents instead of making their own. Although I only interviewed those in college or recent graduates, a number of respondents told me that they had friends that did not go to college because they were undocumented and did not think they could go to college and/or did not know how to afford it. These friends of theirs seem to follow the same pattern; almost all of them were hired for low-skilled jobs in the same industries as their parents straight out of high school. Thus, despite speaking fluent English, having a high school diploma, and being well-versed in American ways (so said their friends) they find themselves working in the manufacturing and construction sector of the economy. Rather than moving up the socioeconomic ladder, they remain stagnant, in the same place their parents are still today.

This outcome is of course different from the typical downward assimilation and underclass many Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation immigrant children are predicted to follow and then find themselves, but there is still cause for concern (López and Stanton-Salazar 2001; Portes et al. 2009; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993; Telles 2006). Fortunately, these children of immigrants can still escape the life that parallels their parents if they are given the ability to do so. However, these immigrant children cannot change their futures if they do not have that chance. Since access to education is critical to their success, “providing Latino families with specific information

on how to complete high school, gain further education, and attain better jobs is sorely needed, especially in communities with large influxes of new immigrant families” (Behnke et al. 2004:31). In addition, better programs to inform at-risk youth about college, like how fill out the application and how to apply for funding, should be implemented at both the junior high and high school levels. Crucially, undocumented children of immigrants should be given the right to attend the public university at in-state cost and once they graduate they should be given a path to citizenship.

As Gonzales-Berry et al. (2006) discovered, undocumented immigration status created the largest barrier to a college education and this is also the case for some members of the 1.5 generation in Arkansas. Additionally, overall cost of a college degree detoured some of the respondents’ friends from applying to college, even though they wanted to go. “The second generation [is] the largest contingent of young Americans in many [high] schools”, so the future of the U.S. rests in their hands (Goodwin-White 2009:1123). We simply cannot allow the undocumented and the less fortunate to slip through the cracks into a stagnant future. I concur with Gonzales-Berry et al. (2006) that “with the regularization of immigration status and access to educational financial aid, the children of immigrants can indeed be successful” and become thriving members of American society (29).

CHAPTER 6

HERITAGE ACROSS BORDERS: THE PERSISTENCE OF TRANSNATIONAL LIFESTYLES

Chapter Introduction

Participation in transnationalism allows many immigrants, including their children, to strengthen ties with the ethnic homeland while living in another country. Transnational activity is common among first generation immigrants, and while such behavior transcends borders, it does not necessarily transcend future immigrant descendant generations. The transnational experiences of the 1.5 and second generation are thus important to discern as they may point to how transnationalism will be carried out in the years to come. Accordingly, this chapter focuses on the extent to which transnationalism exists today among the children of immigrants and its likelihood to persist into the future. In this chapter, I review the prominent literature on transnationalism and then I use the data I collected in the field to explain how and in what ways this population is transnationally active. I also consider the ways in which the immigrant descendants maintain their ethnic heritage and discuss such activities in addition to transnationalism.

It will become apparent in what follows that the members of the 1.5 and second generation do participate in transnational activities, but whether this will hold true as they move further into adulthood is debatable. Some transnational ties to the ethnic homeland will likely be sustained, but I argue participation will be to a lesser degree than it is now, especially as they become independent of their immigrant parents and create a life of

their own. Instead, taking part in behaviors that are used to maintain aspects of the ethnic heritage appears to be most important to these children of immigrants.

Defining Transnationalism

In recent years a new analytical framework based on 'transnationalism' has emerged (Castles and Miller 2003). Linkages and networks are created through transnational processes that tie together and engage two or more nation-states (Kearney 1995a). These linkages between societies created by, or based on, transnational migration has lead to this most recent theoretical movement. Transnationalism occurs when immigrants and their descendents "maintain social connections [as well as economic and political connections] within the polity from which they originated" (Glick-Schiller 1999:96). Thus, transnationalism entails people literally living their lives across two (or sometimes more) international borders (Glick-Schiller 1999). Transnationalism is not a one time event, but is rather a practice that develops over time and can change course as well (Levitt and Glick-Schiller 2004).

Although many researchers now use a transnational lens, they do not necessarily share a precise definition of the term transnationalism. For example, "Arjun Appadurai describes transnationalism as primarily a cultural phenomenon in which global capital has created practices and meanings that are no longer bound to a geographic place", while Basch et al. (1994) define transnationalism "as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (Fitzgerald 2000:5,7). Elizabeth M. Aranda (2007) refers to transnationalism as "the development of networks, activities, patterns of living, and ideologies that span the home and host societies of immigrants, emerging out of long-

standing patterns of migration and settlement” (3). Finally, rather than using the term ‘transnationalism’, as he feels the term fails to adequately consider all dimensions of transmigration, Smith (2006) chooses to use the phrase ‘transnational life’, which not only “includes those practices and relationships linking migrants and their children with the home country”, but transnational life “is also embodied in identities and social structures that help form the life world of immigrants and their children and is constructed in relations among people, institutions, and places” (6-7). Though not an exhaustive list of the various definitions used to describe transnationalism, it is clear that the term does not always mean the exact same thing. However, generally speaking, transnationalism is used to describe the processes in which immigrants and their children take part in or employ that create linkages to and with their country of heritage and place of residence.

Transnationalism can be delineated into two types; transnationalism from above and transnationalism from below (Castles and Miller 2003; Fitzgerald 2000; Fulcher 2000; Pries 2001; Smith and Guarnizo 1998). Transnationalism from above consists of “activities conducted by powerful institutional actors”, such as multinational corporations, state and national governments, and other macro-level structures, that transcend borders (Castles and Miller 2003:30). The development of transnationalism from above is more recent and could be considered a reaction to transnationalism from below. Macro-level institutions, specifically state and national governments, are beginning to appreciate, and perhaps take advantage of, the benefits transnationalism can offer, especially for the sending countries.

Transnationalism from below, in contrast, “is the creation of a new social space—one spanning at least two nations—that is fundamentally ‘grounded in the daily lives, activities, and social relationships’” of everyday immigrants (Mahler 1998:67). It is also the transnational “activities that are the result of grass-roots initiatives by immigrants and their home country counterparts” (Castles and Miller 2003:30; Smith and Guarnizo 1998). Additionally, transnationalism from below heavily emphasizes human agency in that it is what creates and maintains the transnational activities that form such transnational linkages and networks. Transnational activities from below can include social contact with family members in the ethnic homeland, voting in national elections from abroad, and sending remittances to the home country.

There is some debate among scholars about what facilitates transnationalism. Some point to the technological advances in communication and transportation as a stimulus (e.g., Castles and Miller 2003; Goldring and Krishnamurti 2007; Orozco 2005), while others claim it is global capitalism that produces transnational activities (e.g., Basch et al. 1994; Smith and Guarnizo 1998). The technological advances involving communication and transport have enabled immigrants to “maintain close links with their area of origin”, and has also facilitated the “growth of circulatory or repeated mobility” (Castles and Miller 2003:29). Manual Orozco (2005) explains that transformations in telecommunications, transportation, tourism, trade, and money transfer mechanisms, which he calls the five Ts of transnationalism, are the influential factors that have increased transnational activities (Goldring and Krishnamurti 2007).

Basch et al. (1994) contend that although technological advances might ease the ability to participate in transnational activities, it is actually “the current moment of

capitalism as a global mode of production that has necessitated the maintenance of family ties and political allegiances among persons spread across the globe” (24). It is thought that global capitalism causes nonindustrialized countries to become incapable of economic independence making them reliant on remittances (Smith and Guarnizo 1998). Global capitalism also creates consumerism in receiving countries and remittances become reasons for others to immigrate too. I would argue that transnationalism is facilitated by both the advances in technology as well as global capitalism. Advances in what Orozco (2005) describes as the five Ts of transnationalism not only speed up transnational on-goings, but they also intensify transnational relations among immigrants and non-immigrants alike, the sending country, and the receiving country (Goldring and Krishnamurti 2007). Global capitalism also plays a role in facilitating transnationalism as it creates consumerism worldwide and makes not only individuals, but countries dependent on immigrant remittances, which encourages continual transnationalism.

There are many actors who take part in transnationalism; immigrants, families, communities, and nation-states all can play a role in sustaining transnationalism. Of course, not every immigrant or every family, or every community, or every nation-state chooses to participate in transnational activities, but those that do make transnationalism a reality. Immigrants are likely the most important players in transnationalism, but they can only maintain these transnational connections with the help of their family and friends in the home country, and even within the receiving country at times as well (Pries 1999). It is important to make clear that someone does not have to be an immigrant to be transnational and movement across borders is not a prerequisite of transnationalism either (Aranda 2007; Levitt 2003; Levitt and Glick-Schiller 2004). For example, second

generation children of immigrants that have never crossed a border can still be transnational. Immigrant communities and organizations in both the receiving and sending countries help make transnational movement, communication, and activities a possibility (Smith 2006).

Evaluating Transnationalism

Transnationalism, although highly touted by some, has its skeptics as well. Lesley Gill (2000) would like to do away with the transnational approach; she argues it fails to pay adequate attention to the “reorganization of political and economic relationships within and between states” (15-16). Portes and his colleagues believe that if transnationalism is used to describe all actions of immigrant populations then soon the word will mean nothing (Fitzgerald 2000). Along similar lines, Sarah Mahler (1998) insists that a basic problem of the field is the sheer amount of terms or phrases that are used to describe transnationalism and its characteristics. She suggests that scholars agree on specific terms that will unify the framework, rather than creating new terms that often parallel existing ones.

Others that oppose transnationalism often do so by claiming that it is nothing new, but rather it is a process that has always existed (e.g., Joppke and Morawska 2003; Smith and Guarnizo 1998). These critics claim that immigrants of the past kept in contact with their families in their countries of origin, participated in their countries’ nationalist movements, and maintained other links to their home countries (Basch et al. 1994). Although it is certainly true that past immigrants did forge and sustain contact with their home countries, current transnationalism is different because of its sheer volume, speed, its increase in quality due to better communication, ease of travel, the efficiency at which

people can send remittances to their home country, and it is being sustained for numerous years (Basch et al. 1994; Smith 2006). This new type of immigrant experience is also a result of “an increased and more pervasive global penetration of capital”, which did not exist in the past (Basch et al 1994:24; Pries 1999).

I consider transnationalism to be a valid concept, but one that needs to be refined. Just as Mahler (1998) suggested, I recommend that transnationalism scholars agree on specific terms to use when defining transnationalism and its aspects. Here it must be emphasized that transnationalism does not represent simply all activity that relates to the home country or the immigrant community in the receiving country. It is important to delineate transnational activity from actions that reinforce the heritage culture. Participating in transnationalism can certainly strengthen ties to the home country and its culture, but not all activities that characterize ethnic heritage maintenance are transnational.

Though many immigrants, their families and friends, and governments worldwide are involved in transnational practices the future of transnationalism is not certain (Adler 2004; Levitt and Waters 2002; Smith 2006). While first generation immigrants are quite active transnationally, the extent to which transnational behaviors will persist among the 1.5 and second generations is not readily agreed upon by scholars. There are two main stances researchers most often take regarding the durability of transnationalism; either transnational ties to the home country will not be maintained by the majority of children of immigrants or transnational activity will in fact continue among immigrant descendants. A number of scholars argue that transnationalism will not only decline, but also be more limited in scope, as the 1.5 and second generation grows older, moves away

from their families, and creates lives of their own (e.g., Foner 2002; Kasinitz et al. 2002; Kasinitz et al. 2008; Rumbaut 2002; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Moreover, as Foner (2002) explains, while “connections to their parents’ homelands will be more important for the present second generation than they were for the immigrants’ children of an earlier era”, because they have been born and raised in the U.S., a majority of today’s immigrant descendants “will be primarily oriented to people, institutions, and places in this country” rather than to their country of heritage (250).

In contrast, some researchers insist that transnationalism persists into future second generations, but its intensity will wax and wane throughout the life-course (e.g., Levitt 2002; Smith 2002, 2006). Here, both Levitt (2002) and Smith (2006) point out that even if a minority of immigrant descendants remain transnationally active, such long-term transnational participation can play a significant role in the political, economic, and social life in both the U.S. and their ethnic homelands. Only time will tell for what lies ahead for transnationalism; the 1.5, second, third, and even fourth generation children of immigrants are the ones that will either continue transnational activities or cut ties with the original home country (Levitt and Glick-Schiller 2004; Levitt and Waters 2002; Pries 1999; Smith 2006). The transnational experiences of the immigrant descendants living in northwest Arkansas become noteworthy as they can provide insight into what the future of transnationalism will look like in the years to come.

Study Participants: Transnationalism

Since transnationalism from below refers to the activities and relationships in the everyday lives of immigrants and their families, it is this type of transnationalism to which I paid the most attention while conducting this research. As mentioned, I use

transnationalism to describe the processes immigrants and their children take part in or employ to create linkages between themselves (while living in the U.S.) and their home communities in the country of heritage. Transnational practices can range from the individual or familial level to the national level across sociocultural, political, and economic realms (Basch et al. 1994; Glick-Schiller 1999; Goldring and Krishnamurti 2007; Itzigsohn et al. 1999; Levitt 2003; Portes 1996). Transnationalism is not a one time event, but rather a collective process that can increase and decrease over time. The transnational activities of the members of the 1.5 and second generation today may offer a glimpse into what the future of transnationalism will look like. The transnational activities of the children of immigrants I interviewed do vary, but for almost everyone, at least some aspects of their lives are led transnationally.

To understand transnationalism and participation in such activities among these children of immigrants, I asked a number of questions during each interview that pertained to such a lifestyle. The questions elicited details about their connections to their country of heritage and the frequency in their involvement in maintaining ties to that country and their family and friends still living there. This data, coupled with the other details I gathered during the interview and participant observation, allowed me to determine if someone leads a transnational lifestyle and in what ways. Throughout a majority of the interviews it became obvious to me that while many of the respondents engage in transnational activity, a number of their behaviors, although not specifically transnational in nature, function to strengthen and/or preserve their attachment to their ethnic heritage. Transnationalism and maintenance of the heritage culture entail different actions and behaviors and should be understood as such; however, the two processes can

overlap and as the respondents make clear, involvement in both is common. As a result, transnational activity and actions that are used to retain aspects of the ethnic heritage are identified separately, but the futures of the two are discussed together.

Transnational participation can take several different forms, which can be delineated into three categories: sociocultural, political, and economic (Portes et al. 1999). Sociocultural transnational activities can consist of creating social networks across borders with the ethnic homeland, traveling to the home country, and celebrating national holidays or participating in religious festivals when visiting the country of heritage. Political transnationalism includes holding dual nationalities and voting in local and national elections of the home country from abroad. Finally, economic transnational activities can consist of being an ethnic entrepreneur or sending remittances to the home country. Individuals may be active in each category, or may only engage in one type of transnationalism at any given time (Goldring and Krishnamurti 2007; Portes et al. 1999).

Sociocultural Transnational Participation

Sociocultural transnationalism is the most common form of participation among the members of the 1.5 and second generation. Social networks that extend across the border are present. Many of those with whom I spoke said that whenever they travel to their country of heritage (i.e., Mexico or Salvador) they always carry packages with them from other families living in northwest Arkansas that are to be delivered to their extended family living there. Upon return, they often have packages from that extended family that are to be given to their family members back in the United States. Thus, goods and keepsakes are being moved across the border among families that are unable to see each other. This is able to happen because of the transnational social networks the immigrants

and their families have created and because of the goodwill of those that are a part of the network. However, most of these deliveries are precipitated by the immigrant parents; although some respondents carry the actual packages, the connections are via their parents' contacts.

In general, it seems that the present social networks that operate between countries are primarily sustained by the immigrant parents and their 1.5 and second generation children are only peripheral members. It is possible that their involvement within transnational social networks may increase as they become the heads of their own households. For example, if the need for transferring goods to the home country continues in the future the responsibility of providing goods and keepsakes to families in the home country may shift from the aging immigrant parents to their children. If true, these immigrant children will have to create new transnational social networks or sustain the already established ones to ensure the movement of items between nations can continue without disruption. On the other hand, if the transfer of goods becomes unnecessary, transnational social networks among this 1.5 and second generation population will weaken. The latter scenario is the most probable outcome as transnational ties to family in the home country is likely to decline as their immigrant parents pass away. Moreover, even if transnational linkages do not deteriorate among the immigrant descendants, it is unlikely that the familial relationships will be based in part on necessity. The more extended family members become the lower the expectations will be of giving and receiving packages often filled with need based goods and keepsakes.

Many of these children of immigrants have traveled to their ethnic homeland; 34 have visited their country of heritage and 22 of them do so once or twice a year. This

travel is almost always initiated and paid for by the immigrant parents. In fact, when the respondents visit their ethnic homeland they are usually accompanied by at least one parent or other family members. Some individuals have been to the country of heritage by themselves, but the travel was still almost exclusively arranged by their parents. Each immigrant descendant that has been to their country of heritage says that they enjoy going, all but two say they take part in the celebrations and holidays there, and each person says that they bring back cultural knick-knacks and certain types of food they can only get in that country upon their return to the U.S.

Of the 11 respondents who have not visited their country of heritage, 9 cannot do so because of issues related to legal documentation, 1 person said that the travel is simply too expensive, and 1 person, the only member of the fourth generation in this study, has no family in his country of heritage. All 11 people did point out that they would like to visit their country of heritage and plan to do so as soon as they are able. Travel to the ethnic homeland occurs at least once a year for almost half of the respondents, but this travel may become less frequent. As the immigrant descendants grow older and have to manage adult responsibilities, such as raising their own family and working full time, finding the time and money to visit their extended family could be difficult. In fact, three respondents said that since starting college they have only been able to travel to their country of heritage every other year rather than annually as they had in the past. Finally, the ability to travel to the ethnic homeland is limited to those with the legal rights to do so. Thus, legal status determines the extent to which some individuals are able to participate in certain transnational activity.

Almost everyone who travels to their country of heritage for vacation says that they always take part in national holiday celebrations and cultural festivals (if they are happening) when visiting. Many respondents travel to their country of heritage over the Christmas holiday, so participation in religious celebrations is quite common among this group. For example, multiple immigrant descendants told me that they take part in Las Posadas. Las Posadas is a processional “that is done from house to house during Christmas that represents when Mary went looking for a place to stay” Camila explained to me. Emilia, an 18 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, says that she really enjoys celebrating holidays in her country of heritage, “it’s really nice, especially going down there for Christmas because you see...there’s parties with piñatas, it’s so nice. Fireworks everywhere.” Characteristic of a transnational lifestyle, a majority of respondents celebrate holidays and participate in festivals that are common to their culture of heritage in both the U.S. and when visiting the home country. Observing holidays and taking part in cultural festivals while in the ethnic homeland will surely continue since everyone spoke so energetically about the joy they have when participating in such celebrations.

There are other sociocultural transnational activities in which this study population takes part as well. Most children of immigrants keep in contact with family in the country of origin and many do so on a regular basis. In total, 38 respondents said that they keep in touch with their family members living in the country of heritage; 18 said that they do so at least once or twice a week, 12 said that they are in contact with their family members once or twice a month, 7 others said they do so about every three to four months, and 1 person said they are in touch about once a year. To stay in contact, 28

people say that they speak to their relatives over the phone, 29 say that they use Facebook to stay in touch, 9 people send emails, and just 4 say that use Skype. Often times, a combination of these ways are used to facilitate conversations. A number of respondents said that Facebook has really helped them stay in contact with their cousins, because in the past they might say hi to each other over the phone in passing (when the immigrant parent was on the phone with a sibling, for instance), but now they can stay in touch as frequently as they would like. Luciana, a 22 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, says she keeps in contact with her family “every two days, like everyday actually, truthfully, especially with Facebook. I know exactly what my aunts are doing and I know exactly what my cousins are doing.” Pilar does not use the phone to talk to family in Salvador, but says “recently my cousin got a Facebook [account] and we’ve been talking on that” and Sebastián, an 18 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, says he speaks to his relatives in Mexico mostly over the phone, but says “lately I’ve also gotten in contact with them on Facebook.”

Another way contact is maintained is through videos, pictures, or letters that are sent back and forth between family members whenever someone visits. For example, when immigrant descendents visit their grandparents in Mexico, they will likely bring videos/pictures/letters from other family members that live in northwest Arkansas. Upon return they will bring similar items from their grandparents and other family members living in Mexico to those living in the U.S. Although a majority of respondents who visit their country of heritage have delivered these items, this type of contact is rarer than phone or Facebook contact because travel is not as frequent.

Interestingly, only three respondents said that they keep in touch with friends in their ethnic homeland. Most of the others said that although they have a few friends in the towns where their families live, they only catch up with each other when they are actually there. Five respondents did say that recently they have become Facebook 'friends' with some of their cousins' friends they have met when in the country of heritage and sometimes they post on each other's walls. Yet, they each said that they did not think this counted as keeping in touch with friends there because they were really their cousins' friends.

Two-thirds of the children of immigrants are in regular communication with their family in the country of heritage, which points to strong familial ties that are being intentionally preserved across borders. However, 12 of the 30 respondents in constant contact, and the 8 others that are in touch with their non-immigrant family less frequently, told me that it is usually their parents that initiate the phone calls to their family in the country of heritage. Then, at some point during the phone conversation they are instructed to get on the line to talk to their relatives. I equate this to when I lived with my parents; when they called my grandparents I was always handed the phone so I could talk to them for a few minutes. Although I was in touch with my grandparents each week, I was not the one making the effort to do so. Accordingly, though remaining in contact with family in the ethnic homeland is happening now among a majority of the immigrant descendants, at least some of it is a result of the immigrant parents' actions. With that said, Facebook communication is a main source of contact for many of the respondents, over which their parents have no control. Moreover, many of them said that Facebook has

single-handedly allowed them to build closer relationships with their extended family in the home country because it makes staying in touch very easy.

Thus, this transnational communication could follow two directions in the future as the children of immigrants become older. First, it could become very rare or cease to exist over time. As they move out of their parents' home or away from Arkansas and start to raise their own families, contact with the family in the ethnic homeland might wane because their immigrant parents are not there to hand them the phone anymore. At the very least, transnational communication over the phone will not be as frequent among the immigrant descendants as it is for their parents. Or second, it could continue because of advances made in internet communication. Since many respondents are excited about the newly established ties they are making with their cousins in the country of heritage and the ease with which Facebook and other social networking sites make it to stay in touch, continuing to be a part of each other's lives is a real possibility.

Transnationalism, as discussed earlier, is facilitated by advances in telecommunications, transportation, tourism, trade, and money transfer mechanisms; the effects of global capitalism have also driven transnationalism (Basch et al. 1994; Goldring and Krishnamurti 2007; Orozco 2005; Smith and Guarnizo 1998). It should be realized then that because the advances in technology and communication have spurred new forms of transnational activity there is no reason to think continuing advances will not play the same role in the future. Obviously, Facebook, a recent innovation, has made communicating to others across borders an almost effortless ability, as is evident among the respondents. Thus, it is possible that transnationalism among the members of 1.5 and second generation may be enabled by ways that have yet to be invented.

Watching television in Spanish is also quite common among the children of immigrants. Just over two-thirds of the respondents say that they watch television in Spanish, seven said that it is rare for them to watch it in Spanish, and four said they never watch it in Spanish. Of those that watch it, the most popular choices are the news on Univision, soccer games featuring Mexican teams, telenovelas (Spanish soap operas), and comedy shows. A lot of the immigrant descendants said that they will watch these shows with their parents, but they also said they will watch television in Spanish even if their parents are not watching it with them. A few of the individuals that watch the news in Spanish say they do so because it offers a much more international perspective on what is happening, rather than the news in English that can have an American bias. They also say that they want to be aware of what is occurring in their ethnic homeland and the news in Spanish allows them to stay up to date on the current events in the home country. Gael, a 21 year old member of the second generation with Salvadoran parents, explains “I notice one thing, you watch American news and you watch other world news, Spanish news, and America just touches on the things that concerns them with the world and outside the world what affects America. They don’t talk about what’s going on in other places.” No one exclusively watches television in Spanish though, and most respondents watch television in English as much, if not slightly more, than they do in Spanish. For now though, the interest in watching television in Spanish is obviously there and is another way these children of immigrants live transnationally. However, although a number of respondents said they sometimes watch television in Spanish without their parents, I think there is a strong chance that once this parental influence becomes infrequent, so too may watching shows in their parents’ native language.

Political Transnational Participation

The members of the 1.5 and second generation do not engage in political transnationalism. To begin, there was very little interest shown by the respondents about current politics in the ethnic homeland. In addition, only a few of these children of immigrants have dual nationality, so it is of no surprise that none of the respondents vote in local or national elections in the home country. A few respondents went as far to say that even if they were able to vote there it would probably be way too complicated, so they would not try. Lastly, any political activity in which they do engage is confined to the U.S. only, which eliminates it from being transnational in nature.

While just 8 of 32 eligible voters have actually voted in state or national elections, a number of respondents are putting their voice forward in both local and national contexts with the hopes they can inspire change. For example, Luciana, an ineligible voter herself, volunteers her time to assist members of the Hispanic/Latino community to register to vote. She shares many of the same political views with those that she helps register, so she knows that if she encourages them to vote, her voice is being heard, albeit indirectly. Emilia, Rodrigo, and Ramiro, among others, are each very active in getting the DREAM Act passed. They are members of either Arkansas Coalition for the Dream or Arkansas Dreamers, both of which are groups that advocate for the DREAM Act statewide and nationally. Emilia and Ramiro have both been to Washington D.C. to speak in front of Congress about the importance of this bill and they have all traveled to Little Rock, AR to speak in front of the state's House of Representatives to voice their same argument. Though new policy has yet to pass, their hard work and persistence will hopefully pay off in the near future. As I have illustrated, some of the immigrant

descendants are active politically, and while their efforts are specifically made with the Hispanic/Latino community (both locally and nationally) in mind, their political participation is not transnational because it is only performed in the United States.

Economic Transnational Participation

Economic transnational activity among the immigrant descendants does occur, but it is also limited. Three respondents work in the business that a family member started that primarily serves the Hispanic/Latino population throughout northwest Arkansas. The immigrant parent or immigrant relative of these respondents can be considered a transnational ethnic entrepreneur since they took the initiative to create a business that provides services the immigrant community needs; they are transnational because the businesses engage Mexico. Camila works as a cashier and shelf stocker at a Mexican goods store her aunt and uncle opened. Her aunt and uncle make routine trips to Mexico where they buy the merchandise they import to the U.S. and then sell in the store. Both Mateo, a 30 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, and Lautaro, a 25 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, work at a bus company their family owns that specializes in transporting people between northwest Arkansas and Mexico; Mateo does the paperwork and Lautaro drives the bus to and from the Mexico border. Each of these individuals is ensuring that the transnational business that a family member founded will continue to prosper. Although they were not the ones to start the business, they now bear some of its responsibility and in a way have grown into transnational ethnic entrepreneurs themselves.

