The Hispanic Challenge?
What We Know About Latino Immigration

Edited by Philippa Strum and Andrew Selee
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Proceedings of a Conference held on March 29, 2004

Division of United States Studies and Mexico Institute,
Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
The Migration Policy Institute

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PHILIPPA STRUM: IMMIGRATION IN U.S. HISTORY

Immigration is a crucial topic in American public policy, just as immigration is crucial to the United States. The genesis of this particular conference on Latino immigration, however, is Samuel P. Huntington’s recently published “The Hispanic Challenge,” which suggests that Latino immigrants are likely to destroy the United States as we know it.1

The essays that follow indicate that Professor Huntington’s thesis is easily rebutted. As the panelists at a conference held at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars agreed, it would be unfortunate to permit serious discussion about Latino immigration to focus on one article that relies on highly questionable scholarship. The larger questions raised by the fact of Latino immigration—or immigration from other nations—should be addressed nonetheless. What is the probable impact on this nation of a very large number of immigrants from nations with cultures that are markedly different and with different kinds of governmental systems? Should those immigrants be embraced as potential producers of enhanced diversity and excitement and wealth, or should they be regarded as highly problematic? If they are to be incorporated into the American polity and economy, what public policies would aid the process?

Any examination of the possible benefits and disadvantages of immigration to the United States should be put into the context of American history, which demonstrates that the current discussion has existed in one form or another since the country was founded. Every generation of Americans has grappled with the issue of immigration. It is an interesting sign of either the success or the failure of the process of immigration and integration that every wave of immigrants to this country, once fully acclimated and integrated, has tended to be suspicious of the next wave of immigrants. The earlier arrivals regard themselves as the “real” Americans, and view the next wave as something quite different. The American history of racial categorization extends to immigration. The very first citizen-
ship law passed by Congress in 1790 limited citizenship to free white persons. Being free was not sufficient; one had to be free and white to be eligible.² From 1882 through 1934, this country passed a series of Asian-exclusion acts that made it impossible for Chinese, Indians, Japanese, and Filipinos to gain citizenship.³ Those laws were overturned only in the mid-1940s.⁴ In 1924, and again in 1952, this country passed national origins quota systems laws, which declared potential immigrants from some areas of the world to be less welcome than those who were perceived as truly “white.”⁵ Immigration quotas on specific areas were not lifted until 1965.⁶ Concerns about immigration policy—who is permitted to move to this country—and immigrant policy—how they are treated once they arrive—are a constant in American politics.

Two passages in Professor Huntington’s article echo these concerns. At the very end of the article he writes, “There is no Americano dream. There is only the American dream created by an Anglo-Protestant society. Mexican Americans will share in that dream and in that society only if they dream in English.”⁷ An earlier reference to Mexican Americans says, “If the second generation does not reject Spanish outright, the third generation is also likely to be bilingual, and fluency in both languages is likely to become institutionalized in the Mexican-American community.”⁸ Some of us may view the ability to speak more than one language as positive; others apparently see it as a threat.

Another American wrote some years earlier about the question of immigrants and told us,

They [immigrants] will bring with them the principles of the governments they leave, imbibed in their early youth; or, if able to throw them off, it will be an exchange of unbounded licentiousness, passing, as is usual, from one extreme to another. It would be a miracle were they to stop precisely at the point of temperate liberty. These principles, with their language, they will transmit to their children. In proportion to their numbers, they will share with us the legislation. They will infuse into it their spirit, warp and bias its direction, and render it a heterogeneous, incoherent, distracted mass.⁹

The writer was Thomas Jefferson, and the passage appears in his Notes on the State of Virginia. The question of immigration, of all its positives and negatives, has long been with us. What follows is an attempt to consider it once again in the light of the large number of Latino immigrants who have arrived recently and who continue to come to the United States today.
I find it hard to understand why *Foreign Policy* published Professor Huntington’s article, and as we turn to a response I find myself asking, “Why is it necessary for us to take seriously something that may be not much more than the rumblings of someone who has simply confused the original meaning of the Greek words for ‘knowledge’ and ‘opinion’?” The Greek word for “knowledge” is *gnosis*; for “opinion,” it is *gnomi*; as you see, they have the same root.

How seriously should we take Professor Huntington’s polemic? Perhaps we should start with the immigration patterns he discusses. Mexican immigration to the United States is substantial. In the last year for which we have full data from the Immigration Service, Fiscal Year 2002, Mexicans accounted for about 20 percent of total legal immigration to the United States. As Elizabeth Grieco indicates, they are also thought to comprise about three-fifths of the undocumented population (see below). But to make the leap from the fact that Mexicans are a very large proportion of both legal and unauthorized immigration to the United States to a fear-induced preoccupation with what may happen to the United States as a result of the increased proportion of people of Mexican origin in the United States, requires not only extraordinary bias but also a high degree of ahistoricism.

In the next 10 to 15 years, Mexican immigrants will indeed come to dominate the flow to the United States even more than they do today. During that period, people who are now in their 50s and early 60s will have left the labor market. They will have been replaced by workers whose ethnic, cultural, and racial background concerns Professor Huntington and, if he speaks for them, other “Anglo-Protestants.” In 10 or 15 or 20 years, Mexican immigrants are likely to be seen not as a problem but as crucial to meeting our labor needs, supporting our retirement systems, and taking care of old people like Professor Huntington and me. What we should be thinking about instead is how to work with the immigrants who continue to be interested in coming here. They may cause consternation to Professor Huntington but they are who America already is. Future immigrants will not be coming from Europe and will not be Anglo-Protestants. Since their coming is a fact, the question this society must address in earnest is how best to incorporate them, rather than how to conduct debates that will marginalize them.
Rather than rebut the Huntington article, we should look more broadly at some of the issues raised in it. As Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said in a different context, we are talking about “known knowns”—the things we know we know—and the “known unknowns”—the things we know we do not know.

The question of migration flows is central here. The great “known known” is the push/pull model and the working of networks. We know that there are factors that cause people to want to leave their homes; they are pulled to the United States by labor markets and other attractions. We know that family networks and extended clans are often the mechanisms of this movement. With somewhat less certainty, we know that patterns of migration, especially those from Mexico, have changed over the last decade or so. There has been a movement away from temporary migration or circularity. There have been changes in the departure points in Latin America, with more people coming from urban rather than rural areas. Destinations in the United States are changing from the traditional settlement areas to others such as the southeast and the upper Midwest. The occupational profiles of migrants are changing, both in the work that migrants did in their home countries and the work they do here. The “known unknown” lies in what we do not know about the interaction of these factors and the relative importance of one factor or another in changing the fundamental patterns of migration to the United States.

In addition, we do not know all the effects of maturity. We are now 30 years into this wave of migration into the United States, and we see some of the effects of maturity in the fact that this is now a well-developed and in some cases a multi-generational movement of people. We see the effects on remittances, for example: over $30 billion sent from the United States to Latin America last year; $13.5 billion or so to Mexico. That certainly is a concrete manifestation of a migratory wave that is now very well established. We do not really know, however, what the impact is of the interrelationship between sending and receiving communities, or how dependent the sending communities are on the money coming back from their members in the United States. We do not completely understand the emergence of fully transnational communities, sending communities that have decades-long links with receiving communities. In fact, those terms do not apply when there is a constant movement of people and goods back and forth. There is a full feedback loop of people coming north and money
going south in a dynamic kind of model that we do not fully understand. At what point, for example, do size and longevity themselves become factors that change the nature of migration?

A related but distinct issue is the impact of the ongoing migration on American labor markets and the way that this impact changes with U.S. business cycles. It has become increasingly clear that the experience of the mid-to-late 1990s is only historical; it does not serve as a model. We know that with extremely tight labor markets, approaching or even exceeding full employment for the domestic labor market, there can be very large inflows of migrants accompanied by a rise in real wages, low unemployment, and little or no displacement, but we do not yet know what happens in other models. Take, for example, the situation that has existed for close to four years: a business cycle marked by minimal to negative net growth in total employment. We are still sustaining large inflows, but we do not understand what is happening in macro terms. We have studied the Latino component of the labor force over the last few years and have a few vague ideas about its impact. We see, for example, that there are sustained net increases of employment for immigrants, but at the same time there are net losses both in employment and labor force participation for natives, with flat wages all around. While we are able to describe that, nothing very useful has been written about the mechanisms of the current peculiar and *sui generis* business cycle, which is neither a boom nor a bust, but is instead something that is coupled with continued net increases in migration.

