

# ONE-AND-A-HALF GENERATION MEXICAN YOUTH IN OREGON: PURSUING THE MOBILITY DREAM

## A REPORT

BY

DRS. ERLINDA GONZALES-BERRY, MARCELA MENDOZA, DWAIN PLAZA

APRIL 2006



OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF ETHNIC STUDIES  
FORUM ON IMMIGRATION STUDIES

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this report, we document the experiences of first-and-a-half generation Mexican youth to understand the challenges they had to overcome and the factors that contributed to their post-secondary achievement and integration. From the analysis of tape-recorded life story interviews with twelve youths, we learned that they arrived from Mexico in rural Oregon between the ages of 7 and 15. They had attended school in Mexico and they self-identify as *Mexicanos*. These youth crossed the border as undocumented immigrants with their families between 1988 and 1991. The parents worked in the fields. Later, the parents legalized their status through IRCA. The families had relatives and friends in rural Oregon who helped them in many ways. In school, the youth were placed in English as Second Language classes, most through the Migrant Education Program. Many perceived discrimination in school. Undocumented immigration status was the biggest barrier to a college education. Legalization and family support were crucial to the success of these youth, along with ESL classes, financial aid, and academic support at OSU. The study suggests that hybrid identities and segmented acculturation can produce positive results for non-European immigrants like those in our sample. This together with legal status will help students integrate successfully.

Drawing on our findings in this study, we provide below recommendations to state and federal agencies involved in making immigration policy and to the institutions that educate the children of immigrants.

- Regularize Immigration Status
- Provide Access to Financial Aid
- Help Parents Help their Children
- Change Attitudes in the Public Schools
- Provide Meaningful and Effective Curriculum for Foreign-born Students
- Continue to Support Migrant Education Programs
- Change Attitudes in Universities
- Provide College Student Support Services

## I. INTRODUCTION

The recent study, *In their Own Words: Immigrants' Experiences in the Northwest*, completed by Northwest Federation of Community Organizations, discusses the obstacles faced by undocumented migrants in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. The report concludes that immigrants to the Northwest are shut out of basic benefits and services that other residents take for granted, including health care and higher education. In other words, these immigrants face economic, educational, and

County	Latino Population (current in 2000)	Percent of Increase 1990-2000
Washington	49,735	245%
Multnomah	49,607	170%
Marion	48,714	167%
Clackamas	16,744	135%
Lane	14,874	117%
Jackson	12,126	104%
Umatilla	11,366	114%
Yamhill	9,017	118%

Table 1: Latino Population Increase in Selected Oregon Counties.  
Source: U.S. Census 2000, Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs  
(available at <http://oregonhispanic.org>)

social barriers that simply are not surmountable so long as their status remains marginal.

In an effort to further expand the knowledge base related to Mexican immigrants in the Northwest, we take this opportunity to discuss our preliminary findings of the experiences of a small group of Mexican youth (five females and seven males) from rural Oregon communities. These young men and women are the children of migrant workers who came to the United States without authorized immigration documents and who have worked primarily in agriculture. These young people have been able to overcome many obstacles in

order to “make it” in Oregon. However, a number of factors including their place of birth, their schooling experiences, social isolation and discrimination, the cultural and economic barriers confronted by these youths in their quest for successful adaptation, have shaped their pattern of integration in unique ways.

Our goal in carrying out this analysis is to shed light on the factors that have contributed to the success of this cohort, and to have this information reach those individuals and groups involved in shaping the discourse surrounding immigration and those involved in creating laws related to immigration reform. This is particularly relevant at a time when a nativist political agenda is calling for drastic measures not only to control undocumented immigration but to severely punish those immigrants of unauthorized status who currently find themselves in the United States. Thus, the need to make available to as broad an audience as possible this type of data becomes especially crucial.

## Defining Generations

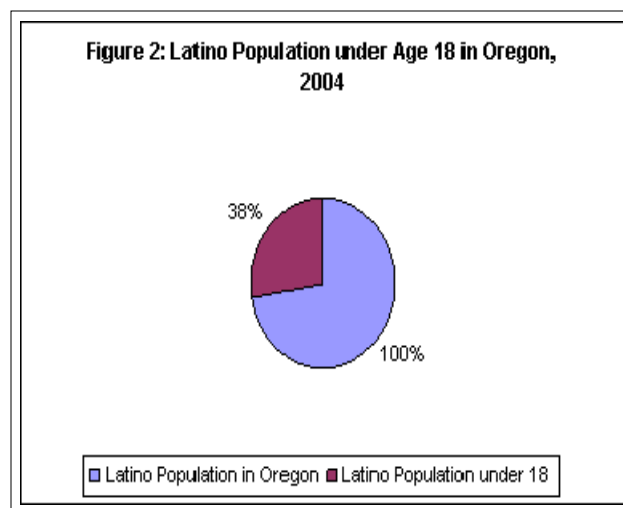
In migration studies, the second generation is generally defined as the native-born children of at least one foreign-born parent. Recent scholarship, however, broadens this definition to accommodate changes in migration patterns affected by family reunification and also the emergence of a transnational labor force created by the forces of globalization.

Excluding the era of the Mexican Revolution, it has been primarily males who have come from Mexico to work the United States. After passage of the Immigration and Reform Control Act which went into effect in of 1987, we have witnessed an exponential increase in the migration of entire families to “*el norte*.” The granting of amnesty to workers who could prove employment and residency in the United States resulted in the regularization of status for more than 3 million individuals across the United States. The families of the newly legalized workers soon began to enter the country, many of them without authorization, but with hopes of future regularization under the family unification provisions of the act.

These families brought with them young children, who though born in Mexico, would have experiences similar to those of siblings born in the United States. Hence migration scholars tend to classify immigrant children younger than five years, along with those born in the United States, as part of the second generation. As there are important differences in the experiences of these children and those of older children, the term *one and a half generation* (1.5) has been coined to identify those foreign-born children who were brought to the United States between the age of five and adolescence. Sons and daughters brought over after the age of eighteen, and who

go directly into the workforce, are counted as part of the first generation. Scholars agree that these distinct cohorts will have different experiences in their psychological developmental stages, in their socialization processes in the family, as well as in their orientation toward their homeland (Zhou 1999).

In “Agony of Exile,” Rumbaut (1991) describes the experiences of those children who are born abroad but who are educated and come of age in the United States, that is, of the one and a half generation. The experiences of these children are distinct from those of younger children whose identities are not yet well defined. Adolescence is a moment of crossing an important identity forming threshold. In addition to the physical and psychological changes involved in crossing this threshold, the individual’s sense of identity is also expanding to include a national consciousness as part of the idea of selfhood.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, adapted from Kids Count 2005.

While attending school in their native land, the adolescent children of immigrants are constructing their identities not only as members of a family, but of broader social groups, and also as members of a particular national space. Given the extreme physical and turbulent psychological changes involved in crossing the adolescence threshold, the process may be likened to a trauma not unlike that experienced by adult migrants as they move from a familiar and secure geo-social and political space to a foreign and frequently hostile environment. Rumbaut (1991:56) remarks, *“The literature on migration and mental health has repeatedly observed that long-distance journeys entail stressful life events, at points of both exit and destination, which severely test the emotional resilience of migrants.”*

The simultaneous crossing of a psychological development border and a national border is a distressing event that may be experienced by adolescent migrants as a double crisis. Rumbaut (1991, 61) speaks of this experience among refugee children: *“The refugee youth must cope with two crisis producing and identity defining transitions: (1) adolescence and the task of managing transition from childhood to adulthood, and (2) acculturation and the task of managing the transition from one sociocultural environment to another.”* Non-refugee migrants of the 1.5 generation undergo similar experiences, though perhaps to a lesser degree. As such, the adaptation and acculturation of the 1.5 generation will be qualitatively different from that of siblings who cross the international border at a younger age. However, the 1.5 and the second generations will share a similar socializing process experienced through American schooling. The developmental

process for both groups *“can be complicated by experiences of intense acculturative and intergenerational conflicts as they strive to adapt to social identity context that may be racially and culturally dissonant”* (Rumbaut 1994, :753).

While our study focuses on the 1.5 generation, we have included two U.S.-born youth (technically second generation) who were born in Los Angeles, California, and taken back to Tijuana, Mexico as infants, to subsequently return as adolescents. These subjects attended school in Mexico and self-identify as *mexicanos*. Hence, we have included them as members of the 1.5 cohort.

### The Children of Immigrants and Assimilation Models

During the first half of the twentieth century, linear assimilation theory was used by social scientists in the United States to describe the integration of immigrants and their offspring into the receiving societies. According to this perspective, with the passage of time each generation of native-born descendants undergoes further acculturation and raises its status vis-à-vis its parental group. Usually after two or three generations in the host society, the descendants of immigrants are theoretically supposed to be indistinguishable from the rest of society in their educational and occupational achievements (Gans 1992a: 174).

Scholars note that this linear depiction is an oversimplified rendition of the actual experiences of non-white immigrant offspring and subsequent generations (DeWind and Kasinitz 1997).



Even if the general direction is a consistent one, the patterns of progress are diverse for various groups (Alba and Nee 1997; Perlmann 2002). Gans (1992b) turns traditional, straight-line assimilation theory in a different direction by concluding that this model has really only applied to the second and subsequent generations of white European-origin migrants to the United States (Italians, Irish, Polish, Russians and Eastern Europeans). Immigrants who are of non-European-origin as are Asians, Africans, and Mexicans have all had different assimilation trajectories and have undergone different patterns of identity development and employment experiences in the United States. Given that race historically has played an important role in determining social status in the United States, *mestizo* and *mulato* immigrants from Latin American tend to face discrimination in education and the labor market which may trump any human capital they might have. These conditions contribute to diverse integration patterns, belying the linear theory of assimilation.