Transnational ethnic entrepreneurship will likely remain limited in terms of the number of participants and will probably decline as these children of immigrants grow

older. Camila, Mateo, and Lautaro each plan to move away from their current jobs once they graduate from college and there was very little mention of transnational business prospects when the respondents discussed their long term career goals. Four males did express their interest in working in their country of heritage if they are able find a good job there. Matías, a 24 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, actually worked in an architectural firm in Mexico City for a year after he graduated from the U of A and would like to do so again. Rodrigo would also like to return to his home country to work there on a seasonal basis. He is majoring in architecture as well and wants to impart his knowledge he is gaining from his college education to those living there by assisting them to build affordable housing. While it is certainly possible a few immigrant descendants will become transnational ethnic entrepreneurs, it is an unlikely prospect for most.

Sending remittances or goods from the U.S. to the home country is a primary form of economic transnationalism. None of the respondents send money or goods to their family in the ethnic homeland, but 35 said their immigrant parents do so. The immigrant parents send remittances and goods, such as clothes and shoes, to their parents or siblings living in the home country. A majority of the respondents said they do not think they will have to send remittances to their family in their country of heritage when they get older because their primary responsibility will be providing for their parents who already reside in the U.S. Some immigrant parents would like to retire in their home country, and if this were to happen, then I am certain remittances would continue to stream across the border, but if most of the family remains in the U.S., these children of immigrants are not likely to remit at all.

The effects global capitalism has on transnational activity are real, but I do not think that it is a cause for transnationalism to persist in ongoing immigrant generations residing in the U.S. (e.g., 1.5, second, third, and fourth). Global capitalism has fueled sending countries' and their peoples' reliance on remittances. Sending remittances to the home country is a primary activity of economic transnationalism and many first generation immigrants remit, but that does not necessarily continue with their children. Although a majority of their immigrant parents send remittances to their parents and siblings, the respondents did not feel the burden of responsibility was going to fall on to them. They recognize they will support their immediate family, but since they all live in the U.S. now, sending remittances does not seem as likely to occur in the future. Thus, global capitalism will continue to stimulate migration and remittances sent from that new first generation, but transnationalism among future immigrant children generations is not necessarily influenced by it.

Study Participants: Ethnic Heritage Maintenance

In order for transnational participation to indeed be transnational it must engage two nation-states. Therefore, some of the activities in which a majority of the children of immigrants in northwest Arkansas take part, as discussed above, are transnational. Importantly however, a distinction must be made between transnational behavior and activities that promote the maintenance of the ethnic heritage. Although transnationalism can facilitate the retention of cultural heritage, activities that typify the preservation of the native culture are certainly not all transnational. These can take multiple forms and are best grouped into sociocultural, political, and economic categories. Sociocultural maintenance activities can include cooking food typical of the home country and

celebrating national holidays or cultural/religious festivals pertinent to the ethnic homeland. Political ethnic heritage maintenance can consist of influencing state or national elections and lobbying for policy change in the United States. Economic activity that relates to maintaining aspects of the heritage culture can include being an ethnic entrepreneur in immigrant communities and investing in the ethnic economy.

Since the activities to maintain the ethnic heritage varies, it is not always clear what they are expected to accomplish. The 1.5 and second generations choose to retain aspects of their native heritage for a variety of purposes. First, it can be used as a way to affirm their membership with the ethnic homeland as a whole (including the people and/or culture of that country) and/or with the immigrant community in the U.S. Second, it can be used as a way to authenticate or assert their heritage culture within the confines of the U.S. Third, it is a way to uphold the values/morals/lessons/beliefs (including religious and/or political) their immigrant parents have taught them. It is important to remember that this involvement in ethnic heritage maintenance only pertains to such activities that occur in the U.S., which of course distinguishes it from transnationalism.

Sociocultural Ethnic Heritage Maintenance

Sociocultural activities that are used to maintain the ethnic heritage are the most common form of maintenance participation among the members of the 1.5 and second generation. As was discussed in Chapter 4, a majority of the respondents said that 75 percent or more of their meals they eat each week are that of their country of heritage's food. Most of them grew up eating what their mother cooked and it usually was food from her home country. Many also commented that during holidays their family is sure to cook food that is culturally significant to their native background. Preserving cultural

food traditions is a common form of sociocultural maintenance, of which many immigrant parents take part. The children of immigrants are influenced by this cooking and traditional holiday meals as most of them told me they prepare similar food to their Mom's and will always follow their mother's recipes for holiday cooking. A few respondents (all male) said that they do not know if a majority of their meals will continue to represent their ethnic heritage for a couple of reasons; first, now that they live alone they are just eating whatever they can afford, and two, they acknowledge that whomever they marry may have different preferences for food. It does seem, however, that many of these immigrant descendants will continue to cook and/or eat food that is typical of their ethnic homeland. Although it may not consist of 75 percent or more of their meals on a weekly basis, it will no doubt remain part of their cooking repertoire and will certainly be the focus of holiday meals to come.

Many of the respondents celebrate the national holidays of their ethnic homeland and participate in Hispanic/Latino cultural and/or religious festivals in the United States. A number of immigrant descendants said that they celebrate Cinco de Mayo at the Jones Center in Springdale, where they hold a celebration for the annual event. Cultural festivals, such as the Day of the Dead, One Community Salsa Fest, and Festival for All (the latter two are cultural festivals specific to northwest Arkansas hosted by the Hispanic/Latino community) are attended by some of them as well. Many also said that they celebrate Christmas as they would in Mexico. For example, Camila says that she participates in Las Posadas (the same religious ceremony in which several others said they take part when in Mexico) and Santiago, a 26 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, says "we try to, I guess, relate to our roots any way we can. For

Christmas my Mom makes a bunch of tamales and gets the whole family together and we just try to stick with the culture, you know?” The children of immigrants usually first learned to celebrate the national holidays, cultural, and/or religious festivals customary to the ethnic homeland from their parents. Now, those that live away from their parents say that they still celebrate the holidays in much the same way they were taught. As for the others, they are very likely to continue such celebrations, even if the immigrant parents are absent, because the holidays and festivals have meaning attached to them. They not only represent their cultural background, but by observing them, tradition is upheld. Preparing or consuming food traditional to the country of heritage, observing national holidays, and taking part in Hispanic/Latino cultural and/or religious festivals in the U.S. each function as ways to retain the ethnic heritage.

Another way that the immigrant descendants are maintaining a connection with their native background is through on-campus involvement. There are a number of Hispanic/Latino based groups on the U of A campus of which a majority of respondents are members. LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens), Conexiones (a program that connects local Hispanic/Latino high school students with Hispanic/Latino college students that provide mentorship and guidance through the college application and entrance process), and ALPHA (Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting) are the main programs many of the children of immigrants take part. Their membership in these groups has afforded them the opportunity to meet other Hispanic/Latino students and form friendships with each other. The bonds they created have resulted in a strong on-campus Hispanic/Latino community that many rely on for a sense of belonging. These relationships may lead to the creation of a Hispanic/Latino

social network that could very well extend past graduation if their experiences within the groups remain positive. Such a network can facilitate ethnic heritage maintenance because it not only allows those within it to remain close to their roots, but continued membership also allows for the expression of a shared cultural heritage among one another. Finally, being part of a Hispanic/Latino social network is a way to authenticate one's belonging to the ethnic group.

Political Ethnic Heritage Maintenance

Maintenance of the ethnic heritage in terms of political engagement, which can consist of influencing local or national elections or lobbying for policy change, is not extremely strong within this population. At this time none of the immigrant descendants have directly influenced local elections in northwest Arkansas or at the national level. However, as mentioned earlier, some of the respondents are politically active and each of them told me that they are specifically involved because they want the Hispanic/Latino community to be heard. As a result, I do think it is possible for the members of the 1.5 and second generation to influence future local and national elections if more of them are actually willing to vote.

As they grow older, I believe that the fear of serving on a jury will minimize and they will register to vote, which could draw more attention to their voting power. Thus, as this population moves further into adulthood I predict that more immigrant descendants will become politically active and will use their political engagement as a way to maintain their ethnic heritage. As the local immigrant community gets larger and the Hispanic/Latino population continues to grow nationwide, the political importance of the 1.5 and second generation will become increasingly more significant. As this happens it

is likely to encourage political mobilization (Ramakrishnan 2005; Tsuda 2012). The views and opinions of the children of immigrants will surely be based, at least in part, on a value and belief system that is influenced by their cultural background. Therefore, engaging politically can also serve as a way for one to endorse their native heritage. Although maintaining this heritage via political channels is not at the forefront of many of the children of immigrants' lives, it certainly could be once they get involved in the political arena.

Economic Ethnic Heritage Maintenance

Economic activity that facilitates the maintenance of the ethnic heritage can consist of being an ethnic entrepreneur in the immigrant community or investing in the ethnic economy. In addition to the three immigrant descendants that work in transnational businesses, two others work in family owned businesses that primarily serve the Hispanic/Latino population throughout northwest Arkansas. The immigrant parent or immigrant relative of these respondents can be considered an ethnic entrepreneur because they were able to create a successful business that caters to the immigrant community. Luciana waits tables at a small Mexican restaurant her uncle started and Axel, a 19 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, also works at the Mexican restaurant his father opened over ten years ago. Both Luciana and Axel work at the family restaurants to earn money while in college, but also because they like working with their family and want the business to continue to thrive. Thus, they both are working to ensure that the ethnic business that a family member founded will see continued success; although they were not the ones to start the business, they are very much a part of the ethnic industry today.

I believe that ethnic entrepreneurship within the U.S. is likely to increase among the members of this 1.5 and second generation as they are beginning to realize that their situation puts them in a unique position in the U.S. economy as they are able to serve both the Hispanic/Latino population and the non-Hispanic white population. Although they may not start their own business, over half of the respondents told me that they would like to work, or at least volunteer, with the Hispanic/Latino community either locally or elsewhere nationally. They all said that they feel like they have a lot to offer the ethnic community because they can relate to them while also being accustomed to American ways. Importantly, they said they would enjoy working with the Hispanic/Latino community because it is a way to connect with others with a similar background, which acts as another way to remain in touch with their ethnic heritage.

Many of the children of immigrants involve themselves in the ethnic economy in the area. A majority of them say that they eat in locally owned restaurants that serve their country of heritage's food, many say that they will go to the Hispanic/Latino grocery stores to find specific meats and spices they cannot buy anywhere else, and some frequent the discotecs in town that only feature music from Latin American countries. Participating in the ethnic economy in northwest Arkansas allows the 1.5 and second generation to retain certain aspects of their ethnic heritage. Staying active in the ethnic economy will likely continue, as it is an easy way to assert cultural belonging and to remain a part of the local Hispanic/Latino community.

The Future of Transnationalism and Ethnic Heritage Maintenance

When talking with the immigrant descendants about their daily lives it was apparent to me that a majority of them do lead transnational lifestyles at this point in

time. They participate in a variety of transnational activities that span the sociocultural and economic domains. Sociocultural transnationalism is the most common, followed by economic transnationalism, and political transnational activity is absent. However, much of the 1.5 and second generation transnational behavior seems to be initiated, or at least facilitated, by the immigrant parents. As the immigrant descendants become increasingly independent from their parents, the future of transnational participation among this population may well become less prevalent.

The transnational activities in which the children of immigrants take part that are routinely precipitated by the immigrant parents consist of transnational social networks that includes the transfer of packages across borders, travel to ethnic homeland, communication with family members in the home country over the telephone, and watching Spanish television. Potential transnational ethnic entrepreneurship and communication with those in the ethnic homeland via the internet, most notably Facebook, are the only two actions of immigrant descendants that are not initiated by the immigrant parents. In fact, I believe it is the latter two transnational behaviors that are most likely to endure for the longest amount of time among the children of immigrants. Even though transnational ethnic entrepreneurship is unlikely for most, a transnational lifestyle is sure to persist for those that become economically engaged within two polities. Transnational contact through the internet, or this virtual transnationalism, will certainly continue among the immigrant descendants as many say that they now stay connected with their cousins and other family in the ethnic homeland much more than they did in the past because of Facebook.

The respondents are confident that they will continue to be intimately involved with their ethnic homeland and their family living in that country and they were sure to stress the significance of it when asked. Accordingly, 44 children of immigrants think it is important to stay connected to their country of heritage; 23 respondents said that it is important because they have family that lives there. Candela stays linked to Salvador “because our family’s over there, we’ve got to make sure that they’re okay and they have what they need”, she explains. Mario says “well...I mean, you have to know about your family, you know? So I need to stay connected [to Mexico].” Emma, a 19 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, says “[it’s important] because...I mean...well, I would regret not talking to them you know? If they’re my family then once they pass away it’s like, oh man, you know?”

In addition, 17 respondents said that staying connected to their ethnic homeland is crucial because it is their cultural heritage, their roots, and/or they were born there. Luana, an 18 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, reveals the importance of both family and heritage; she says “it’s my family, I need to know what’s going on there and it still brings me back to my childhood.” Violeta, a 20 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, explains it is important to stay connected to Mexico “because you have to always remember where you came from or where your...your culture and your values are from.” Likewise, Isabel, a 19 year old member of the second generation with Salvadoran parents, says “I think it’s important to keep traditional roots and just to keep that culture because I, I don’t know, it’s just has to do more with wanting to keep that culture and then have my kids know where they come from.” Vanessa also mentions the importance of culture as to why she wants to remain

connected to both Mexico and Salvador; she says “I don’t want it to be lost...just keep the culture going.” Along similar lines, Axel states “yeah, I still feel connected. I still want to feel connected and I still want to be connected. It’s my heritage. I don’t want to lose it.”

Five respondents told me that they will always remain connected to their country of heritage because it helps define who they are. For instance, Ana, an 18 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, says “[it is important to stay connected] because it is basically who I am. It’s a part of me I guess” and Mateo explains “[that connection] just kind of defines who I am and where I come from. And it kind of also gives me a sense of direction of where I’m going.”

Finally, one respondent said it is not important for him to stay connected to his home country. Fernando, says “it is not important [to stay connected to Mexico], but it is to family. The country has not given us anything, but I’m very grateful for this country; and you know, that’s why one day I want to give back to this country, because I am very grateful for it.” He cares for his extended family in Mexico and wants them to do well, but he feels no responsibility towards the country of his birth. Rather, he is incredibly appreciative of the opportunities he has received while growing up in the U.S. and wants to devote his time and attention to this country.

Although the children of immigrants intend to remain transnationally active, such participation is likely to decline over time. Rather, ethnic heritage maintenance is much more likely to persist into the future. Many of these members of the 1.5 and second generation have a sincere attachment to their ethnic homeland and maintaining aspects of it is an important part of their lives. The activities in which the immigrant descendants

take part that contribute to the retention of their ethnic heritage can be influenced by the immigrant parents, but not to the same extent as their transnational practices. Activities that help preserve the native background that are inspired by the immigrant parents' actions include preparing and/or consuming food typical of the home country and participation in national holidays, cultural, and/or religious festivals that are common to the ethnic homeland. However, belonging to a Hispanic/Latino social network, potential engagement in the political arena, potential ethnic entrepreneurship, and contributing to the ethnic economy are activities in which these children of immigrants take part that are not a direct result of their immigrant parents' behavior.

Instead, participation in such activities is a conscious decision for the immigrant descendants. They purposely choose to engage in these ways because it allows them to do any or all of the following: assert their membership with the ethnic homeland, express their ethnic heritage within U.S. borders, create a sense of belonging with the country of heritage (including the people and/or culture) and/or with the Hispanic/Latino community within the U.S., and uphold the traditions to which they are accustomed. In addition, the ethnic heritage maintenance activities over which the immigrant parents have had influence, most notably the preparation of ethnic food and holiday celebrations, of which the immigrant descendants now do themselves, still requires agency. Thus, the respondents' involvement in each of the described maintenance activities is deliberate; such behavior is intentionally carried out to ensure aspects of their ethnic heritage remain intact. These intentions are in contrast to their transnational behavior. Although transnationalism can too be a way to maintain ethnic heritage, for these immigrant

descendants their participation in transnational activity is not always a voluntary decision because their immigrant parents are often dictating such actions.

Family, cultural heritage/roots, and a means of recognizing one's self are the main reasons these children of immigrants want to stay connected to their ethnic homeland. Preventing a sense of loss of culture and heritage was a common theme in their responses about their relationship with their ethnic background. Thus, maintaining a connection to the ethnic heritage that is strong enough to preclude cultural understandings and values from diminishing among the members of the 1.5 and second generations is a priority among this population. To better understand whether this will continue to be the case, I inquired about language preservation and continued travel to the country of heritage with their future children.

All but one study participant said that they plan to teach their future children Spanish (one male individual did not provide a yes or no answer because he said he would defer to his future wife on that decision). When asked why they would teach their kids Spanish, 25 respondents said because they did not want their children to forget their heritage and/or roots, 21 people said that speaking English and Spanish is a practical and it provides opportunity, and 6 individuals mentioned that they would want their kids to be able to speak to their grandparents (i.e., the immigrant parents of the respondent). Santiago, for example, says "yes, definitely [I will teach my kids Spanish]. I just...I don't know...I think it's important and I want to keep the roots and I don't want them to forget about where their blood came from." Jesús, a 20 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, voices a similar opinion; he states "absolutely [I will

teach my kids Spanish] because I don't want... I guess I don't want this heritage to just kind of fade away. I think that I have a responsibility to carry it forward."

Echoing the same sentiment as both Santiago and Jesús, Tomás says "why would I teach Spanish to my kids? Well it's part of my culture. It's part of who I am. Especially the language aspect and it would be really embarrassing if they didn't know it because my Dad doesn't really speak English. It's part of who I am." Agustina, an 18 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, goes further with her reasoning in her following explanation to me:

[I will teach my kids Spanish] because I grew up speaking Spanish, my parents their native language is Spanish. It goes back to the whole roots, so they can also appreciate their culture and their background, where they came from. And I feel that in a way it's going to teach them tolerance. To be tolerant with other, um, other ethnicities, with people from, just I guess, to not look at people and think color or think race, or any of that, you know?

Finally, Maite says "I will teach them Spanish mainly just because I want them to keep their culture and also because I know that it would provide them with more opportunities." Teaching Spanish to their children is imperative for almost all of these respondents and the reasons why they want to teach their kids Spanish often parallel each other. Keeping the cultural heritage alive and remembering one's roots is clearly of the upmost importance.

All 45 immigrant descendants said that they will travel to their country of heritage with their future children. Twenty respondents said that they will take their kids there because they want to make sure they will learn about their cultural heritage and want to teach them about their roots. For example, Gael says "it's part of me, they have to know, that's part of our culture" and Javier explains "because just the way I don't want to lose

my culture, I don't want them to get too...Anglicized or whatever the word is. I want them to know their culture." Similarly, Mario says "[I will take my kids to Mexico] just to show them where I was born and all that, you know? And to get them to learn the culture too."

A couple of respondents said that they want their kids to learn about the culture, but it is also important they understand the advantages they have in the United States. Miguel explains "I will take [my kids] to Mexico just so they can stay close to their culture, so they know where they're coming from...so they can see how blessed they are" and Victoria says "we will go just so they can see what it's like. Because, so, they can appreciate what they have here, because it's a lot harder there [in Mexico and Salvador]."

Eighteen people said they will travel to their country of heritage so their children can see where they or their grandparents grew up; Vanessa says "I'll go because that's, that's where their grandma and their grandfather was from. I would show them all of that." Finally, eight respondents mentioned that they will travel to their parents' home country because they want their kids to meet their extended family that still lives there. This is evident as Pedro, a 19 year old member of the second generation with Mexican parents, explains "[we will go to Mexico] because I will hopefully still have family there, like, I guess my cousins if they live down there and they are going to have their kids and we'll want to see them." The reasons the immigrant descendants give for traveling with their children to the country of heritage are culturally and root based. I must reiterate that only 8 respondents mentioned they will take their children to the country of heritage to see family, yet 23 people said that family was the main reason to stay connected to that country. This indicates that maintaining transnational ties to family may indeed decline

over time as many children of immigrants' immediate family resides in the U.S. and the extended family becomes more extended. However, Facebook and other future advancements in modes of communication over the internet will continue to make contact more readily available and accessible, which may ensure that virtual transnationalism will characterize future transnational participation for many.

It is undeniable that the members of the 1.5 and second generation want to impart the continued preservation of their cultural of heritage and their roots in the ethnic homeland onto their future children. Teaching them to speak Spanish and traveling with them to the country of heritage will help maintain cultural competence and instill the cultural values to which so many respondents are attached. The enthusiasm when speaking about these things is apparent and I believe that given the best conditions, each of these immigrant descendants would teach their children Spanish and would travel to their country of heritage, but I am hesitant to say that this will be the reality for all of their children. Speaking Spanish in the home so the children will learn it will be difficult if a respondent marries someone who does not speak the language and international travel is expensive. If the immediate family lives in the U.S., I imagine travel to the home country to reunite with the extended family will be rare. Moreover, although traveling to the ethnic homeland is technically a transnational activity, it seems that future travel among these children of immigrants will function more as a means to maintain their ethnic heritage and share it with their children as opposed to serving as part of a constant and active transnational lifestyle.

The overwhelming sentiment is that these children of immigrants do not want to lose their heritage and by purposely taking part in ethnic heritage maintenance activities

they are able to remain connected to it in a variety of ways and retain the aspects of it that are most important to them. Although transnationalism is used as a way to sustain ties to one's ethnic homeland, ethnic heritage maintenance activities are not always embodied in transnational practices. Therefore, while some transnational behaviors among the 1.5 and second generation will persist (especially virtual interactions and potential ethnic entrepreneurship), I expect that for the most part transnationalism will fade, especially as the immigrant parents have less control over their children's lives and also as the immigrant descendants' adult responsibilities continue to grow. My predictions parallel the conclusions several researchers have reached about other 1.5 and second generation populations growing up in the U.S. (e.g., Foner 2002; Kasinitz et al. 2002; Kasinitz et al. 2008; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut 2002).

The fervor to remain connected to their native background remains widespread among this population. Importantly, the children of immigrants do not have to engage in transnational activity to remain in touch with their ethnic heritage. Instead, involvement in activities that are deliberately employed to retain the cultural heritage are most critical and as a result will be more typical of the 1.5 and second generation than transnationalism in the years to come. This maintenance of the ethnic heritage will continue because as they have demonstrated, it is what is important to them. Maintaining tradition works to affirm their membership with their ethnic heritage (including both familial ties and culture), authenticates their Mexican- or Salvadoran-ness, connects them to their roots, and exemplifies the belief system instilled upon them by their immigrant parents.

Finally, it must be mentioned that this predicted outcome is contingent on a number of important factors. Settlement location, career choice, and marriage could each affect how one chooses to maintain their ethnic heritage. For example, if one moves to an area with a large Hispanic/Latino community, their affiliation and participation within the group may grow stronger. In contrast, if an individual moves to a town where there are no other Hispanic/Latinos it may be harder to behave in ways that help reinforce the ethnic heritage. However, a majority of the respondents hope to find a job within northwest Arkansas or nearby upon graduation so their exposure to the immigrant community will likely remain the same. In addition, the attachment these children of immigrants feel to their ethnic heritage is real and because of this I believe that their commitment to maintaining it will remain strong throughout their lives. Imparting this behavior onto their future children may not be as wide spread as they hope, but that is difficult to determine now and of course only time will really tell.

CHAPTER 7

ETHNIC IDENTITY: THE MEANINGS ATTACHED TO THE SELF-LABELS

Chapter Introduction

Ethnic identity is understood by most scholars to be multi-dimensional, variable in both time and context, and entail feelings of group belonging (e.g., García 2004; Nagel 1994; Phinney et al. 2001; Tovar and Feliciano 2009; Umaña-Taylor and Fine 2004). Many children of immigrants identify ethnically. Of course, both the ethnic label and the reasons for such ethnic identification can vary, even among individuals with similar experiences. The ethnic identity of the members of the 1.5 and second generation is of interest because it can signify how these individuals perceive their relationship and/or membership with the U.S. and their ethnic homeland (Tovar and Feliciano 2009). In addition, the meanings attached to such ethnic identities, or the lack thereof, is important to recognize because it can yield the intention of the self-label.

Accordingly, this chapter focuses on the self-ascribed ethnic identities of the children of immigrants. I discuss the concept of ethnic identity and review the ways in which it is commonly studied. Next, I present the data I gathered in the field to address the common ethnic labels used by the study population to identify themselves. I then go further and consider the ways in which some respondents use their ethnic identity to represent their association with a certain group and I also explain the importance attached to such labels. It will become apparent that while the members of the 1.5 and second generation do identify in similar ethnic terms, only some generalizations are able to be made. In addition, although some respondents' ethnic identity is purposely chosen for what it connotes, I argue that not all ethnic identity is necessarily deployed in response or

opposition to American society. In fact, some children of immigrants struggle with identifying in certain ways because the existing labels do not adequately represent who they are or their situation.

Defining Ethnic Identity

The concept of ethnic identity is complex and multi-layered (García 2004; Tovar and Feliciano 2009). While there is no set definition of ethnic identity, scholars agree that it is malleable, adaptive, negotiated, and contingent (e.g., Eschbach and Gómez 1998; García 2004; Macias 2006; Purkayastha 2005). It can be a product of individual selection or externally imposed by others (Eriksen 2002; Jones 1997; Nagel 1994). Ethnic identities are socially constructed and are shaped by the interactions people have with the host country and their co-ethnics (Jensen et al. 2006; Nagel 1994; Omi and Winant 1994; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Waters 1990). The political climate, racial structure, or perceived discrimination can influence ethnic identity choice, as can experiences with the ethnic community, the ethnic homeland, and the majority population (Tovar and Feliciano 2009; Zarate et al. 2005). In short, ethnic identities are flexible, variable, situational, and influenced by many different contexts (Tovar and Feliciano 2009).

Though ethnic identity can be assigned to an individual by others, scholars often focus on self-ascribed ethnic identities (Tovar and Feliciano 2009). Much of this research examines the different contexts that can affect ethnic identity choice, such as family background or the social environment, or it evaluates the extent to which ethnic identification predicts certain predispositions, such as academic achievement or civic engagement (e.g., Golash-Boza and Darity Jr. 2008; Jacoby 2004; Massey and Sánchez R. 2010; Phinney et al. 2001; Stepick and Stepick 2002; Tovar and Feliciano 2009;

Umaña-Taylor and Fine 2004; Zarate et al. 2005). In general, the results of these studies reveal that there can be significant relationships between ethnic identity labels and specific contexts and that at times particular ethnic identification predicts tendencies. However, the findings also make clear that ethnic identity is quite variable so what holds true now may not in the future (Jiménez and Fitzgerald 2007).