We should note that one of the curious things accompanying this business cycle is an extraordinary change in the way the poor are demonized. Twenty or so years ago the poor were demonized by the image of the “Welfare Queen”—someone who took money but did not work. The demonization of immigrants in this business cycle, however, is of poor people with too great a work ethic—people who work too hard. We now have the image of the workaholic Mexican as the demonized vision of the poor in this country.

When we turn to the issue of assimilation we ask, what is happening, socially and culturally, to long-term immigrants and their offspring? We know that the adoption of language is taking place at a very rapid pace. According to the 2000 Census, less than ten percent of the Hispanic population lived in households where no English was spoken; the number among children was just two percent. Fear of the loss of English seems so statistically invalid that it is hardly worth discussing. We know for a fact that in one generation, as immigrants produce U.S.-born children, the passage from Spanish to English is virtually complete, although that often
occurs in a bilingual context. We know that language is both a marker and a mechanism of cultural change. To what extent, however, is the acquisition of language a symbol that somebody has changed, and to what extent is the acquisition of language the mechanism by which people are changed? One attitudinal survey after another has shown that there is a range of attitudes among Latinos towards a variety of issues from trust in government to the morality of abortion. The range runs from the very distinctive views of recently arrived immigrants to a variety of views that fall squarely within the parameters of the beliefs of the non-Hispanic white population. We have learned that language is the single strongest predictor of where a Latino will fall on that continuum of opinion, stronger than education, income, or the length of time spent in this country. The more Spanish-speaking people are, the more conservative they tend to be on social issues, the more trusting they tend to be of government, and the more fatalistic they tend to be about their own lives. The more English-speaking they are, the more they tend to fit in the broad parameters of American public opinion. They are more cynical, for example, about public institutions, and more individualistic in terms of their own sense of their place in the world and whether they are in control of their own destiny.

Clearly, a process of change is underway. The “known unknowns” are the mechanisms of the change and the end state to which they lead. There is a very large second generation of children of Hispanic immigrants whose median age is twelve. They represent this country’s first large-scale assimilation of children of immigrants in nearly 100 years. I use the word assimilation but it can be called incorporation or acculturation or any number of other things, and indeed the lack of a term in fact makes the point. We have not agreed on what it is, or what to call it, let alone what the mechanisms are. The melting pot might have been a viable model in a society that was marked by de jure racial segregation, societally accepted forms of discrimination based on ethnicity, and other mechanisms that enforced the ideal of a single national type, whether defined as Anglo-Protestant or something else. The process we are witnessing now is taking place in a very different country; for the first time, it is taking place in an extremely pluralistic society. The era of assimilation involving the second Latino generation is occurring after the migration of African Americans to the North, after the Civil Rights era, and after the many cultural changes associated with the golden decade of the 1960s. It is a very different country: one in which many but not all group boundaries are permeable and changeable. We simply do not have a model for change in this context. We do not, for example, have a good model for understanding the process of
change when the children and grandchildren of immigrants are marrying people outside their ethnic group in the numbers that we see today.

These are the questions and issues we must address.

ELIZABETH M. GRIECO: THE FOREIGN-BORN FROM MEXICO IN THE UNITED STATES: 1960 TO 2000

According to the United States Census Bureau, the Mexican immigrant population in the United States more than doubled between 1990 and 2000, increasing from 4.3 million to 9.2 million. The addition to the population of 4.9 million more Mexican foreign-born during the last decade is significant, and the impact of this growth, especially at the local and regional levels, cannot be overstated. Nonetheless, the increase in the Mexican immigrant population since 1990, as well as in the foreign-born population as a whole, was not unexpected and in fact followed a pattern of continued growth established over the last 35 years.

In order to understand the recent and rapid change in the size of the Mexican immigrant population, it is essential to place its growth in the wider historic and demographic contexts. While the increase in the number of immigrants from Mexico is the main driver of growth in both the Hispanic foreign-born and the total foreign-born populations, the Mexican foreign-born still represent a relatively small proportion of the total population of the United States. As discussed below, however, immigration from Mexico has been geographically concentrated along the southern border of the United States, and the impact of this growth at the national level therefore differs considerably from the impact at the local, state and regional levels.

The Growth of the Hispanic Population

The first important context in which to place the growth of the Mexican immigrant population is the wider Hispanic or Latino population. Figure 1 shows the total population for the United States by Hispanic origin for the years 1970 to 2000, illustrating two important trends. Both the Hispanic population and the Hispanic foreign-born, including Mexican immigrants, have been and continue to be relatively small proportions of the total population. In 2000, the Hispanic population, including both native and foreign-born, constituted 13 percent of the total U.S. population, up from nine percent in 1990. The Hispanic foreign-born accounted for five percent of the total population in 2000, up from three percent in 1990. While the non-Hispanic population also experienced growth
between 1990 and 2000, the rate of change was faster for both the Hispanic and the Hispanic foreign-born populations. The Hispanic population grew by 61 percent, while the Hispanic foreign-born population grew by 81 percent. These rates were higher than the non-Hispanic population, which grew by nine percent.

**The Growth of the Foreign-Born Population**

Figure 2 shows that the total foreign-born population increased between 1970 and 2000, reaching 31.1 million. There were increases in both the
Hispanic and non-Hispanic foreign-born populations, with the non-Hispanic foreign-born accounting for 54 percent of all immigrants by 2000 and the Hispanic foreign-born, for 46 percent. However, the main driver of change in the foreign-born population, especially between 1990 and 2000, was the Hispanic foreign-born. Between 1990 and 2000, the Hispanic foreign-born population increased by 81 percent, compared with 42 percent for the non-Hispanic foreign-born.

The Growth of the Mexican Foreign-Born Population

As Figure 2 shows, the increase in the Hispanic foreign-born population has been the driving force in the growth of the total foreign-born, and growth in the Hispanic foreign-born population, especially between 1980 and 2000, was the result of immigration from Mexico. Figure 3, which shows the foreign-born in the United States by area of origin for the years 1960 to 2000, illustrates two important trends. First, there was a dramatic decline in the foreign-born population from Europe between 1960 and 2000. While in 1960 the European foreign-born constituted about 75 percent of the foreign-born population, by 2000 it constituted only about 16 percent. There was also a simultaneous increase in all other groups. Second, while the Mexican and other Latin American foreign-born groups were approximately the same size between 1960 and 1990, the Mexican foreign-born population increased rapidly between 1990 and 2000. Mexican immigrants were roughly 22 percent, or about one in
every five, of the total foreign-born population in 1990. By 2000, Mexican immigrants accounted for 30 percent, or about one in every three foreign-born. The proportion of immigrants from the rest of the world also increased, doubling between 1960 and 2000, due primarily to Asian immigration.

The increase in the Mexican immigrant population has been quite dramatic over the last 30 years. Figure 4 shows the increase in the foreign-born population from Mexico in the United States between 1960 and 2000. Between 1960 and 1970, that population grew by only 32 percent, but between 1970 and 1980 it nearly tripled in size, experiencing a 189 percent increase. Between 1980 and 1990, the population almost doubled, increasing by 95 percent, and between 1990 and 2000, the population more than doubled, increasing by 114 percent. More recent estimates using the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2002 American Community Survey place the Mexican foreign-born population at about 10 million.18

The growth of the Mexican foreign-born population looks much less dramatic, however, when compared to both the growth in the total foreign-born population and the total U.S. population. Figure 5 shows the size of the total foreign-born population and the foreign-born from Mexico between 1960 and 2000. Figure 6 shows the population of the United States by nativity for the years 1960 to 2000. Both the total foreign-born and the Mexican foreign-born are still relatively small populations in spite of recent rapid growth. By 2000, the foreign-born population of 31.1 million represented about 11 percent of the total population of the United
States, with the Mexican foreign-born constituting only about three percent. The Central and South American foreign-born represented five percent of the total population, while the foreign-born from Latin America represented six percent. Mexico accounted for about half of the total of all foreign-born immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean.

**The Foreign-Born by Country of Birth**

While the Mexican foreign-born account for only three percent of the total population, Mexicans dominate the foreign-born population.
Figure 7 shows the percent distribution of the foreign-born population by country of birth for the United States in the year 2000, indicating the ten largest groups. The difference between the size of the Mexican foreign-born population, constituting approximately 30 percent of all the foreign-born in the United States, and the other origin groups is striking. For example, the Filipino foreign-born—the second largest origin group—are only four percent of the total foreign-born population, which means that the Mexican immigrant population is about seven times as large as the Filipino foreign-born population. This size differential underscores the fact that immigration from Mexico is the driving force in the growth of the foreign-born population. It should be remembered, however, that in spite of this dominance, the foreign-born population is still tremendously diverse. The United States literally receives immigrants from all over the world.