Portes and Zhou (1993) have articulated three distinct forms of second-generation integration in the United States. The first assumes the familiar second-generation story of socio-economic progress. Over time, acculturation occurs alongside the integration of the (white) immigrant offspring into (white) mainstream economic and social life. However, these authors note that this experience does not hold for non-white second generation immigrants in the United States. Rather, the pattern of integration for second-generation non-white immigrants can be one of segmented assimilation incorporating two additional scenarios. One depicts the non-white second generation person's acculturation and integration into an inner-city underclass where the outcomes are poverty and irregular employment. The second scenario emphasizes economic advancement but with deliberate preservation of ethnic membership, values and a continued economic attachment to

ethnic communities.

Immigration scholars examining the lives of children of immigrants have begun to explore how "new" non-white ethnic minorities resist hegemonic notions of assimilation, often creating new identities and images of themselves (Levitt & Waters 2002; Portes & Rumbaut 2001; Portes & Zhou 1993). In this paper, the principal theoretical perspective that guides the research is the theory of the social construction of ethnicity and hybrid identity. This model conceptualizes ethnicity and hybrid identity as a fluid, situational, volitional, and a dynamic phenomenon, one in which ethnic boundaries, identities, and cultures, are negotiated, defined, and produced through social interaction inside and outside ethnic communities. Through social interactions, individuals are able to define and express their identity as "ethnic" actors (Nagel 1994).

Two of the basic building blocks of ethnicity are identity and culture. In everyday social arenas, we use culture to give meanings to our identity as we use identity to construct affiliations and boundaries with other individuals and groups. The complex interplay of identity and culture is a salient feature of the experiences of ethnicity construction for young Mexican-origin immigrants, especially when their marginality is highlighted by the host society.

In discussing identity, it is useful to look at hybrid culture and how it helps to manufacture meanings of ethnicity for the one and a half generation. Hybrid culture is one of the basic materials used to construct ethnic meaning and the construction of culture is a tale of human agency and internal group processes of cultural preservation, renewal, and innovation (Nagel 1994). When immigrants engage in constructing hybrid culture, they also engage in the process of building ethnic boundaries, which determine who they are, what they are, and how they feel they fit into the existing dominant culture.

In our exploration of the lives of one and a half generation Mexicans in Oregon, we found Nagel's (1994) metaphor of the "shopping cart" to be useful in understanding how culture operates as a vehicle to shape their hybrid ethnic identity in the United States:

*"We can think of ethnic boundary construction as determining the shape of the shopping cart size, number of wheels, composition, etc. ethnic culture then is composed of the things we put into the cart--art, music, dress, religion, norms, beliefs, symbols, myths, customs. It is important that we discard the notion that culture is simply historical legacy; culture is not a shopping cart that comes to us already loaded with a set of historical goods. Rather, we construct culture by picking and choosing items from the shelves of the past and the present."* (1994: 155).

Kibria (1997) observes that second generation Asian-Americans often experience a sense of "not belonging." For Kibria's respondents, who grew up as children of immigrants, problems of "not fitting in" were often easily recollected and acted as constant reminders of their identity as ethnic individuals. Such has not usually been the case for second generation Euro-Americans, such as Italians, Russians, Germans or Poles who eagerly invoked a mixture of positive and negative honorific experiences which included name calling, taunting and physical fights while growing up the United States.

Portes and Rumbaut (1996; 2001) postulated that three major factors affect the ways in which immigrants are incorporated economically and politically into a host society. The amount of human capital possessed by the first generation is certainly germane to the ability of the second generation to integrate into mainstream society in the United States. But beyond the educational level, job skills, wealth, and knowledge of English of the first generation, contextual factors are also important. Among them the reception by the host government and the host society are of major importance. The position of

the receiving government can be one of exclusion—that is of denying legal status to immigrants. It may also grant passive acceptance. The granting of legal status under the provisions of the 1986 Immigration and Reform Act (IRCA) would represent such an action. Or a government may offer active encouragement, as in the case for example of political refugees who are offered not only legal status but also government assistance to help facilitate their relocation.

In addition to these contextual factors, Portes and Rumbaut point to family composition as a crucial factor in determining the kind of incorporation that the one and a half generation will undergo as they grow and attempt to make their way in U.S. society.

Those children from intact families, that is, in which both biological parents are present, will have greater success than those who do not. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) have linked the factors cited above to three different types of acculturation experienced by immigrants in their incorporation into U.S. society.

*Dissonant acculturation* refers to circumstances in which children of immigrant parents with low human capital acculturate at a more rapid rate than their parents, frequently abandoning the home culture and distancing themselves from their parents. It is also likely that these youths will take on an adversarial stance vis-à-vis mainstream culture, identify with counter-cultures and ultimately face irregular employment and poverty.

*Consonant acculturation* takes place when both parents and children acculturate at an even pace, experiencing the gradual abandonment of the home culture and language and finally assimilating into mainstream culture. This pattern is most apt to occur when parents possess higher levels of human capital.

Immigrant	2000-2002	2001-2003	2002-2004
Children in Immigrant Families	31%	29%	26%

Table 3: The share of children under 18 living in linguistically isolated households .Source: Adapted from Kids Count 2005.

Immigrant Status	2000-2002	2001-2003	2002-2004
Children in Immigrant Families	29%	30%	29%

Table 2: Immigrant Children under 18 Whose Parents All Have Less Than a High School Degree in Oregon, 2000-2004. Source: Adapted from Kids Count 2005.

*Selective acculturation* occurs when the learning process of the first and second generations is embedded in a strong co-ethnic community whose large size and institutional diversity would slow down the cultural shift and promote partial retention of the language and norms of the first generation. Unlike dissonant acculturation which results in role reversal—that is children helping parents navigate in the host culture--this mode does not undermine parental authority.

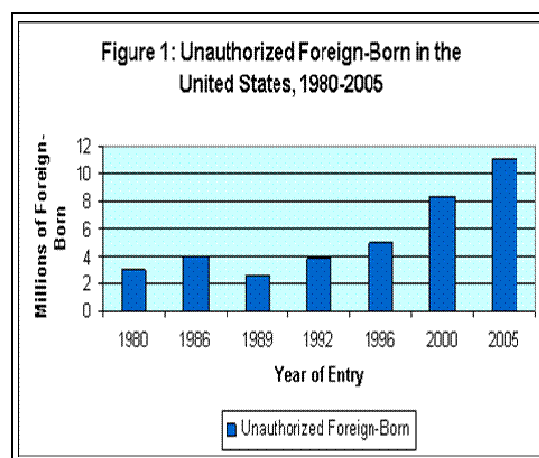
An additional contextual factor relates to the presence and position of communities of co-ethnics. If compatriots already are present in the receiving society they may be in a position to help newer immigrants find housing and jobs. This kind of social capital often facilitates incorporation, but it can also have a negative effect in that if co-ethnics are already embedded in structurally segregated low wage industries and jobs, immigrants with more human capital may be channeled into these same occupations as well (Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

In today's restructured economy, jobs are segmented into communications and technology positions requiring high levels of education and jobs in the service sector

requiring little education. In this kind of labor economy the children of immigrants, if they are to get jobs that will differentiate their social status from that of parents with low human capital, must overcome the education gap in one generation—as opposed to Europeans who were able to secure good paying jobs in industry despite education gap was not as crucial for the latter as it is for immigrants today (Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

Rural Mexican immigrants by and large have little human capital and they are frequently condemned to live shadowed lives because of their unauthorized status (Chavez 1992; Mahler 1995; Martinez 2001; Rothenberg 1998). This makes it very difficult for parents to offer the kinds of support necessary to ensure children's successful integration. In addition, nativism and resulting programs of forced assimilation provoke dissonant acculturation and an adversarial response which leads to downward assimilation. Thus, according to Portes and Rumbaut (2001:279-80), "*There is no second generation group for which selective acculturation is more necessary than for Mexican Americans.*"

The study discussed below will demonstrate that the success of our subjects has been due in part to their having been in a position to construct hybrid identities and pursue selective acculturation.