Not all researchers, however, agree on the ways to approach ethnic identity. For example, Suzanne Oboler (1995) insists that ethnic identity must be considered in relation to racial history, class, and gender roles and Gloria Anzaldúa (1999) emphasizes the need to assess ethnic identity as fluid rather than using static definitions of it (Zarate et al. 2005). Finally, both Benjamin Bailey (1999) and Ana C. Zentilla (1997) suggest that language plays an important role in how people and groups identify ethnically (Zarate et al. 2005).

For this research, I choose to concentrate on the self-identification dimension of ethnic identity among the members of the 1.5 and second generation. I explore the self-ascribed ethnic identities of this population to better understand the importance or insignificance of such labels. For example, in line with Bailey (1999) and Zentilla (1997), I pay attention to the language the respondents use to evaluate if ethnic identity is a deliberate choice or inconsequential to the individual using it. I also determine if there is a prevalent ethnic identity label among the children of immigrants and if so, what influences such identification. To be clear, I use the terms ethnic identity, ethnic label, and self-label interchangeably as they signify the same thing.

Study Participants: Ethnic Identity

When inquiring about the topic, it is important to bear in mind that ethnic identity does not imply adherence to just one term. Accordingly, to elicit the ethnic identifications of the children of immigrants, I asked two open-ended questions during the interview, which allowed for multiple answers; they are as follows: ‘which word or phrase best describes your ethnic identity?’ and ‘is there another word or phrase that best describes your ethnic identity?’ (Lubbers et al. 2007:727). Most respondents answered quickly and often times, they listed more than one ethnic term to which they self-ascribe (usually in response to the second question). Thus, the first answers to the initial question I asked are likely the predominant ethnic label(s) the children of immigrants use and their subsequent answers to the second question highlight the other ethnic terms they employ as well.

Although it is possible for an individual to not self-identify in ethnic terms, this was not the case for any of the interviewees. However, a few people did not understand what ethnic identity meant when I posed the initial question. When this happened, I did my very best to not give examples of possible ethnic labels in an effort to avoid influencing their response. I explained that ethnic identity could be a way in which people signify their affiliation with a certain ethnic or cultural group or could be a way for people to express their ethnic heritage. Luckily, each respondent understood the intention of the question after my clarification attempt and was able provide an answer.

In line with Anzaldúa (1999), ethnic identity should be viewed as a fluid state. It can change or stay the same and can be affected by or dependent on various factors, such as time, place, and interaction. Accordingly, to further understand the ethnic identity choices of this population I asked a number of questions during each interview that

related to the topic. In addition to the questions that elicited specific ethnic self-labels, I inquired about the importance of their ethnic label, meanings attached to their ethnic identity, and identity change. I also paid special attention to the ways in which these immigrant descendants speak about ethnic identity and how it relates to other aspects of their lives. I use the information I compiled during the interview in combination with participant observation to not only delineate the ethnic identities of the respondents, but to highlight other aspects of their ethnic identification that is not necessarily expressed through such labels.

Ethnic Identity: Self-Labels

Once all interviews were complete, I discerned four types of ethnic labels with which the children of immigrants identify. Following Jensen et al.'s typology (2006) and similar to the ethnic self-labels Rumbaut (1994) distinguishes, they are categorized as follows: 1) home country identity, an identity that ties the individual to the culture and nation of heritage (Mexican, Salvadoran, or Honduran), 2) American hybrid identity, a hybridization that combines a specific cultural reference with an Americanized identity (Mexican American, Salvadoran American, Bolivian American, Tex Mex, or Chicano/a), 3) Hispanic/Latino identity, a general pan-ethnic identity that denotes a heritage that groups across nations share, and, 4) American identity, an identity that ties the individual to the United States. Although there are additional possible self-labels, such as Tejano or Hispano, the examples used above comprise all of the ethnic labels with which the members of the 1.5 and second generation identify. I must reiterate that I did not articulate these labels to the respondents at any point during my time with them, but rather let each person explain their ethnic identity strictly in their own terms.

The first response from the immigrant descendants yielded 13 home country identities, 15 American hybrid identities, 16 Hispanic/Latino identities, and 1 American identity (Figure 3). The subsequent responses revealed that 32 individuals identify with two ethnic labels: 15 individuals identify with both home country and Hispanic/Latino identities, 16 people utilize American hybrid and Hispanic/Latino identities, and 1 person identifies with both American and Hispanic/Latino identities. Seven people employ three ethnic labels: home country, American hybrid, and Hispanic/Latino. Just six respondents exclusively identify with one ethnic label (one home country identity and five Hispanic/Latino identities) (Figure 4).

		Frequency	Percent
Ethnic Identity	home country	13	28.9
	American hybrid	15	33.3
	Hispanic/Latino	16	35.6
	American	1	2.2
	Total	45	100.0

Figure 3. Ethnic Identity, First Response

		Ethnic Identity, First Response				Total
		home country	American hybrid	Hispanic/Latino	American	
Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses	home country	1	0	0	0	1
	Hispanic/Latino	0	0	5	0	5
	home country, Hispanic/Latino	10	0	5	0	15
	American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	0	11	5	0	16
	American, Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	1	1
	home country, American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	2	4	1	0	7
Total		13	15	16	1	45

Figure 4. Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses

A home country identity is often considered oppositional to the U.S. and the American way of life; those that identify with the home country intentionally do so in reaction to the negative aspects and/or experiences they associate with the U.S. and the majority population (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Zarate et al. 2005). Portes and Rumbaut (2001) contend that “even when the [identity] process involves embracing the parents’ original national identities, this is less a sign of continuing loyalty to the home country than a reaction to hostile conditions in the receiving society” (284). Portes and Rumbaut (2001) leave little room for an alternative representation of a home country identity. However, this type of reactive identification is most commonly associated with dissonant acculturation and downward assimilation, not characteristic of this study population.

Even though Portes and Rumbaut (2001) specifically say that a home country identity is much more oppositional in nature than it is an effort to remain attached to the country of heritage, I argue against this. Rather, identifying with the ethnic homeland is a way in which some of the respondents are able to distinguish their ethnic heritage and assert their ethnic pride (Espiritu and Wolf 2001). It certainly did not come across to me that a home country identity is in spite of the U.S. as a country or its majority population. Instead, most people said that ‘Mexican’ (or another home country label) suits them well because it best represents who they are and where they are from. This home country identity is used by the respondents to identify with their ethnic homeland and does not specify, necessarily, identification with the local immigrant community. All but one person identifies as Hispanic/Latino in combination with their home country label and seven respondents employ American hybrid and Hispanic/Latino labels alongside their home country identity. It seems that for those that identify with the home country, it is

much less a form of resistance than it is a way to express their ethnic heritage and attachment to it.

An American hybrid identity is one that binds a cultural heritage orientation with an Americanized referent (e.g., Mexican American, Salvadoran American, Bolivian American, Tex Mex, or Chicano/a). While Tex Mex (Texas Mexican) and Chicano/a could be considered pan-ethnic identities, I purposely classify them as American hybrids because the three individuals that identify as such (two Chicano/a and one Tex Mex) each explained to me that the label best combines their Mexican upbringing in American culture, which has led to a dual identification with both their ethnic heritage and American way of life (Stepick and Stepick 2002). This description elucidates quite well what most of the other respondents told me as to why they identify with an American hybrid label; it is a sufficient way to describe their situation in which they have grown up. No one exclusively uses an American hybrid; instead, 16 immigrant descendants recognize Hispanic/Latino as part of their identity in combination with an American hybrid and 4 individuals employ American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino, and home country labels together.

A pan-ethnic label, such as Hispanic or Latino, is a broader identification that encompasses a number of similar or related ethnic groups. Pan-ethnic identities may stem from a majority populations' homogenization of culturally related groups, but they are employed by minority populations who wish to associate themselves and/or express commonality with other members of a broader ethnic group (Min and Kim 2002; Nagel 1994; Tovar and Feliciano 2009). A pan-ethnic identity may be used as a way for one to combat the negative experiences they face in the U.S.; such identification highlights their

membership of a group of people that face a similar situation (Golash-Boza 2006; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Or, in contrast, someone may employ a pan-ethnic identity because of the cohesion it implies to a group of people, but this unity need not be based on their exclusion within the U.S. While some people may avoid identifying pan-ethnically in an effort to minimize their association with a label to which negative stereotypes and discrimination are tied, others choose a pan-ethnic label as a way to convey their ethnic group belonging and/or to uphold group solidarity (Oboler 1992; Tovar and Feliciano 2009).

Though Hispanic and Latino are distinct pan-ethnic labels, I choose to use them as one combined term, Hispanic/Latino, because they both recognize an association with others of Latin American descent from Spanish speaking countries (Golash-Boza 2006). Furthermore, most often the children of immigrants use Hispanic and Latino interchangeably and when someone did not, the reasons for preferring Hispanic instead of Latino were similar to the reasons others preferred Latino to Hispanic. For instance, three respondents said that Latino is too general so they favor Hispanic, while two other respondents told me that Hispanic is too broad of a word so they prefer Latino. Since identifying with a Hispanic or Latino pan-ethnic label is a way in which the immigrant descendants are able to express their commonality and group membership with others that share similar characteristics, combining Hispanic/Latino is appropriate.

In all, 44 respondents self-identify as Hispanic/Latino, which makes it quite clear that these members of the 1.5 and second generation do not actively avoid association with a larger ethnic group. Of those that describe themselves as Hispanic/Latino initially, five people solely use the pan-ethnic label, five individuals identify too with the home

country, five others use an American hybrid label, and one person combines all three. Not everyone could explain why they choose the pan-ethnic label as a lot of the answers were pretty general. For the most part though, the immigrant descendants understand themselves as Hispanic/Latino for two main reasons: 1) they learned the words Hispanic and Latino in school (before college) and employ them because it implies that they are part of an ethnically specific group of which they are proud and since other people usually understand what Hispanic/Latino means it is easy to use and 2) they think Hispanic/Latino is a good way to describe who they are because it implies more than just being one thing (as in only Mexican or only American). It certainly is not being exclusively used as a way to express their shared experiences of discrimination. Rather, the pan-ethnic label, Hispanic/Latino, encompasses many different meanings and that is exactly why it appeals to so many of the children of immigrants.

While the ethnic identities of the respondents are no doubt unique to each person, there are consistencies regarding their self-label choices within the study population as a whole and in comparison with other research findings. The Hispanic/Latino pan-ethnic label is without question the most dominate identity to which the immigrant descendants adhere, but 39 of them combine this with at least one other ethnic identity as well. Hispanic/Latino is most commonly used alongside an American hybrid (16 respondents), followed by the almost as equally popular Hispanic/Latino and home country combination (15 respondents).

Many scholars consider discrimination to play a major role in ethnic identification (e.g., Golash-Boza and Darity Jr. 2008; Goodwin-White 2009; Lee and Bean 2004; Massey and Sánchez R. 2010; Phinney et al. 2001; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Stepick

and Stepick 2002). It is thought to influence identity choice in a variety of ways. For example, specific experiences of discrimination can shape an individual's identity in that their identity becomes reactive against the country and majority population, a person may begin to ethnically identify with a larger group in response to perceived discriminatory acts directed towards them, or negative stereotypes associated with a certain ethnic identity may lead someone away from self-labeling as such. In other words, there are two ways immigrant descendants can react to discrimination: by a reactive ethnic identity or by assimilating to the majority population and subsequently indentifying with them. Identifying with the majority population presents difficulties for many racialized minorities as they cannot just be non-ethnic and white; however, they can identify as American. Though discrimination is considered to have a significant effect on ethnic identity, among this study population there is little importance given to it, at least consciously.

As a group, 18 respondents say they experience discrimination regularly, 18 others have not been victims of discrimination, and the remaining 9 individuals say that they are discriminated against occasionally. The ethnic identities are distributed fairly evenly across the three different groups.³⁰ For example, of the 18 individuals that are often discriminated against, 6 identify with the home country and Hispanic/Latino, 5 use both an American hybrid and Hispanic/Latino label, 3 plurally identify with the home country, Hispanic/Latino, and an American hybrid, 3 employ just a Hispanic/Latino identity, and 1 person singularly identifies with the home country. The 18 respondents that have not been discriminatorily victimized identify similarly. The dual home country

³⁰ See E.1. in Appendix E.

and Hispanic/Latino identity is used by eight individuals, four identify with an American hybrid and Hispanic/Latino, four plurally identify with the home country, Hispanic/Latino, and an American hybrid, one person identifies as only Hispanic/Latino, and another employs an American and Hispanic/Latino identity combination.

The only inconsistency in the distribution is that nearly all (seven of nine) immigrant descendants that sometimes experience discrimination employ a dual American hybrid and Hispanic/Latino identity. It is difficult to assess what all of this insinuates, but at the very least, it may indicate that discrimination does not inhibit one from ethnically identifying in part with the majority population. This does not imply that the American hybrid identity is employed as a way to avoid prejudice or to disassociate with the ethnic minority as each person still simultaneously identifies as Hispanic/Latino. Instead, this suggests that a pan-ethnic identity, among this population, is based more heavily on inclusion, rather than experiences of exclusion since identifying as Hispanic/Latino is characteristic of all but one study participant and is not limited to those that have been discriminated against. The data also suggests that identification with the home country is not necessarily a reactive or oppositional identity spurred by discrimination and marginal status since just over half of those that use a home country self-label have not been victims of discriminatory experiences. Rather, it is much more likely that employing a home country identity is a way to positively associate with the ethnic homeland (Espiritu and Wolf 2001).

While there appears to be little significance between discrimination and ethnic identity choice in terms of actual numbers, it is important to gauge how such discriminatory experiences may have shaped current self-labels and if such identities are

directly attributed to them as many researchers conclude (e.g., Golash-Boza and Darity Jr. 2008; Goodwin-White 2009; Lee and Bean 2004; Massey and Sánchez R. 2010; Phinney et al. 2001; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Stepick and Stepick 2002). I asked the children of immigrants if they thought their negative experiences with the majority population ever affects their ethnic identity and each person said no. In fact, most of them wanted to know why it would change how they thought of themselves. None of the respondents mentioned anything to me that even slightly suggests the ethnic identities they employ are a reaction or response to discrimination. Therefore, it does not appear that discrimination strengthens ethnic minority identification among the members of the 1.5 and second generation since those that do experience discrimination ethnically identify similarly to those that have not been victims of it. While ethnic identity is undoubtedly shaped by many different experiences and on many different levels, it does not seem that discriminatory encounters are having any lasting effects on it, at least of which the immigrant descendants are aware. Of course, it is still possible that discrimination, or even lack thereof, does influence ethnic identity choice. However, if this is indeed the case, it is beyond both the immigrant descendants' (and my) level of individual consciousness.

Ethnic identity can also be moderated by a number of other factors, such as gender, generation, and citizenship (Phinney et al. 2001). I examined these characteristics of the children of immigrants in an effort to better understand what may affect their identification preferences. In their work on ethnic identity and immigration, Jean S. Phinney et al. (2001) explain that although the relationship between ethnic identity and

gender is explored frequently, most research findings are inconclusive.³¹ Nevertheless, gender may still distinguish tendencies so it remains an important aspect to consider in ethnic identity research. As mentioned before, the immigrant descendant population consists of 21 males and 24 females. While there is a higher percentage of females compared to males who identify with a home country and Hispanic/Latino label (46% vs. 19%) and a slightly higher percentage of males compared to females that identify as only Hispanic/Latino (19% vs. 4%), identification with the other labels is similar. The overall preference of the self-label Hispanic/Latino among males and females is nearly equal (100% vs. 96%) and a comparable percentage of males and females (38% vs. 33%) employ American hybrid and Hispanic/Latino identities.³²

Gender does not shape overall ethnic identification to a great extent within this population. The only exception to this is that a home country self-label is more prominent among females. While I am unable to specifically determine why more females than males identify with the home country, it is possible that the difference is related to their upbringing. Immigrant descendant girls tend to be raised under more parental discipline and protection and are forced to stay home more often than their boy counterparts, who are given more freedom. Moreover, immigrant parents frequently put more pressure on girls to maintain cultural traditions and languages (Feliciano and Rumbaut 2005; Zhou and Bankston 2001). Coupled together, this may account for why more females than males identify with the home country.

³¹ Phinney et al. (2001) use data from the International Comparative Study of Ethnocultural Youth (ICSEY project) that sampled adolescents from recent immigrant groups in four different countries; in the U.S., immigrant youth from Mexican, Vietnamese, and Armenian backgrounds living in southern California were sampled.

³² See E.2. in Appendix E.

In her work on ethnic and Americanized identities, Tanya Golash-Boza (2006) shows that home country labels are less likely to be employed among individuals who have been in the U.S. longer.³³ In other words, identification with the home country is less prevalent among later generations of immigrant descendants as it is with earlier ones. The initial responses from the children of immigrants in northwest Arkansas do correlate with her results. The 1.5 generation is more likely to choose a home country label than the second generation (9 vs. 4). However, this changes when asked if they have dual ethnic identities as three more members of the second generation identify with the home country. Finally, six second generation individuals identify plurally using the home country, American hybrid, and Hispanic/Latino self-labels in comparison to just one member of the 1.5 generation. While the home country ethnic identity is more popular among the 1.5 generation initially, it becomes more salient among the second generation when used in conjunction with another self-label.³⁴

Golash-Boza (2006) also finds that an American self-identity is increasingly more likely among immigrant children the longer they have been in the United States. Accordingly, it is expected that the second generation is more apt to ethnically identify with an American or American hybrid self-label. Indeed, Jessica Tovar and Cynthia Feliciano (2009) come to a similar conclusion in their work on Mexican American ethnic identities.³⁵ For them, generational status is the strongest predictor of American or American hybrid identities and Hispanic/Latino labels; their second generation

³³ Golash-Boza (2006) uses data from two nation-wide projects that surveyed Latinos in standard metropolitan statistical areas in 1992 and 2002. Respondents are eighteen or older and are members of the first, second, third, or fourth generation.

³⁴ See E.3. and E.4. in Appendix E.

³⁵ Tovar and Feliciano (2009) use data from 21 qualitative interviews with 1.5 and second generation immigrant descendants, ages 20-26, living in southern California (interviews were conducted in 2006) and from the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS) (CILS data last collected in 2001-2003).

respondents self-identified as American, Mexican American, or Hispanic/Latino far more often than did the 1.5 generation. Part of my results parallel both Golash-Boza's (2006) and Tovar and Feliciano's (2009) in that the second generation is slightly more likely to ethnically identify using an American hybrid label upon their first response than is the 1.5 generation (10 vs. 5) and this continues to be the case when dual and plural ethnic identity labels are articulated (15 vs. 9).³⁶

Yet, while the Hispanic/Latino label upon their first response is also more common among the second generation than it is with the 1.5 generation (10 vs. 6), as dual identities are expressed, Hispanic/Latino becomes equally as prominent among the 1.5 generation as it is within the second generation (21 vs. 21). Thus, in contrast to Tovar and Feliciano (2009), generation among the children of immigrants with whom I spoke is not a significant predictor of Hispanic/Latino self-identification. Moreover, this does not correspond with Golash-Boza (2006) as she finds that those who have resided in the U.S. for the least amount of time are more prone to employ the self-label Latino/a. This result goes against not only what Tovar and Feliciano (2009) conclude, but also what I find. In fact, most of the participants in my research project explained that they learned about being Hispanic/Latino in school in the U.S. It would seem, then, that their Hispanic/Latino ethnic identification is better attributed to their subsequent schooling in the U.S. rather than to the actual duration of their time spent in this country.³⁷

Several researchers have found that almost no immigrant descendant youth identify simply as American (e.g., Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Stepick et al. 2001; Stepick

³⁶ See E.3. and E.4. in Appendix E.

³⁷ Of course, amount of schooling or access to schooling could be related to amount of time spent in the U.S., but since almost everyone identifies as Hispanic/Latino in this study population, time in school is not being addressed.

and Stepick 2002; Waters 1999). Instead, they are likely to use an American hybrid or home country label (Stepick and Stepick 2002). This is similar to my research as only one respondent identifies as American and not exclusively because he couples it with a Hispanic/Latino ethnic label. Sebastián, a member of the 1.5 generation, says “I just feel American, but I’m Hispanic too. I’m just both.” Being American then, does not preclude him from adopting a pan-ethnic identity. In fact, none of the ethnic labels automatically excluded use of another label entirely. While home country and American hybrid ethnic self-labels are never just employed dually, they do co-exist among seven respondents that also utilize Hispanic/Latino. However, it is possible that employing a home country identity eliminates use of an American identity and vice a versa since no one indicated dual usage of both these identities.

The extent to which legal status affects ethnic identity is not explicitly discussed in Phinney et al. (2001), Golash-Boza (2006), or Tovar and Feliciano (2009), but it is important to note within this population as not everyone has U.S. citizenship. Although the first identifications voiced by the respondents indicate no significant variance by citizenship, the dual and plural identities are of interest. Those that are undocumented are more likely to employ an American hybrid identification than are U.S. citizens (67% vs. 53%) and the undocumented are less likely to self-identify with the home country than are U.S. citizens (33% vs. 59%).³⁸ Both of these findings are actually in discrepancy with that which aligns with Golash-Boza (2006) and Tovar and Feliciano (2009) because that data suggests generation plays a large role in predicting ethnic identity choice. If this pattern were to hold true for legality, Golash-Boza (2006) would expect the

³⁸ See E.5. and E.6. in Appendix E.

undocumented to be more likely to employ a home country identity than U.S. citizens (because presumably members of the 1.5 generation who are undocumented have been in the U.S. for less time than second generation U.S. citizens) and Golash-Boza (2006) and Tovar and Feliciano (2009) would presume the undocumented to be less likely to use an American hybrid label than U.S. citizens (because undocumented individuals belong to the 1.5 generation while U.S. citizens consist of members of both the 1.5 and second generation).

While these calculations do not negate the other results, this information about my study population indicates that both generational and legal status can influence self-label identification. In this case, I believe the undocumented are more likely to use an American hybrid identity and less likely to employ a home country label than their U.S. citizen counterparts because most of the undocumented individuals feel the need to express explicitly their belonging to the U.S. as a country, despite their legal circumstances. Those that self-identify with an American hybrid are able to remain attached to their home country while also legitimizing their belonging to the United States. Obtaining legal U.S. citizenship is of the upmost importance for the nine undocumented children of immigrants and identifying as American is one step many of them think is a necessary one to take. In contrast, those with legal U.S. citizenship are under no pressure to validate their American-ness to themselves or the majority population since they are legally American.

Golash-Boza (2006) concludes that the use of ethnic self-labels, like Hispanic/Latino, among the immigrant and immigrant descendant population in the U.S. is in response to their experiences of discrimination and exclusion; utilizing a shared

ethnic identity is a way in which this population can recognize their denial of full membership to the United States. Although I am sure that this is the case among some children of immigrant populations, I do not think that the immigrant descendants in my study population give this much credence to their ethnic identities. As mentioned, while some respondents articulated their ethnic identification self-label with ease and employed such an identity with purpose, just as many struggled telling me why they identify as they do. For example, a few of them did not know what ethnic identity was and a number of people said 'I guess I would say I'm [ethnic identity here]'. While some respondents are certainly more in tune with their ethnic identity self-labels and employ them as a way to convey meaning, this is not typical for everyone. In fact, I find that a lot of scholars give ethnic self-labels more agency and power than is perhaps always warranted (e.g., Allen 2006; Golash-Boza 2006; Golash-Boza and Darity Jr. 2008; Massey and Sánchez R. 2010; Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

Although my study population is small in sample size, which means broad generalizations are difficult to make, this research nonetheless demonstrates that ethnic identity can be extremely variable, even among similar populations. Some of the results I present do parallel others' work on ethnic identity, but at the same time there are also some noticeable differences. While I cannot isolate the exact reasons for the divergent findings, time, location, and data collection strategies may account for some of the discrepancies. The populations examined in the three studies I review are each based, at least in part, on members of the 1.5 and second generation consisting of youth and young adults through their early twenties. Since age of the immigrant descendants is comparable to those I interviewed, I cannot suggest it is a factor in the differing results.

I conducted my research in 2011 while the data in Phinney et al. (2001), Golash-Boza (2006), and Tovar and Feliciano (2009) was collected between 1992 and 2003 (some additional data was gathered in 2006 by Tovar and Feliciano (2009)). It is possible that answers provided by research participants are contingent on what is happening at that moment in time. For instance, the political climate, the country's economic success, and racial tensions can vary significantly over different years, so the actual period of data collection may shape a respondent's ethnic identity choice. In addition, the geographic location of their research sites consisted of typical immigrant receiving cities and states (e.g., southern California and Miami, Florida), which my study did not. Thus, geographic location may not only influence the determinants of segmented assimilation, but it may also play an important role in ethnic identity self-labeling among children of immigrant populations. Finally, a majority of the data used by these scholars is from surveys, while my findings are based entirely on in-depth interviews and participant observation. Although the research topics are similar, a difference in methodologies may account for some of the divergent findings. Whether time, location, and data collection techniques of the studies are the basis of the data variation is difficult to decipher, but it certainly is plausible. The important point to be made here, though, is that ethnic identity choice is not always reached by the same process and is not always easily explained.

Ethnic Identity: Alternative Means of Expression

Simply asking the children of immigrants to specify a word or phrase that best describes them in ethnic terms is useful for some purposes, such as categorization or isolating similarities and differences of self-label usage in comparison to variables like discrimination, gender, generation, and citizenship as I have done. However, the answers

to such questions do not automatically get at the different contexts that can influence ethnic identity nor do they reveal what each ethnic identification means for the individual that employs it. By paying attention to how immigrant descendants speak about themselves, as both Bailey (1999) and Zentilla (1997) suggest, I was able to better understand how their life experiences and daily interactions with those around them shape their ethnic identity. In fact, often times selecting a word or phrase with which one ethnically identifies did not always signify what is important to the respondents. While for some the ethnic self-label they use embodies the meanings they want it to, not everyone felt this way, and for others, although they identify ethnically, it was not at all important for them to do so. All of this, however, was not necessarily explicitly discussed in relation to ethnic identification, but rather was elucidated through what the immigrant descendants told me about their life, behaviors, and actions.

Many children of immigrants say that they are Hispanic/Latino and that they utilize the pan-ethnic self-label because it adequately describes who they are and people understand what it means. Though they identify as such, it is almost as if they use the self-label because it is the best term available, not because they are adamant about what it symbolizes. Rather, it seems like this membership and belonging to a larger group is better embodied in their actions and behaviors and is not necessarily reliant on their ethnic identification. For example, a majority of the immigrant descendants are involved in on-campus groups that are Hispanic/Latino based and many of the male respondents are in a Latino fraternity. Each person that is a part of an on-campus organization told me that they joined because they wanted to meet other Hispanic/Latinos and learn more about their ethnic heritage. The commonalities they share with others are what drew each

person to the specific groups they joined. While a Hispanic/Latino self-label does represent cohesion among a group of people, this solidarity the members of the 1.5 and second generation are creating with one another is best exemplified in their interactions with each other, rather than simply ethnically identifying in the same way. Thus, their sense of ethnic group membership and belonging is best manifested in their behavior, but also in their Hispanic/Latino self-label, intentionally or not.