**The Distribution of Mexican Immigrants in the United States**

While the Mexican foreign-born make up about three percent of the total national population, the impact of the Mexican immigration is not uniform across the United States. Because of its historic geographic concentration, Mexican immigration has had its greatest impact at the local, state, and regional levels, especially along the border. While, as noted above, the Mexican foreign-born make up three percent of the total population nationally, immigrants from Mexico account for 12 percent of the total population in California, nine percent in Texas and Arizona, eight percent in Nevada, and six percent in New Mexico. In counties or cities, the con-
centrations are often higher. The majority of the Mexican foreign-born, however, still reside in two states, California and Texas. Figure 8 shows the percent distribution of the foreign-born from Mexico by state for the year 2000. California has 43 percent of all foreign-born from Mexico in the United States, followed by Texas with 20 percent. The next largest concentration is in Illinois, with seven percent.

There is some evidence to suggest that the dominance of California and Texas as the states of choice for Mexican immigrants may be shifting. Figure 9, which shows the percent of all foreign-born from Mexico...
residing in California, Texas, and all other states between 1960 and 2000, illustrates two important trends. First, the proportion of the Mexican foreign-born in Texas has declined continually between 1960 and 2000, from about 35 percent in 1960 to about 21 percent in 2000. Second, the proportion of Mexican foreign-born in California increased between 1960 and 1980, remained stable between 1980 and 1990, and then declined significantly between 1990 and 2000, from 58 percent in 1990 to 43 percent in 2000. These declines suggest that Mexican immigrants are moving to new areas.

What are the new areas of destination for the Mexican foreign-born? Table 1 (p. 15) shows the states with both large numeric increases and large percentage increases in their Mexican immigrant populations. Georgia, North Carolina, and Colorado each have more than 150,000 resident Mexican foreign-born now where they each had fewer than 35,000 in 1990. Other states that have experienced significant change include Utah, New Jersey, Indiana, and Tennessee. Figure 10 (p. 15) maps the distribution of the foreign-born from Mexico in the United States as a percentage of the total county population. The traditional areas of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, and Nevada are still receiving large numbers of foreign-born but so are the new areas of Mexican migration such as North Carolina, Georgia, Colorado, Utah, and even Idaho, Kansas, Arkansas, and Florida.

Conclusion

In summary, the foreign-born population is growing rapidly and is likely to continue to do so. As the figures above indicate, Mexican immigration is the primary driver of growth in the foreign-born population as a whole as well as the Hispanic foreign-born. This growth and its impact can be understood only in the proper demographic context. Both the foreign-born and the foreign-born from Mexico are still relatively small portions of the total population, but what occurs at the national level is often radically different than what occurs at the local level. While it is important to recognize the small size of the Mexican immigrant population relative to the total population of the United States, it is equally important to realize that the foreign-born from Mexico are geographically concentrated, posing challenges—and opportunities—at the regional, state, and local levels. Concentrations in traditional immigrant states such as California and Texas are likely to continue, but there is some evidence to suggest that a greater proportion of Mexican immigrants are going to new centers of growth in states such as North Carolina, Georgia, and Colorado.
TABLE 1
States with large numeric and percent increases in their foreign-born populations from Mexico, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number 1990</th>
<th>Number 2000</th>
<th>Numeric difference</th>
<th>Percent change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>34,261</td>
<td>181,508</td>
<td>147,247</td>
<td>429.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>20,309</td>
<td>190,621</td>
<td>170,312</td>
<td>838.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>10,294</td>
<td>62,113</td>
<td>51,819</td>
<td>503.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>12,791</td>
<td>67,667</td>
<td>54,876</td>
<td>429.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>8,757</td>
<td>172,065</td>
<td>163,308</td>
<td>1,864.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>1,972</td>
<td>44,682</td>
<td>42,710</td>
<td>2,165.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>8,922</td>
<td>66,478</td>
<td>57,556</td>
<td>645.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DAVID GUTIÉRREZ: THE SEARCH FOR RELEVANT PUBLIC POLICIES

Professor Huntington’s recent piece is not the only one to reflect negative attitudes toward Hispanic immigration. Otis Graham has published a scholarly book with a similar theme, and as similar attitudes are being expressed in both academia and the political sphere, political questions have become important to the discussion. Although as a Chicano historian and a fifth generation Californian I take issue with Professor Huntington’s rather shoddy historical scholarship, I respect his right to raise cautionary notes about immigration policy and the demographic trends that have so clearly transformed American society, and agree that it is high time that we had an honest debate about Mexican and Latin American immigration as well as migration into the United States from other parts of the world.

There are areas in which I find myself in at least conceptual agreement with Professor Huntington. He has a fairly long list of concerns but two are central to his argument. The first is the continuing high volume of immigration from Spanish-speaking countries; the second, the large number of such people who are already here. It is critical to decouple the two phenomena because the 38 million Latinos who are already physically in the country are here to stay. Professor Huntington articulates his second concern in this way:

The extent and nature of this [Latino] immigration differ fundamentally from those of previous immigration, and the assimilation and successes of the past are unlikely to be duplicated with the contemporary flood of immigrants from Latin America. This reality poses a fundamental question: Will the United States remain a country with a single national language and a core Anglo-Protestant culture? By ignoring this question, Americans acquiesce to their eventual transformation into two peoples with two cultures (Anglo and Hispanic) and two languages (English and Spanish).

It is hard to dispute the reality of the situation that concerns Professor Huntington. The 2000 Census provides all the proof one needs that we are in the midst of an unprecedented demographic revolution, with social dislocations and social strains, particularly for the Latino populations, in areas of high Latino concentration. The problem with Professor Huntington’s analysis is not his assertion that we are entering a very dangerous time, because we are, but the trajectory of causation implicit in the analysis. In his view, the source of the challenge and the crisis is Latinos themselves,
and the prescriptive changes he recommends are focused on what Latino residents should be doing to conform to the normative universe he has constructed for them.

Professor Huntington would like to see Latinos learn English, commit themselves to becoming better educated, adopt American political values and institutions, and limit the number of children they produce. It is somewhat strange to hear him and others develop social and cultural wish lists about Latinos without taking into account the conditions that both American-born and immigrant Latino populations have had to face.

If we are concerned about the Latino menace to the social stability of the United States, and if we are concerned more specifically with Latino language proficiency, does it make sense to banish bilingual education and other innovative approaches to language training in the schools? If we are truly concerned about social capital issues, access to education, and training a skilled workforce as the native population ages, is it sensible to abolish affirmative action and to pursue other public education policies that also help push out Latino students? I am not referring to future immigrants, but to people who are already here. If we are truly committed to encouraging people to embrace American political institutions and what Professor Huntington describes as American political and cultural values, does it make sense to lambaste them as a social problem, rather than to praise their work ethic, their family values, and their historical and ongoing contributions to the construction and maintenance of the society?

A similar question is raised concerning the prospect of separatist politics, or of a Chicano Quebec or whatever similar metaphor comes to mind. If we do not want people to develop oppositional points of view and oppositional politics, does it not make sense to be more embracing of their concerns within the context of a democratic tradition? If this society is truly concerned about social stability and about the 38 million Latinos who are already an organic component of the society, it might behoove us to start thinking about ways to alleviate the crisis. One thing that is missing from Professor Huntington's analysis is the transnational or global context, particularly the economic context, in which migration flows occur. He does not discuss U.S. economic policies abroad. He does not discuss in great detail the kind of push mechanism that NAFTA has provided over the short term. He does not discuss the impact of U.S. military policy on destabilizing populations, which leads those populations to go elsewhere to escape oppression or to seek economic opportunity.

There is rising concern about the unintended consequences of globalization that can be seen in South America or Chiapas or Oaxaca, about the
outsourcing of U.S. jobs, about the deepening crises in Social Security and Medicare, and about the erosion of the positions of both the American middle class and the large and increasingly disenfranchised working class. Those are all phenomena that fit hand-in-glove with the explosion of the Latino population. What is needed is not more immigrant bashing and ethnic baiting but a national commitment to a kind of domestic Marshall Plan, designed to meet and address what Professor Huntington has called “the Hispanic Challenge.” That makes much more sense to me as an expression of U.S. self-interest. If, with Professor Huntington, we are truly concerned about seeing both Latino immigrants who are already in this country and their children embrace what he calls the American dream, we might stop thinking of them as a menace to Western civilization. If for no other reason than informed self-interest, we might start thinking of them as a tremendous human resource, and begin providing with them with some encouraging incentives for integration.