Source: Adapted from Passel 2006, p. 3, Fig. 2



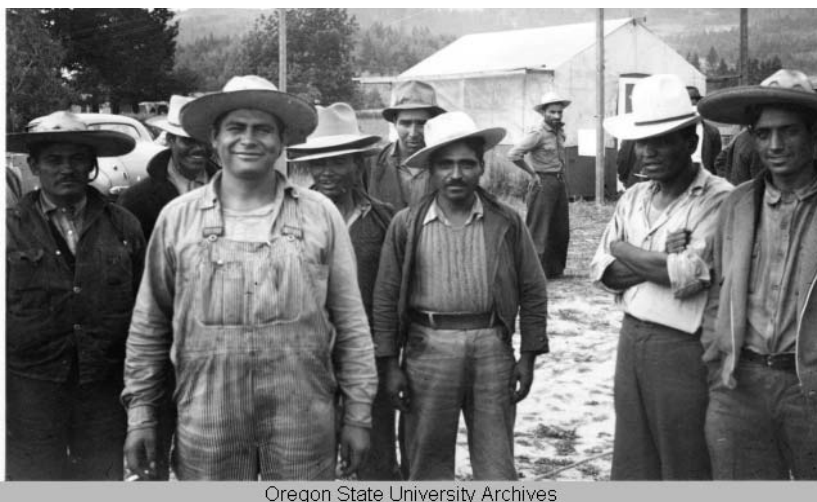
## Mexicanos in Oregon



First group of *Braceros* arrives in Salem, OR, Summer 1943 (Courtesy Oregon State Archives P20:793)

As early as the 1930s Mexican origin workers were traveling to Oregon to pick crops and work on the railroad, and a few families settled out in Eastern Oregon. In 1943 *braceros* were brought to relieve the labor shortage created by WWII (Calavita 1992; Driscoll 1999; Scruggs 1988; Gamboa 1990). An August 29 headline on the first page of *The Oregon Statesman* in very large print hails Mexicans as “‘Good Neighbors’ Here to Aid Farmers” and, ironically playing off the war rhetoric of the day, includes a large photo of the “foreign army of invited invaders” (photo caption) marching like a troop of trained soldiers down Capitol Street in Salem, Oregon. The program lasted until 1964, but in Oregon it was terminated at the end of the war (Gamboa 1990). Given that illegal migration from Mexico had run parallel to contractual labor migration during the forties, by the fifties undocumented workers were squeezing Mexican-Americans in Texas out of farm labor in the lower Rio Grande Valley (Scruggs 1979). Furthermore, land consolidation, irri-

gation, and mechanization resulted in a significant reduction of jobs in that area (Wells 1976; Loprinzi 1991). Workers displaced by illegal immigration gradually made their way to the Northwest and, in them, Oregon farmers who had become very fond of Mexican labor, found a new work force that fit their needs and those of the state at large. Not unlike *braceros* who came before them, this new group of farm workers arrived on time to cultivate and harvest, and they left when the season was over, creating few wrinkles in the social fabric of the state. These migrants were also joined by former *braceros* who, although their formal contract program had ended, continued to come to places they had visited as contract workers, but now illegally. “*In this sense, the bracero program never really ended, it simply went underground*” (Cornelius 1978, 18).



Farm workers at their camp, Hood River. (Courtesy Oregon Archives P20:791)

*Mexicanos in Oregon cont.*

These workers began to settle out in significant numbers in the late fifties and the sixties in various communities in Oregon, but primarily in Nyssa, Ontario, Washington County, and the mid-Willamette Valley. When the Texas migrant stream eventually ceased, the recruitment of Mexican labor became indispensable to the state's agriculture industry. However the imposition of new limits on legal immigration from Mexico in 1968, when a hemispheric cap of 120,000 was set, meant that much of this recruitment involved undocumented workers. In addition, workers who were not directly re-cruited found their way to Oregon each spring and summer to harvest crops.

The seventies witnessed the continued arrival of *mexicanos* to the state, most of them coming under the same circumstances as the early settlers of the fifties and sixties: as migrant workers (Loprinzi 1991). By the mid-1980s, a circular and seasonal pattern of migration from Mexico to the United States was an established process that met the needs of both immigrants in search of jobs and employers in search of cheap labor. As Massey et al. (2002:71) observed:

*"The evidence is thus consistent in showing that a relatively stable, smoothly functioning migration system was functioning in the mid-1980s. In general, it was a system that minimized the negative consequences and maximized the gain for both countries. The United States got a steady supply of workers for jobs that natives were loath to take, and by slowing increasing the enforcement effort in tandem with the volume of undocumented migration, it*

*maintained a level of deterrence that selected workers who were both the ablest and the least likely to carry serious social costs: young men of prime productive age traveling without dependents. Illegal status had the added benefit of encouraging migrants to return home."*

At the same time, the United States was undergoing a period of economic and political turmoil and citizens, feeling ever more vulnerable, became concerned about their own futures. They turned their attention to 'illegal' migrants, demanding that the government do something about immigration which--in nativist discourse--was 'out of control.' The U.S. Congress responded to the scapegoating of migrants with a new immigration reform law that interrupted the systematic process of circular and seasonal migration. The result of this legislation was a sharp rise of undocumented immigration and the dispersion of migrants to areas beyond the traditional receiving states and across the United States (Cornelius 1990). A perusal of demographic statistics shows that Oregon was affected by these changes as the Hispanic population—primarily of Mexican origin—increased by 144 percent between 1990 and 2000. It is within the parameters of this legislation that our subjects came to Oregon, arriving between 1988 and 1991. Their lives would be greatly impacted by the passage of IRCA.

## The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA)

The 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) allowed workers who could prove they had resided and worked in the United States since 1982 to apply for legal resident status. Under this act, the Season Agricultural Workers Program (SAW) gave agricultural workers special considerations, permitting them to secure temporary residency with permanent residency granted after two years. To qualify they had to show that they had worked in a perishable commodity for at least ninety days from May to May of each of the years 1984, 1985, and 1986 and that they had resided in the United States for at least six months during each of these years. A second option was to show that they had worked for 90 days in agriculture between May 1, 1985 and May 1, 1986 (Gamboa and Buan 1995, 64; Martin 1998).

Recent scholarship points out that the SAW Program was subject to widespread abuses. In California, for example, more agricultural workers were legalized than actually worked in agriculture (Martin et al 1988). Similarly, one interviewee for our project reported that a grower in Oregon for whom his father worked had given his father a handful of applications to pass out to members of his family and friends. Many of them did not work in agriculture, but they took advantage of the program to regularize their status.

The SAW Program, according to immigration scholar Wayne Cornelius (1990, 286)

*“proved to be an easy-to qualify-for legalization option, attracting over 1.3 million applicants (82 percent of them Mexicans)—far more than the 250,000 appli-*

*cants that the framers of IRCA had anticipated. The SAW program was also attractive because it provided (unintentionally) a fast track to permanent legal-immigrant status, without the costs, difficulties, English language, and U.S. civics requirements of the general amnesty program.”*

Another unintended result of IRCA was an increase in the number of women and children coming to the United States (Donato 1993). As a large portion of the undocumented male work force was legalized, their families traveled north to join them with hope of eventually obtaining legal status themselves. A third and important factor regarding IRCA is that, with authorized status, migrants felt empowered for the first time to seek jobs beyond the agriculture sector and beyond California. In Cornelius’s (1990:127) words:

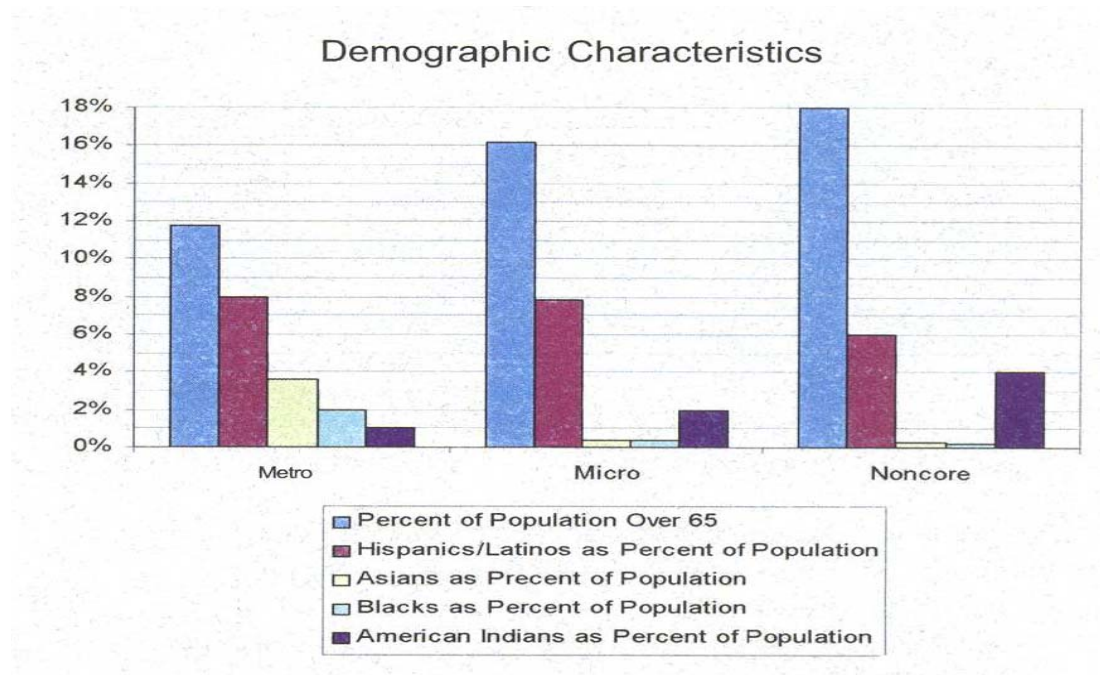
*“IRCA’s massive legalization program liberated 2.3 million former undocumented migrants, some 55 percent of whom lived in California, from the enforced servitude of illegal status and gave them, for the first time, the confidence and freedom to strike out in search of better opportunities elsewhere.”*

The increase in Oregon’s *mexicano* population immediately after IRCA bears out this statement.