One of the hardest questions for a majority of the respondents to answer during their interview is as follows: ‘if you had to choose, what flag would you hold first, the Mexican flag [or the appropriate country] or the U.S. flag?’ Many had to pause for a few seconds and really think about it. A lot of people said that this is a really tough question and I could see each respondent wrestle with their answer. The struggle many immigrant descendants felt when answering this question is elucidated in Axel’s response, described here:

Whose flag? I don’t know. It’s difficult because at first I saw myself as American. But then whenever all this undocumented stuff happened and everything, I felt like kind of betrayed. And then I got closer to Mexico. But now all this DREAM Act stuff and everything I think I should...if I wanted to be an American I think I should hold the American flag first. So I don’t know. That’s a hard question. It’s hard. It’s really hard. Like even though I’ve never really been to Mexico I still feel connected to it because it’s my background. But still, like America, they’ve done so much for me. I like both. I don’t know which one I would hold first. I would do both. One in each hand. Yeah, that’s what I would do.

In total, 19 respondents chose the flag of their country of heritage, 16 said they would hold the U.S. flag first, 9 said they would hold both at the same time, and 1 said neither. A lot of the immigrant descendants told me they felt bad for choosing one flag over the

other after answering the question, but no one changed their position when I suggested they could.

Ethnic identity and flag choice are interesting to consider together since flag choice may indicate national loyalty. For instance, when a person chooses to hold a country's flag over another, it is likely that it is that country and people to whom they are loyal. It is possible that this devotion is expressed through ethnic identity. If these suppositions are true, it should be expected that those who identify with the home country will be more likely to choose the home country flag than the U.S. flag, while those with an American or American hybrid identity will be more likely to choose the U.S. flag than the flag of the ethnic homeland. Upon initial identification responses, the first expectation holds true. Of those that identify with the country of heritage, nine respondents choose to hold the flag of their ethnic homeland, while just two individuals select the U.S. flag and two others choose both flags. However, of the respondents that employ an American or American hybrid self-label, six select the flag of their home country, seven pick the U.S. flag, two specify they would hold both flags, and one said neither, which indicates the second expectation is not true.

Once dual and plural identities are expressed, employing a home country identity and coupling it with the Hispanic/Latino self-label does not significantly change the original pattern of flag choice among those with a home country identity. Of those who use both identities, ten choose the flag of the ethnic heritage, while just three people select the U.S. flag, and three others prefer to hold both flags. Likewise, the numbers are hardly different among those that employ American or American hybrid identities coupled with Hispanic/Latino self-label; just one additional person selects the U.S. flag

and the rest stay the same. Among those that utilize the home country self-label in combination with an American hybrid and Hispanic/Latino, flag selection is almost evenly allocated; three respondents pick the flag of the home country, two people opt for the U.S. flag, and two others prefer to hold both flags. Finally, of those that only employ a Hispanic/Latino self-label, three individuals indicated the U.S. flag and two people selected both flags.³⁹

This data illustrates two important characteristics of ethnic identity in relation to flag choice. First, there is a positive relationship between ethnically identifying with the home country and selecting the flag of that country, and second, the other ethnic self-labels with which the respondents identify do not predict flag choice. Thus, it is only those that employ a home country identity exclusively or in combination with Hispanic/Latino that correlates with ethnic homeland flag choice. This may imply that a home country identity better encompasses allegiance to that country, whereas the other ethnic identities do not necessarily contain such an association since flag choice is much more variable among them. Ethnic identities, for some, can indeed convey their national loyalty, but it appears that national loyalties are not always relevant to ethnic identities. However, the variation in ethnic identity across flag selection does suggest that the ethnic identifications among this study population do not preclude an identity with another people or adherence to another culture or country.

Ethnic identity is contingent on various factors, such as time, place, and interaction (Anzaldúa 1999). Though each member of the 1.5 and second generation self-ascribes to specific ethnic identities, 37 respondents explain that at certain times they can

³⁹ See E.7. and E.8. in Appendix E.

feel more Mexican (or the appropriate home country identity) or more American than usual. For example, Paula, a 24 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, says “[how I feel] definitely changes. Like yesterday I wanted to play Spanish music, I don’t really listen to a whole lot of Hispanic music. Sometimes I miss it. Sometimes I’ll talk to my brother and be like, dude, I miss listening to live Hispanic music” and Ramiro explains “[I feel] Mexican when I go to a [soccer] game. I get my Mexican out through the screaming and everything.” Gael tells me “when I’m with my family or with other friends that are Salvadorans, I feel Salvadoran”, which echoes how a number of other respondents feel and is also similar to what Maite experiences as she says “when I go back to Mexico I know I feel more Mexican.” Thus, being around others that share the same country of heritage induces identification with that home country for many. Overall, eating culturally specific food, celebrating culturally specific holidays, and participating in ethnic festivals are the most common activities among the immigrant descendants that produce a conscious feeling of being more Mexican than American.

Everyone who says they feel more Mexican at certain times also reports sometimes feeling more American. For example, Tomás declares “the best example I can think of right now off the top of my head would be in the World Cup when the United States won against Algeria, I went nuts” and Gabriela says “I guess whenever I’m with my American friends I feel more American.” Thus, cheering for the U.S. national team caused Tomás to feel very American and similar to what a number of other respondents said, being around American friends makes Gabriela feel more American. Josefina, a 19 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, says “I guess I have that [American] feeling when I’m in Mexico,” which was also voiced by seven other

respondents. For some, being in the ethnic homeland induces a sense of American-ness, while for others, like Maite, it does the opposite. Finally, Agustina explains “being around people who don’t have [U.S.] citizenship that definitely does make me feel a lot more American because I do have more rights and more privileges that they don’t have.” Speaking English, listening to country music, participating in American civil duties, and celebrating U.S. holidays are the other behaviors that are most frequently associated with feeling American. Feeling more Mexican (or the appropriate home country identity) or more American at these times did not change the children of immigrants overall ethnic identification, but it no doubt influences it. It also suggests that the ethnic self-labels to which they adhere are quite fluid as they encompass their situational identities at seemingly all times. Thus, while participation in certain activities and presence in certain situations can define who they are ethnically, their ethnic identity, in turn, embodies these same behaviors and accounts for identity flexibility.

Though each immigrant descendant identified ethnically in concrete terms, close to a third of the respondents actively struggle with the notion of in-between-ness, which can sometimes have an affect on their ethnic self-label choice. Javier explains “I see myself as mixed culturally and [the majority population] sees me as Mexican or Hispanic and then I see myself as Mexican, but other Mexicans perceive me as culturally Anglo! You’re in the middle all of the time.” Likewise, Gael says “the thing that is weird is that here we’re considered Hispanics, but I hear if you go back [to Salvador], they call you gringo. They call you white! And I’m like, ‘so what am I? Seriously! Am I American, am I this?’ It’s kind of confusing.” Josefina expresses a similar sentiment when she tells me “this ethnic identity stuff reminds me of a poem we read in Spanish last year...it said

something like ‘to people here you’re not American, you’re not white, but to people over there you’re not Mexican.’ It kind of explains how I feel.”

Some of the children of immigrants explain their ambiguous positions by stressing their in-between-ness. For example, Luciana says “I’m not American because I wasn’t born here. I’m not Mexican because I didn’t grow up there. So, I would say I’m kind of in between...I’m in that no man’s land. I guess that’s where Hispanic will fall under.” Candela comments “I think we’re just in between; we’re not accepted in both” and Maite says “I’ve grown up in the U.S. and I have my Mexican culture, but I also have my American culture within me; I’m in-between.” There is so much talk of this in-between-ness, but there is not always a word or phrase that encompasses it all for these individuals that feel this way. While Luciana employs Hispanic, Tomás notes that he is “Latino in the States, but that term doesn’t exist in Bolivia.” Moreover, Luna mentions that on the U.S. Census there is not a correct ethnicity box for her to check and Axel too spoke about the Census. He says “I don’t know what to check off...Latino or Hispanic or Mexican American because legally I’d be only Mexican, but I’m half Anglo in a way. So, I’m both, so I don’t check anything.” For Sofia, it is a bit easier because Chicana embodies for her exactly what she feels; “[I’m] Chicana because I feel like it’s the word that just...it puts it all together. It’s like I was born here, but my parents are Mexican. And so I’m Mexican American. And it all fits in this term, which symbolizes I’m like a mix of everything.”

Each of these statements, apart from Sofia's, elucidates the uncertainty and confusion many individuals face when thinking about their ethnic identity and place in both the U.S. and their country of heritage. Luciana's words offer some insight:

It's a whole new generation of people and I don't know, we have our foot in one area and we have our foot in the other and we kind of identify with both, but yet at the same time there is no clear identifier for us.

Her thoughts are useful to consider since they are applicable to all members of the 1.5 and second generation. It is apparent that there is not a clear identifier for these children of immigrants as ethnic identification self-labels among them do vary. While some respondents consider their ethnic identity personifies them well, others are not as confident with their self-label, a few people did not know what ethnic identity meant, and a number of individuals place little to no emphasis on their ethnic identification at all. The immigrant descendants' comments make it obvious that an ethnic label may not have the same meaning in the U.S. as it does elsewhere, the identities may not have the same meanings among those who employ it, and although different contexts, such as time, place, or interactions, can have significant bearing on how one feels at a certain time, their ethnic identities at those specific moments do not necessarily change. This suggests, then, that the current self-labels to which the children of immigrants adhere are very adaptable as the flexibility of such identities is continually demonstrated situationally.

Ethnic Identity: Transnational Identity and Biculturalism

The ethnic identities of the immigrant descendants that are embodied in actual self-labels and also in their daily behaviors, interactions, and emotions draw attention to two additional characteristics of the respondents. Although, as researchers, we must be careful not to force something that is simply not there and avoid applying meaning to

something that does not have it, I believe that transnational identity and biculturalism warrant discussion because they both typify a majority of individuals in this study population. A transnational identity is a simultaneous identification with both the U.S. and ethnic homeland. Though no one indicated that they self-identify as ‘transnational’, the flexibility of these ethnic identities, such as employing an American hybrid label and choosing to raise the flag of the ethnic homeland, feeling more Mexican in certain situations and then feeling more American in a different context, and the presence of feeling in-between, demonstrates their transnational quality.

Ethnic identity and flag choice are useful to consider again here because how they function in combination often elucidates the dual attachment many immigrant descendants have with the home country and the U.S. at the same time. For example, nine respondents employ an American hybrid ethnic identity and choose to hold the flag belonging to their ethnic homeland. Along similar lines, five individuals identify with the home country and choose to hold the U.S. flag. This tendency to ethnically identify with either the ethnic homeland or the U.S. and to then choose to hold the flag of the opposite country clearly indicates that a dual identification with both countries is not only possible, but occurs regularly. Finally, nine others choose to hold both flags at the same time and their identities are evenly distributed among home country, American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino, and a combination of all three self-labels.⁴⁰ Many children of immigrants are still connected and feel loyal to their ethnic homeland, but at the same time, many of those same children of immigrants feel equally loyal and pledge allegiance to the U.S. For instance, Ana would choose to hold both the American flag and the

⁴⁰ See E.7. and E.8. in Appendix E.

Mexican flag at once. She tells me “it kind of feels like I’d be betraying one of them [if I just picked one]. Although I say I’m really a Mexican, like because of my culture and everything, I was born here and the United States has given me a lot so far.” Christian, a 24 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, thinks likewise as he says “um, I would say just both [flags]. Yeah, I don’t think I would go for just one.” As these immigrant descendants want to remain a part of and identify with their country of heritage, they also have a simultaneous attachment to and connection with the United States.

While ethnic identity self-label choices of the children of immigrants was steadfast (at least while I was conducting this research), how the respondents feel at a specific moment is often circumstantial. For example, someone who identifies as Mexican and Hispanic/Latino could feel more American in certain situations, but this does not change the overall ethnic identity. Participation in specific activities or particular events often allows the members of the 1.5 and second generation to be in touch with their American side or identify as American for a while and other occasions can bring out their heritage culture side or identification with the ethnic homeland. Thus, their identities are fluid, contextual, and transnational.

A transnational identity even portrays those that struggle with in-between-ness quite well. These respondents’ are unsure of their ethnic identity since they are not a complete part of the home country nor do they at all times fully relate to the U.S. However, they acknowledge that this position allows them to identify with both places, and they do, just not entirely. Therefore, a transnational identity can embody in-between-ness. This coexisting identification with the U.S. and the home country, however, is not

always signified by their ethnic identity self-label choices, but it is present in their thoughts and behaviors.

A transnational identity, consistent with someone who identifies with the host society (i.e., the U.S.) and with their country of heritage, characterizes a majority of these children of immigrants. Biculturalism, the ability to be proficient in two cultures (i.e., familiarity and understanding of cultural traditions, ways of life, and language competency), also typifies many of the immigrant descendants. To be clear, biculturalism is a cultural state and is separate from a transnational identity. For instance, a person can have a transnational identity, but not be bicultural. Or, a bicultural individual can not identify transnationally. Though biculturalism and transnational identity are not conditional, among the members of the 1.5 and second generation they often co-exist.

While no one specifically said that they were bicultural, there was frequent mention of being mixed culturally. This notion of being bicultural comes across quite clearly when the respondents discuss whether their ethnic background is a benefit or a disadvantage for them. Moreover, there was a lot of pride exhibited by the children of immigrants when discussing their ability to function biculturally. In all, 36 immigrant descendants think that their Hispanic/Latino ethnicity is an advantage. Being bilingual, the ability to understand and communicate with more than one culture, and having a more culturally aware perspective are the most common attributes the respondents associate with their ethnicity and denote as beneficial to not only their life in general, but also to future employers. Four respondents believe that their ethnicity is both helpful and detrimental depending on the situation. For example, bilingualism is practical and minority status is an advantage on college applications and among some employers, but

at the same time, the stereotypes associated with being Hispanic/Latino are often negative and can result in discriminatory practices. Two individuals consider their ethnicity to be a hindrance because of the negative stereotypes Hispanic/Latino often conveys, possible discrimination, and they do not like being equated with the poor statistically averages (in terms of economic and educational success) with which Hispanic/Latinos are associated. Finally, three people say that their ethnicity is neither an advantage nor a disadvantage because it makes no difference at all.

The members of the 1.5 and second generation that consider their ethnic background to be a benefit far outweigh the limited few that do not. Importantly, the aspects of it that are most frequently highlighted indicate not only that they are indeed bicultural, but it is exactly that, their biculturalism, that is advantageous for them. Rumbaut (1994) says that biculturalism is conveyed by using an American hybrid self-label, like Mexican American, as opposed to a home country label (i.e., Mexican) or just American. While this may be true for some, I do not think that an American hybrid label always implies biculturalism, and in addition, I do not believe that bicultural status pertains exclusively to those that employ an American hybrid self-label. Rather, biculturalism is not limited to ethnic self-labels, especially because ethnic labels do not always correlate with actual cultural behavior. A bicultural state, instead, transcends ethnic identity and is often better elucidated in the immigrant descendants' mind-sets, their ways of behaving, and their ability to conduct themselves in two different cultures.

The Future of Ethnic Identity

Each immigrant descendant employs at least one ethnic identity and most recognize that they have dual or plural ethnic identities. While some of the answers I

received from the respondents about why they ethnically identify as they do were vague, over the course of all of the interviews and time spent as a participant observer, I learned what each of the ethnic identity labels means and why it is used, at least in a general sense. A home country self-label is used by those who want to acknowledge their ethnic heritage and continued attachment to it. A home country identity among this population signifies specific identification with the ethnic homeland and does not imply, necessarily, identification with the local immigrant community. An American hybrid identity is common among the children of immigrants that think it best defines their situation as growing up Mexican (or Salvadoran or Bolivian) in the U.S. Finally, a Hispanic/Latino self-label is a pan-ethnic identity that implies membership with the Hispanic/Latino population as a whole; it is used by the majority of the respondents because it is what they learned in school and they like that it represents a whole group of people.

The ethnic identity self-labels, when analyzed together, did reveal a couple of patterns. First, discrimination does not strengthen ethnic identification. The immigrant descendants that experience discrimination ethnically identify in much the same way as those who are not discriminated against. Gender does not predict ethnic identification, but there is a tendency for more females than males to identify with the home country. Generational status does affect ethnic identity to some extent. Members of the 1.5 generation are more prone to ethnically identify with the home country than second generation individuals, but this pattern disappears when dual and plural identities are discussed. In addition, members of the second generation are more likely to self-identify using an American hybrid identity than the 1.5 generation. Hispanic/Latino identities, on the other hand, are not generationally determined. Finally, legal and citizenship status

may influence ethnic identity. Contrary to prevalent assumptions, undocumented individuals are more likely to employ an American hybrid identity and less likely to identify with the home country than those with U.S. citizenship.

I also learned that the ethnic identities among these children of immigrants are not necessarily employed with specific intentions in mind. For the most part, the respondents identified the way they did because the ethnic label made sense to them. Although for some, the self-label embodied the characteristics that defined them perfectly, for others, less meaning was attached, and a number of the immigrant descendants struggled with coming to terms with who they are and where they fit in. As Luciana articulated so well, at this time there does not seem to be an appropriate identifier for these children of immigrants. Instead, ethnic identifications among this population are variable and while some patterns emerge, the data shows how flexible identity really is.

While everyone was able to provide an ethnic self-label to which they ascribe it was important for me to also consider if ethnic identity is more than something that is simply expressed in specific terms. By having the respondents reflect on what country's flag they would hold, I discovered that there may be a positive relationship between a home country identity and allegiance with that place. In addition, considering ethnic self-label choice in relation to flag preference highlighted the transnationality of some of the immigrant descendants' identity. It is also quite clear that membership and belonging with the Hispanic/Latino population is not simply achieved by identifying as such, but is reached by actual association and activity with the ethnic community. Many individuals are aware that their actions affect their identities at any given time; these identity shifts are situationally or contextually based. While the ethnic identity self-labels may be

reinforced during this time, it is the behaviors that are being recognized and therefore are empowering, not necessarily the ethnic label itself. Since the ethnic identity self-label does not always well represent what the children of immigrants think and feel, it is important to also pay attention to their actions and behaviors because at times it is that which best demonstrates their identification. By doing so, I was able to illuminate certain characteristics of this study population, particularly their transnational identity and biculturalism.

The members of the 1.5 and second generation are not intentionally asserting or actively emphasizing their ethnic self-labels in their daily lives (they do not go around saying ‘I’m Mexican’ or ‘I’m Hispanic’, etc.). Instead, their ethnic identity shows up more in their daily behavior and then is influenced by it as well. In turn, it is apparent that for a majority of the immigrant descendants the ethnic labels they attach to themselves are not necessarily powerful entities that embody reactive or oppositional status, but rather terms that are adequate descriptors that one uses when asked. Of course, some respondents purposefully employ their ethnic identity because of the meanings they attach to it, but among this population, it is more the exception than the norm. The children of immigrants’ actions can no doubt influence ethnic identification and ethnic identity can also be manifested in their conduct, but such self-label choice and activity are not always dependent upon each other. Thus, the immigrant descendants’ ethnic identities and behaviors are closely interrelated, but not always contingent on one another.

It is important to remember that because ethnic identity is fluid, it is capable of adapting, evolving, shifting, and even changing over time. This means that the ethnic

identity self-labels to which the children of immigrants adhered when this research was conducted may now be different. Ethnic identification is a process that can be in constant flux because it is continually affected by life experiences and interactions. As a result, it is difficult to predict what the specific ethnic identities of this population will look like in the future. However, there are a couple of reasons that merit discussion that suggest the ethnic identities of these children of immigrants are more likely to evolve than to stay the same.

First, college has been shown to play a major role in the development and realization of ethnic identities of similar populations (e.g., Gonzales Berry et al. 2006; Tovar and Feliciano 2009; Umaña-Taylor and Fine 2004). Only Isabel mentioned to me that ever since she started college she has struggled with her ethnic identity; she says that being surrounded by all different types of people has made her question to whom she relates the most and it causes her confusion about her ethnic identity. For now, however, she considers herself Salvadoran American and Hispanic/Latina. While it was not apparent yet that college was influencing the other respondents' ethnic identities per se, a number of them told me that they have been able to learn a lot more about their ethnic heritage in college in part from the on-campus Hispanic/Latino organizations and because there are classes taught on the subject. This suggests to me that as they continue to learn and gain exposure to new ideas and different people, the experiences may influence how they come to see themselves ethnically.

Second, none of these immigrant descendants are married as of yet, but when that does happen it certainly could impact ethnic identification. While interethnic marriage has been found to decrease the saliency of ethnic identity, intergenerational intramarriage

could produce the opposite effect (Golash-Boza and Darity Jr. 2008; Jiménez and Fitzgerald 2007). Later generation immigrant descendants, who are further removed from the home country, that marry members of the 1.5 and second generation may reconnect with their ethnic heritage, which in turn can cause ethnic identities to become more significant (Jiménez and Fitzgerald 2007).

Attending college and marriage are major life events that are likely to influence ethnic identification. Any momentous occasion, the political climate, or personal experiences within the ethnic community, homeland, and majority population can also shape ethnic identity. Moreover, it must be recognized that ethnic identity is not always stable, it will continue to be situational and contextual, and it can become more or less salient as time goes by. For now though, each of the members of the 1.5 and second generation have ethnic identities to which they adhere, some more strongly than others.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION: THE INTERSECTIONS OF ASSIMILATION, TRANSNATIONALISM, AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

Chapter Summary

In this concluding chapter, I briefly summarize my dissertation findings. I continue with a discussion about assimilation and transnationalism where I look to answer how transnational participation varies across the path of segmented assimilation these immigrant descendants follow. Next, I concentrate on assimilation and ethnic identity and address how the identities of the children of immigrants relate to their path of assimilation. Then, I turn my attention to transnationalism and ethnic identity where I explore the relationship between transnational participation and the self-ascribed ethnic identities to which the respondents adhere. It will become apparent, in what follows, that assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity do indeed intersect, but these connections do not always result in the same outcome for each immigrant descendant.

In the latter half of this final chapter, I discuss what the future might hold for the respondents. I argue that better access to higher education and creating a path to U.S. citizenship for undocumented children of immigrants are both critical to the success of these current and future 1.5 and second generation populations. Finally, I suggest a number of potential study possibilities that would complement my work and also greatly enhance migration research.

Summary of Research Findings

The main goal of my dissertation research was to discover the ways in which the members of the 1.5 and second generation living in northwest Arkansas negotiate

assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity. In this dissertation, I have presented the data I collected in the field, discussed my research in comparison to other scholarly work on these topics, and have offered critical insights about contemporary immigrant descendants residing in small town America whom are often overlooked in migration studies because of their non-traditional place of residence. Crucially, these principal findings emerge only from the children of immigrants' words and actions that convey their understandings of the lives they lead today.

This dissertation provides new perspective on the Hispanic/Latino members of the 1.5 and second generation. While research on the children of immigrants is often conducted in large urban centers with a focus on junior high and high school students, I instead examine college-aged immigrant descendants living in Arkansas. Their experiences of growing up in a smaller, less metropolitan region are just as relevant as those in traditional immigrant gateways in large urban areas. In this study, I do not just pay attention to the immigrant descendants' socioeconomic mobility prospects, but rather I also explore their cultural and social integration patterns and establish the roles transnationalism and ethnic identity play in their daily lives. Lastly, I continue to differentiate the 1.5 and second generation members of this study population because while they do share many similarities, their place of birth can affect their behavior.

My research advances the understandings of segmented assimilation theory and it augments existing transnationalism and ethnic identity scholarship. Based on what each of the 45 Hispanic/Latino children of immigrants told me combined with what I inferred from participant observation, it is quite clear that all of the study respondents are assimilating along the ethnic or bicultural path of segmented assimilation into the

majority middle-class. Each individual is preserving certain aspects of their cultural heritage and maintaining solidarity with the Hispanic/Latino population while also being upwardly mobile. The assimilation trajectory among these immigrant descendants is unexpected because typically the Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation are predicted to follow the second path of segmented assimilation where there is little hope of mainstream success. My research reveals that four particular characteristics of the study population distinguish them from other Hispanic/Latino 1.5 and second generation members that are expected to assimilate downward: selective acculturation, supportive parents and intact families, a small town geographic location, and access to education (Rumbaut and Portes 2001; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Thus, I suggest that the determinants of segmented assimilation may differ for the children of immigrants living in smaller, less metropolitan locales compared to those living in typical immigrant receiving cities and states.

As I listened to the respondents' descriptions of their daily activities and interactions, the aspects of their lives that are important to them, and the way they think they will behave in the future, I was able to establish if and in what ways they participate in transnationalism. While a majority of the immigrant descendants are transnationally active and although they intend to remain so even as they get older, I predict such activity will actually decline over time. Undoubtedly, some transnational ties to the ethnic homeland will be sustained by a few of the children of immigrants. Yet, because for the most part their transnational behavior is initiated, or at least facilitated, by their immigrant parents, as they become independent and have a life of their own, their future transnational participation will decrease significantly. I do, however, believe that

transnational contact through the internet, or virtual transnationalism, is the most likely cross-border activity to continue among this population because it is easy to sustain and many of the immigrant descendants told me that they now stay connected with their cousins and other family in the ethnic homeland much more often than they did in the past as a direct result of Facebook.

When hearing everything the study participants had to say about their transnational activity, it became clear that many of them have a sincere attachment to their ethnic homeland and maintaining a connection to it is a focal point in their lives. While participating in transnationalism is a way in which linkages with the cultural heritage can be sustained, a majority of respondents also take part in non-transnational activities that promote the maintenance of their ethnic heritage. Heritage maintenance functions to affirm the immigrant descendants' membership with their ethnic homeland (including both familial ties and culture), authenticates their Mexican- or Salvadoran-ness, connects them to their roots, and exemplifies the belief system instilled upon them by their immigrant parents. Transnational participation can be used as a way to preserve aspects of the native culture, but such preservation can be accomplished through maintenance behaviors and activities that occur solely within the U.S. as well. Thus, transnational practices, which engage two nation-states simultaneously, are not the only way to maintain ethnic heritage because such maintenance can, and often does, occur within a single nation-state.