**MICHAEL JONES-CORREA: TRANSNATIONALISM AND DUAL LOYALTIES**

There is currently a good deal of concern among some parties that the capacity of the United States to assimilate its immigrants has been undermined as never before, as Professor Huntington writes in his essay, by “the impact of transnational cultural diasporas; the expanding number of immigrants with dual nationalities and dual loyalties; and the growing salience for U.S. intellectual, business, and political elites of cosmopolitan and transnational identities.” The following focuses on these claims about transnationalism and their consequences for assimilation in the United States.

Transnationalism—the existence of social networks, institutions, and ties that link immigrants to their countries of origin—is a reality. These networks and ties among current immigrants have become the focus of intense study by social scientists, but an exclusive focus on transnationalism today both misrepresents the uniqueness of the current immigration in comparison with past immigration and distorts the broader trends of immigration and immigrant incorporation now under way. Immigration, assimilation, and transnationalism are in fact closely connected. I will touch on four aspects of the debate around transnationalism today—rates of return, travel, remittances, and dual nationality—and their impact on immigrant assimilation.

Immigrant transnationalism is not a phenomenon unique to today’s immigrants, who are no more likely to return to their home countries
than were immigrants in the past. Most native-born Americans are of course the descendants of immigrants, and therefore have reason to think that they know something of migration. The United States, Americans like to say, is a land of immigrants. This pronouncement assumes that migrants have always come to the United States to stay. This, however, is the perspective of Americans who are descended from immigrants; that is, a view colored by the inherited memories of those immigrants who decided to stay. Americans do not hear the stories of those who went back. In fact, earlier migrations to the United States were, in large part, sojourner migrations: migrations of people who intended to stay for only a short while. This can be seen from the historical rates of return migration. A Congressional commission established in 1911 estimated that one-third of the migrants to the United States prior to World War I returned, and many other countries had even higher rates of return. Between 1908 and 1910, 2,297,338 immigrants were admitted, and about 736,000 departed. The overall return rate was 32 percent, but the return rate was about 57 percent for Croatians, 63 percent for northern Italians, 56 percent for southern Italians, 65 percent for Magyars and Hungarians, 31 percent for Poles, 41 percent for Russians, 59 percent for Slovaks, and 51 percent for Spaniards. We have simply forgotten that this is what migration has looked like. It is impossible to know what the rates of return are today with any certainty, since accurate emigration data are not currently collected, but there are reasonable estimates that suggest that the rates of immigration today are just about what they were in 1910 or lower: about 30 percent of migrants coming to the United States return to their home countries while the rest remain here. If history is written by the winners, immigration history is written by the descendants of those who stayed, not by those who returned, and family lore is passed on by those who made the choice to remain. We are the victims of faulty memories.

But wait, the argument goes, isn’t transnationalism today qualitatively different from that in the past? After all, travel is easier and faster, and communication over long distances is facilitated by cable and satellite-delivered media, telephone connections, and the Internet. These factors make extensive contact with families and home towns in immigrants’ countries of origin all the more likely. The ease of travel and communication, however, does not necessarily mean that people want to return to their countries. In the fall of 2003, a group of colleagues and I conducted 15 focus groups of Latinos in nine cities and towns across the United States. Almost all the respondents were Latin-American immigrants or their children. The questions we asked were very general. We did not ask about travel to countries of
origin, for example, but if the subject was mentioned we followed up by asking how often they traveled and when they had last traveled.

Despite the fact that almost all the respondents who talked about travel had made at least one trip back to their countries of origin, the view of many towards their countries could be summed up by the sentiment, “Nice place to visit but I wouldn’t want to live there.” Two responses from the Spanish-language focus group in Los Angeles serve to illustrate. One was that of Walter, who said, “I love my country Guatemala, but I can’t stand it too much over there.” Beatriz commented, “I agree…I love my country, and go back every four years, but I cannot live or work there. I go for a week and I am ready to come back.”

A significant portion of the respondents in these focus groups indicated that when they traveled to their countries of origin they did not enjoy the experience of return. Their responses touched on various themes: social disconnection, lack of economic opportunity, and physical discomfort. Dina, from the Spanish-language focus group in New York, told us, “After five years of being here, I arrived [in El Salvador]…and I wanted to come back the next day…There was no water, no electricity…my daughter had an intestinal infection and almost died…After two years I went back and the same thing happened. Every time I go the same thing happens…I don’t ever want to go back.” Then there is Carlos, from the Spanish-language focus group in Los Angeles: “There are no opportunities there. Even though someone says they have plans to pay their debts and go back, they don’t.”

On the face of it, respondents’ travel patterns seem to confirm the transnational argument: almost all respondents, it seems, had traveled back to their countries of origin, some of them quite often. When one delved more deeply, however, it appeared that many had negative opinions about their experiences returning to their home countries. Across almost all the focus groups, both those conducted in English and those in Spanish, respondents offered unsolicited opinions indicating that they felt out of place when going back to visit, that they were unlikely to stay for good and, implicitly or explicitly, that they were likely to remain in the United States. Even those expressing a desire to return often couched their responses in terms of unlikely possibilities such as, “You know I would go but my kids want to stay, so what can you do?” Those who knew they wanted to stay in the United States, on the other hand, were much more adamant. They were here to stay, and they knew it.

What about ties to family members in home towns? Even if immigrants do not like to travel to their countries of origin and do not intend to go
back permanently, Latin American immigrants in the United States still have strong ties to their countries of origin and remit large sums of money to their family members. In addition, sending countries have encouraged immigrants to set up hometown associations and have then pressed the associations to send targeted remittances for development projects in their home towns. Mexico in particular has worked aggressively through its “Program for the Mexican Community Living Abroad” to establish hometown associations and has pushed them to participate in Mexico’s three-to-one matching programs, where every dollar of targeted development remittances by the hometown associations is matched by three from the Mexican government. However, from 1993 to 2001, the 235 hometown associations that participated in the program donated only $1.8 million to their hometowns. This is a miniscule piece of the $30 billion that Latin American immigrants sent to family members back home in 2003.25

The amounts remitted back to family members keep increasing from year to year, which would seem to indicate that ties to countries of origin are maintained and reinforced over time. Research indicates, however, that for individual migrants, remittances peak in their first decade in the United States and decline subsequently as family ties are diminished by death or distance or as other family members migrate to the United States.26 It is important to keep these remittance figures in perspective. While Latin American immigrants remitted $30 billion in 2003, the total purchasing power of Hispanics in the United States was estimated at $653 billion that year, which means that the total remittances make up no more than between four and five percent of total Latino purchasing power.27

But, one might ask, aren’t ties to immigrants’ countries of origin abetted and reinforced by the acceptance of dual nationalities and dual loyalties? Today dual nationality is increasingly recognized by sending countries and, to a lesser extent, by receiving countries as well. (The United States does not encourage dual nationality but does not penalize it.) This means that immigrants can take on additional nationalities without losing their nationality in their country of origin. What difference, then, does dual nationality really make? Presumably it encourages immigrants to maintain ties with their countries of origin, but the research I have done using the Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey indicates precisely the opposite. Latin American immigrants from countries recognizing dual nationality have significantly higher rates of naturalization as U.S. citizens and, once naturalized, have higher rates of participation in electoral politics in the United States.28 Dual nationality actually decreases the cost to immigrants of becoming U.S. citizens. If U.S. citizenship is presented as an
either/or choice, many immigrants will procrastinate, staying in the United States as permanent residents but being unwilling to sunder their official standing with their countries of origin. Dual nationality allows them to retain recognition of their ties with their countries of origin, making it easier for them to incorporate fully into American political life.

There is substantial evidence to suggest that transnational ties do continue, whether in the form of organizational networks such as hometown associations, or as reflected in immigrant attitudes and behavior such as engagement in remittance practices and travel back to the country of origin. This evidence has been used by commentators such as Professor Huntington to suggest that immigrants are failing to assimilate into American society and that immigrants, particularly Latino immigrants, are threatening American national identity. Immigrant assimilation, however, has rarely been a matter of absolutes. The assumption that Latinos either participate solely in their own separate social networks, apart from the nation-state, or commit entirely to their receiving society is belied by the much more complex portrait that emerges from the rich data available. It shows that Latinos may feel the pull of ties to their countries of origin but also develop deep attachments to the United States; that immigrants and their children continue to travel to their countries of origin but have conflicted feelings about visiting; and that despite any ties to their countries of origin, they plan to remain in the United States. That is key: whatever the nature of their feelings for their countries of origin, most immigrants are here to stay.