Additional federal legislation passed in 1990 also is germane to our study. Unlike IRCA, which was designed to curb illegal immigration, the 1990 Immigration Act was meant to reform legal migration and to correct some of the problems created by IRCA, the main one being an unintended increase of undocumented migration. This law “eased the threat of deportation for the families of aliens who became legalized under the amnesty provisions of the 1986 law and made it easier for family members of permanent residents from Mexico and certain other countries to obtain visas and thus reunite their families in the United States” (Gamboa and Buan, 70). The conditions described above are the very conditions under which our interviewees came to Oregon, where some 36,000 SAWs were processed.

aliens who became legalized in-



Metro = Oregon County with urbanized area of 50,000 or more plus outlying counties with strong ties to the central county.  
 Micro = Oregon county with at least one urban cluster of 10,000-49,999 population, plus outlying counties with strong economic and social ties to the central county  
 Noncore = Oregon counties with higher percentage of older residents than metropolitan and micropolitan counties.  
 (Courtesy—Oregon State University Rural Studies Program)

## II. METHODS AND DATA

The group of twelve one-and-a-half generation Mexican youth whose experiences we describe below was interviewed in 2001 and 2002. The life history interviews were carried out in the context of a larger study on identity, acculturation, and integration of one and-a-half and second generation Mexican immigrants in Oregon, directed by Erlinda Gonzales-Berry and Dwaine Plaza. To obtain our sample a purposive snowball technique was used in which participants were selected through their acquaintance with the researchers, through references provided by friends, colleagues, and relatives, or by the participants themselves. Same sex and similar age interviewers who were also of Mexican origin conducted the interviews. The structured questionnaire was administered both in English and Spanish by Mexican-born bilingual research assistants. The interviewees were free to reply in either English or Spanish, though there is a predominance of Spanish throughout the tapes. All of the interviews were audio-taped and took between one and two hours to complete. The interviews were transcribed, translated, and analyzed for common themes. The personal names in the transcriptions are fictitious to maintain the anonymity of our interviewees.

Unlike most conventional in-depth interviews, the life history approach seeks to capture longitudinally the cycles, rhythms, and changes in a person's life. The interviews were analyzed using the strategy of the "constant comparative method of analysis," a strategy of data analysis that calls for continually "making comparisons" and "asking ques-

tions" (Strauss & Corbin 1990). Interviews were coded and sorted according to emerging themes. These themes were then compared to each other for generalizability. Categories relevant to the theme of this study were noted.

The qualitative study which follows offers rich data on particular individuals, their perspective on life, their migration, their families, acculturation, cultural values and their social norms. The data do not, however, allow us to generate information which can be subjected to quantitative analysis nor can the interviews be used as a basis for making sweeping statements about more general conditions experienced by all one and a half generation Mexican Americans. The strength of these interviews is the fact that they offer us an exploratory view of the significance of segmented assimilation and hybridity in the lives of a cohort of young Mexican American men and women trying to "make it," that is, to succeed, in the United States. From the responses to that comprehensive survey we selected twelve case study individuals (seven males and five females) of one and-a-half generation youth who were students at Oregon State University at the time of the interviews. All these youth were born between 1974 and 1982 and came to the United States prior to or at adolescence. All of them self-identify as *mexicanos*. Although two males were actually born in Los Angeles, California and taken back to Tijuana, Mexico, shortly after birth. Given their life experiences, we include these two males in the 1.5 category.



## METHODS AND DATA *cont.*

All twelve interviewees in our sample arrived in the United States between 1988 and 1991. They were part of a family migration north stirred by the legalization of a parent (father or mother), who had been working in the fields of Oregon as an undocumented farm worker, and then obtained permanent residency through I.R.C.A. As children the interviewees attended elementary or middle-school in Mexico. They enrolled in public schools as soon as their families moved to Oregon.

We analyze in the following section the characteristics that these interviewees share in common, and the outcomes of their similar processes of integration. We use individual cases only as examples of common trajectories. We discuss

the personal and family background of these youth, the border crossing experiences, their insertion into the public school system of Oregon, experiences of discrimination, the construction of Identity, their experiences getting to and being in college, and their aspirations for the future. We find that the life histories of these twelve young *mexicano* males and females—who didn't know one another before enrolling at Oregon State University—are surprisingly similar. The individuals in this sample provide a glimpse into the lives of the children of Mexican farm workers whose immigration status was legalized through I.R.C.A. in the late 1980s in Oregon.



OSU Chicano/a Alumni Association members, David and Edith Molina, Willen Cervantes, Tomas Cervantes, with recipients, Yecenia Martinez and Jose Gutierrez, of First Chicano/a Alumni Scholarship—2005 (Courtesy of OSU MEChA)

### III. ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

#### The Families Migrate North

In their analysis of why migrants leave Mexico to seek employment in the United States, Massey et al (2002) conclude that the decision to emigrate is not arrived at willy-nilly, nor are emigrants merely responding to extreme conditions of poverty in Mexico as is frequently assumed. Global international labor flows are prompted by social and economic transformations that occur as a result of capital penetration and free markets in poor nations. Workers from regions undergoing rapid economic development, often find themselves displaced from traditional ways of earning a living, and move to self-insure, acquire capital, and/or substitute for a lack of credit at home by selling their labor abroad (Massey et al 2002). Moreover, the segmented labor market which has become standard fare in the globalized economy of rich nations creates a demand for this low-wage labor pool.

The young people we interviewed were not certain about the actual reason why their parents decided to immigrate to Oregon—as Pablo said: *“To tell you the truth, I don’t really know why we came up here.”* Since they were 7 to 15 years old at the time, these children did not participate in their parents’ decision to move north. However, given the opportunity to choose, the teenagers would have preferred to stay in Mexico. In the interviews, they said that the move was to join a father or mother, in the hope of improving the family’s life chances. Common explanations are that their parents wanted to earn more money, own a home, and give their children a good education.

Before they decided to migrate to Oregon, the parents of the interviewees were low-wage workers in manufacturing, construction, and the service sector in Mexico. Most of the mothers were homemakers or earned an income in the informal economy. All but one parent had less than a ninth grade education—one father completed high school in Mexico, while one mother had no schooling.

#### Nostalgic Recollections

At the time of migration, most of these youth lived in large intact families with both parents at home—two households were headed by single mothers. They come from large families and have siblings who migrated north together. They all had fond memories of their childhood in Mexico. The common perception is that they had a good life in the neighborhoods where they lived, surrounded by friends and extended family. Ricardo explained:

*“My life in Mexico was a happy one. I had a very happy childhood, with lots of freedom. Because it was healthy it has helped me remain sane and focused, with good examples. I don’t remember being poor because we always had enough to eat and we were loved.”*

Susana had a similar experience:

*“I had a lot of fun in elementary school in Mexico. I was involved in dance, in poetry. It was really hard for me to leave because I was to be escolta de la bandera in sixth grade. I missed my friends. My mom tells me that I never saw how poor we were.”*

## ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS *cont.*

María's recollections are also very similar, but she pays special attention to the connection between her happiness and the presence of extended family:

*"My life in Mexico was lots of fun. I never felt that we lacked anything. I didn't understand that my parents may have been having financial problems. My cousins lived across the street and we played together. They lived with their grandmother, my uncle's mother and I integrated myself into that family."*

Carmen, who also valued kinship ties, was particularly saddened by the loss of extended family:

*"My life was more pleasant than the life we have here. I thought it would be better in the United States, but when I remember, I realize that it was better over there. I went to school, I had friends, my teachers treated me well, I got recognition for my good grades, I had my family close by, my grandparents, my cousins. I was free to go wherever I wanted and didn't have to worry about anything. It was better in Mexico. Here I don't feel free, I don't have [extended] family."*

Initially most interviewees did not think that the move would be permanent, since their parents often talked about going back to Mexico. Their parents may have headed north intending to follow the decades-long pattern of circular migration rather than with settlement in mind. As such, these families really didn't have much concrete knowledge about life in the United States, or else they had unreal expectations. They were, however, certain about one thing: the availability of increased opportunities, particularly in the education domain—as Alicia explained: *"My parents decided to come to have a better life than we had in Mexico, less economic limitations and better education for us."* She added: *"I didn't know anything about the United States, besides that you come to work and that this is the dream land."* Luis knew that in the north people spoke a different language and the president was Ronald Reagan. *"I thought that just for coming here we would become rich,"* said Ricardo.

That education for their children was an important motivating factor for her parents is apparent in Marta's recollection:

*"My father was already here [in Oregon] and he saw how easy it was to go to school here, while my mom was struggling to send my two older brothers to high school in Mexico. My dad told my mom that she needed to bring the kids to Oregon so they could finish high school here. My parents thought that they would have a better life and could own a house."* She added: *"I knew nothing about el norte before we came, only that it had snow; they grew cherries, and spoke English."*

These youth and their parents knew very little about the language, the society and the culture of the host country. But they did carry in their imaginations visions of modernity and of a pristine environment. Roberto, for example, observed: *"My parents knew that the U.S. was more modern, had big freeways, green spaces, and playgrounds for kids."*

## ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS *cont.*

### Social Networks

While structural conditions in large measure create migration flows from developing to wealthy nations, there is a good deal of scholarship that points to the importance of social networks in initiating and sustaining those flows. According to Massey et al:

*“The most important network relationships are based on kinship, friendship, and paisanaje, which are reinforced through regular interaction in voluntary associations. In moving to a strange and often hostile land, migrants naturally draw upon these familiar bonds to share the hazards and hardships of life in exile, and those left behind rely on the same ties to mitigate the loneliness and anxiety of having a loved one far away. As migration continues, however, these well-known social connections acquire new meanings and functions. They are transformed into a set of social relationships whose content and meaning are defined within the migrant context. Over time, shared understandings develop about what it means to be a friend, relative, or paisano with a community of migrants. Eventually these understandings crystallize into a set of interrelationships that define the migrant network.”* (Massey et al. 1987, 140)

In fact, social networks become such an effective catalyst for migration that host countries actually have experienced a decrease in the need for labor recruitment. In the same way that migration saves the host country the costs connected with reproducing a labor force, migrant networks absorb labor recruitment costs that otherwise would be borne by employers. The parents of the interviewees had family and friends in Oregon that helped them to find a

job and enroll their children in school. Interestingly, all the fathers and the two single mothers who headed these households had spent time as farm workers in the state of Oregon before they decided to bring their families north.