The overwhelming sentiment among the members of the 1.5 and second generation is that they do not want to lose their heritage. By deliberately engaging in ethnic heritage maintenance activities they are able to remain connected to their native

background in a variety of ways and retain the aspects of it that they consider most important. The ways in which immigrant descendants preserve their ethnic heritage can be influenced by the immigrant parents, but not to the same extent as their transnational practices. There is a genuine desire, commitment, and willingness so many of the respondents have to stay in touch with their native culture and since ethnic heritage maintenance activity is not reliant on the parents' involvement, it is much more likely to persist into the future. These children of immigrants do not have to engage in transnationalism to stay connected with their ethnic heritage. Rather, participation in activities within the U.S. that are purposely employed to retain the cultural heritage are most important and will be more typical of the 1.5 and second generation than transnationalism in the coming years.

To examine ethnic identity thoroughly, I not only recognize it in terms of self-labels, but also consider how ethnic identification is expressed in, or is a manifestation of, these immigrant descendants' daily behavior. When I inquired about the ethnic identities to which the respondents self-ascribe, it was apparent immediately that a large majority of them attach relatively little importance to the actual self-label(s) they use. Each individual did indeed recognize how they identify ethnically, but there was not a lot of continued emphasis given to this issue. A few study participants do employ specific ethnic identities because of the meanings attached to them, but most adhere to certain self-labels because they seem to be the best fit or at least are the most applicable. For example, a number of the children of immigrants are not convinced that the ethnic identities they use represent their situation completely, but nevertheless identify as such because it is the best option available. Analyzing these self-ascribed ethnic labels must be

done with caution because little significance is given to them by those that employ them. Thus, while some patterns emerge, they must still be taken at face value.

I found that experiences of discrimination do not strengthen ethnic minority identification within this study population. Gender difference accounts for just one tendency in that females do seem to be more inclined than males to identify with the home country. Generational status does have an effect on ethnic identification to a certain extent. Upon initial ethnic identity self-label responses, 1.5 generation individuals are more likely to identify with the home country than members of the second generation, but this trend disappears once dual and plural identities are stated. Additionally, second generation individuals more frequently identify with an American hybrid ethnic label than do members of the 1.5 generation. Hispanic/Latino identities, however, are not generationally influenced. Lastly, legal and citizenship status may shape these children of immigrants' ethnic identity. Among this group, undocumented individuals are more likely to self-ascribe to an American hybrid label and less likely to identify with the home country than those with U.S. citizenship.

These findings do show particular tendencies among this study population, but they do not reveal the entire narrative. In addition to eliciting the actual ethnic label to which the immigrant descendants self-ascribe, I also discovered that ethnic identity is not just simply expressed in specific terms. Rather, their daily behavior illuminates their ethnic identity and in turn their ethnic identity is influenced by these actions, intentionally or not. While the respondents are not deliberately articulating or actively emphasizing their ethnic self-labels, how they recognize themselves ethnically often instead presents itself in their daily thoughts and conduct. Moreover, the ethnic labels with which a

majority of the children of immigrants identify are not necessarily powerful entities that embody reactive or oppositional status to American society, but are rather terms that adequately describe them when asked.

In recent years, researchers have started to suggest that assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity should be part of the same conversation, rather than discussed separately as routinely happened in the past (e.g., Levitt and Waters 2002; Smith 2006). Accordingly, as I established the ways in which the members of the 1.5 and second generation negotiate assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity, I also paid particular attention to the relationships among these three processes. Assimilation and transnationalism are not incompatible. Indeed, assimilating to the U.S. mainstream while retaining a connection to the ethnic homeland is characteristic of the members of the 1.5 and second generation with whom I spoke. Their transnational activity allows for a continued relationship with the home country and it does not curtail assimilation to the U.S. In fact, by selectively acculturating the children of immigrants are able to engage with both their heritage and assimilate to the U.S. as opposed to an all or nothing alternative. Moreover, while assimilation does not lead to a diminishing ethnic affiliation among the study population, identifying ethnically does not inhibit them from becoming upwardly mobile. Furthermore, the ways in which the immigrant descendants ethnically self-identify is often shaped by their transnational participation. The children of immigrants' assimilation trajectory, transnational behavior, and ethnic identification, therefore, should indeed be addressed together because they are interrelated and often influence each other.

Assimilation and Transnationalism

Assimilation is often spoken about as a process that is in opposition to transnationalism (e.g., Basch et al. 1994; Kearney 1991; Smith and Guarnizo 1998). The basic argument for this line of thought is that those who participate in transnational activities cannot be assimilating because maintaining ties to the ethnic homeland acts as an impediment to the assimilation process. However, this is not necessarily the case. Recently, a number of researchers have suggested that assimilation and transnationalism “may not be contradictory processes” (Purkayastha 2005:8; e.g., Levitt 2001; Levitt and Waters 2002; Portes et al. 1999; Smith 2006). Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters (2002) contend that “assimilation and transnationalism should not be seen as opposites” as immigrants and their children can combine the two processes for a positive outcome (Jones-Correa 2002:231). For example, Robert C. Smith (2002) argues that assimilation pressures can actually foster transnationalism “by giving the second generation a reason to want to redefine their Mexican-ness in a new context” (147). Some go further and say that transnational practices are a response to being received negatively in the U.S. and such transnational participation allows the children of immigrants to circumvent downward assimilation (Smith 2002; Waters 1999).

Though Smith (2002) points to the two processes as being intimately connected, others are a bit more guarded with their assessment of assimilation and transnationalism. Michael Jones-Correa (2002) says that “though assimilation and transnationalism may be going on simultaneously, they are not necessarily complementary” (232). He explains, for example, that there are disagreements among immigrants about both assimilation and transnationalism; while one immigrant may feel strongly about participating in

transnational activities, another, even in the same family, may feel less obligated to maintain ties across borders and instead concentrates on creating social networks in the new hometown. However, Jones-Correa (2002) makes clear that it is more likely the case that assimilation and transnationalism are actually both complementary and competitive depending on context. Assimilation and transnationalism are certainly connected; the two processes can affect each other in a number of ways and although they “are not mutually exclusive [they] can go hand in hand” (Foner 2002:250).

While Smith (2002) finds that for the 1.5 and second generation children of Mexican immigrants living in New York City assimilative pressures are the impetus for transnational participation, the transnational behavior among those with whom I spoke, seems to be initiated by their immigrant parents rather than spurred by the stresses of assimilation. Along similar lines, I do not attribute the study populations’ transnational activity to the negative reception or discriminatory experiences some have faced upon their arrival to or during their time living in the U.S. (Smith 2002; Waters 1999). Instead, transnationalism is simply part of their lives and has been for as long as they remember. Many travel to the ethnic homeland, transfer goods and family memorabilia across borders, and communicate with their relatives in the home country over the phone or via the internet. Though their parents are often influential in assuring these activities occur, the immigrant descendants’ participation in such transnational activity is not in reaction to how they are treated in the U.S., but is rather a way through which they are able to stay connected with their extended family and ethnic heritage. In this case, assimilation and transnationalism are compatible and the processes do not operate in a competitive fashion.

While some researchers have found that a transnational lifestyle is a response to harsh treatment in U.S. society among children of immigrants and can in turn prevent downward assimilation, it seems that transnationalism, regardless of why it is taking place, can deter the propensity for youth to assimilate downward (Smith 2002; Waters 1999). Transnational participation is a way in which the members of the 1.5 and second generation can maintain a positive relationship with the people and culture of the homeland. Therefore, they are able to recognize their ethnic heritage in a positive light, rather than view it as a preventative to success.

A number of scholars also contend that transnationalism, or the intentional preservation of the immigrant background, is a form of resistance to the host country (e.g., Basch et al. 1994; Kearney 1991; Portes 1996; Smith and Guarnizo 1998). Basch et al. (1994) explain that within certain “situations of political and economic domination and racial and cultural differentiation, building transnational social fields...can be seen as a form of resistance” by immigrant and immigrant descendant populations (46). Participating in transnationalism does not necessarily imply resistance to me, but rather the desire to keep familial relations intact and to remain familiar with the heritage culture. Basch et al. (1994) do say “the issue of resistance is a complex one that must be contextualized” and I agree (46). In this case, transnational activity is not a challenge to U.S. society or American ways. Rather, the study populations’ transnational behavior is used as a way to stay linked to their country of heritage, not as a way to disconnect themselves from the U.S. Therefore, transnationalism is not used as a way to resist assimilation nor is it an oppositional threat to the assimilative process.

Jones-Correa (2002) insists that although assimilation and transnationalism may be working simultaneously it does not imply that they are complementary. There are instances where the two processes do not complement each other, but in this research, for the most part, assimilation and transnationalism appear compatible. Transnationalism is a mechanism the immigrant descendants use to sustain ties to their ethnic homeland, but this does not prevent them from assimilating. Instead, staying connected to the native background allows them to retain the aspects of the heritage culture that are most important, while assimilating to American ways at the same time. Integrating and remaining affiliated with the immigrant group and maintaining its positive attributes is characteristic of the ethnic or bicultural path of segmented assimilation that each of the children of immigrants are currently following.

Interestingly, the position in which the immigrant descendants find themselves today is likely heavily attributed to their parents. The strong and positive relationships the immigrant parents maintain with the home country (often via transnationalism) is imparted onto their children. This positive affiliation with the home country nurtured by the immigrant parents (and often the immigrant community) can guard the members of the 1.5 and second generation against downward assimilation. Participating in transnational activity enables the children of immigrants to engage with the homeland, retain cultural aspects of it, and positively associate with their ethnic heritage instead of reacting against it. Transnationalism, in this way, can help ease the pressures of assimilation as it becomes an important component (though not a condition) of selective acculturation.

Selective acculturation is viewed as the most favorable type of acculturation and is most often associated with the upwardly mobile ethnic or bicultural path of segmented assimilation (Portes and Zhou 1993). Rather than having to abandon the ethnic background and native language completely, transnational participation allows the immigrant descendants the ability to engage with both cultures and utilize the best aspects from them, while creating a space for themselves in the U.S. (Gonzales-Berry et al. 2006). Therefore, transnationalism can help foster upward mobility into mainstream culture with the continued preservation of the ethnic heritage's values as it has surely done for the members of the 1.5 and second generation living in northwest Arkansas. The immigrant parents' facilitation and influence of transnational behavior among their children seemingly smoothed the process of integration to the U.S. and made selective acculturation the most likely outcome. Thus, transnational participation that transcends immigrant generations appears quite beneficial and perhaps crucial to the respondents' seemingly successful integration and promise of upward mobility.

Assimilation and Ethnic Identity

Lately, more scholarly attention has been given to the relationship between assimilation patterns and ethnic identity formation of immigrants and their descendants and some potential connections have been found (e.g., García 2004; Golash-Boza 2006; Kasinitz et al. 2001; Kasinitz et al. 2004; Lee and Zhou 2004; Tovar and Feliciano 2009; Vertovec 2001). Jennifer Lee and Min Zhou (2004) contend that rather than leading to reduced ethnic distinctiveness, assimilation may result in the 1.5 and second generation identifying pan-ethnically (a broader identification that encompasses a number of similar or related ethnic groups). As they integrate into the majority society, immigrant

descendants may start to express their commonality with similar ethnic groups of different national origins by employing a pan-ethnic self-label. Indeed, this appears to be the case among the children of immigrants in northwest Arkansas as all but one person identifies as Hispanic/Latino. In fact, identifying as Hispanic/Latino is most likely a direct effect of assimilation since many of the respondents learned the terms *Hispanic* and *Latino* in U.S. classrooms.

Along somewhat similar lines, Tovar and Feliciano (2009) find that “increased integration into mainstream educational institutions can solidify or strengthen ethnic self-identification” (215). While they found this to occur at the college level, it might begin even earlier for some as my research indicates. Interestingly, Lee and Zhou (2004) also suggest that “as members of the second and later generations become more fully incorporated into America’s racialized social system, a pan-ethnic identity may become more salient, more inclusive, and more quintessentially American in everyday practices” (14). I do not think that the pan-ethnic identity Hispanic/Latino has reached a quintessential American status yet, but among immigrant descendants, the self-label is prevalent and inclusive, so it may get there soon.

These conclusions about pan-ethnic identities diverge from straight-line assimilation as integration into mainstream education should result in weaker ethnic self-identities (Tovar and Feliciano 2009). Segmented assimilation does not predict stronger ethnic identification to occur in tandem with upward mobility either, but by selectively assimilating along the ethnic or bicultural path, a sustained membership with the ethnic community can indeed foster and allow for continued ethnic identification. The ethnic or bicultural path that each study participant is following suggests that the children of

immigrants can become upwardly mobile while preserving their minority identification and using the resources provided by their ethnic community. Thus, the 1.5 and second generation can assimilate to the majority middle-class while retaining or strengthening their ethnic identity, even if this occurs in mainstream institutions (Goveia et al. 2005; Portes and Zhou 1993; Tovar and Feliciano 2009).

A home country identity is often considered to be a reactive identity in response to the negative experiences with the majority population many immigrant descendants face in the U.S. (Golash-Boza 2006; Lubbers et al. 2007; Portes et al. 2005; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). As a result, oppositional home country identities are often correlated with downward assimilation (Portes et al. 2005; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Although over half of the respondents identify with the home country label, it is not associated with downward assimilation and it is not in opposition to U.S. society. Instead, it is a way they recognize their ethnic heritage and continued relationship with it.

Since everyone in my research sample is integrating along the ethnic or bicultural path I cannot discuss how ethnic identities vary across the different paths of segmented assimilation. Furthermore, because there is not a specific identity pattern that characterizes the population as a whole, it is difficult to assess how their ethnic identities particularly relate to the third path of segmented assimilation. However, the respondents' ethnic identities, which are represented through the self-labels they employ and also in their daily behaviors, thoughts, and interactions signify not only their transnational nature, but also biculturalism. Such transnational identity and biculturalism, both of which are typical to the majority of the children of immigrants, are imperative aspects to

mention because they often are specific to only those immigrant descendants that are assimilating successfully.

A transnational identity, a simultaneous identification with both the U.S. and the ethnic homeland, suggests a positive association with both places, which is unlikely of someone who is on a downward assimilative trajectory. Bicultural individuals are adept in two cultures (i.e., has familiarity and understanding of cultural traditions, ways of life, and language competency), but such proficiency often can only be learned if they are effectively integrating into the majority population, where they learn American ways both implicitly and explicitly. The ways in which the ethnic self-labels are distributed across the ethnic or bicultural path of segmented assimilation proves to be of little significance among the study population because the specific ethnic identity self-labels vary and reveal no specific patterns. Instead, what the children of immigrants' ethnic identities embody is important to consider. Luna's description for what she often wishes illuminates her desire for a more inclusive country that allows for more than just one type of American:

I want to have the freedom to live here [in the U.S.]...and sort of not be judged by people for being both Mexican and American. A lot of Americans say 'assimilate! You live in the U.S.! That's where you live. This is the flag you should be waving and they take offense otherwise. But I would definitely say that I'd love to see a U.S. where it's acceptable for people to be both American and some other culture.

Luna says that the U.S. is her home and while she considers herself economically, culturally, and socially assimilated to the U.S., she still wants it to be acceptable for her to express her Mexican culture. She does not think that being assimilated means that she has to give up her ethnic identity and she is desperate for the majority population in the

United States to feel the same way. In her opinion, assimilation to the U.S. should not preclude aspects of her Mexican culture that she says will always be a part of her. This same sentiment is shared by each of the respondents and their hope for a more accepting America should not be out of reach.

The ethnic or bicultural path of segmented assimilation that the immigrant descendants are following is encouraging, but many of them feel like the assimilation ideal (i.e., straight-line assimilation) that resonates among the U.S. majority population is one that is rooted in the past. Instead, it needs to be redefined to more accurately reflect today's reality. It is clear that "societies need to find a balance between encouraging cultural retention and promoting adaptation to the larger society" (Phinney et al. 2001:506). This likely starts with a re-understanding of assimilation in which the traditional model is discarded and a modernized version of assimilation begins with the notion that it is a two-way process (Barkan 2007; Jacoby 2004; Kasinitz et al. 2008; Massey and Sánchez R. 2010; Singer 2004). Rather than the majority population mandating the immediate assimilation of minority ethnic populations to American ways of behaving and understanding, there needs to be more value given to different ways of life and a better effort to integrate the minority cultures with the majority so that they can function together and not in opposition. If this shift happens, it will no doubt be based on the experiences of the children of immigrants. Then, Luna's vision for the U.S. could turn into tomorrow's actuality.

The transnational identities and biculturalism that are encompassed by the immigrant descendants' ethnic identifications, and illuminated in Luna's words, are significant because they show that assimilation is indeed occurring. While certain ethnic

self-labels may be more representative of specific paths of segmented assimilation, such as a reactive home country identity that signifies downward assimilation, ethnic identities across the ethnic or bicultural path may not be as predictable. Rather, the different identity combinations that the children of immigrants employ indicate that successful integration of the 1.5 and second generation can involve a variety of potential identity choices.

Transnationalism and Ethnic Identity

Recent scholarship indicates that transnational participation can play a role in ethnic identity construction among children of immigrants in the U.S. (e.g., Gonzales-Berry et al. 2006; Kibria 2002; Levitt and Waters 2002). In fact, a number of researchers suggest that transnationalism actually creates ethnic identities (e.g., García 2004; Kearney 1995b; Kibria 2002; Levitt and Waters 2002; Smith 2006; Tovar and Feliciano 2009). Since ethnic identities materialize through a versatile and multidimensional process, it is of no surprise that transnational activity can influence ethnic identity formation (García 2004).

At this point in their life, a majority of the children of immigrants are transnationally active. While I expect this transnational lifestyle to weaken in the coming years, it is important to consider now how their transnational involvement shapes ethnic self-identification. In their research on members of the 1.5 generation living in rural Oregon, Erlinda Gonzales-Berry et al. (2006) find that the transnational links the children of immigrants sustain with Mexico help cultivate their ethnic identities. Specifically, travel to the ethnic homeland strengthened ties to Mexico itself and their extended family living there. For many of their respondents, it also elucidated the stark differences in

lifestyle between the U.S. and Mexico. While relationships with family and culture are made stronger during the trips to Mexico, at the same time, the immigrant descendants learn that they are more accustomed to life in the U.S. Their ethnic identities are molded to reflect their relationship with both the ethnic homeland and the United States.

Travel to the home country works much the same way for many of the children of immigrants in northwest Arkansas. A number of respondents enjoy their vacations in the ethnic homeland because it is a way they can (re)connect to their cultural background. For example, a return to Mexico for Santiago means “you get to see where you came from because even though I’ve lived here [in the U.S.] forever, you never forget where your roots came from and just going back to it and seeing the house that I grew up in, it just makes me not forget where I come from”, he says. For Sofía, visiting Mexico allows her to accentuate her Mexican-ness. She explains “I love going to Mexico because I just love the culture and I love just being kind of...more Mexican.” Finally, Violeta states “there are times when I just feel like really Mexican, whenever I’m, you know, in Mexico” and Maite similarly says “when I go back to Mexico I know I feel more Mexican and I like feeling that way.”

While this time spent in the home country reinforces the immigrant descendants’ attachments to it, often times they are also met with feelings of appreciation for their lives in the U.S. Julieta, an 18 year old member of the 1.5 generation with Mexican parents, recalls her trips to visit her extended family in rural Mexico. She tells me “their lifestyle wasn’t what my lifestyle is. See I grew up with technology and all that stuff and they had to get their own water and their stove is like wood, I was just like, ‘what is this?’” Emilia expresses a similar sentiment about her travels to Mexico; she explains “we actually boil

our water on the stove, mix it with the cold water, and pour buckets on ourselves. I remember thinking this is so frustrating, like where is my shower?"

Visits to the ethnic homeland for some respondents actually heighten their sense of being American. Agustina says "I would have to say probably when I go to Mexico I do feel more American" and Candela voices the same thoughts, "when I go to El Salvador I feel more American. It's just mostly the way they talk over there I can't get that down and yeah, it's just, I don't know everything about them." Trips to the country of heritage make a majority of these children of immigrants more aware of how they perceive themselves. While time spent in their place of heritage accentuates some peoples' Mexican-ness (or Salvadoran-ness), for others their American-ness is more noticeable to them. However, nearly everyone mentioned that while they very much enjoy seeing their family and being a part of their native culture, they are grateful for the amenities and opportunities available to them in the U.S. This transnational activity, then, is a way in which the immigrant descendants are able to negotiate their understandings of themselves in relation to their ethnic homeland and the U.S., which in turn, no doubt shapes how they identify ethnically.

Other transnational behaviors, such as keeping in contact with family members in the home country and working in a transnational business, can also influence ethnic identity. For example, maintaining connections to people in the country of heritage, whether it is extended family or business partners, can prevent the respondents from losing access to their cultural background. This may ensure that their ethnic identity associated with the homeland or with the ethnic group as a whole remains intact. However, travel to the home country, specifically, is the transnational activity that is

likely the most influential on the children of immigrants' ethnic identity. The vacations spent there, which often entail a lot of family time, participation in cultural activities and holiday celebrations, and re-acquaintance with the country's way of life, function to preserve aspects of the ethnic heritage and allows many of them to reaffirm membership to that place and its people. Visiting the home country is a way in which many of the immigrant descendants strengthen the connection to their cultural heritage and authenticate their ethnic identity. For some it illuminates their Mexican-ness (or Salvadoran-ness) and for others it brings out their American-ness. Clearly, then, these experiences influence ethnic identity.

Transnationalism is also related to ethnic identity because it can allow individuals to maintain a transnational identity that is based on dual identification with the ethnic homeland and the United States. Among the children of immigrants, their transnational activity, particularly transnational travel, works to uphold their relationship with the home country and at the same time also results in gratitude for their more modern and opportunistic lifestyles in the U.S. to which they are accustomed. The immigrant descendants want to remain connected to their country of heritage and do so through their transnational involvement, but they also continue to be attached to the U.S. Their ethnic identities that embody their actions and behaviors, such as participation in transnationalism, coupled with their significant regard for the U.S. indicate that many of these children of immigrants have transnational identities. While transnational social connections to the ethnic homeland can facilitate and/or strengthen this transnational identity, transnationalism is not a predisposition or a requirement of a transnational identity. In fact, each of the immigrant descendants that are unable to travel to their home

country because of their legal circumstances still simultaneously identify with both their ethnic heritage and the U.S. Thus, transnational involvement can give rise to or reinforce a transnational identity, as it does for some of the respondents, but it is not a necessary condition for it.

For many children of immigrants, it is feasible to suggest that their ethnic identities are cultivated in part through transnationalism. By maintaining connections to the ethnic heritage, these members of the 1.5 and second generation are able to realize and/or substantiate their ethnic identities. However, transnationalism does not influence the ethnic identities of the immigrant descendants in necessarily the same way, nor is their involvement in such activities necessarily represented similarly in their self-label identifications either. For example, most respondents who travel to the home country observe holidays and participate in cultural festivals when there, but the ethnic identities of those that do take part in the celebrations vary.⁴¹ Yet, this is not much of a surprise since traveling to the home country elicits a variety of reactions and feelings from the immigrant descendants that are not always parallel. Since those that participate in transnational activities do not always adopt the same ethnic identity, transnationalism does not determine the specific nature of the children of immigrants' ethnic self-label.⁴² Rather, the point to be made here is that ethnic identities emerge through multidimensional processes and experiences and transnational involvement certainly plays a frequent role in shaping them (García 2004; Goveia et al. 2005; Gonzales-Berry et al. 2006; Kibria 2002; Smith 2006).

⁴¹ See F.1. in Appendix F.

⁴² See F.2. and F.3. in Appendix F.

Although transnationalism does currently play a role in the immigrant descendants' ethnic identity development, as transnational participation decreases in the future, a shift in ethnic identities is possible. For instance, travel to the home country for a number of respondents reinforces their native heritage, but if visits become less frequent, retention of specific ethnic identities, such as a home country identity, may lose its popularity. If transnational involvement does wane, exploring the future ethnic identity choices in relation to the self-labels employed today will likely be of particular interest to identity and migration scholars alike. If there is a change in ethnic identification, it could further corroborate recent research that has established the connection between transnational activity and ethnic identity. As the frequency of transnational behaviors decrease, different ethnic identities may emerge. On the other hand, since a transnational identity is not dependent on actual transnational social connections and activities, it could still remain intact as long as identification with both the ethnic homeland and the U.S. continues.

The Future of the Children of Immigrants

The particular focus of my dissertation research is on the assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity of the members of the 1.5 and second generation. The respondents are generally conscious of what assimilation means, the activities in which they take part that span two nations, and how they self-ascribe ethnically. Yet, how they negotiate such processes are not on the forefront of their minds on a day to day basis. Rather, the immigrant descendants are simply living their lives and while assimilative pressures, transnational activity, and ethnic identity are part of it, they are not always central issues. In other words, when elicited, the respondents are able to talk about

assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity, but it is not something they intentionally speak about regularly.

As discussed in Chapters 4-7, the ways in which the children of immigrants assimilate, participate in transnationalism, and identify ethnically does inform who they are and how they operate, but the impacts are both implicit and explicit. Some experiences and certain instances, including traveling to the ethnic homeland, celebrating U.S. national holidays, and being discriminated against, can accentuate the study participants' understandings of these aspects of their lives, but they are not always paying attention to how they function on a daily basis. However, almost everyone is sensitive of their immigrant descendant status and situation. The respondents know they are the children of immigrants and it acts as a sense of pride for them. While most view their Hispanic/Latino heritage as advantageous, they recognize that the majority population does not always share the same opinion. They have a strong desire to succeed, but are acutely aware of the hurdles they encounter in order to be successful. For the members of the 1.5 and second generation, success entails graduating from college, having a career, creating a family of their own, and making a positive impact on their community. Additionally, for those that are undocumented, attaining the legal right to live and work in the U.S. is of utmost importance.

Currently, all of the children of immigrants with whom I spoke are in college or are recent college graduates. I do anticipate that a majority, if not all, of the current students will graduate. They are determined to finish their degrees and their career goals are lofty. Their aspirations demonstrate that they intend to make a name for themselves rather than becoming another depressing minority statistic. If opportunities are available,

there is no doubt that this population will climb the socioeconomic ladder into the middle-class. I expect that as they grow older, start careers, and create families of their own, a majority of the respondents will become even more entrenched into the social fabric of U.S. society. I foresee their political involvement increasing as they become less concerned about jury duty and I also think that their continued exposure to the majority white population will result in more friendships with non-Hispanic white individuals. Additionally, I suspect that the children of immigrants will continue to maintain aspects of their ethnic heritage. In short, in the coming years, I foresee a majority of the respondents to be upwardly mobile and more fully integrated into all realms of the U.S. while still being adept to their native culture and traditions. This prediction, of course, is specific to the study population. However, I do not think that these members of the 1.5 and second generation are necessarily the exception as many immigrant descendants are no doubt already following in their footsteps. To ensure this continues, the conditions in northwest Arkansas that can be attributed to such positive results must stay favorable and their future prospects must be opportunistic.