I do agree with Professor Huntington in at least one respect: receiving countries such as the United States could be doing much more to incorporate new immigrants into the fabric of civil and political life. While there has been a rapid increase in the number of Hispanic voters, for example, with Latinos making up seven percent of the electorate in the 2000 elections, more than seven million Latinos did not participate because they were not U.S. citizens. Only 57 percent of Hispanic citizens were registered. Only 44 percent of Hispanic registered voters voted, compared with 53 percent of African-American and 60 percent of white registered voters. The full realization of potential Hispanic political power will come only with the naturalization of those who have yet to become citizens, the registration of those who are already citizens, and the participation of those who are registered. At every one of these hurdles of naturalization, registration and turnout, Latinos lag behind the population as a whole. If we are really concerned about Latino incorporation into American society, should we not address these issues and think about possibilities such as non-citizen voting, earned citizenship, streamlined naturalization, and civic education?
I have been working for the last 24 years in the field of Latino education. Those of us with years of experience conducting research on Latino education know that too often, politics rather than educational research shapes educational policy related to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students (now classified as English Language Learners or ELL). Note the recent case of Proposition 227 in California, which was approved by the majority of the voters in June 1998 and which dealt a crushing blow to bilingual education in the state.\textsuperscript{31} Despite the body of research showing that the academic development of ELL students is best served when they are able to mobilize their own linguistic and cultural resources, the public’s demands to assimilate immigrants as quickly as possible have won the day, at least in California. The questions we should address are: What do we know about the linguistic assimilation of the second generation (the children of immigrants)? What are some of the advantages enjoyed by Latino students with high levels of bilingualism? What are the consequences of rapid one-way cultural assimilation among Latino youth?

To answer the first question, I draw upon data collected by Alejandro Portes and Rubén Rumbaut in their Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study. The data has appeared in their books *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation* and *Ethnicities: Children of Immigrants in America*.\textsuperscript{32} On the whole, the new second generation has learned English quite rapidly. One indicator is language preference among these youth. In 1992 when the sample of children of immigrants was in the eighth and ninth grades, only 32 percent of Mexican-born children preferred English to Spanish. By 1995 the number had doubled to 61 percent and by the time the sample reached their early twenties, 87 percent preferred English. The numbers for the youth in the study who were born in the United States are somewhat different: in 1992, 45 percent favored English over Spanish; in 1995, 79 percent preferred English; and when they reached their mid-twenties, 96 percent of the U.S.-born Mexican Americans preferred English. They are clearly becoming fluent in English, their preferred language.\textsuperscript{33} At the same time, the latest survey shows that a substantial amount of Spanish is still being spoken in the home. In the aggregate, 55.3 percent of the two groups spoke only Spanish with their immigrant parents, while 32.1 percent spoke both English and Spanish with their parents.\textsuperscript{34}
The second question involves the advantages experienced by Latino students with high levels of bilingualism. As Carol Schmid notes, “In the heat of the campaign against bilingual education in California, it was often suggested that speaking two languages was an important source of academic failure among Mexican Americans.” Most evidence from the United States, Canada and other countries, however, points to a positive association between fluent bilingualism and both academic achievement and intellectual development. In 1995, Rubén Rumbaut observed that a study of 15,000 language-minority San Diego high school students indicated that the group classified as highly bilingual, meaning fluent in both English and another language, had better grades and a slightly lower dropout rate than the group that spoke only English. This was true even though the parents of the English-only students were of a higher socioeconomic status than those of the bilingual students. A study by Min Zhou and Carl Bankston found that “[s]econd-generation Vietnamese Americans who could read and write Vietnamese well were much more likely (46.8 percent) to report receiving top grades than were those who were less fluent in their parents’ native tongue.” My and Sanford Dornbusch’s study of Mexican-origin high school students who were highly bilingual found that such students had higher grades and higher educational expectations than their English-dominant counterparts. In spite of having a lower socioeconomic status, the bilingual students were more likely to exhibit greater social capital, defined in terms of supportive relations with school personnel and adults in the community.

The cultural perspective on the role of bilingualism and biculturalism is a subset of recent scholarship that attributes the educational success of some immigrant groups to the consolidation of ethnic-social capital and their resistance to rapid unidirectional cultural assimilation. Maintaining fluency in the parents’ language permits immigrant youth to become better integrated into a system of ethnic supports that encourages cultural accommodation, positive ethnic identity and school achievement; along with this comes sanctions on deviant behavior. Similarly, such ethnic integration allows immigrants to resist those aspects of rapid assimilation associated with disaffected, working-class and lower-middle class youth subcultures.

The third question is, what are the consequences of rapid one-way cultural assimilation among Latino youth? A growing body of research on the adaptation of recent Latino immigrants suggests that they experience very different avenues of assimilation or incorporation into American society.
Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou have called this “segmented assimilation.” The key factors in this assimilation appear to be the kind of reception immigrants receive from the host society, the state of the local and national economies, and the ability of recent immigrants to integrate themselves into an established immigrant enclave or into social networks rich in cultural assets and social support. A number of studies show that recent immigrants who are able to become embedded in resourceful immigrant networks, in spite of their low socioeconomic status, exhibit a number of advantages when compared to second generation and U.S.-born Latinos undergoing rapid cultural assimilation and loss of competency in Spanish.

A variety of studies have demonstrated that rapid cultural assimilation and marginality from the extended family and from the core of the immigrant community are associated with a greater number of stressful event experiences, parent-adolescent conflicts, engagement in more negative health behaviors during pregnancy, and less insulation from inner-city street life. Rapidly acculturating U.S.-born children are less confined to the family and adult ethnic institutions and less subject to parental monitoring and control; thus, they are more likely to adopt the attitudes and cultural styles of native-born disaffected youth. Latino youth who are able to develop a strong bilingual and bicultural orientation benefit from the existing protective factors found in many tightly knit immigrant kin networks and communities. The problem, of course, is that many second-generation youth lack positive alternatives to the ethnic enclave and alternative ways of embedding themselves in rich kin networks. A growing body of research in education, including my own, clearly shows that after the elementary grades, public schools are not very effective in the social integration of large numbers of Latino youth.

In addition, chronic poverty, segregation and residence in distressed central city neighborhoods increase the chances of exposure to acute and chronic stressors that have negative repercussions for physical and mental health. Assimilation under such conditions leads to acculturation and coping styles that severely isolate the young immigrants from whatever protective networks and agents may exist in the school kinship networks and community. We must look seriously at how we can shore up the protective environments that exist in Latino communities and that could exist within our public schools. We could construct supportive environments within the community that would encourage “accommodation without assimilation” and a biculturalism that could serve to mobilize the cultural and linguistic assets in these communities.
DISCUSSION

JESÚS SILVA-HERZOG MÁRQUEZ: The title of this discussion sums up what we have been trying to do: move from Professor Huntington’s provocative article about the “Hispanic Challenge” to assess what we actually do and do not know about Latino immigration. We may well agree that there is not much scholarly merit in the article, which does not deal seriously with what the data have shown about Latino migration. The article cannot be viewed only from the academic perspective, however; it is also a political act and could be extremely influential in the public arena. Professor Huntington has a large audience and has been extremely successful in creating a vocabulary for public discussion. It is therefore necessary to address what he is saying, as his thesis may otherwise control the way these problems are presented in future debates and policy discussions in this country and elsewhere. We have tried to draw upon the data here because the great challenges are ignorance and prejudice. This is a problem not only on this side of the border but on the other side as well, in the nations from which this migration comes.

CARLOS LOZADA, Managing Editor of Foreign Policy: We decided to publish Professor Huntington’s article primarily to spark conversations and discussions of this kind. We have received hundreds of letters, most of them critical, but the criticisms differ in interesting ways. Some say that Professor Huntington’s numbers are wrong, assimilation is happening, and language transition into English is happening. Those critics have tended to be the ones with academic titles after their names. Then there has been another kind of criticism that says the country can coexist with multiple cultures and multiple allegiances; that diversity, whether linguistic, religious, or cultural, is a strain with which we can cope. That kind of criticism has tended to come from community activists, religious leaders, elders, and pastors in Hispanic churches. I hope you will address that dissonance, if indeed it is a dissonance.