Some parents had engaged in circular migration before making the decision to finally settle in rural Oregon, supporting the observation that *“Once a migrant has left and returned, he or she is very likely to make another U.S. trip, setting off another cycle of crossing, arriving, working, remitting, and returning”* (Massey et al 2002, 64). Two of the interviewees are grandchildren of former bracero workers. This comes as no surprise given that the bracero program gave thousands of workers valuable knowledge of and experience in the United States, thus creating a robust cache of social capital for future generations.

The social networks that attracted and retained these immigrant families in small towns in Oregon were formed by brothers, sisters, friends, and co-nationals who created enclaves throughout the agricultural regions of the state. These relatives and friends remained in touch with one another throughout the years. For example, Marta explained:

*“My father came to Oregon in 1985. He had most of his family already here (two sisters with their own families). My dad worked in Oregon for a while, and visited us back in Mexico about once a year. He sent money to my mom, and letters with photos in the snow and with the cherries. When he visited us in Mexico, my dad came in a truck, and bought toys and clothes for us.”*



## ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS *cont.*

In Susana's words,

*"My father's sister had been in Oregon for about ten years and kept calling my dad to come and join her family. My dad came for two years, worked in the fields and sent money to my mom. Then he went back to Mexico for about one year, but couldn't find a good job. My brothers were in high school and there was not enough money, so my father returned to Oregon and my parents decided that we would all go there. We are seven children now, six born in Mexico and one in Oregon."*

The breadwinners in each household (ten fathers and two mothers) did not have working permits when they first arrived in Oregon to do farm work. However, they were able to obtain permanent residency through IRCA and eventually, with the support of social networks, they brought their families to join them. Recalling this situation, María said: *"My dad had been here before and he was able to legalize his situation through the amnesty. My mom couldn't bear her loneliness in Mexico and she brought us here, too."*

### Crossing the Border

Between 1988 and 1991, most of these Mexican youth crossed the international border into the United States without immigration documents. One interviewee whose mother had become a permanent resident entered the country with a tourist visa. In their recollections, two of our informants said that immigration officers let their fathers cross with their families even when the wives and children did not have documents. Marta was one of them: *"My father came in a truck to pick us up. He had permanent residency in the U.S. since 1989 but we didn't."* This experience points to the rather casual attitude that the border patrol was known to display prior to the construction of the border as a militarized deterrence zone beginning in the nineties (Nevins 2002).

Another informant in our sample crossed the border into the United States guided by smugglers, along siblings and other families. He informs us:

*"A friend of my mother was going to come to Portland as an illegal and we came with them. We crossed with some*

*smugglers in Tijuana, we hid, we traveled for a good while along a lengthy road. The other group that accompanied us was grabbed by the border patrol. The smugglers settled us in an apartment in Los Angeles for two or three days. There was little food. The Oaxaqueños who were with us had to wait for their relatives to pay the smugglers to bring them to Portland. We arrived in Portland with them one night and had to sleep on the bus station. My father picked us up at the Greyhound and we went to the ranch where he worked. The boss gave him a trailer for us [to live in]."* José's experience was very similar:

*"My mother knew someone who was coming and we crossed with her. We crossed the line running at Tijuana and they picked us up in Los Angeles. The Coyotes kept us four days in a room without windows until the wee hours. There were eight of us. My mother's kinfolk brought us to Portland and my father then picked us up."*

Regarding his crossing experience, Luis reported:

*"One day my mother told me we were coming to the U.S. with my little brothers. I was about to turn eight. We arrived in Nogales. The husband of a friend of my mother's crossed us and some other families. A pickup took us to Los Angeles and from there to Hillsboro. My mother went to work in the fields. She lied that she had been working in the fields since '85 so she could get amnesty."*

In a recent article on immigrant women in the Washington, Andrews, Ybarra and Miramontes (2002) document the crossing experiences of 15 women from Mexico to the United States. So similar are their experiences to those of our subjects that these women could well have been the mothers of our interviewees. However, in the Washington study there was greater use of coyotes than in our study. When our subjects crossed, the border had not yet been militarized by programs such as Operation Gatekeeper. Thus crossing was not yet so dangerous as to force migrants to depend on coyotes, as was the case of the women in the Washington study who crossed after 1994 (Nevins, 2002; Andreas 1998).



## ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS *cont.*

### Settling in Rural Oregon

*Mexicano* workers have been migrating through and settling in rural Oregon since the early twentieth century. In his pioneer work on immigration, Manuel Gamio (1930) found that 445 money orders were sent from Oregon to Mexico in the first decades of the twentieth century. Given the primacy of agriculture in the Oregon economy, and its dependency on, first domestic migrant and later immigrant labor, *Mexicano* workers have historically migrated to rural areas.

Before these youth and their siblings arrived in rural Oregon with their mothers, their fathers were already working in the fields, tending crops such as strawberries, cherries, and asparagus. Some had broken away from the fields and were working in tree nurseries and dairy farms. The latter has emerged as one of Oregon's leading industries, and it too makes extensive use of immigrant labor. Initially, the wives and older children helped with the farm work. Below María and Susana respectively recall their family work histories:

*"We arrived in a small village called Amityville. My father worked in a dairy farm milking cows. Then my mother went to work with him and she began to draw a salary. Later we moved to another village, in the same area."*

*"My dad worked in The Dalles picking herries and apples. He would take us to pick berries too. In the fall he went to pick apples and pears in Hood River and we went too. We had to stay in the cabin and help out. We only did that for one year because my parents realized that they were going to nowhere that way. My dad started working in a mill company and he's still there ten years after. My dad is a forklift operator. He was able to get my brothers to work with him too. My mother has worked at restaurants, hotels, a cannery, and at MacDonald's for five years. Now she's working at a hotel."*

The interviewees similarly reported that they found the new environment unfamiliar. For example,

María said: *"I wasn't used to living on a farm because I came from Mexico City."* Pedro also felt particularly alienated in his new living conditions. He notes: *"What I didn't like at first in Oregon was the rain and cold and living with a Christian family because I was a Catholic and couldn't adapt. At first I rejected English because I did not feel comfortable in the United States. I felt that my life had changed here. Everything caved in. In Mexico I ran about and had many friends, and here I was shut in without seeing anyone."*

Ricardo remorsefully compares his life in Oregon with life in Mexico. He tells us:

*"When I arrived I didn't like it because of lack of freedom and the cold. Everything was cloudy, sad, lonely and dark. We lived by a mountain, and several months passed before summer returned. It was a drastic change because in Mexico it was warm, we bathed in the river, and when my friends had to tend the cows, I got to play with them in the hills"*.

The trauma of migration seeps through their narratives as they link climatic changes with the emotions of loss and sadness they were feeling as a result of the dramatic change in their lives.

After obtaining permanent residency in the late 1980s, some parents found employment in manufacturing, in construction, in restaurants and hotels, substantiating Cornelius' (1990) claim that IRCA freed immigrant workers to take jobs beyond agriculture. For example, José said: *"My dad used to work in a dairy farm and my mom wasn't employed. Now my dad and my mom work in a factory."*

Carmen's mother, for example, worked in a nursery and she picked berries in the fields. *"Now [that she has permanent residency status] she does all kinds of work. She works in a cannery, sometimes she goes to the fields and, when there is work, in an electronic company."*

The experiences of Carmen's mother reveal that by settling in a rural area, she can always fall back on field work when jobs are scarce in other sectors.

## ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS *cont.*

### Schooling in Oregon

All these interviewees were enrolled in school as soon as they arrived in Oregon. They had attended school in Mexico before—some were in grade school, others in middle or high school. Since they were all monolingual in Spanish, these youngsters were initially placed in English as Second Language classes. The ESL Classes were part of the Migrant Education Program (MEP), a program which has been in existence in Oregon since the 1960s. This program has played a crucial role in meeting the needs of migrant students and in helping retain them in school. The youth in our study spoke highly of opportunities afforded to them by the MEP, particularly the field trips and the Migrant Institute of Leadership camps. For most, it took over one year to learn sufficient English to be able to switch to some monolingual English courses:

*“We arrived in March and in two weeks I started school. My sister and I were the only Mexicans in that school. The students were all Anglos. They were polite, but nothing more. In another class there was a son of Mexicans who didn’t speak Spanish. They put us both in ESL. We would go to another classroom and a Texan teacher taught us English. The first ESL teacher I had was very good and in six months I could speak English. I finished elementary school two years later.”*

Ricardo’s recollection of learning English is linked to a memory of a cold classroom, suggesting that this was an unpleasant experience:

*“In school they put us in a cold room with another teacher who taught us English. Afterwards another teacher came who taught us another subject. There was also a bilingual student who came to translate.”*

Despite the fact that the interviewees learned English, they were often kept in ESL classes until

high school. This was María’s experience:

*“We arrived in Oregon in March, during spring break and I entered the fifth grade in school. They placed me in the Migrant Education Program and also in summer school. I took ESL all those years until high school.”*

Susana, however, had a very different experience. She recalls: “

*I was in sixth grade in Mexico. In Oregon I went to school in January and they put me in a classroom with a teacher that I couldn’t understand. He only took me there when they were doing math, the rest of the time I was in the library watching videos or TV, things like Sesame Street and the Bill Cosby Show. That’s how I started to learn English. At recess nobody would talk to me, I felt that I couldn’t relate to anybody.”*

In Luis’s case, school counselors pushed him to learn English. *“They believed that if I learned English everything would fall in place for me.”* This is a philosophy that underlies most ESL programs. Yet in so many cases, students who have mastered English are still dropping out from school. This led one researcher to examine the issue of “when English isn’t enough” (Valdes 1996).