The outcome of the Hispanic/Latino community in northwest Arkansas will likely be affected by the children of immigrants. For the most part, the respondents would prefer to stay in Arkansas after they graduate if quality employment is available. If this happens, the ethnic community will be a continued presence and is likely to thrive. As more and more members of the 1.5 and second generation graduate from the U of A and the local community college, they will become an integral part of the educated workforce in the area. I believe that as the Hispanic/Latino community continues to increase in size, their economic impact will be realized and companies will be eager to broaden their

customer base. To best accomplish this, it will be advantageous for employers to hire the children of immigrants who are familiar with both American and their ethnic heritages' ways.

Among the study participants, the common denominators that lead to upward mobility along the ethnic or bicultural path posited by segmented assimilation theory are selective acculturation, supportive parents and intact families, a small town, rural geographic location, and access to higher education. The triggers that often lead to downward assimilation do not exist in northwest Arkansas. There is no ethnic ghetto, gang activity is non-existent, the economy is strong, and everyone has access to the same public schools in the area. As a result, downward assimilation is an unlikely option for the children of immigrants because the conditions certainly do not precipitate it and there is not an underclass to which they can assimilate.

There is no guarantee that the environment in northwest Arkansas will remain conducive to such positive outcomes that are indicative of the study population. However, it is possible to suggest ways in which the conditions can be improved so that an upwardly mobile future for this immigrant descendant population and those to follow can continue. As my research suggests, and paralleling other scholarship, higher education is a leading factor attributed to successful outcomes in the lives of children of immigrants (e.g., Behnke et al. 2004; Gonzales-Berry et al. 2006; Goodwin-White 2009; Phinney et al. 2001; Xie and Greenman 2011). Graduating from college, or even obtaining a two-year community college degree, can drastically increase the chance of upward mobility and future economic success. In short, education is essential.

Many of the study participants told me that the Hispanic/Latino population (immigrant parents and their children alike) is not exposed to educational opportunities and there are few attempts to teach the community about how the higher education system operates. For example, while there are afterschool classes in English that teach high school students and their parents about the college application process and financial aid, there is nothing like that conducted in Spanish. The immigrant families, that already lack human and social capital, are put at a further disadvantage because there are fewer means by which they are able to learn how to navigate the educational system. This type of structural inequity is difficult to overcome because it is an impediment of which some individuals are not even aware.

Obviously, my respondents were able to figure out their educational options, fill out applications, apply for financial aid, and attend college, but for quite a few of them, this was done on their own initiative. Some students did have help from a teacher or mentor in high school, but even then, most of the groundwork was completed on their own. Acquiring the necessary information about attending college should be made easier for any student, but better informing Hispanic/Latino immigrant descendents about educational opportunities needs to be a priority in northwest Arkansas since there seems to be far less understanding of it than there should be. The community leaders with whom I spoke each expressed a similar opinion.⁴³ They said that the Hispanic/Latino community needs to be better exposed to and better able to access post-secondary

⁴³ To protect each community leader's confidentiality I do not use any names or specific job titles. Each community leader resides in northwest Arkansas and works with the Hispanic/Latino population in the area. The leaders I interviewed include a state board member, a liaison for Hispanic/Latino students in an area public school, a director of the English as a Second Language (ESL) in an area public school, a newspaper editor, and a community program director.

education. Understanding college options and how to apply is crucial for the children of immigrant population as it gives them the ability to try to further their education if they want to do so.

An individual's potential to attend an academic institution is affected in part by their knowledge of how to get there. In addition, the propensity to subsequently graduate from college can be influenced by the on-campus support available to the individual. While the U of A and NWACC do hold informational meetings about their institutions at the local high schools, they need to do a better job of getting this material to not just high school students, but to junior high students and their immigrant parents. Exposing students to educational opportunities at an early age and teaching their parents about their options needs to become standard practice. The U of A and NWACC need to work in conjunction with the area schools to ensure this happens, in both English and Spanish. In addition, the college counselors in the high schools need to continually reach out to immigrant descendant children to make certain they are exposed to the idea of college as a potential option after high school, rather than only helping those that ask.

Many children of immigrants are first generation college students and many are also living away from their hometown and families for the first time. To help facilitate a positive college experience, once enrolled (or even before when they are learning about the school), the immigrant descendants need to be made aware of the support available to them if they so need it. The U of A is doing a commendable job of reaching out to this population. They have a multi-cultural center that gets a lot of students involved with one another, they support a number of on-campus Hispanic/Latino groups, and there is university outreach to the local Hispanic/Latino community in the area. However, the

Hispanic/Latino student body at the U of A is under-represented, so more needs to be done to increase their enrollment. In short, to ensure the children of immigrants become valuable members to the state, better informational programs directed at the Hispanic/Latino population (i.e., the immigrant descendants and their immigrant parents) about the educational system and its opportunities are warranted.

Undocumented status is a major obstacle for some of the members of the 1.5 generation. In fact, the respondents least likely to continue on an upwardly mobile path are those that are in the U.S. illegally. Despite their abilities to persevere, their ambitious goals and their chances for a better life than their immigrant parents' will be severely handicapped by their illegality. Although undocumented college students can apply for temporary legalization under the Deferred Action plan that allows graduates to be able to reside and work in the country for up to two years after graduation, this is simply not enough. Instead, the national government must pass the DREAM Act. In basic terms, the DREAM Act provides a path to permanent residency and eventual legal U.S. citizenship for members of the 1.5 generation who grew up in the U.S., are in good standing (i.e., no criminal background), and have completed at least two years of higher education at a university or college institution or have served at least two years in the U.S. military (Dream Insight 2010).⁴⁴ Passing the DREAM Act will ensure the children of immigrants that have grown up in the U.S. for a majority of their lives, consider the U.S. their home, and want to be a part of it, can indeed be active members of American society. Until then, the future progress of these immigrant descendants is in jeopardy.

⁴⁴ For more on the DREAM Act, please refer to <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/DREAM-Insight-July2010.pdf>.

Rather than waiting on Congress, the Arkansas legislature should follow the impetus of the 14 other states that have done so and pass a state version of the DREAM Act bill.⁴⁵ Without this legitimate prospect of U.S. citizenship, the study participants will continue to live in the state as unauthorized immigrants and their career paths are unlikely to reflect their educational level and bicultural abilities, both of which make them valuable members to the community. In addition, to improve the chance of a bright future, a change in attitude is warranted. The children of immigrants must be considered citizens of the U.S. and positive contributors to the country. To facilitate this way of thinking, the majority and minority populations first need to be better integrated. Within northwest Arkansas, local leaders should reach out to the Hispanic/Latino members of the community in an effort to get them more involved in town activities. Advertising events in both English and Spanish on flyers, newspapers, and radio stations is one way to make this happen. Additionally, the immigrant descendants should be encouraged to participate in team sports organized by the local recreation centers and schools. The more contact the white and nonwhite members of the community have with each other, especially if it begins at a young age, will likely produce better interethnic understanding. This will hopefully lead to fewer occurrences of discrimination and more acceptance of each other.

The most at-risk children of immigrants that are not represented by this study population are those youth who are not in college. The respondents' told me that almost all of their immigrant descendant friends that are not pursuing higher education are now working in the same low-skilled jobs as their parents' in the manufacturing and

⁴⁵ The 14 states that have passed a state version of the DREAM Act are California, Connecticut, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin (Kalet 2013; Scott 2012).

construction industries. Unfortunately, it is a problem for these young adults to follow in their immigrant parents' footsteps because these jobs are often low-paying and offer little room for career advancement. Their progress, then, is stalled and economic success remains difficult to achieve. Although these children of immigrants speak fluent English, have a high school diploma, and are adept in American ways, they are neither moving up or down the socioeconomic ladder and are instead remaining stagnant.

According to the respondents', most of their friends that find themselves in these jobs would actually like to go to college. Apparently, their friends did not apply anywhere because they are either undocumented and did not think they could attend a university or afford it or they did not apply because they missed the application deadline. This makes it very clear that a better understanding of post-secondary educational and funding opportunities must be imparted onto the Hispanic/Latino immigrant descendant population. These children of immigrants do not have to follow their parents' trajectory, but they must have the know-how and opportunity to create their own path.

Of course, some immigrant descendants may be limited in their college options if their grades or test scores are extremely low and some are simply unable to afford the cost of tuition and school materials regardless of loans. It is also possible that once a child turns 18 their parents expect them to become a full-time economic provider, so working to support the family is the top priority. However, the respondents' made it quite clear to me that most of their non-college going friends are not enrolled because they did not receive enough guidance from their school (including their teachers and counselors) or their parents (because they are unfamiliar with how the process works) to make sure the application process and financial opportunities were understood.

The members of the 1.5 and second generation, including the respondents and their friends, must be given a fair and equal chance to succeed. If the state and country lies idly by and fails to recognize the determination and perseverance that typify so many of these members of the 1.5 and second generation, the effects may be detrimental. The undocumented and the less fortunate simply cannot be allowed to slip through the cracks into a stagnant future. As President Obama (2013) said in his inauguration speech for his second term, “our journey is not complete until we find a better way to welcome the striving, hopeful immigrants who still see America as a land of opportunity”. Better access to higher education and passing the DREAM Act are good places to start.

Suggestions for Future Research

Although this dissertation offers an innovative look into the children of immigrants, there is much more that can be done. Therefore, I have a number of suggestions for potential avenues of research that I hope will be pursued in the coming years. The data I collected indicates that the predicted outcomes for 1.5 and second generation populations in traditional receiving cities and states do not parallel those in smaller, less metropolitan locales. Since my study sample is relatively small, significantly increasing the participant pool would make for better comparisons with larger studies that examine similar subject matters. Research that addresses how assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity are negotiated in the lives of immigrant descendants would also benefit immensely from long-term analysis. Re-evaluating the assimilation patterns, transnational activity, and ethnic identification of respondents over multiple years and stages of life would best elucidate how the three processes function and continue to function among the children of immigrants. Additionally, as I did in my own

work, it is important to recognize variables, such as legal and generational status, gender, and discrimination experiences, in any research on immigrant descendant populations to determine if and how those aspects influence the ways in which assimilative pressures, transnational participation, and ethnic identity are realized in their lives.

While my dissertation does not explicitly address how the study participants arrived at the position they are in today, what they do to get to college, and the specific help they have along the way, exploring this avenue of study is practical for a number of reasons. Scholars, educators, and government leaders are concerned about the education attainment levels of Hispanic/Latino children of immigrants because they are some of the lowest in the nation (e.g., Gonzales Berry et al. 2006; Portes et al. 2009; Portes and MacLeod 1999; Stepick and Stepick 2002; Tienda and Haskins 2011; U.S. Department of Education 2011). In fact, just 13 percent of Hispanic/Latinos in the U.S. have a Bachelor's degree (U.S. Department of Education 2011). Clearly, there is a significant portion of immigrant descendants that are not making it to college and for those that do get there successfully graduating is often difficult (Baum and Flores 2011; Portes and Rivas 2011).

The Hispanic/Latino student population in northwest Arkansas demonstrates that immigrant children, in spite of their disadvantages, have a strong desire to attend college, are motivated to get there, remain in school, and in all likelihood each of them will graduate soon. The door is open for further studies and longitudinal research on how successful these immigrant descendants are during college. If the study participants do graduate and enter into advantageous careers then certain questions must be asked, such as what is the University of Arkansas and the local community college doing correctly to

enroll and to ensure the retention of their Hispanic/Latino student body and similarly, how and in what ways are the immigrant parents, public schools, and local churches influencing or contributing to such positive results. Discovering what factors in small town communities may be leading to greater achievement among the members of the 1.5 and second generation compared to their contemporaries living in large metropolitan areas is especially useful for understanding the best possible options to achieve a post-secondary education. If students do not finish their Bachelor's degree, recognizing the reasons for this is essential as well. Determining what causes students not to finish college is valuable for future university students so they can be sure to avoid the same pitfalls. An exploration into the interethnic relationships occurring in northwest Arkansas is also warranted. The academic community can learn from this unique setting and then apply it to other contexts of intercultural mixing, ideally at the better studied larger receiving metropolitan centers (e.g., Los Angeles and Chicago based schools).

In addition, future research into the young adult immigrant descendant populations living in small town America should not be limited to just those in college. While my work that concentrates only on college students is valuable because it illuminates a part of a college population that is under-represented, it would best be complemented by including data about their friends that did not pursue higher education. Accordingly, research is needed on Hispanic/Latinos in these smaller, less metropolitan areas that never made it to college to see whether they face a similar downward assimilation trajectory to that seen in traditional immigrant receiving cities and states or if their experiences are still quite different and better-off than those in large urban metropolitan areas because of the small town environment. Informing on these two

different paths might prove significant in determining how to best pave the way for future 1.5, second, third, and fourth generations alike.

Finally, to make their hard work useful in today's world, researchers will need to share their findings with local, state, and national leaders, educators, and government officials. In addition, the information gathered in future studies should be disseminated to the local majority and minority residents where the research takes place. Presenting the results in local communities and also to larger state and national audiences may facilitate interethnic understanding, help reduce anti-immigrant sentiment, and encourage better relationships between the non-Hispanic white and Hispanic/Latino populations living in the United States.

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APPENDIX A

MAP OF ARKANSAS AND MIGRATION FLOWS IDENTIFIED IN CHAPTER 2

A.2. Migration Flow: Immigrant Descendants. The left column is the country and state of origin. Columns on right indicate destination. Parentheses indicate number of respondents if more than one.

From Mexico:

Baja California (2)	→	Green Forest (2)	
Chihuahua	→	Gentry	
Durango (2)	→	Bentonville	
		DeQueen	
Estado de Mexico	→	Rogers/Lowell	
Guanajuato (6)	→	Farmington	
		Fayetteville	
		Rogers (3)	
		Texas	
Jalisco	→	California	→ Fayetteville
Mexico D.F.	→	Rogers	
Tamaulipas	→	Springdale	
Tlaxcala	→	Manila	
Zacatecas (3)	→	Clarksville	
		Rogers (2)	

From Other Countries:

Bolivia	→	Virginia
Honduras	→	Little Rock
Puerto Rico	→	Bentonville

From United States:

Arizona	→	Rogers	
California (14)	→	Bentonville	
		Fayetteville	
		Huntsville	
		Rogers (8)	
		Springdale (3)	
Illinois	→	Springdale	
Nebraska	→	Kansas	→ Green Forest
Nevada (2)	→	Rogers	
		Waldron	
New Jersey	→	Berryville	
Texas (3)	→	Fayetteville	
		Rogers	
		Siloam Springs	

A.3. Migration Flow: Immigrant Descendants' Fathers. The left column is the country and state of origin. Columns on right indicate destination. Parentheses indicate number of individuals if more than one. *no data about four of the respondents' fathers

From Mexico:

Baja California	→	California	→	Arkansas
Chihuahua (2)	→	Kansas	→	Arkansas
	→	Texas	→	Arkansas
Durango (3)	→	Arkansas		
		Illinois	→	Arkansas
		Texas	→	Arkansas
Guanajuato (9)	→	Arizona	→	Arkansas
		California	→	Arkansas (3)
		California	→	Texas
		Indiana	→	Arkansas
		Missouri	→	Arkansas
		Oregon	→	Arkansas
		Texas	→	Arkansas
Guerrero (4)	→	California	→	Arkansas (4)
Jalisco (3)	→	California	→	Arkansas (3)
Michoacán (2)	→	California	→	Arkansas (2)
Morelos	→	California	→	Arkansas
Nayarit	→	California	→	Arkansas
Oaxaca	→	California	→	Arkansas
Sal Luis Potosi	→	Texas	→	Arkansas
Tlaxcala	→	California	→	Arkansas
Zacatecas (3)	→	Arkansas (2)		
		Texas	→	Arkansas (1)

From Other Countries:

Bolivia	→	Virginia		
El Salvador (6)	→	California	→	Arkansas (4)
		Nevada	→	Arkansas
		New Jersey	→	Arkansas
Honduras	→	California	→	Arkansas

From United States:

Texas	→	Remains in Texas		
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A.4. Migration Flow: Immigrant Descendants' Mothers. The left column is the country and state of origin. Columns on right indicate destination. Parentheses indicate number of individuals if more than one. *no data about two of the respondents' mothers

From Mexico:

Aguascalientes	→	Nevada	→	Arkansas
Chihuahua (4)	→	California	→	Arkansas (2)
		Illinois	→	Arkansas
		Kansas	→	Arkansas
Durango (4)	→	Arkansas (3)		
		California	→	Arkansas
Guanajuato (9)	→	Arizona	→	Arkansas (2)
		Arkansas (2)		
		California	→	Arkansas (3)
		Missouri	→	Arkansas
		Texas		
Guerrero (4)	→	California	→	Arkansas (4)
Jalisco	→	California	→	Arkansas
Mexico D.F.	→	Texas	→	Arkansas
Michoacán (2)	→	California	→	Arkansas (2)
Nayarit (2)	→	California	→	Arkansas (2)
Nueva Leon	→	Arkansas		
Oaxaca	→	California	→	Arkansas
San Luis Potosi	→	Texas	→	Arkansas
Zacatecas (2)	→	Arkansas		
		Texas	→	Arkansas

From Other Countries:

Bolivia	→	Georgia	→	Virginia
El Salvador (6)	→	California	→	Arkansas (6)
Honduras	→	California	→	Arkansas

From United States:

Kansas	→	Texas
Texas	→	Arkansas

APPENDIX B

IRB LETTER, INFORMATIONAL LETTERS, AND INTERVIEW GUIDES
IDENTIFIED IN CHAPTER 3

B.1. Copy of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Exemption Status Letter

ASU Knowledge Enterprise
Development

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

To: Takeyuki Tsuda
MC

From: Mark Roosa, Chair *SM*
Soc Beh IRB

Date: 02/10/2011

Committee Action: Exemption Granted

IRB Action Date: 02/10/2011

IRB Protocol #: 1101005967

Study Title: The Second Generation in Northwest Arkansas: Negotiating the Roles of Assimilation, Transnationalism, and Ethnic Identity

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(2).

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.

B.2. Information Letter for Community Leaders. This is a copy of the informational letter I gave to each community leader before conducting the interview.

INFORMATION LETTER: Interviews with community leaders

The Second Generation in Northwest Arkansas: Negotiating Assimilation, Transnationalism, and Ethnic Identity

Date: TBD

Dear Participant:

I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Gaku Tsuda in the School of Human Evolution and Social Change at Arizona State University.

I am conducting a research study to obtain a more in-depth understanding of the lives of second generation by examining how the children of first generation immigrants negotiate assimilative pressures, transnational practices, and ethnic identification in their everyday lives. This research will provide a more detailed portrait of the lives of the second generation, the actions they take in order to belong to American society, and the processes by which they maintain their heritage in a new land. The results will create a better understanding of how the children of immigrants integrate into American society and ways in which the process can be improved for future second generations.

I am inviting your participation, which will involve 30 minutes to 1.5 hours of your time. You will be asked to answer a number of questions about the second generation population in Northwest Arkansas. I will ask each question and write the responses on the interview guide. I will also record the interview sessions, if you allow me to do so. You have the right not to answer any question and you can stop the interview at any time.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You can skip questions if you wish. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this study.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation. Although there may be no direct benefits to you, the possible benefits of your participation in the research are that it will provide the wider public a more in-depth portrait of the lives of the second generation, the actions they take in order to belong to American society, and the processes by which they maintain their heritage in a new land. The results will create a better understanding of how the children of immigrants integrate into American society and ways in which the process can be improved for future second generations.

All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential. The results of this research study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications, but the researchers will

never identify you. Names will be removed from all interview sheets and will be replaced with an ID code and a pseudonym.

I would like to audiotape this interview. The interview will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interview to be taped; you also can change your mind after the interview starts, just let me know. Taped interviews will also be kept in the locked filing cabinet and names will never be asked while the tape is recording. Once the audio recordings are transcribed and the researcher's dissertation is complete the audio tapes will be destroyed and discarded.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team at: Dr. Takeyuki Tsuda, SHESC, Arizona State University, PO Box 872402, Tempe, AZ 85287-2402, 480-965-7887, or Claire Smith, SHESC, Arizona State University, PO Box 872402, Tempe, AZ 85287-2402, 719-761-7860.

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788. Please let me know if you wish to be part of the study.

If you agree to be interviewed, you must sign an informed consent, which I will give to you now.

Sincerely,

Claire Smith

B.3. Community Leader Interview Guide. This is a copy of the interview guide I used during each of the interviews I conducted with the community leaders. I asked each question and wrote down their responses. The interview was also recorded.

Interview Guide: Community Leaders

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Age: _____
3. What is your primary job? _____
4. What is your role in the community? I.e. what do you do? _____
5. Do you consider yourself to be a leader in the community? Yes No
a. Why or why not? _____
6. How do you describe yourself in terms of ethnic identity? _____
7. Do you speak Spanish? Yes No
a. If yes, how well? Fluently Conversationally Not very well
8. Are you familiar with the 1.5 and second generation population in Northwest Arkansas? Yes No
If no, I will explain my research population now.
9. Both Springdale and Rogers have large populations of Hispanic/Latinos (approximately 30% of both towns)...how do they fit into Northwest Arkansas?

10. Are racial tensions high in the area? Yes No Sometimes
a. Why do you think this is? _____
11. Do you think the children of Mexican (or other Latin American countries) immigrants here in NWA are integrating into US society/culture? Yes No Sometimes
a. Why or why not? _____
b. If not, how can this be changed? _____
12. Are the local communities attempting to integrate the different cultures together?
Yes No
a. If yes, in what ways? _____
b. If not, why isn't this happening do you think? _____

13. Do you find that the Hispanic/Latino population participates in the same activities as the greater Caucasian population in the area? Yes No Sometimes

a. Why or why not? _____

14. In your opinion does everyone in NWA have the same access to education? Yes No

a. Why or why not? _____

15. In your opinion does everyone in NWA have the same access to health care? Yes No

a. Why or why not? _____

16. Do you know if there are any Latino cultural festivals in the area? Yes No

a. If yes, do only Latinos attend or is it more multi-cultural than that? _____

Basically, I'm trying to figure out if there is a lot of interaction between the Latino population and the more native white population in the area....?

b. What do you think about this? _____

c. Why is this the case? _____

17. Do you know if there is a lot of gang activity among the Latino population in town?

Yes No

a. If yes, are all Latinos in the same gang or are there multiple gangs? _____

b. How are they divided up? By nationality or what? _____

c. Is there a lot of gang activity among the white population in the area? Yes No

18. In your opinion is there a lot of discrimination directed towards Latinos (by the white population) in NWA? Yes No

a. Why do you think this is? _____

b. Do you have any specific examples of discrimination? Please describe:

19. Are there any community centers in the area that primarily cater to Hispanics/Latinos? _____

20. Finally, is there anything else you can tell me that you may think is important for me to better understand the second generation Latino population in the area? _____

Thank you so much for your time today. I really appreciate it!

B.4. Information Letter for Immigrant Descendants. This is a copy of the informational letter I gave to each immigrant descendent before conducting the interview.

INFORMATION LETTER: Interviews with immigrant descendants

The Second Generation in Northwest Arkansas: Negotiating Assimilation, Transnationalism, and Ethnic Identity

Date: TBD

Dear Participant:

I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Gaku Tsuda in the School of Human Evolution and Social Change at Arizona State University.

I am conducting a research study to obtain a more in-depth understanding of the lives of second generation by examining how the children of first generation immigrants negotiate assimilative pressures, transnational practices, and ethnic identification in their everyday lives. This research will provide a more detailed portrait of the lives of the second generation, the actions they take in order to belong to American society, and the processes by which they maintain their heritage in a new land. The results will create a better understanding of how the children of immigrants integrate into American society and ways in which the process can be improved for future second generations.

I am inviting your participation to be interviewed, which will involve 1 to 2 hours of your time. You will be asked to answer a variety of questions that will expand on the answers given on the survey. Additional questions will address assimilation, transnationalism, and ethnic identity, among others. I will ask each question and write the responses on the interview guide. I will also record the interview sessions, if you allow me to do so. You have the right not to answer any question and you can stop the interview at any time.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You can skip questions if you wish. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. You must be between the ages of 18 and 30 to participate in the study.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation. Although there may be no direct benefits to you, the possible benefits of your participation in the research are that it will provide the wider public a more in-depth portrait of the lives of the second generation, the actions they take in order to belong to American society, and the processes by which they maintain their heritage in a new land. The results will create a better understanding of how the children of immigrants integrate into American society and ways in which the process can be improved for future second generations.

All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential. The results of this research study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications, but the researchers will

never identify you. Names will be removed from all interview sheets and will be replaced with an ID code and a pseudonym.

I would like to audiotape this interview. The interview will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interview to be taped; you also can change your mind after the interview starts, just let me know. Taped interviews will also be kept in the locked filing cabinet and names will never be asked while the tape is recording. Once the audio recordings are transcribed and the researcher's dissertation is complete the audio tapes will be destroyed and discarded.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team at: Dr. Takeyuki Tsuda, SHESC, Arizona State University, PO Box 872402, Tempe, AZ 85287-2402, 480-965-7887, or Claire Smith, SHESC, Arizona State University, PO Box 872402, Tempe, AZ 85287-2402, 719-761-7860.

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788. Please let me know if you wish to be part of the study.

If you agree to be interviewed, you must sign an informed consent, which I will give to you now.

Finally, if you would like to continue to be a part of the study you will be asked to take part in a number of follow up one-on-one interviews. In these interviews you will be asked to expand on some of the answers given in the first interview. We can discuss this possibility after this interview session has been completed.

Sincerely,

Claire Smith

B.5. Immigrant Descendant Interview Guide. This is the interview guide I used during each of the interviews I conducted with the immigrant descendants. I asked each question and wrote down their responses. The interview was also recorded. If I interviewed someone that was not of Mexican origin, I substituted the appropriate country name wherever applicable.

Interview Guide: Immigrant Descendants

This survey consists of five sections. If at any time you want to quit the interview you are free to do so. You may also skip any questions you do not want to answer. If you have any questions or concerns at any time please let me know.

Section I: In this section I would like to gather some background information on you and your parents to better understand your migration history and how you ended up living in Arkansas.