ROBERTO SURO: This is why we have commented on Professor Huntington’s shoddy historical scholarship. With the exception of the aberrational period between 1924 and 1965, the United States has always been a multicultural society in which the circumstances that you are describing pertain; that is, it is a society in which there have always been disenfranchised people such as the slave population, Native Americans, and various immigrant groups. What Professor Huntington has not taken into account is the diversity within the Latino immigrant population, not only between U.S.-born and foreign-born but within the various nation-
ality populations and across a broad array of other variables as well. The other major problem is the way he sets up the problem. When he talks about Americans and American culture, when he talks about American values, when he uses that kind of singularity to describe a much more complicated, contingent, and nuanced set of practices and beliefs within the population, he does tremendous violence to historical reality and he does even more violence to politics on the ground. I do not have as rosy a view about the prospects for Latino acculturation as do some of my colleagues, but I do think we have input into that process. When we decide, collectively, to open up or close avenues, we determine the shape of acculturation in the future.

**DEMETRIOS PAPADEMETRIOU:** We have two choices with regard to Professor Huntington. Here I will speak as both a researcher and a denizen of Washington to comment on the way magazines, as well as the professoriate, do their business. Professor Huntington has already legitimized the stigmatization of an entire class of people and may well have deflected badly-needed attention from the issue of integration. We all need to begin to think much harder about how we fashion ourselves into some sort of a unit—although not into the “melting pot,” which of course never really existed. The melting pot idea sprang from the mind of another professor early in the last century and then it somehow became common wisdom: in its simplest form, it suggests that until the 1960s immigrants became “American,” while all of the post-1965, post-European migration was somehow different. We know that is not historically correct, and Roberto Suro has spoken to this issue. What Professor Huntington does, then, is give life to a political wedge to be exploited by the worrying classes. The other reaction to Professor Huntington, which I hope we will follow, is to view his article as an opportunity and ask those who think, or just fear, that he is correct to work with the rest of us to develop a national consensus about how to increase social cohesion. This is important because ultimately the forces in all societies tend to move from the center to the outside, centrifugally, rather than moving from the outside in, centripetally. We can then ask for a serious national conversation about offering newcomers an opportunity to learn English. One has only to look at the over-subscription for classes that teach people English and the two and three year delays in getting into such classes, and wonder why Professor Huntington and his friends do not do something about that.

But I resent something else. Professor Huntington may already have won another game in Washington, because here it is often the first one out of the gate, rather than the one who finishes first, who wins a political
argument about a contentious and poorly-understood issue. Dissertations will be written about how right or wrong Professor Huntington was; articles will be written; reputations will be made and unmade. The unfortunate truth is that the damage has already been done. Those of us who care deeply and think about how to improve our immigration and integration policies will have to contend with Professor Huntington’s hobbyhorse for the next three or four years. Many people on Capitol Hill or on the talk shows will embrace Professor Huntington’s analysis and make it the centerpiece of their political agenda. Those of us on the other side will at times become mere props for some mad academic flashing a dozen charts in a three minute show, using them to say, “All of you people who criticize Professor Huntington are defending something that is broken, but here is a professor who is telling it like it really is.”

What *Foreign Policy* has done is make Professor Huntington the new focal point of a conversation that will likely waste all of our time. It will create further confusion, rather than contributing to a solution. With regard to Carlos Lozada’s point: is it possible that the people who reply to *Foreign Policy* are not really representative of anything beyond people who have the time to read and reply to *Foreign Policy*, or who are angry enough about the issue to want to write about it? I resent the fact that we are now going to have to move away from the discussion that we must have about sound immigration policies; about what to do about ten million illegally-resident people in our country or about building stronger diverse communities. Instead, the argument will be about whether the Latinos, and the Mexicans in particular, are “good” immigrants or “bad” immigrants.

**QUESTION:** What I have been hearing today suggests that the real issue is not one of people not learning English, or the rate at which Hispanic immigrants do learn English, but rather such phenomena as the kinds of schools children have to go to, the kinds of social policies that they encounter, and the racial attitudes they encounter. Isn’t it the reception of Hispanics that is the problem?

**ROBERTO SURO:** During the era of European immigration to this country, we made very deliberate efforts to ensure the integration of immigrant offspring through our educational system. The period of European immigration coincided with almost a hundred years of continuously increasing public investments in education. Investments included the extension of public education through high school, creation of the land grant university system, passage of the GI bill, and so on: a series of deliberate and substantial efforts to increase the level of education and of access to education in this country. The successful integration of the offspring of
European immigrants in the first half of the twentieth century was not an accident or an expression of American exceptionalism; it was a result of very deliberate social policies, even if the integration that occurred was the unintended consequences of those social policies. The current wave of children of the immigrants of the 1980s and 1990s is moving into public schools at a time of significant public disinvestment in education. It is almost exactly the opposite strategy from the one that this country has proven effective in the past.

**DAVID GUTIÉRREZ:** We know from the work of economists that the conditions that were present in past generations and that enabled the second and third generations to experience social mobility are no longer present. For the past thirty years, we have seen the dwindling of the manufacturing sector, and we now have a bifurcated economy with a very large service sector. We are going to have a lot of young people going to high school without seeing any connection between studying and potential returns on their education. We will have heightened competition for better pay and service jobs. Workers today are having to renegotiate contracts for lower salaries and benefits and that can only make members of the young adult community wonder why they should invest in school. At the same time, the older white population is mushrooming, particularly in California. Those people are beginning to retire and will be increasingly dependent upon Latino workers who will not have the kind of income that will generate the taxes necessary to support the older generations. The issue will then be what taxes the workers will pay, what percentage of their taxes will go towards education for Latino and other minority children, and what percentage will go to support a growing elderly white population. That may create some frightening racial politics.

**MICHAEL JONES-CORREA:** Demetri is right about the Huntington article being a red herring. In particular, the issue of transnationalism, of which Professor Huntington makes so much, diverts attention away from the social, educational, and political policies we have to implement if we really care about the full incorporation of immigrants in this country.

**RICHARD KIY:** I am the President of the International Community Foundation in San Diego, which is currently funding a research project by UCLA that looks at the migrant community in San Diego County. It is the first time the matricula consular data from any Mexican Consulate in the United States has been correlated with the U.S. Census. What we have learned from that study is that there is a positive correlation between the Mexican migrants who arrived in San Diego County between 1995 and 2000 and the Census tracts in San Diego that are in poverty and extreme
poverty. What the data begin to tell us is that without a pathway towards legalization, we will not get assimilation. The most marginalized communities in San Diego today are the ones living in the legal shadows.

**DAVID GUTIERREZ:** What we are talking about is an exploding, disaffected, economically marginalized population that is predominantly Latino and multinational. Political integration and cultural assimilation are largely determined by the ability of those people to move out of the lower level niches that you have described and upward in the job and income markets. We do not see that happening. For the American working class in general, and for immigrants in particular, there has been a flattening and even an erosion of that potential over the last 30 years. The issue is not so much immigration or the exploding Latino population as it is the structural changes in the American economy to which we are paying insufficient attention.

**ROBERTO SURO:** One correction is in order here. Latino immigrants now experience substantial employment growth that is in fact stronger than for almost any other section of the workforce. In the second half of the 1990s, real wages actually increased and poverty decreased for that population along with the rest of the population.

**DAVID GUTIERREZ:** I agree. I was trying to link together your discussion of educational opportunity, the structural educational opportunity of the post-war years, and the flattening of economic opportunity, because what you omitted is the erosion of skilled blue collar jobs which historically have been the great safety valve for the Latino population.

**THOMAS GUEDES DA COSTA:** As a Brazilian-born political scientist, I have been disturbed by some comments suggesting that Latinos are incapable of fitting into a democratic political system such as that of the United States. Is there a valid way of assessing whether Latinos in this country are acquiring and reproducing democratic values here?

**MICHAEL JONES-CORREA:** We know very little about how the children of immigrants are functioning politically; about which of their parents’ values or how their parents’ values are being passed on to them. We do know that the overall political participation rates of Latinos in the United States are very low, as they are for Asian-Americans. We should be concerned about this because the participation patterns are not improving. I mentioned just a few possibilities, suggesting that we consider options such as non-citizen voting, which was allowed in the United States through 1924. At its high point in the 1880s, over 18 states permitted any immigrant who declared the intention of becoming a U.S. citizen to vote in state and local elections. After 1924, however, every state disallowed non-citizen voting.
There are possibilities for streamlined naturalization, there are possibilities for earned citizenship—which was for a moment part of the debate around President Bush’s most recent legalization proposal. The murmurs about earned citizenship have completely disappeared, however.