The lack of English skills at a time in the development cycle when the need to develop peer relations and networks is paramount to young people was indeed an alienating experience for our subjects, reminding us of Rumbaut’s premise that the 1.5 generation is quely traumatized by migration. Their sense of alienation and frustration vis-à-vis the language question was further exacerbated by the fact that they were immersed in a society that constructs race in a manner different from that experience in their homeland. Enrique vividly sums up his experience:

## ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS *cont.*

*"I went to predominantly white schools. People had a difficult time trying to understand who I was and relating to me. I had a tough time trying to explain myself. The first couple of years in Oregon were tough, not knowing a word of English. I felt that the kids in elementary school didn't like me simply because I was Mexican. I was a culture shock trying to adapt and not having friends; the whole moving away from home to a new environment. I had to put up with people laughing at me because I couldn't pronounce words properly. The school didn't have the resources to provide an environment where I was actually helped with my differences. These are obstacles that I found but grew stronger because of them."*

Carmen likewise talks about her sense of alienation, and she is able to succinctly pinpoint its cause when she says:

*"In School everything was strange. I felt that people stared at me as if I were not from here. In Mexico we all looked the same. Yes one might be darker or lighter skinned, yea. But here a great deal is made of skin color. Also, I had a hard time learning English."*

Perhaps because he was born in Los Angeles, Paco was not prepared for the kind of discrimination he experienced. With time he was able to develop a mature response to racism:

*"When I came over here, I didn't figure that people were going to dislike me that much for being different. Even though they treated me like shit, I still told them that I was Mexican because I grew up in Tijuana, and was born in Los Angeles. Now if they tell me something racist I don't laugh. I think that they are ignorant because they are judging without really understanding me."*

In the eyes of our informants, discrimination extended beyond the immediate peer group to include school personnel. Although, as Marta said, they had some inspiring teachers that treated them the same as other students, most youngsters in our sample experienced discrimi-

nation from other students and what they perceived as disinterest from school personnel. As Alicia said, *"Mexican students suffer from language barriers and discrimination from teachers."*

Susana's experience with indifference became pronounced in high school:

*"I wasn't aware of discrimination until high school. My mom always talked about it but discrimination didn't hit me until then. My counselors in high school didn't encourage me to go to college. I would skip classes and wouldn't get in trouble. They didn't care"*

Carmen adds more details to this often repeated story:

*"My counselors never placed me in chemistry or biology as they did students who were headed to college. They let them take those classes, but when they gave me my schedule for the following semester those classes were nowhere to be seen. I didn't know I could request them. I was satisfied with what they gave me."*

Beyond a simple lack of interest, as her observation highlight, Alicia believes discrimination was the direct result of racism.

*"In high school, they would put some students in wood shop classes and the other white students would take classes to prepare for college. A lot of Mexican students were never taken out of ESL, even when they could do well in regular classes. Some teachers treated me good because I guess they liked me. Some treated me bad probably because I was Mexican. They thought I was inferior to the white kids, that I didn't have the capacities that they have."*

Luis provided a glimpse of the effects that racism has on a child: *"In school they let you know that the culture here is superior, so you start feeling bad about your identity. When I was in fourth grade, I was embarrassed to speak Spanish."*

## ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS *cont.*

José was also deeply affected by racism, but he was able to overcome its negative emotional effects: *"I sensed that whites feel superior. It doesn't bother me now because I know it's not true."*

### Reaction to Perceived Discrimination

Some of these youth reacted to perceived discrimination by trying to assimilate and "acting white." According to Alicia, acting white refers to people that have assimilated, people that act like Americans and who feel ashamed of who they are and where they come from. These youth wanted to dress with the same styles as their classmates. They participated in school sports, and listened to their peers' music. However, through time, these strategies left them unsatisfied, and the youth went back to socializing with other Mexicans, listening to Latino music, and enjoying Mexican food.

Enrique was especially articulate regarding his experiences with perceived racism and his coping strategies. He says:

*I remember the first two or three years, I faced a lot of discrimination and hostility from people because I'm Mexican. There was a time when I really tried to assimilate, tried to hang out with white kids. The kids that were born here used to get different treatment than me. I tried to 'act white' so I could blend in better, so I could be seen as one of them and not as a Mexican. But then I realized that that was not the way to go and nowadays I don't care. I grew more mature and got more educated"*

He added:

*"I remember hearing my parents and other people talking about racism and how white people didn't like us because we are brown and Mexican. Every time I felt that people didn't like me or treated me bad, I always thought that it was racism, that they were being discriminatory because I was Mexican. You have to prove yourself everyday. Just because I'm Mexican*

*doesn't mean that you are better than me because you are white. If you are better than me it's because you are better than me, not because you are white."*

The effects of discrimination can be wearing according to Carmen:

*"In school I always feel that I have to prove myself to my teachers. I have to make an extra effort to get the same grade or even a lower grade. I always have to spend a lot of personal energy in order to not lose control when I am being treated badly, and this is true of all Mexicans."*

The testimony of our interviewees strongly suggests that racism and discrimination in the public schools either push students out of school or create a glass ceiling that makes college inaccessible to them. In Juan's words:

*"In school we could talk to teachers but they didn't believe in us. The only teacher that supported me was my ESL teacher but I didn't believe her because none of my peers were going to college, so I just worried about finishing high school. In high school I didn't learn things that would help me find a job, just English."*

### Family Support

Despite the repeated narrative of lack of institutional support, all of our informants eventually made their way to the University, received degrees, and have successfully integrated themselves into American society. Crucial to their achievements has been the unwavering support of parents, siblings, and extended family. José's statement summarizes this fact: *"My parents lived for us. They had jobs that paid very little but what they earned was for us. 'We are doing this for you guys,' my parents used to tell us."*

Alicia also talked about parental support and the values they passed on to her: *"My parents always supported me. They told me to be an honest person, be respectful, to appreciate everything that I have, and not to take things for granted."*

## ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS *cont.*

In these youthful memories, parents helped with homework and made themselves available, although they did not get involved in school activities—in part because of job schedules, and also because parents would not know how to participate. “My mother supported me as much as she could,” said Carmen. “She found me skirts for dances, helped me find the paperwork that I needed.”

Parents were also depicted as “severe.” Marta looks back at her experience and sums it up with bit of irony. For the authors and probably for the readers of this article, Marta’s reaching college against the odds signifies the true marker of achievement and success. Her parents however, while not devaluing this accomplishment, are particularly pleased that getting a college degree did not undermine their familial values:

*“My parents didn’t let me go out with friends; I couldn’t spend the night or play at somebody’s home. They were very strict. My parents changed when I was in high school because I noticed that they were overprotective.” She added: “My parents told me to go to school and get married with a Christian, not to go away with a boyfriend. If you do that, my dad said, I’m not going to recognize you anymore; you would be dead to me. You have to have a Christian wedding in white, be a good wife and have children. I’m proud that I didn’t go with my boyfriends. All my girlfriends from high school dropped out and now have children, and are living with their boyfriends. My parents are proud that I graduated from high school and I’m in college, but they are proudest because I didn’t go out with a boyfriend.”*

Family support notwithstanding, it was not always easy to stay in high school and complete a degree. Several of our informants talked about older siblings who dropped out of high school because of what they describe as lack of incentive and encouragement from the teachers. Juan gave account of an older brother who had a family of his own and was trapped in low-wage jobs because he didn’t

finish high school: “My brother regrets that he didn’t continue his education in college, but now he has two children and it’s a little late. He didn’t understand what he was missing when he dropped out of school.”

If one takes into account the role of human capital as an important factor in the integration of immigrants in their new host cultures, as Portes and Rumbaut (2001) have postulated, it makes sense that older children, who are actually counted as part of the first generation, will have experiences more akin to those of their parents. The fact that they are already at the threshold of adulthood and have formed their identities in Mexico may make it difficult for them to adapt to the socializing process of public schooling. Moreover, the limited human capital of the parents may act as a pressure point on older children, pushing them to enter the work force in order to help support the rest of the family. Thus they leave school and like their parents enter low wage labor sector. However, as they acquire new skills and have broader experiences maneuvering in the real world, they bring additional human capital and, of course, wages into the home. They are then able to direct this human capital, particularly in terms of advice and moral support, toward the advancement of younger members of the family. Marta sums this process up when she says: “My brothers didn’t go to college so I could go.” The experiences of older siblings, then, may be viewed as a sacrifice necessary for the achievement of the 1.5 and second generation.



## ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS *cont.*

### Getting to College

As we have gathered from previous interviews, the public school system was not particularly helpful in getting these young people to the University. We heard repeated, stories of curricular tracking, segregation in ESL classes, and teacher and counselor indifference. Occasionally a caring soul intervened. Carmen, for example, related the following story:

*I was able to attend college because in my last year of high school a counselor who said that I was too involved with Hispanics--I was queen for the Cinco de Mayo celebration, I did Mexican folklore dancing to keep our traditions alive, I tried to represent Mexican culture—that counselor asked me: ‘Carmen what do you want to do with your life?’ I told her that I wanted to be a doctor and she told me, but do you realize that for that you need all these classes and lots of math. I told her I didn’t know. She got me an application for Oregon State University. When the recruiters came to our school they told me that I lacked three math classes to complete the minimum requirements for admission. I took what I lacked that same year. Had that counselor not spoken to me when I still had a year to go, I would not have been accepted to the university.”*

The issue of undocumented immigration status is seen by some of our informants as the biggest barrier to a college education. Marta faced this situation:

*“I didn’t put effort in high school because I didn’t have [immigration] documents. I didn’t do well in school. I wasn’t academically prepared to enter college. I just wanted to pass school because I thought that it would be the end. After I graduated from high school I took one year off while waiting for my permanent residency.”*

She became a permanent resident after she graduated from high school and *“insisted that my father make us permanent residents so I could go to college and apply for financial aid. I had to wait one year after graduating from high school because my immigration papers were ‘in transition.’ My father couldn’t legalize my older brother because he was 21 and la migra [immigration officers] took him while he was working in the fields.”*

We can not stress enough the issue of civil status (Chávez 1992). Without documentation, this cohort of informants, who came to this country at a young age and who received much of their schooling here, would simply not have had access to college, and their prospects for integration in American society would have been severely limited. Legal status together with family encouragement and support, even when families lacked the actual means to pay, were crucial to the success of these students. It is interesting that the two youth who came to the United States with mothers only both went on to college. José recalled: *“My mom always encouraged me to go to college. Right after high school collage was attached, no doubts. Nobody helped me with the application process to OSU.”*

Ricardo sums up in simple but poignant words the role played by his mother in his journey to college: *“My mother motivated me to go to the university. She knows it will help me better our lives; that is her legacy.”*

## ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS *cont.*

### College Life

The journey to college was a difficult one. Yet the twelve men and women in our sample enrolled at Oregon State University. Families could contribute very little, but given that all had legal status, they were able to receive financial aid in the form of grants and loans. However, information regarding financial aid was scarce; in a number of cases this group learned of financial aid from friends rather than college counselors. Alicia was one such case: *“My father wanted me to go to college, but there was no information given to Mexicans about coming to college. I didn’t know about financial aid. A friend told me to ask for applications and financial aid.”*

They found college extremely challenging on a number of fronts. Susana summed up her initial reactions: *“It’s really difficult for us to be the first in the family to go to college. We have to learn English, learn the American way of how professors expect you to behave and do in school. You have to deal with everyday discrimination and prejudice.”* The young women in our sample were all single at the time of the interview, and remained so throughout their college experience.

Three of the young men started families while in college, so their trajectory was a made even more difficult. One interviewee, was forced to drop out after the first quarter, but he returned a year later. He told his counselors, *“I am going to return after helping my family because my parents were ejected from their apartment and I had to help them. But I realized that if I continued working as a plumber with my father, I would be a plumber all my life, and I didn’t like that.”*

For all of the interviewees, the college experience changed their lives. At OSU there are a number of academic support mechanisms such as the Migrant Education Program, The Minority Education Office, and the Education Opportunity Program. In addition there is *El Centro Cultural César Chávez*, which for many students serves as ‘a home away from home.’ There are several student groups that provide social networking, events, and activities that keep students tied to the *mexicanos* community. Several of our informants joined MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán) and report having been transformed by their membership. *“I have changed so much in one year at the university,” said Marta; “the way I think, the people I know. I’m changing. I have the support of my Mexican friends. I’m involved in MEChA and a dance group.”*

First-and-a-half generation Mexicans in college still experience barriers to their success. They mentioned the following: a) poor language skills and insufficient academics that don’t prepare them for college work; b) limited self-esteem--they don’t think that they are going to succeed; c) financial pressures; and d) lack of understanding of how the college system work—for example, they don’t know that they can talk to the professors if a subject turns out to be too difficult. However, they were all able to connect with other students like themselves and create strong bonds and a sense of community. Friends thus replaced family as the primary support mechanism, and together they were able to form strong hybrid identities as members of an ethnic minority within the university setting.

## ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS *cont.*



Students at OSU Chicano Cultural Center, now Centro Cultural Cesar Chavez, 1977. Courtesy of Oregon State Archives.

### Identity Formation

Most of these youth identified as *mexicanos* before enrolling at OSU, and all continued to identify strongly as Mexican. Many took classes in Chicano history and culture, Spanish for Native Speakers, and Mexican history. This expanded knowledge base contributed to the process of fine tuning their identities. Those who became politicized through MEChA—an organization whose primary mission is to serve the *mexicano* and Chicano communities and to create college access for Chicano and *Mexicano* students—took on a “Chicano” identity, though they still laid strong claim to their Mexican identities. Juan’s testimony bears this out: “*I’m strong Chicano and also mexicano. I learned about Chicanos in college. At home I learned that I’m mexicano. Hispanic doesn’t say anything about our indigenous past. Latino refers to the European heritage, like Italians.*”

María talks about the choices she makes with regard to identity labels: “*When I arrived here I identified as mexicana. I had never heard the word Hispanic; I would write Mexican in the “other” category. Hispanic, Latino, Mexican-American are labels I don’t use. Chicana, I use sometimes, but not when applying for a job.*” These

comments demonstrate that as their knowledge base expanded, the issue of ethnic identity became more nuanced.

Language is an important aspect of their identity. While all of our informants were fluent and literate in English, they are also fluent in spoken Spanish, and they are quite comfortable using that language. In fact, Spanish is the predominant language of the interviews, suggesting that when speaking about their personal lives, they prefer their native language. The maintenance of Spanish is crucial to their ability to maintain close ties to their families and kinship networks.

### Transnational Links

Their *mexicano* identity is also nurtured by frequent visits to family and friends in Mexico. After they became permanent residents, most of the interviewees went back to visit their relatives. Visits to the homeland both strengthen the ties with the extended family and underscore the differences between the country of origin and the host country. For example, Alicia said:

*“When I went back to my town in Michoacan, I saw it very different from what I remember it. There were more paved streets. I didn’t feel like I belonged.”* Roberto recalled several visits to Tijuana, Chiapas and Guadalajara. He said: “*I visited my grandparents in Guadalajara. It’s a beautiful place but it’s deserted by the effects of the migration to the U.S. There are no people there, but you can tell that there were people before.*” Their strong Mexican identities notwithstanding, it is clear to these youths that their place is now in the United States. Roberto makes this clear when he says: “*I always say that I’m mexicano, although now I belong more to this country.*”

## ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS *cont.*



Immigration Rally in Portland Oregon, April 2004. Courtesy of OSU MEChA

María finds life in Mexico more appealing in many ways, yet she prefers life in the United States: *"I like life here because there are more luxuries. Money buys more here. You can buy a car, but not be happy. Here you don't see Mexican traditions. There are no Christmas parties or posadas. Punch just doesn't taste the same! Here families live apart, very individual. En Mexico, even if you don't have as many luxuries, you live an emotionally happier life because you are with your family and there is always someone there who will help you. Here it is materialistic and Mexico is more community oriented."*

Enrique's identity might be described as quintessentially transnational, in that he sees himself as belonging to two nation-states:

*"My alliance is with Mexico because you can't take back what you are. I have more alliance with my country of origin even though I don't live there anymore and I have lost some cultural values. But on the other hand, I do have alliance towards this country because I've grown into it and I've learned the system, and I've learned that this is probably the place where I'm going to spend the rest of my life. So I definitely do have alliance towards this country."*

### Goals for the Future

Ten years from the date the interviews were conducted, most of the interviewees saw themselves settled in Oregon, married with children, with a good steady job, and in touch with other Mexicans. José said: *"I want my main community to be my people so I may pretend that I'm*

*in Mexico."* They are looking forward to careers in education, health, or starting up their own business. They are confident that the Latino community will continue to grow in Oregon. As Enrique said: *"I know that eventually the Latino population of this place is going to grow and will be more diverse, so I won't have to choose whether I want to live with Mexicans or not."* However, regardless of where they choose to live, they all expressed the desire to serve or benefit *mexicanos*. For example, Marta said: *"I look forward to studying something that could help me work with the community."*



## IV. COMMENTARY ON THE EXPERIENCE OF THE 1.5 GENERATION

The 1.5 generation have several shared characteristics. They come from stable two-parent families with high levels of labor force participation. Every member of the family pulled together to achieve collective economic goals, and contributed to the household income in moments of economic distress. For example, the older children helped their parents in agricultural jobs, translated for them, and looked after younger siblings. While in college, they also worked in the fields or in temporary jobs during the summers.

These Mexican youth arrived in the U.S. speaking only Spanish then progressively became bilingual in English, but Spanish continues to be an important aspect of their identity. Their younger siblings, who arrived in the U.S. at less than 5 years of age, have gradually lost the propensity to speak the native language—linking the experiences of the foreign-born small children with that of the U.S.-born second generation.