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Age _____

3. Year of birth: _____

4. What town do you live in right now? _____

5. Were you born in Mexico? Yes No

 If yes:

 a. What state in Mexico? _____

 b. Were you born in a village/rural area or a city/urban area? Circle one.

 c. When did you move to the US? _____

 d. How old were you when you moved to the US? _____

 e. Did you move straight to AR or another state? _____

 If no:

 f. Were you born in the United States? Yes No

 If yes:

 i. In what state in the US were you born? _____

 ii. When did you move to Arkansas? _____

 If no:

 ii. In what country were you born? _____

 iii. When did you move to the US? _____

 iv. How old were you? _____

6. How long have you lived in the US? _____

7. How long have you lived in Arkansas? _____

a. You live in _____ now. Have you lived in any other towns in Arkansas? _____

If yes:

b. Where? _____

c. For how long? _____

d. Which place do you like the best? _____

e. Why? _____

8. Have you lived in another state in the US? Yes No

If yes:

a. Where? _____

b. For how long? _____

9. Have you ever lived in Mexico? Yes No

If yes:

a. In what state? _____

b. For how long? _____

10. Do you want to live in Mexico at some point in your life? Yes No Maybe

a. Why or why not? _____

11. Do you like Arkansas? Yes No

12. Do you like living here? Yes No

a. Why or why not? _____

13. Do you ever want to move away from here? Yes No

a. Why or why not? (don't like it here, better opportunities elsewhere, family...etc.) _____

b. If yes, where do you want to move? _____

14. Does your mother currently live in Arkansas? Yes No

If yes:

a. In what town? _____

b. How long has she lived in Arkansas? _____

If no:

c. Has your mother ever lived in Arkansas? Yes No

d. Has your mother ever lived in the US? Yes No

e. Where does she live now? _____ (country and/or state)

15. Was your mother born in Mexico? Yes No

If yes:

a. In what state was she born? _____

b. When did your mother move to the US? _____

c. Did she move straight to AR or to another state first? _____

d. Why did she move to AR? _____ (job, family/friends, lifestyle...etc.)

e. Did she have a contact here before moving here? Yes No

If no:

f. Where was she born? _____ (country and/or state)

If another country:

g. When did your mother move to the US? _____

h. Did she move straight to AR or to another state first?

i. Why did she move to AR? _____ (job, family/friends, lifestyle...etc.)

j. Did she have a contact here before moving here? Yes No

If the US, but not AR:

k. Why did she move to AR? _____ (job, family/friends, lifestyle...etc.)

e. Did she have a contact here before moving here? Yes No

16. Does your father currently live in Arkansas? Yes No

If yes:

a. In what town? _____

b. How long has he lived in Arkansas? _____

If no:

c. Has your father ever lived in Arkansas? Yes No

d. Has your father ever lived in the US? Yes No

e. Where does he live now? _____ (country and/or state)

17. Was your father born in Mexico? Yes No

If yes:

a. In what state was he born? _____

b. When did your father move to the US? _____

c. Did he move straight to AR or to another state first? _____

d. Why did he move to AR? _____ (job, family/friends, lifestyle...etc.)

e. Did he have a contact here before moving here? Yes No

If no:

f. Where was he born? _____ (country and/or state)

If another country:

g. When did your father move to the US? _____

h. Did he move straight to AR or to another state first? _____

i. Why did he move to AR? _____ (job, family/friends, lifestyle...etc.)

j. Did he have a contact here before moving here? Yes No

If the US, but not AR:

k. Why did he move to AR? _____ (job, family/friends, lifestyle...etc.)

e. Did he have a contact here before moving here? Yes No

Section II: In this section I will ask you questions about language, identity, occupation and education.

18. Do you speak English? Yes No
a. How well? Fluently Conversational Not very well
19. Do you speak Spanish? Yes No
a. How well? Fluently Conversational Not very well
20. Does your mother speak English? Yes No
a. How well? Fluently Conversational Not very well
21. Does your mother speak Spanish? Yes No
a. How well? Fluently Conversational Not very well
22. Does your father speak English? Yes No
a. How well? Fluently Conversational Not very well
23. Does your father speak Spanish? Yes No
a. How well? Fluently Conversational Not very well
24. Which word or phrase best describes your ethnic identity? _____
25. Is there another word or phrase that best describes your ethnic identity? _____
26. Are you employed at this time? Yes No
27. What is your current occupation/job? _____
a. Do you utilize Spanish at your job? Yes No
28. Do you like your job? Yes No
29. What was your previous job before the one you have now? _____
a. Did you need to use your Spanish at that job? Yes No
30. What is your ideal job? _____
31. What is the highest level of education you have received? Select from the following list:
___ Less than 7 years of school
___ Completed junior high school
___ Some high school
___ High school degree/GED

- ___ Some college and/or technical school
- ___ Technical school degree/Associate's degree
- ___ College degree
- ___ Graduate degree

If no college degree:

- a. Are you currently going to college? Yes No
- b. If yes, where? _____
- c. What's your major? _____
- d. Do you want to go to college? Yes No
- e. When? _____

32. Did you go straight to college after high school? Yes No

33. Are your parents happy you're in college? Yes No

34. Did you experience any resistance from them about going to college? Yes No

- a. Why? _____
- b. Did your parents go to college? Yes No
- c. Are you the first in your family to go to college? Yes No
- d. Brothers and sisters go to college or are planning on it? Yes No

35. Are you currently in any type of education or training program, including language classes? Yes No

- a. If yes, what is it? _____

36. Do you have any children? Yes No

- a. If yes, how many? _____

37. Do you own the home/apt that you live in? Yes No

Section III: In this section I am going to ask you questions that will help me determine how you live your life on a daily basis.

38. What do you do with your free time (i.e. where do you hang out, with whom do you hang out, what kind of tv do you watch, do you play sports, go out at night, etc.)? [Make sure you're getting detailed answers to this question.]

39. Where do you spend most of your free time? _____

40. Of your friends in the area, are the mostly Mexican, American, a combination, or another ethnicity? _____

41. Do you belong to any of the following? Check all that apply: (any groups on-campus?)

- League of United Latin American Citizens
- The Jones Center
- Church _____
- Other _____
- No

42. Do you go to and/or participate in any of the following community activities?

- Sports tournaments
- Sports teams
- Non-profit fundraiser
- Homecoming parade
- Christmas parade/festivities
- Art shows
- County fair
- Feather fest
- Other _____
- No

43. If you do not belong to any community organizations or activities, why not?

- Not interested
- Don't know about them
- Not invited
- Other _____

44. Do you live with your parents/family? Yes No

a. If yes, do you help pay the bills? Yes No

b. When do you think you'll move out of their house? _____

c. If no, do you live alone or with friends? _____

45. Is your apt/house that you live in more 'Mexican' or 'Anglo' do you think? _____

a. Can you give me some examples that makes it how it is? _____

46. Do you hang out with your family a lot? Yes No

47. Do you speak mostly Spanish or mostly English with your family? _____

a. Do you speak mostly Spanish or mostly English with your friends? _____

48. How many of your friends live in your town? Check one:

- None
- Some
- Many
- All

49. How many of your relatives live in your town? Check one:

- None
- Some
- Many
- All

50. How interested are you in knowing what goes on in your town? Check one:

- Not at all
- Some
- A lot
- Very

51. How would you describe your feeling towards your neighbors? Check one:

- Very distant
- Somewhat distant
- Neutral
- Close
- Very close

52. Of the ten houses closest to your home/apt, how many adults/people your age who live in these houses do you know on a first name basis? Check one:

- None
- One or two
- 3-5
- 5-10
- More than 10

53. To what degree do you feel 'at home' in this community? Check one:

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- At home
- Very much at home

Section IV: In this section I am going to ask you questions about your connections to Mexico.

54. Do you ever travel to Mexico? Yes No

If yes:

- a. Why do you go there? (family, fun, business...etc.) _____
 - a1. How do you get there? (plane, car, bus, etc.) _____
- b. Where do you usually go? _____
- c. For how long? _____
 - c1. How often do you go? _____
- d. Do you like traveling to Mexico? Yes No Sometimes

- i. Why or why not? _____
- e. Do you hang out with people when you are in Mexico? Yes No
 - i. Who (i.e. family, friends, acquaintances, etc.)? _____
- f. Do people in Mexico think you fit in? Yes No Sometimes
 - i. Why or why not? _____
- g. Do you feel connected to Mexico (i.e. do you fit in)?
 - Yes No Sometimes
 - i. Why or why not? _____
- h. Do you bring Mexican food/goods home with you after traveling to Mexico?
 - Check one:
 - ___ Never
 - ___ Rarely
 - ___ Sometimes
 - ___ Often
 - ___ Always
 - i. Do you participate in cultural festivals and/or holidays in Mexico?
 - Check one:
 - ___ Never
 - ___ Rarely
 - ___ Sometimes
 - ___ Often
 - ___ Always

If no:

- j. Do you want to travel to Mexico? Yes No Maybe
- k. Why or why not? _____

- Brothers and sisters:
- l. Do they travel to Mexico? Yes No
 - m. With whom do they go to Mexico? _____
 - n. What form of travel do they use? _____

55. Do you have relatives that live in Mexico? Yes No

If yes:

- a. Do you keep in touch with them? Yes No
 - If yes:
 - b. How do you keep in touch with your relatives in Mexico? Check all that apply:
 - ___ Phone calls
 - ___ Letters
 - ___ Emails
 - ___ Videos
 - ___ Pictures
 - ___ Other _____
 - c. How often do you keep in touch? _____ (per week or month)

d. Do you (or your parents) send money/goods to any of your family in Mexico? Check one:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

56. Do you have friends that live in Mexico? Yes No

If yes:

a. Do you keep in touch with them? Yes No

If yes:

b. How do you keep in touch with your relatives in Mexico? Check all that apply:

- Phone calls
- Letters
- Emails
- Videos
- Pictures
- Other _____

c. How often do you keep in touch? _____ (per week or month)

d. Do you send money/goods to any of your friends in Mexico?

Check one:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

57. Do you vote in Mexican elections? For example, for the President or local town mayor? Check one:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

58. Do you vote in US elections? For example, for the President, local town mayor or school board? Check one:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

59. Do you participate in cultural festivals and/or holidays here in northwest Arkansas?

Check one:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

60. Do you watch Mexican television (i.e. the news, soccer games, telenovelas, etc.)?

Check one:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

61. Do you watch American television (i.e. the news, sports, tv shows, etc.)? Check one:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

62. Do you talk on the phone to your family or friends in Mexico? Check one:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

63. Do you think it is important to stay connected to Mexico (and your family and friends there)? Yes No

a. Why or why not? _____

b. If yes, can you rank these things in order of importance? You can also add something if you want.

- traveling to Mexico
- participating in Mexican cultural festivals/holidays in the US
- talking on the phone with family/friends in Mexico
- sending money to family/friends in Mexico
- bringing Mexican food/goods back to the US after a visit to Mexico
- voting in Mexican elections
- watching Mexican news, soccer games, and/or telenovelas
- sending pictures back and forth with family/friends in Mexico

___ cooking/eating Mexican food
___ other _____
___ other _____

64. Do you feel discriminated against by the local population? Yes No Sometimes
a. Why or why not? _____

Section V: In this section I will ask some additional questions about your life. Please give in-depth answers if possible. Some of these questions will be similar to those already asked, but this is important to make sure I understand everything you've already told me.

65. How do you describe yourself in terms of ethnicity?

66. Do you feel more Mexican or more American? Or both? Or something else? _____
a. Why? _____
b. When? I.e., is there a certain time you feel more Mexican than American or vice a versa?

67. How would you describe American society and culture?

68. Do you feel like you fit into American society/culture? Yes No Sometimes
a. Why or why not? _____
b. Do you feel like the general public here thinks you fit into American society/culture? Yes No Sometimes

69. How would you describe Mexican society and culture?

70. Do you feel like you fit into Mexican society/culture? Yes No Sometimes
a. Why or why not? _____
b. Do you feel like those in Mexico think you fit in there? Yes No Sometimes

71. Do you like living in the US? Yes No Sometimes
a. Why or why not? _____

72. Whose flag would you hold first? _____

73. Do you think your ethnicity helps or hinders your ability to do things in the US? [For example, getting a job?] Yes No Sometimes

- a. What does it help? Give examples. _____
- b. What does it hinder? Give examples. _____
- c. Why do you think this is? _____
74. Do you know what assimilation or integration means? Yes No
 Assimilation means....
 Integration means....
75. Do you think you are integrated into American society/culture? Yes No
 a. Why or why not? _____
 b. If no, do you want to be integrated into American society/culture? Yes No
 c. Why or why not? _____
76. Do you like American society/culture? Yes No
 a. Why or why not? _____
77. Do you like Mexican society/culture? Yes No
 a. Why or why not? _____
78. Do you like one more than the other? Yes No
 a. Which one? _____
 b. Why? _____
79. Do you feel discriminated against here? Yes No Sometimes
 a. If yes, why? _____
 b. Do you have any examples of the discrimination you have experienced?

80. Do your friends experience any type of discrimination? Yes No Sometimes
 a. If yes, can you give me some examples of that discrimination?

 b. Why do you think this happens? _____
81. Do your parents experience any type of discrimination? Yes No Sometimes
 a. If yes, can you give me some examples of this discrimination?

- b. Why do you think this happens? _____
82. What does it mean to be a 1.5 or 2nd generation immigrant in Arkansas? [Explain 1.5 and second generation if needed] _____
- a. Do you think it differs if you grew up in Los Angeles or Chicago? Yes No
- b. Why or why not? _____
83. Do you think you perceive yourself differently than the Anglo population perceives you? Yes No
- a. In what ways? _____
- b. Do you think people have labels for you? _____
- c. Do you think the word 'Mexican' has a negative connotation? Yes No
- d. Why or why not...in what ways? _____
84. How is your relationship with your parents? Grandparents? Do you relate to each other well? Do you think your immigrant experience is similar to theirs?
- _____
- _____
- a. Is your immigrant experience similar to that of your brother(s) and sister(s)? Yes No
85. What do you want to do when you get older? _____
86. What's your major goal(s) in life? _____
87. Will you teach your children to speak Spanish? Yes No
- a. Why or why not? _____
88. Will you take them to Mexico? Yes No
- a. Why or why not? _____
89. What is your favorite sports team? _____
90. Are you a hog fan? Yes No
- a. Why or why not? _____
91. When you go shopping for food do you shop Latino first or Anglo? _____
92. When you go shopping for clothes do you shop Latino first or Anglo? _____
93. Are you religious? Yes No
- a. Do you go to Church? Yes No
- b. If yes, how often?
 ___ every week

- 1-2 times a month
- 2-3 times a year
- never

c. Do they have services in both English and Spanish? Yes No
d. If yes, which service do you attend? _____

e. What is your religion?
 Christian; what denomination? _____
 Jewish
 Other

94. Do you support the Dream Act? Yes No

95. Are you familiar with the law 287G? Yes No

- a. What does it mean to you? _____
- b. Has it affected what you do in your daily life? Yes No
- c. Has it affected your friends or family members' daily lives? Yes No
- d. In what ways? _____

96. What do your parents do? _____

97. Are there any major 'Latino'/'Hispanic' hangouts I could go to so I could meet more people to interview? Like the discotecas for example? _____

This concludes the interview. Do you have any questions or additional comments? Thank you for your help. Give respondent their \$25.

Now, do you have any friends that you could put me in touch with so I can conduct the same interview with them? Please!! Thanks so much!

APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA IDENTIFIED IN CHAPTER 3

C.1. Demographic Data of Immigrant Descendants

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Generation	Country of heritage	Age upon arrival to US	Age upon arrival to AR
Luciana	F	22	1.5	Mexico	3	3
Santiago	M	26	1.5	Mexico	4	8
Sebastián	M	18	1.5	Mexico	5	5
Camila	F	18	1.5	Mexico	10	10
Gabriela	F	22	1.5	Mexico	3	3
Sofía	F	19	2	Mexico	birth	5
Matías	M	24	2	Mexico	birth	8
Diego	M	25	1.5	Mexico	6	6
Mateo	M	31	1.5	Mexico	9	15
Natalia	F	18	2	Mexico	birth	12
Luna	F	23	1.5	Mexico	4 1/2	4 1/2
Javier	M	23	1.5	Mexico	4	4
Lautaro	M	25	1.5	Mexico	12	12
Jesús	M	20	2	Mexico	birth	15
Christian	M	24	1.5	Mexico	13	13
Rodrigo	M	21	1.5	Honduras	10	13
Axel	M	19	1.5	Mexico	1	1.5
Gael	M	21	2	Salvador	birth	9
Emilia	F	18	2	Mexico	birth	13
Miguel	M	19	2	Mexico	birth	16
Tomás	M	20	1.5	Bolivia	8	20
Julieta	F	18	1.5	Mexico	5 months	5 months
Paula	F	24	1.5	Mexico	3 months	19
Agustina	F	18	2	Mexico	birth	13
Ramiro	M	23	1.5	Mexico	10	10
Daniel	M	18	2	Mexico	birth	3
Fernando	M	23	1.5	Mexico	2	6
Aarón	M	18	4	Mexico	birth	18
Maite	F	19	1.5	Mexico	2	2
Violeta	F	20	2	Mexico	birth	12
Candela	F	19	2	Salvador	birth	7
Ana	F	18	2	Mexico	birth	12
Isabel	F	19	2	Salvador	birth	2
Luana	F	18	2	Mexico	birth	10
Pedro	M	19	2	Mexico	birth	5
Mariana	F	18	2	Salvador	birth	11
Mario	M	21	1.5	Mexico	7	19
Josefina	F	19	1.5	Mexico	1	6
Vanessa	F	19	2	Mexico & Salvador	birth	2
Pilar	F	19	2	Salvador	birth	2
Emma	F	19	2	Mexico	birth	6
Clarisa	F	20	3	Mexico	2	13
Alessandra	F	18	2	Salvador	birth	11
Arturo	M	19	2	Mexico	birth	5
Victoria	F	18	2	Mexico & Salvador	birth	5

APPENDIX D

ASSIMILATION QUESTIONS, INDEX OF SOCIAL POSITION, TABULATED

DATA, AND TABLES/GRAPHS IDENTIFIED IN CHAPTERS 4 AND 5

D.1. Questions Used to Determine Level of Assimilation

- 1) Are you fluent in English? (each question is worth 0-6 points)
 - a. Yes – 6 points
 - b. Conversational – 3 points
 - c. No – 0 points

- 2) Do you think you are integrated into American society/culture?
 - a. Yes – 6 points
 - b. Sort of/sometimes – 3 points
 - c. No – 0 points

- 3) What food do you normally buy at the grocery store?
 - a. Anglo/American food – 6 points
 - b. Combination – 3 points
 - c. Hispanic/Latino food – 0 points

- 4) What type of clothes do you most often wear?
 - a. Anglo/American – 6 points
 - b. Combination – 3 points
 - c. Hispanic/Latino – 0 points

- 5) Whose flag would you choose to hold first?
 - a. American flag – 6 points
 - b. Both flags at the same time – 3 points
 - c. Mexican/home country flag – 0 points

- 6) Are you a hog fan?
 - a. Yes – 6 points
 - b. No – 0 points
 - c. Don't care – x

- 7) What is your favorite sports team?
 - a. American team – 6 points
 - b. Well known international team (not from Latin America) – 3 points
 - c. Team from the home country – 0 points

- 8) If you attend church, what service (language) do you attend?
 - a. English service – 6 points
 - b. Bilingual service – 3 points
 - c. Spanish service – 0 points

- 9) What is the ethnicity of a majority of your friends?
 - a. Anglo/American – 6 points
 - b. Combination – 3 points

c. Hispanic/Latino – 0 points

10) Do you think you fit into American society/culture?

- a. Yes – 6 points
- b. Sort of/sometimes/don't know – 3 points
- c. No – 0 points

11) Do you think others think you fit into American society/culture?

- a. Yes – 6 points
- b. Sort of/sometimes/don't know – 3 points
- c. No – 0 points

12) Do you vote in US elections?

- a. Yes – 6 points
- b. Will/plan on it – 3 points
- c. No – 0 points

13) Do you feel at home here?

- a. Very much at home – 6 points
- b. At home – 4 points
- c. Somewhat at home – 2 points
- d. Not at all at home – 0 points

D.2. Tabulated Data: Level of Assimilation of the Immigrant Descendants

Pseudonym	Total points	Questions answered	Total value	Level of assimilation
Luciana	35	11	3.18182	med
Santiago	51	11	4.63636	high
Sebastián	63	11	5.72727	high
Camila	31	11	2.81818	med
Gabriela	54	13	4.15385	high
Sofía	52	12	4.33333	high
Matías	58	12	4.83333	high
Diego	55	12	4.58333	high
Mateo	60	11	5.45455	high
Natalia	56	13	4.30769	high
Luna	47	10	4.7	high
Javier	45	12	3.75	med
Lautaro	55	12	4.58333	high
Jesús	55	12	4.58333	high
Christian	40	12	3.33333	med
Rodrigo	50	12	4.16667	high
Axel	42	11	3.81818	med
Gael	55	13	4.23077	high
Emilia	30	11	2.72727	med
Miguel	50	13	3.84615	med
Tomás	52	12	4.33333	high
Julieta	67	13	5.15385	high
Paula	58	11	5.27273	high
Agustina	34	11	3.09091	med
Ramiro	61	12	5.08333	high
Daniel	52	13	4	high
Fernando	63	12	5.25	high
Aarón	52	11	4.72727	high
Maite	36	12	3	med
Violeta	56	13	4.30769	high
Candela	32	12	2.66667	med
Ana	48	12	4	high
Isabel	66	13	5.07692	high
Luana	51	13	3.92308	med
Pedro	53	13	4.07692	high
Mariana	49	13	3.76923	med
Mario	53	13	4.07692	high
Josefina	46	13	3.53846	med
Vanessa	32	12	2.66667	med
Pilar	42	11	3.81818	med
Emma	52	13	4	high
Clarisa	47	12	3.91667	med
Alessandra	59	12	4.91667	high
Arturo	61	12	5.08333	high
Victoria	46	11	4.18182	high

D.3. Hollingshead's Index of Social Position (Miller and Salkind 2002:462-469)

- Nam, Charles B., & Powers, Mary G. (1965). Variations in socioeconomic structure by race, residence, and the life cycle. *American Sociological Review*, 30(February), 97-103.
- Nam, Charles B., Powers, Mary G., & Glick, Paul C. (1964). *Socioeconomic characteristics of the population: 1960* (Current Population Reports, series P-23, no. 12). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.
- Powers, Mary G., & Holmberg, Joan J. (1978). Occupational status scores: Changes introduced by the inclusion of women. *Demography*, 15, 183-204.

7.2.5 Hollingshead's Index of Social Position

Variable measured. Positions individuals occupy in the status structure.

Description. Both two- and three-factor forms of the index have been used extensively. The two-factor index is composed of an occupational scale and an educational scale. The three-factor index includes a residential scale. Because the residential scale was based on sociological analysis concerning New Haven, Connecticut, many communities would not be amenable until residential areas were mapped into a six-position scale. The two-factor index requires only knowledge of occupation and education.

The occupational scale is a 7-point scale representing a modification of the Edwards system of classifying occupations into socioeconomic groups. The Edwards system does not differentiate among kinds of professionals or the size and economic strength of businesses. The Hollingshead Index of Social Position ranks professions into different groups and ranks businesses by their size and value.

The educational scale is also divided into seven positions. In the two-factor index, occupation is given a weight of 7 and education is given a weight of 4. If one were to compute a score for the manager of a Kroger grocery store who had completed high school and one year of business college, the procedure would be as follows:

Factor	Scale Score	+	Factor Weight	=	Partial Score
Occupation	3		7		21
Education	3		4		12
			Index of Social Position Score		33

Where published. August B. Hollingshead, *Two Factor Index of Social Position* (copyright 1957), privately printed 1965, Yale Station, New Haven, CT. August B. Hollingshead and Frederick C. Redlich, *Social Class and Mental Illness: A Community Study* (New York: John Wiley, 1958), 387-397.

Hollingshead's account of the background and rationale for the two-factor scale appears in August B. Hollingshead (1971), "Commentary on 'The Indiscriminate State of Social Class Measurement,'" *Social Forces*, 49, 563-567.

Reliability and validity of Index of Social Position. High correlation is reported between the Hollingshead and Redlich measure and the index of class position devised by Ellis, Lane, and Olesen (1963).

Various combinations of the scale score for occupation and education are reproducible in the Guttman sense because there is no overlap between education-occupation combinations. If an individual's education and occupation are known, one can calculate his or her score; if one knows an individual's score, one can calculate both occupational and educational level.

Hollingshead and Redlich reported a correlation of judged class with education and occupation as $R_{1(23)} = .906$. For judged class correlation with residence, education, and occupation, $R_{(234)} = .942$. Hollingshead and others conducted extensive studies of the reliability of scoring and validity of the index on more than 100 variables.

Slomczynski, Miller, and Kohn (1981) report that use of the Hollingshead index of occupational status for research in the United States is validated by longitudinal measurement models that show the Hollingshead index to be as strong an indicator of occupational status as is Treiman's International Prestige Scale, the Hodge-Siegel Index, or the Duncan Socioeconomic Index.

Utility. Because of the difficulty in obtaining residential information where adequate ecological maps do not exist, the two-factor variation of the Index of Social Position has been used widely. Only occupation and education are needed, and these data are relatively easy to obtain. The scale score can be computed quickly and individual social position established.

References

- Ellis, R., Lane, W., & Olesen, V. (1963). The Index of Class Position: An improved intercommunity measure of stratification. *American Sociological Review*, 28, 271-277.
- Slomczynski, Kazimierz M., Miller, Joanne, & Kohn, Melvin L. (1981). Stratification, work, and values: A Polish-United States Comparison. *American Sociological Review*, 46, 720-744.