**PHILIPPA STRUM:** Perhaps we can pull together the political factors, the educational factors and the magazine angle. We can learn from the methods of incorporating people politically that have been used in our history when, for example, women were technically citizens of the United States but still were not allowed to vote in federal elections and were therefore not full citizens of this country. There were states that permitted them to vote nonetheless, and we might consider what we can do for those who are not legal citizens today and whom we nonetheless want to bring into the body politic. As my colleagues have indicated, however, the best way of integrating people into the society is through the education system. I would argue that the glory of immigration in this country has been the integration of immigrants through the public school system. But it is not and never has been just the public school system that educates. The media has always had a role, and this includes media such as *Foreign Policy*. I agree with Demetri that *Foreign Policy* did something irresponsible in highlighting Professor Huntington: not in its tracking of his ideas but in its highlighting of Professor Huntington by giving him front-page coverage. The best way to rectify the negative educational effect that will continue to accrue from the article is to come up with a positive educational effect. How about having an issue of *Foreign Policy* devoted to the question of what we can do to integrate immigrants into the United States and asking questions such as what we can do about the education system? What would be the result, for example, if we doubled the number of teachers in the United States, halved the number of students in each classroom, and doubled teachers’ salaries? Might that have an impact on immigrants and the incorporation of immigrants? Why doesn’t *Foreign Policy* publish articles that suggest something like that?

**CARLOS LOZADA:** The longest letters to the editor section we have ever published devoted to one article has been devoted in response to Professor Huntington’s piece, so I encourage you to take a look at it.

**PHILIPPA STRUM:** Letters to the editor are important, but they do not have the same clout as a cover that says, “This is it, folks,” which is what you did with Professor Huntington.

**CARLOS LOZADA:** Oh, absolutely, but contrary to what Demetri said, I do not believe that the first out of the gate wins the race. I think Howard Dean would probably disagree with Demetri. This article was the begin-
ning of a huge debate that has continued in newspapers, columns, and magazines, not only in the United States, but around the world. It is up to people such as those on this panel to pick up the challenge.

**Stephen Clarkson:** I am from the University of Toronto. Canadian immigration levels per capita are much higher than the United States, and part of the assimilation or adaptation process is based on providing what we call heritage language classes in schools. The classes are not always in the 9 to 3 hours but take place after classes, in order expressly to encourage immigrants to keep up their language connections as part of their identity adaptation. That seems to have worked quite well, at least in the big cities that can afford to do this.

My question is about the data. First of all, are they accurate about Mexico, given that a lot of people who come to the United States through Mexico are not originally from Mexico? If they are accurate, has any work been done to establish whether there are any correlations between increased trade and investment between the United States and Mexico, connected in part to NAFTA, and the phenomenon of much increased Mexican immigration? Has anyone on the panel done work on Americans’ view of themselves and their country perhaps being extended to include a different relationship with Mexico as a result of NAFTA? Is there a growing sense of North American community? Is a transformation taking place in the American consciousness because of the increased Mexican component of the population?

**Elizabeth Grieco:** The data I presented from Census 2000 on the size of the Mexican population are accurate because they cover both the legal and undocumented populations. The Census Bureau made a conscious effort to market the Census so that it would reflect the entire Hispanic community. There were a lot of advertisements in both Spanish and English and the Census Bureau considers it to have been a very good census, better by far than the one in 1990. So I would say yes, the data are as accurate as any we are going to get.

**Demetrios Papademetriou:** The Carnegie Endowment and the Migration Policy Institute put together a NAFTA at 10 publication, in which MPI covered migration and Carnegie covered the environment and the labor market.44 We argue that whatever it is that gives rise to and deepens the migration relationship between the United States and Mexico preceded NAFTA by a decade, if not by a century. The one variable that is responsible for the extraordinary growth of Mexican immigration to the United States in the second half of the 1990s is demand. When there is 3.9 or 4.0 percent unemployment, which is more than full employment in the
United States, and when virtually everything has been done to bring all of the discouraged workers into the labor market and yet there is still an extraordinary demand for workers in the bottom half of the labor market, and when the visa system is nonetheless left unadjusted, the result is what happened in the second half of the 1990s. I do not think you can tie much of anything to NAFTA per se, but a ten-year period is certainly not a long enough period from which to draw conclusions.

In terms of a North American community, there is an interesting situation here, and there is a similar situation in Canada. If you go into the places where Professor Huntington speaks, people look just like Professor Huntington. The reality is that 50 out of 100 of the people entering the American labor market for the first time, whether they are recent high school graduates or newly arrived immigrants, are foreign-born. This country is changing dramatically in ways that Professor Huntington and too many other people are not even beginning to think about. In another 20 or 30 years, they will be asking whether Professor Huntington and people who look like him still represent anyone in this country. Professor Huntington fails to understand that the change has already happened.

REY KOSLOWSKI: In migration studies we distinguish between immigration policy and immigrant policy. Immigration policy deals with how many people you let in, what jobs they can have, what countries can they come from, etc. Immigrant policy deals with what happens after people arrive. Many European countries and other countries around the world have national immigrant policies about education, civic education, provision of welfare, and so on. We do not. That is all left to the private sector, to the churches, and sometimes to the states and localities. President Bush initiated a new discussion of immigration policy in January. If Professor Huntington and those who agree with him believe that lack of English is the big problem here, I have a suggestion for them. My proposal is to have nationally funded English as a Second Language (ESL) classes free for anyone who wants them, in the evening as well as during the day, so those people who are doing all those jobs and want to learn English will be able to do so.

MICHAEL JONES-CORREA: On a number of occasions I have heard people representing what might be called the anti-immigrant perspective. What strikes me about their position is how deeply pessimistic they are about the possibility of integration, which in part explains their focus on closing the borders and stopping immigration. Compare that view with the last debate around immigration at the turn of the last century, when liberals and conservatives also differed about what to do about immigration
but the tone of the debates was very different. Conservatives then had many different points of view, some of them racist, but many of them were still deeply optimistic about the possibilities of American integration. Professor Huntington is representative of the current conservative pessimism, with its loss of faith in the ability of American society to incorporate newcomers and to continually re-cast itself while remaining true to its original ideals.

QUESTION: I immigrated to this country five years ago, and I believe that Professor Huntington is wrong to speak of the Hispanic challenge. That is not really the challenge; it is, instead, the United States challenge. What can we, who come from different cultures—German, Irish, Mexican, Bolivian—do to succeed in this country while at the same time embracing our culture and embracing our languages? I think that is the true challenge, not the Hispanic challenge. I came here five years ago, worked hard, truly believed in the American dream, and I will go to UCLA next year. The American dream is still out there. All of us of different races should work together to embrace the American dream while, at the same time, integrating our different cultures and languages.

ANDREW SELEE: That is a very good note on which to end this conversation. I think the final comment goes to show that what we have is a question of what kind of society we want to create in the United States. There are reasons for optimism, but we have to work to turn optimism into public policy and social reality.

NOTES

2. Act of March 26, 1790 (1 Stat. 103).
10. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Department of Defense News Briefing,


14. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, “Hispanic origin” is a self-designated classification for people whose origins are from Spain, the Spanish-speaking countries of Central or South America, the Caribbean, or those identifying themselves generally as Spanish, Spanish-American, etc. Origin can be viewed as ancestry, nationality, or country of birth of the person or person’s parents or ancestors prior to their arrival in the United States. In the federal system, the terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” are used interchangeably. In this paper, I use the term “Hispanic” to refer to the total “Hispanic or Latino” population.

15. The U.S. Census Bureau uses the term “foreign-born” to refer to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. This includes naturalized U.S. citizens, legal permanent residents (immigrants), temporary migrants (such as students), humanitarian migrants (such as refugees), and persons illegally present in the United States. In this paper, the terms “foreign-born” and “immigrant” are used interchangeably.

16. The U.S. Census Bureau uses the term “native” to refer to people residing in the United States who were United States citizens in one of three categories: (1) people born in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia; (2) people born in the United States Insular Areas such as Puerto Rico or Guam; or (3) people who were born abroad to at least one parent who was a United States citizen.

17. According to Census 2000 Summary File 3 (or “sample”) data, the Hispanic population grew from 21,900,089 in 1990 to 35,238,481 in 2000, or by 61 percent. However, the Census 2000 Summary File 1 (or “full population”) data indicates that the Hispanic population grew from 22,354,059 in 1990 to 35,305,818 in 2000, or by 58 percent.