7.2.5.1 Hollingshead's Two-Factor Index of Social Position

The following two scales, the occupational and educational scales of the two-factor Index of Social Position, are reprinted by permission from August B. Hollingshead and Frederick C. Redlich, *Social Class and Mental Illness: A Community Study* (New York: John Wiley, 1958). Copyright 1958 by John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

The Occupational Scale

1. Higher Executives of Large Concerns, Proprietors, and Major Professionals

A. Higher Executives (Value of corporation \$500,000 and above as rated by Dun and Bradstreet)

Bank	Business
Presidents	Vice-presidents
Vice-Presidents	Assistant vice-presidents
Assistant vice-presidents	Executive secretaries
	Research directors
	Treasurers

B. Proprietors (Value over \$100,000 by Dun and Bradstreet)

Brokers	Farmers
Contractors	Lumber dealers
Dairy owners	

C. *Major Professionals*

Accountants (CPA)	Judges (superior courts)
Actuaries	Lawyers
Agronomists	Metallurgists
Auditors	Military: commissioned officers, major and above
Architects	Officials of the executive branch of government, federal, state, local: e.g., Mayor, City manager, City plan director, Internal Revenue director
Artists, portrait	
Astronomers	
Bacteriologists	
Chemical engineers	Physicians
Chemists	Physicists, research
Clergymen (professional trained)	Psychologists, practicing
Dentists	Symphony conductor
Economists	Teachers, university, college
Engineers (college graduates)	Veterinarians (veterinary surgeons)
Foresters	
Geologists	

2. Business Managers, Proprietors of Medium-Sized Businesses, and Lesser Professionals

A. *Business Managers in Large Concerns (Value \$500,000)*

Advertising directors	Manufacturer's representatives
Branch managers	Office managers
Brokerage salesmen	Personnel managers
Directors of purchasing	Police chief; Sheriff
District managers	Postmaster
Executive assistants	Production managers
Export managers, international concerns	Sales engineers
Government officials, minor, e.g., Internal Revenue agents	Sales managers, national concerns
	Store managers

B. *Proprietors of Medium-Sized Businesses (Value \$35,000-\$100,000)*

Advertising	Jewelers
Clothing store	Poultry business
Contractors	Real estate brokers
Express company	Rug business
Farm owners	Store
Fruits, wholesale	Theater
Furniture business	

C. *Lesser Professionals*

Accountants (not CPA)	Military: commissioned officers, lieutenant, captain
Chiropodists	
Chiropractors	Musicians (symphony orchestra)
Correction officers	Nurses
Director of Community House	Opticians
Engineers (not college graduate)	Optometrists, D.O.
Finance writers	Pharmacists
Health educators	Public health officers (MPH)
Labor relations consultants	Research assistants, university (full-time)
Librarians	Social workers

3. Administrative Personnel, Owners of Small Businesses, and Minor Professionals

A. *Administrative Personnel*

Advertising agents	Sales representatives
Chief clerks	Section heads, federal, state, and local governmental offices
Credit managers	Section heads, large businesses and industries
Insurance agents	Service managers
Managers, departments	Shop managers
Passenger agents, railroad	Store managers (chain)
Private secretaries	Traffic managers
Purchasing agents	

B. *Small Business Owners*

Art gallery	Furniture
Auto accessories	Garage
Awnings	Gas station
Bakery	Glassware
Beauty shop	Grocery, general
Boatyard	Hotel protection
Brokerage, insurance	Jewelry
Car dealers	Machinery brokers
Cattle dealers	Manufacturing
Cigarette machines	Monuments
Cleaning shops	Music
Clothing	Package stores (liquor)
Coal businesses	Paint contracting
Contracting businesses	Poultry
Convalescent homes	Real estate
Decorating	Records and radios
Dog supplies	Restaurant
Dry goods	Roofing contractor
Engraving business	Shoe
Feed	Signs
Finance companies, local	Tavern
Fire extinguishers	Taxi company
Five and dime	Tire shop
Florist	Trucking
Food equipment	Trucks and tractors
Food products	Upholstery
Foundry	Wholesale outlets
Funeral directors	Window shades

C. *Semiprofessionals*

Actors and showmen	Dispatchers, railroad
Appraisers (estimators)	Interior decorators
Army, master sergeant	Interpreters, courts
Artists, commercial	Laboratory assistants
Clergymen (not professionally trained)	Landscape planners
Concern managers	Morticians
Deputy sheriffs	Navy, chief petty officer

Oral hygienists	Reporters, newspapers
Physiotherapists	Surveyors
Piano teachers	Title searchers
Publicity and public relations	Tool designs
Radio, TV announcers	Travel agents
Reporters, court	Yard masters, railroad

D. Farmers

Farm owners

4. Clerical and Sales Workers, Technicians, and Owners of Small Businesses

A. Clerical and Sales Workers

Bank clerks and tellers	Factory supervisors
Bill collectors	Post office clerks
Bookkeepers	Route managers
Business machine operators, offices	Sales clerks
Claims examiners	Sergeants and petty officers, military services
Clerical or stenographic	Shipping clerks
Conductors, railroad	Supervisors, utilities, factories
Factory storekeepers	Supervisors, toll stations

B. Technicians

Dental technicians	Operators, PBX
Draftsmen	Proofreaders
Driving teachers	Safety supervisors
Expediter, factory	Supervisors of maintenance
Experimental tester	Technical assistants
Instructors, telephone company, factory	Telephone company supervisors
Inspectors, weights, sanitary, railroad, factory	Timekeepers
Investigators	Tower operators, railroad
Laboratory technicians	Truck dispatchers
Locomotive engineers	Window trimmers (stores)

C. Owners of Little Businesses (\$3,000-\$6,000)

Flower shop	Newsstand
Grocery	Tailor shop

D. Farmers

Owners

5. Skilled Manual Employees

Auto body repairers	Brewers
Bakers	Bulldozer operators
Barbers	Butchers
Blacksmiths	Cabinet makers
Bookbinders	Cable splicers
Boilermakers	Carpenters
Brakemen, railroad	Casters (founders)

Cement finishers	Mechanics (trained)
Cheese makers	Millwrights
Chefs	Moulders (trained)
Compositors	Painters
Dicmakers	Paperhangers
Diesel engine repair and maintenance (trained)	Patrolmen, railroad
Diesel shovel operators	Pattern and model makers
Electricians	Piano builders
Engravers	Piano tuners
Exterminators	Plumbers
Firemen, city	Policemen, city
Firemen, railroad	Postmen
Fitters, gas, steam	Printers
Foremen, construction, dairy	Radio, television maintenance
Gardeners, landscape (trained)	Repairmen, home appliances
Glass blowers	Rope splicers
Glaziers	Sheetmetal workers (trained)
Gunsmiths	Shipsmiths
Gauge makers	Shoe repairmen (trained)
Hair stylists	Stationery engineers (licensed)
Heat treaters	Stewards, club
Horticulturists	Switchmen, railroad
Linemen, utility	Tailors (trained)
Linoleum layers (trained)	Teletype operators
Linotype operators	Tool makers
Lithographers	Track supervisors, railroad
Locksmiths	Tractor-trailer trans.
Loom fixers	Typographers
Machinists (trained)	Upholsterers (trained)
Maintenance foremen	Watchmakers
Masons	Weavers
Masseurs	Welders
<i>Small Farmers</i>	Yard supervisors, railroad
Owners	Tenants who own farm equipment

6. Machine Operators and Semiskilled Employees

Aides, hospital	Cooks, short order
Apprentices, electricians, printers, steam fitters, toolmakers	Deliverymen
Assembly line workers	Dressmakers, machine
Bartenders	Elevator operators
Bingo tenders	Enlisted men, military services
Bridge tenders	Filers, sanders, buffers
Building superintendents (construction)	Foundry workers
Bus drivers	Garage and gas station attendants
Checkers	Greenhouse workers
Coin machine fillers	Guards, doorkeepers, watchmen
	Hairdressers

Housekeepers	Standers, wire machines
Meat cutters and packers	Strippers, rubber factory
Meter readers	Taxi drivers
Operators, factory machines	Testers
Oilers, railroad	Timers
Practical nurses	Tire moulders
Pressers, clothing	Trainmen, railroad
Pump operators	Truck drivers, general
Receivers and checkers	Waiters-waitresses ("better placed")
Roofers	Weighers
Setup men, factories	Welders, spot
Shapers	Winders, machine
Signalmen, railroad	Wiredrawers, machine
Solderers, factory	Wine bottlers
Sprayers, paint	Wood workers, machine
Steelworkers (not skilled)	Wrappers, stores and factories
<i>Farmers</i>	
Smaller tenants who own little equipment	

7. Unskilled Employees

Amusement park workers (bowling alleys, pool rooms)	Laborers, unspecified
Ash removers	Laundry workers
Attendants, parking lots	Messengers
Cafeteria workers	Platform men, railroad
Car cleaners, railroad	Peddlers
Carriers, coal	Porters
Countermen	Relief, public, private
Dairy workers	Roofer's helpers
Deck hands	Shirt folders
Domestics	Shoe shiners
Farm helpers	Sorters, rag and salvage
Fishermen (clam diggers)	Stage hands
Freight handlers	Stevedores
Garbage collectors	Stock handlers
Gravediggers	Street cleaners
Hod carriers	Struckmen, railroad
Hog killers	Unemployed (no occupation)
Hospital workers, unspecified	Unskilled factory workers
Hostlers, railroad	Waitresses ("hash houses")
Janitors (sweepers)	Washers, cars
Laborers, construction	Window cleaners
	Woodchoppers
<i>Farmers</i>	
Sharecroppers	

7.2.6 The Educational Scale

The educational scale is premised upon the assumption that men and women who possess similar educations will tend to have similar tastes and similar attitudes, and will also tend to exhibit similar behavior patterns.

The educational scale is divided into seven positions:

1. *Graduate professional training:* Persons who completed a recognized professional course that led to the receipt of a graduate degree were given scores of 1.
2. *Standard college or university graduation:* All individuals who had completed a 4-year college or university course leading to a recognized college degree were assigned the same scores. No differentiation was made between state universities and private colleges.
3. *Partial college training:* Individuals who had completed at least 1 year but not a full college course were assigned this position.
4. *High school graduation:* All secondary school graduates, whether from a private preparatory school, public high school, trade school, or parochial school, were given this score.
5. *Partial high school:* Individuals who had completed the 10th or 11th grades but had not completed high school were given this score.
6. *Junior high school:* Individuals who had completed the 7th grade through the 9th grade were given this position.
7. *Less than 7 years of school:* Individuals who had not completed the 7th grade were given the same score irrespective of the amount of education they had received.

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D.4. Tabulated Data: Current Social Position of the Immigrant Descendants

Pseudonym	Subject's job	Subject's occupation score	Subject's education	Subject's educational score	Subject's current social position
Luciana	server, intern at radio station	6, 3C	Associate's; in college	2.5	52, 31 (41.5), middle
Santiago	drywall subcontractor	5	in college	3	47, lower-middle
Sebastián	no job	7	in college	3	61, lower-middle
Camila	server, cashier	6, 6	in college	3	54, lower-middle
Gabriela	legal assistant	3C	in college	3	33, middle
Sofia	telephone wire installer	5	in college	3	47, middle
Matías	architect	1C	BA	2	15, upper
Diego	bartender	6	in college	3	54, lower-middle
Mateo	bus driver	6	Associate's; in college	2.5	52, lower-middle
Natalia	fast food manager	3A	in college	3	33, middle
Luna	tutor	6	BS; in grad school	2	50, lower-middle
Javier	work study	4A	Associate's; in college	2.5	38, middle
Lautaro	bus driver	6	Associate's; in college	2.5	52, lower-middle
Jesús	fast food manager	3A	in college	3	33, middle
Christian	architect drafter	4B	in college	3	40, middle
Rodrigo	restaurant busser	7	in college	3	61, lower-middle
Axel	server	6	in college	3	54, lower-middle
Gael	FedEx employee	6	in college	3	54, lower-middle
Emilia	babysitter	7	in college	3	61, lower-middle
Miguel	factory employee	6	in college	3	54, lower-middle
Tomás	server	6	in college	3	54, lower-middle
Julieta	convenient store clerk	4A	in college	3	40, middle
Paula	intern in IS at Tyson	3A	in college	3	33, middle
Agustina	babysitter	7	in college	3	61, lower-middle
Ramiro	veterinarian assistant	3A	Associate's; in college	2.5	31, upper-middle
Daniel	restaurant busser	7	in college	3	61, lower-middle
Fernando	PC tech at a factory	4B	in college	3	40, middle
Aarón	fast food employee	6	in college	3	54, lower-middle
Maite	retail clerk	4A	in college	3	40, middle
Violeta	retail clerk	4A	Associate's; in college	2.5	38, middle

Candela	server	6	in college	3	54, lower-middle
Ana	work study	4A	in college	3	40, middle
Isabel	work study, legal aid	4A	in college	3	40, middle
Luana	work study	6	in college	3	54, lower-middle
Pedro	fast food employee	6	in college	3	54, lower-middle
Mariana	customer service	4A	in college	3	40, middle
Mario	factory employee	6	in college	3	54, lower-middle
Josefina	retail clerk	4A	in college	3	40, middle
Vanessa	retail, work study	4A, 6	in college	3	40, 54 (47), middle
Pilar	retail clerk	4A	in college	3	40, middle
Emma	retail clerk	4A	in college	3	40, middle
Clarisa	daycare employee	6	in college	3	54, lower-middle
Alessandra	no job	7	in college	3	61, lower-middle
Arturo	no job	7	in college	3	61, lower-middle
Victoria	no job	7	in college	3	61, lower-middle

D.5. Tabulated Data: Predicted Social Position of the Immigrant Descendants

Pseudonym	Subject's predicted job	Subject's predicted occupation score	Subject's predicted education	Subject's predicted educational score	Subject's predicted social position
Luciana	news journalist	3C	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Santiago	nurse	2C	Bachelor's	2	22, upper-middle
Sebastián	musician	3C	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Camila	clothes designer	3C	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Gabriela	business owner	3A	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Sofia	educator/teacher	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Matías	architect	1C	BA (finished)	2	15, upper
Diego	professor	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Mateo	clothing design business	2B	Bachelor's	2	22, upper-middle
Natalia	lobbyist	1C	Bachelor's	2	11, upper
Luna	Professor	1C	BS (finished); MS	1	11, upper
Javier	business	3A	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Lautaro	architecture firm owner	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Jesús	architect	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Christian	architect	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Rodrigo	architecture firm owner	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Axel	lawyer	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Gael	business manager	2A	Bachelor's	2	22, upper-middle
Emilia	business traveler	3C	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Miguel	engineer	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Tomás	lawyer	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Julieta	bank manager	2A	Bachelor's	2	22, upper-middle
Paula	international IS	2C	Bachelor's	2	22, upper-middle
Agustina	not sure yet	3A	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Ramiro	ER nurse	2C	Bachelor's	2	22, upper-middle
Daniel	dental hygienist	3C	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Fernando	Homeland Security agent	2A	Bachelor's	2	22, upper-middle
Aarón	think tank	3A	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Maíte	clothing design business	2B	Bachelor's	2	22, upper-middle
Violeta	president of an Hispanic NGO	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Candela	Secret Service agent	2A	Bachelor's	2	22, upper-middle
Ana	psychiatrist	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Isabel	Ambassador	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper

Luana	not sure yet	3C	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Pedro	engineer	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Mariana	not sure yet	3C	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Mario	business owner	3A	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Josefina	business	3A	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Vanessa	child life specialist	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Pilar	human resources	3A	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Emma	art teacher; gallery owner	3B	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Clarisa	speech pathologist	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Alessandra	teacher	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper
Arturo	lab scientist	3C	Bachelor's	2	29, upper-middle
Victoria	teacher	1C	Bachelor's	2	15, upper

D.6. Tabulated Data: Current Social Position of the Immigrant Descendants' Fathers

Father of Pseudonym	Father's current job	Father's occupation score	Father's education (college)	Father's educational score	Father's current social position
Luciana	restaurant co-owner	3B	some	3	33, middle
Santiago Sebastián	no data translator at public school	no data 1C	no yes	5 2	no data 15, upper
Camila	retail clerk	4A or 6	no	5	55, lower-middle
Gabriela	welder	5	no	5	55, lower-middle
Sofía	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Matías	farmer	5, 6, or 7	no	5	62, lower-middle
Diego	welder	5	no	5	55, lower-middle
Mateo	no data	no data	no	5	no data
Natalia	truck driver	6	yes	2	50, lower-middle
Luna	no data	no data	no	5	no data
Javier	tractor engines business owner	3B	no	5	41, middle
Lautaro	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Jesús	lab assistant	2C	no	5	34, middle
Christian	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Rodrigo	mechanic shop owner	3B	some	3	33, middle
Axel	restaurant owner	3B	no	5	41, middle
Gael	retail clerk; city employee	4A, 3A	no	5	48, 41 (44.5), middle
Emilia	lab assistant	2C	no	5	34, middle
Miguel	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Tomás	maintenance worker	6	yes	2	56, lower-middle
Julieta	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Paula	retired	Retired	no	5	retired
Agustina	lab assistant	2C	no	5	34, middle
Ramiro	construction crew member	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Daniel	restaurant employee	6	some	3	54, lower-middle
Fernando	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Aarón	no data	no data	no data	no data	no data
Maite	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Violeta	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Candela	landscaping business owner	3A	no	5	41, middle

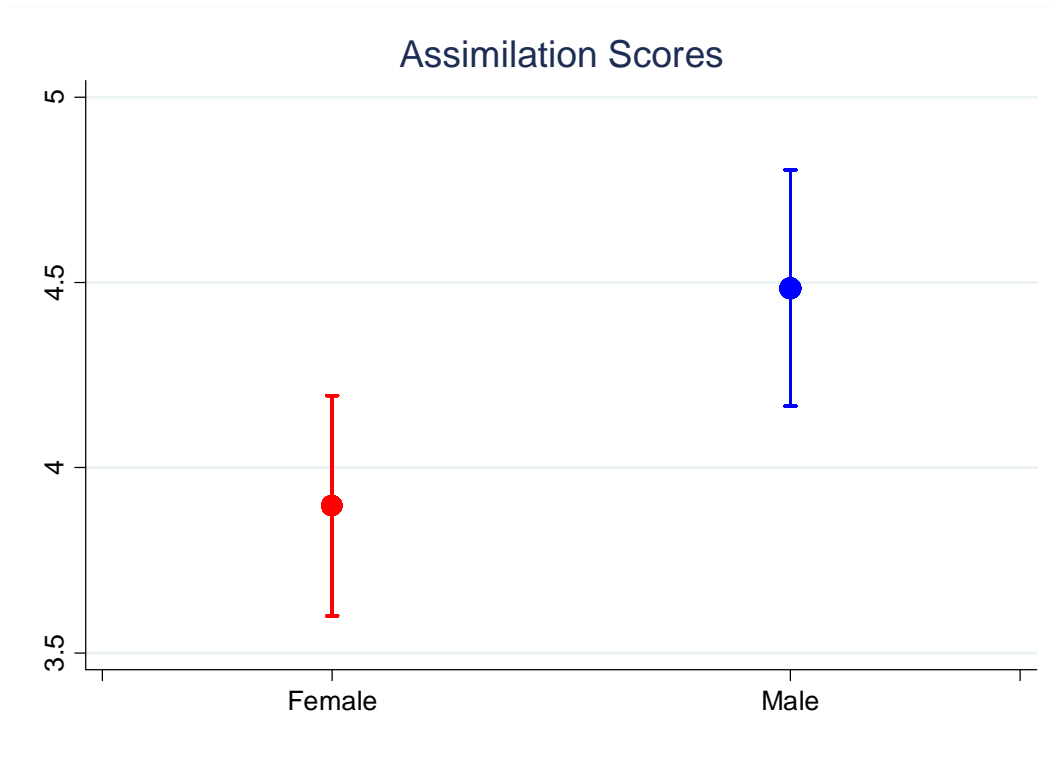
Ana	electrician	5	yes	2	43, middle
Isabel	truck driver	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Luana	Evangelist	3C	no	5	41, middle
Pedro	bus driver	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Mariana	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Mario	construction crew member	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Josefina	baker	5	no	5	55, lower-middle
Vanessa	delivery driver	5	no	5	55, lower-middle
Pilar	no data	no data	no	5	no data
Emma	not employed	7	no	5	69, lower
Clarisa	customer service	4A	yes	2	36, middle
Alessandra	retired	Retired	no	5	retired
Arturo	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Victoria	preacher	3C	some	3	33, middle

D.7. Tabulated Data: Current Social Position of the Immigrant Descendants' Mothers

Mother of Pseudonym	Mother's current job	Mother's occupation score	Mother's education (college)	Mother's educational score	Mother's current social position
Luciana	restaurant co-owner	3B	Yes	2	29, upper-middle
Santiago Sebastián	no data teacher; insurance agent	no data 1, 3C	no yes	5 2	no data 15, 29 (22), upper-middle
Camila	store clerk	4A	no	5	48, lower-middle
Gabriela	housekeeper	6	some	3	54, lower-middle
Sofia	factory worker	6	some	3	54, lower-middle
Matías	temp worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Diego	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Mateo	retired	retired	no	5	retired
Natalia	social worker	3A	yes	2	29, upper-middle
Luna	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Javier	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Lautaro	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Jesús	cafeteria worker	7	no	5	69, lower
Christian Rodrigo	factory worker restaurant food prepper	6 5	no no	5 5	62, lower-middle 55, lower-middle
Axel	restaurant co-owner	3B	no	5	41, middle
Gael	homemaker	7	no	5	69, lower
Emilia	cafeteria worker	7	no	5	69, lower
Miguel	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Tomás	insurance agency owner	3B	yes	2	29, upper-middle
Julieta	homemaker	7	no	5	69, lower
Paula	retired	retired	no	5	retired
Agustina	cafeteria worker	7	no	5	69, lower
Ramiro	housekeeper	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Daniel	homemaker	7	no	5	69, lower
Fernando	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Aarón	corporate asst manager	4A	yes	2	36, middle
Maite	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Violeta	cafeteria worker; hair stylist	7, 5	no	5	69, 55 (62), lower-middle
Candela	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Ana	corporate director	4A	yes	2	36, middle

Isabel	warehouse worker	7	no	5	69, lower
Luana	homemaker	7	no	5	69, lower
Pedro	homemaker	7	no	5	69, lower
Mariana	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Mario	homemaker	7	no	5	69, lower
Josefina	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Vanessa	restaurant food prepper	5	no	5	55, lower-middle
Pilar	on disability	disability	no	5	on disability
Emma	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Clarisa	homemaker	7	yes	2	57, lower-middle
Alessandra	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Arturo	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle
Victoria	factory worker	6	no	5	62, lower-middle

D.8. Assimilation and Gender Correlation. This graph displays the mean assimilation scores for males and females (4.48 for male, 3.90 for female). Linear regression was used to estimate means of assimilation scores and their 95% confidence interval by gender. The test comparing the scores for these two groups had a p-value of 0.009 indicating a significant difference in assimilation by gender as scores for males was found to be greater than those of females.



APPENDIX E

TABLES IDENTIFIED IN CHAPTER 7

E.1. Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses and Discrimination

		Discriminated Against			Total
		Yes	No	Sometimes	
Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses	home country	1	0	0	1
	Hispanic/Latino	3	1	1	5
	home country, Hispanic/Latino	6	8	1	15
	American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	5	4	7	16
	American, Hispanic/Latino	0	1	0	1
	home country, American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	3	4	0	7
Total		18	18	9	45

E.2. Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses and Gender

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses	home country	Count	0	1	1
		% within Gender	0.0%	4.2%	2.2%
	Hispanic/Latino	Count	4	1	5
		% within Gender	19.0%	4.2%	11.1%
	home country, Hispanic/Latino	Count	4	11	15
		% within Gender	19.0%	45.8%	33.3%
	American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	Count	8	8	16
		% within Gender	38.1%	33.3%	35.6%
	American, Hispanic/Latino	Count	1	0	1
		% within Gender	4.8%	0.0%	2.2%
	home country, American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	Count	4	3	7
		% within Gender	19.0%	12.5%	15.6%
	Total	Count	21	24	45
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

E.3. Ethnic Identity, First Response and Generation

		Generation		Total
		1.5	2	
Ethnic Identity	home country	9	4	13
	American hybrid	5	10	15
	Hispanic/Latino	6	10	16
	American	1	0	1
Total		21	24	45

E.4. Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses and Generation

		Generation		Total
		1.5	2	
Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses	home country	0	1	1
	Hispanic/Latino	3	2	5
	home country, Hispanic/Latino	9	6	15
	American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	7	9	16
	American, Hispanic/Latino	1	0	1
	home country, American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	1	6	7
	Total	21	24	45

E.5. Ethnic Identity, First Response and Legal Status

			Legal Status			Total
			US Citizen	US resident	Undocumented	
Ethnic Identity	home country	Count	10	1	2	13
		% within Legal Status	31.3%	25.0%	22.2%	28.9%
	American hybrid	Count	10	1	4	15
		% within Legal Status	31.3%	25.0%	44.4%	33.3%
	Hispanic/Latino	Count	11	2	3	16
		% within Legal Status	34.4%	50.0%	33.3%	35.6%
	American	Count	1	0	0	1
		% within Legal Status	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%
Total	Count	32	4	9	45	
	% within Legal Status	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

E.6. Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses and Legal Status

			Legal Status			Total
			US Citizen	US resident	Undocumented	
Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses	home country	Count	1	0	0	1
		% within Legal Status	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%
	Hispanic/Latino	Count	2	2	1	5
		% within Legal Status	6.3%	50.0%	11.1%	11.1%
	home country,	Count	12	1	2	15
	Hispanic/Latino	% within Legal Status	37.5%	25.0%	22.2%	33.3%
	American hybrid,	Count	10	1	5	16
	Hispanic/Latino	% within Legal Status	31.3%	25.0%	55.6%	35.6%
	American,	Count	1	0	0	1
	Hispanic/Latino	% within Legal Status	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%
	home country,	Count	6	0	1	7
	American hybrid,	% within Legal Status	18.8%	0.0%	11.1%	15.6%
	Hispanic/Latino	Count	32	4	9	45
	Total	% within Legal Status	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

E.7. Ethnic Identity, First Response and Flag Choice

		Flag Choice				Total
		country of heritage flag	US flag	both flags at same time	neither flags	
Ethnic Identity	home country	9	2	2	0	13
	American hybrid	6	6	2	1	15
	Hispanic/Latino	4	7	5	0	16
	American	0	1	0	0	1
Total		19	16	9	1	45

E.8. Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses and Flag Choice

		Flag Choice				Total
		country of heritage flag	US flag	both flags at same time	neither flags	
Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses	home country	1	0	0	0	1
	Hispanic/Latino	0	3	2	0	5
	home country, Hispanic/Latino	9	3	3	0	15
	American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	6	7	2	1	16
	American, Hispanic/Latino	0	1	0	0	1
	home country, American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	3	2	2	0	7
Total		19	16	9	1	45

APPENDIX F

TABLES IDENTIFIED IN CHAPTER 8

F.1. Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses and Participation in Holiday/Festival Celebrations in Country of Heritage

		Celebrate Holidays/Festivals in Country of Heritage		Total
		Yes	No	
Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses	home country	1	0	1
	Hispanic/Latino	4	0	4
	home country, Hispanic/Latino	10	2	12
	American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	7	0	7
	American, Hispanic/Latino	1	0	1
	home country, American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	5	0	5
	Total	28	2	30

F.2. Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses and Frequency of Travel to Country of Heritage

		Frequency of Travel to Country of Heritage					Total
		1-2 times per year	every other year	not recently	3-5 times in life	1-2 times in life	
Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses	home country	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Hispanic/Latino	3	0	1	0	0	4
	home country, Hispanic/Latino	8	0	2	2	1	13
	American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	5	1	1	0	2	9
	American, Hispanic/Latino	1	0	0	0	0	1
	home country, American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	4	1	1	0	0	6
	Total	22	2	5	2	3	34

F.3. Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses and Frequency of Communication with Family Members in Country of Heritage

	Frequency of Communication with Family Members in Country of Heritage			Total
	at least 1-2 times per month	at least 1-2 times every 4-6 months	never or very rarely	
	home country Hispanic/Latino	1	0	
home country, Hispanic/Latino	9	3	3	15
Ethnic Identity, Combined Responses American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	11	1	4	16
American, Hispanic/Latino	0	1	0	1
home country, American hybrid, Hispanic/Latino	4	2	1	7
Total	30	7	7	45