20. Huntington, op. cit., p. 32.

21. Ibid.


24. For a full discussion of these findings, see Valerie Martinez-Ebers, Luis Fraga, John Garcia, Rodney Hero, Michael Jones-Correa and Gary Segura, “A New Generation of


31. Proposition 227 requires all public school instruction to be conducted in English; permits the requirement to be waived if parents or guardian show that the child already knows English or has special needs or would learn English faster through an alternate instructional technique; provides initial short-term placement, not normally exceeding one year, in intensive sheltered English immersion programs for children not fluent in English; appropriates $50 million per year for ten years, funding English instruction for individuals pledging to provide personal English tutoring to children in their community; and permits enforcement suits by parents and guardians. The full text is available at http://primary98.ss.ca.gov/VoterGuide/Propositions/227.htm. The Proposition was passed by California voters on June 2, 1998, thereby reinstating an English-only instructional mandate similar to the one that governed state classrooms from 1872 to 1967.


Rubén G. Rumbaut and Wayne A. Cornelius, eds., *California’s Immigrant Children: Theory, Research and Implications for Educational Policy* (University of California Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, 1995).


41. The first important and comprehensive review of research on the effects of acculturation and generational status on Latino students’ educational and occupational experiences was conducted by Raymond Buriel. Buriel, “Integration with traditional Mexican-American culture and sociocultural adjustment,” in Joe L. Martinez, Jr. and Richard H. Mendoza, eds., *Chicano Psychology* (2nd ed.) (Academic Press, 1984). It pointed to the advantages of maintaining close communicative ties and social integration in immigrant enclaves. In an important cross-ethnic study by Marta Tienda and Grace Kao, eighth graders whose parents were immigrants reported higher grades and higher mathematics test scores than those whose parents were born in the United States. Grace Kao and Marta Tienda, “Optimism and Achievement: The Educational Performance of Immigrant Youth,” in 76 *Social Science Quarterly* (1995) 1–19. The *University of Chicago Chronicle* reported that Tienda and Kao’s study “disputes earlier studies that suggest immigrant groups tend to improve their educational status in successive generations. According to the new study, many Asian groups begin at an educationally advantaged position as immigrants and then decline in achievement in successive generations as the families adopt mainstream American values.” William Harms, “Tienda: Much to Learn from Educational Success of Immigrants’ Children,” 14 *University of Chicago Chronicle* (March 30, 1995), available at http://chronicle.uchicago.edu/950330/tienda.shtml.


**Participant Biographies**


**DAVID GUTIÉRREZ** is Associate Professor of History at the University of California – San Diego. His research interests include Chicano and Mexican immigration history, comparative ethnic politics, and the history of U.S. citizenship and civil rights. Dr. Gutiérrez has received grants from the Ford Foundation, the National Research Council, and the Dorothy Danforth Compton Foundation. He is the author of *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity; Between Two Worlds: Mexican Immigrants in the United States;* “Ethnic Minorities and the ‘Nation’: The Debate Over Citizenship in Recent American History”; and “Migration, Emergent Ethnicity, and the ‘Third Space’: The Shifting Politics of Nationalism in ‘Greater Mexico.’” He is also the editor of the *Columbia History of Latinos in the United States, 1960–Present.*

**MICHAEL JONES-CORREA** is Associate Professor of Government at Cornell University, where he specializes in immigration and immigrant politics and ethnic and racial politics in the U.S. His publications include *Between Two Nations: The Political Predicament of Latinos in New York City,* “Institutional and Contextual Factors in Immigrant Citizenship and Voting,” “Political Participation: Does Religion Matter?” (co-author), “Under Two Flags: Dual
Nationality in Latin America and Its Consequences for Naturalization in the United States,” “All Politics is Local: Latinos and the 2000 Elections,” and “Immigrants, Blacks and Cities,” and he is the editor of Governing American Cities: Inter-Ethnic Coalitions, Competition, and Conflict. Dr. Jones-Correa is the recipient of grants from the Ford, Hewlett, Anne E. Casey, and Russell Sage Foundations as well as the Social Science Research Council.

JESÚS SILVA-HERZOG MÁRQUEZ is professor at the Law School of the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM). He was previously a Mexico Public Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center, in a joint program with the Mexican Council on Foreign Relations, and a visiting scholar at Georgetown University in 1998. Silva-Herzog writes a weekly column in the newspaper Reforma and is the author of Esferas de la democracia and El antiguo régimen y la transición en México. He appears regularly as a radio commentator and previously appeared on the television program “Primer Plano.”

DEMETRIOS G. PAPADEMETRIOU is President and co-founder of the Migration Policy Institute, and was previously a Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Prior to joining the Carnegie Endowment, Dr. Papademetriou was the Director for Immigration Policy and Research at the U.S. Department of Labor and the Chair of the Secretary of Labor’s Immigration Policy Task Force. He has written over 150 articles, book chapters, and magazine pieces on the subject, as well as more than two dozen books, monographs, and major reports, including Caught in the Middle: Border Communities in an Era of Globalization (co-author) and Reinventing Japan: Immigration’s Role in Shaping Japan’s Future (co-author). Dr. Papademetriou is the co-founder, former chair (1995–1999), and Chair Emeritus of “Metropolis: An International Forum for Research and Policy on Migration and Cities.”

ANDREW SELEE, who organized the conference on the Hispanic Challenge, is Director of the Woodrow Wilson Center’s Mexico Institute. He is co-editor of three books, including Mexico’s Politics and Society in Transition (2003), Chiapas: Interpretaciones sobre la negociación y la paz (2003), and Decentralization, Democratic Governance, and Civil Society: Africa, Asia, and Latin America (2004). Previously, he served as Senior Program Associate in the Wilson Center’s Latin American Program; before that, as a staff member in the U.S. House of Representatives. He also spent several years working in Mexico with development and migration programs.
RICARDO D. STANTON-SALAZAR is Associate Professor of Education & Sociology at the Rossier School of Education of the University of Southern California, and was previously the Associate Director of that university’s Center for American Studies and Ethnicity. A specialist on the role of race and ethnicity in public education, working-class racial minority youth development (with a focus on Latinos in the U.S.), and urban education, his publications include Manufacturing Hope & Despair: The School and Kin Support Networks of U.S.-Mexican Youth; “A Social Capital Framework for Understanding the Socialization of Racial Minority and Youth”; and “Informal Mentors and Role Models in the Lives of Urban Mexican-origin Adolescents” (co-author).

PHILIPPA STRUM, Director of the Division of U.S. Studies at the Wilson Center, is also Breuklundian Professor Emerita at City University of New York. Her books and articles include Women in the Barracks: The VMI Case and Equal Rights; When the Nazis Came to Skokie: Freedom for the Speech We Hate; Privacy: The Debate in the United States Since 1945; Brandeis: Beyond Progressivism; Louis D. Brandeis: Justice for the People; The Supreme Court and “Political Questions”; Presidential Power and American Democracy; and “Rights, Responsibilities and the Social Contract.” Dr. Strum is the co-editor of the Center’s Muslims in the United States: Demography, Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Participation and Women Immigrants in the United States, and has received grants for her work from the Guggenheim Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies and the American Philosophical Society.

ROBERTO SURO is the director of the Pew Hispanic Center, a Washington-based think tank. The mission of the Center, which was established with support from the Pew Charitable Trusts, is to improve understanding of the diverse Hispanic population in the United States, chronicle Latinos’ growing impact on the nation, and disseminate research to policymakers and the media. Mr. Suro previously spent 27 years working as a print journalist for a variety of publications, most recently the Washington Post. He also worked as a foreign correspondent for Time magazine and the New York Times in Latin America, Europe and the Middle East, and covered an array of Washington beats including the Pentagon, the State Department and the Justice Department. Mr. Suro’s publications include Strangers Among Us: Latino Lives in a Changing America; Watching America’s Door; and Remembering the American Dream.
THE HISPANIC CHALLENGE?
WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT LATINO IMMIGRATION
MARCH 29, 2004

3:00 p.m.–3:20 p.m.  INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Philippa Strum, Director, Division of United States Studies, WWC
Demetrios Papademetriou, President, MPI

3:20 p.m.–4:20 p.m.  PANEL: WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Roberto Suro, Director, The Pew Hispanic Center
Elizabeth M. Grieco, Data Manager, Migration Information Source, MPI
David Gutiérrez, WWC Fellow and Professor, University of California, San Diego
Michael Jones-Correa, WWC Fellow and Professor, Cornell University
Ricardo D. Stanton-Salazar, WWC Fellow and Professor, University of Southern California

4:20 p.m.–5:30 p.m.  DISCUSSION:

MODERATED BY:

Andrew Selee, Director, Mexico Institute, WWC
Jesús Silva-Herzog Márquez, WWC/Comexi Scholar and Professor, ITAM