The foreign-born parents of these youth entered the country as undocumented farm workers. Later they were able to obtain permanent residency for them and their families. Most of these adult immigrants have only a few years of schooling and little or no knowledge of English. They are socially defined as nonwhite, though race is for them a source of confusion and ambivalence (Lopez and Stanton-Salazar 2001). They inherit the burden of Mexican “color.” Added loads are undocumented immigration status and the negative stereotypes emerging from host culture residents’ previous relations with migrant farm workers in the Pacific Northwest (Andrews, Ybarra and Miramontes 2002).

The 1.5 generation of youth in our sample recall experiences of perceived structural discrimination—notably in school by peers, teachers and staff. Rumbaut (1996:123) points out that coming to grips with discrimination and prejudice is more psychologically damaging for adolescents than for young children. Strong families and community networks can shield these youths, but when the available support comes from oppositional peer groups rather than families, the result can be rejection of schooling, church, and parental goals. The youth in our sample report about older siblings and Mexican friends who dropped out of school

and adopted disaffected attitudes that are part of dissonant acculturation. Nevertheless, while they acknowledge discrimination, the Mexican one and a-half generation youth in our sample do not attribute all their challenges to racism.

Educational aspirations and expectations, as well as the role of significant relations and others in shaping these orientations are predictors of attainment in adulthood. The immigrant parents of the youth in our sample have explicit educational expectations that do not differ by gender. Studies have shown that relative to the children of U.S.-born parents, the children of foreign-born immigrants have higher educational expectations (Kao and Tienda 1998).

Their college experiences undoubtedly contributed to increased options regarding identity formation, as these youths see themselves as both/an, that is, as Americans and as Mexicans. They have strong Mexican identities, yet there's no doubt in their minds that they belong in this country. Their position points directly to the category labeled “selective acculturation” in Portes and Rumbaut’s segmented assimilation model. The experience of this group in college provided them with a co-ethnic community that provided support and enhancement of self-esteem. The portion of their academic experiences that contributed to cultural and historical self-knowledge also played an important role in shoring up their *mexicano* identities. And although there were exposed to potentially “adversarial” ways of interpreting U.S. society—i.e. Chicano ideologies—the strong and positive Mexican identity nurtured by their families, protected them against downward assimilation. In short, this cohort has been able to choose the best from two cultures to thus enables themselves to claim a space in U.S. society. This process has also provided them with a strong commitment to serving and advocating on behalf of their communities. Susana’s word sums up this connection to community: “I would like to live here—not in Mexico—because my family is here. I have relatives in Mexico there but I have more security here. I feel that I don’t belong anymore. The experiences of my relatives in Mexico have been different from mine. I have more passion to fight against injustice here.”



## V. CONCLUSIONS

Our primary goal in this study was to document the trajectory of adaptation and attainment of one and-a-half generation Mexican youth in Oregon, a segment of the rapidly growing Latino/Hispanic population. We are interested in helping those who serve this population and especially policy makers learn the following. First, it is important that we understand the barriers and the obstacles these youth have had to overcome in order to be successful at school. Second, there is a tremendous need for developing cultural competency among teachers and school personnel in order to root out indifference, racism and discrimination. Third, family support plays a major role in motivating youth to go to college. Fourth, student support services in college play an important role in the success of these youth once they reach college. Fifth, with the regularization of immigration status and access to educational financial aid, the children of Mexican immigrants can indeed be successful and make it in Oregon society. Given the growing numbers of Latino/Hispanic youth in the Oregon school system today, policy makers and educators need to think about how to equip them with the tools and strategies for successful integration rather than having them experience downward assimilation in the future. Our study suggests the formation of hybrid identities and segmented acculturation can produce positive results for non-European immigrants like our sample. In Oregon today one does not have to follow the linear migration path of assimilation to be successful—this is particularly relevant for non-white ethnic populations.

Transnational lifestyles and linkages have made segmented assimilation more likely the path that many non-white immigrants in Oregon in the future will pursue. Crucial to their success and integration is the granting of legal status to immigrants and their foreign-born children -- otherwise, a likely outcome for many youth in the future will be adversarial acculturation and downward assimilation.



OSU Students perform Aztec danza (Courtesy of MEChA)

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Immigrants, are currently attending school in the United States. Many of them have been here since childhood. They have received much of their schooling in the United States and they have spent years acculturating to U.S. society. However, their hopes for the future are bleak because without legal status they have little hope of pursuing a higher education. In this age of a highly segmented labor market, a college education becomes increasingly important to the children of immigrants who desire to pursue careers beyond the service sector. Those who are unable to complete a high school education will undoubtedly face downward assimilation. The prospects are not much better for those who do graduate from high school but are unable to attend college. To address these issues, government and educational institutions need to develop policies that treat the children of immigrants as future citizens and contributors to the common good of this country. Thus, we recommend:

### **The Regularization of their Civil Status**

Legal status will open many doors to youth interested in pursuing a college degree. Furthermore, it will make them eligible for in-state tuition in Oregon and for financial aid. The creation of viable paths to citizenship is the most crucial element vis-à-vis the future higher education of immigrant children.

### **Provide Financial Aid**

Given the economic status of so many immigrant parents, many of whom live below the poverty lines, financial aid is a crucial factor in helping immigrant children attend college.

### **Help Parents Help their Children**

The support of parents plays a very important role in instilling the desire to achieve a higher education. But parents often do not have sufficient human capital to go beyond emotional support. Legal

status for parents will give them access to tools, programs, and services that will increase their human capital, which in turn can be used to promote their children's college education. The schools also need to provide liaison agents and programs that educate parents regarding the ways and expectations of American schools so parents are better prepared to help educate their children.

### **Change Attitudes in the Public Schools and Provide Training in Cultural Competence**

The children of immigrants, in many cases, face blatant discrimination which has a detrimental effect on the self-esteem of immigrant youth; in others, benign neglect has the same effect. School personnel and educators must understand the challenges that these youths face and be sensitive to their needs, which may differ considerably from those of mainstream students. Immigrant Students are eager to achieve, and many bring from home a desire to attend college. To this end, teacher certification programs and the schools themselves must provide training in cultural competency for all school personnel. They should also implement policies that call for accountability for the education of immigrant children and assessment programs driven by measurable benchmarks.

### **Provide Meaningful and Effective Curriculum for Immigrant Students**

The public schools must continue to explore the most effective methods for teaching English and also content in the native language while students learn English. They can also contribute to the civil status of their immigrant students by providing, as part of their social science curriculum, training for the citizenship exam.

### Change Attitudes in Universities

Universities are certainly becoming aware of the fact that the demographics of the college bound student pools are changing and will change even more drastically in the near future. Hence, they must create strong articulation programs with elementary, mid- and high schools, and community colleges, and they must pay serious attention to the creation of access for this changing pool. They must also pay more than lip service to the hiring of faculty and staff from immigrant communities.

### Continue to Support Migrant Education Programs

Migrant Education Programs in Oregon have been quite successful in addressing issues of retention and access, but they frequently do not go past the elementary grades. These programs need to be strongly articulated across the K-16 curriculum and given the financial support needed for effective functioning and impact.

### Provide College Student Support Services

Universities such as OSU already provide excellent student support services, including a cultural center, student organizations, and academic support programs, recruitment and orientations programs, and culturally relevant academic programs. These programs play an important role in retention of immigrant students, and they must continue to operate at sufficient levels of funding and commitment. Universities must also broaden student mentoring, preparation and opportunities for graduate education, and opportunities for helping immigrant students become a part of the university community life.



OSU Students on deck of Centro Cultural Cesar Chavez, 2005. Courtesy MEChA.

## REFERENCES

- Alba, R.D., Nee, V. (1997). Rethinking assimilation theory for a new era of immigration. *International Migration Review*, 31(4), pp. 218-234.
- Andrews, Tracy J., Vickie D. Ybarra, and Teresa Miramontes. 2002. Negotiating Survival: Undocumented Mexican Immigrant Women in the Pacific Northwest. *The Social Science Journal* 39:431-49.
- Andreas, P. 1998. The U.S. Immigration Control Offensive. In M.M. Suarez Orosco ed., *Crossings*. Cambridge Harvard Univesity Press, 341-356.
- Calavita, Kitty. 1992. *Inside the State: The Bracero Program, Immigration, and the I.N.S.* New York and London: Routledge.
- Chávez, Leo R. 1992. *Shadowed Lives: Undocumented Immigrants in American Society*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, Jovano-vich.
- Cornelius, Wayne A. 1990. "Impacts of the 1986 U.S. Immigration Law on Emigration from Rural Mexican Sending Communi-ties. Frank D. Bean, Barry Edmonston, and Jeffrey S. Passel, eds. *Undocumented Migration to the United States: IRCA and the Experience of the 1980s*. Santa Monica, CA., Rand Corp; Washington D.C.: Urban Institute Press, 227-249.
- Cornelius, Wayne A. 1978. *Mexican Migration to the United States: Causes, Consequences, and the U.S. responses*. Cambridge, MA: Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute for Technology.
- DeWind, J., & Kasinitz, P. (1997). Everything old is new again? Processes and theories of immigrant incorporation. *International Migration Review*, 31(4), 1096 1111.
- Driscoll, Barbara. 1999. *The Tracks North: The Railroad Bracero Program of World War II*. Austin: University of Mexican American Studies.
- Donato, K.M. 1993. Current Trends and Patterns of Female Migration: Evidence from Mexico. *International Migration Review*, 27:748-771.
- Gamboa, Erasmo. 1990. *Mexican Labor and World War II: Braceros in the Pacific Northwest, 1942-1947*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Gamboa, Erasmo and Carolyn M. Buan. 1995. *Nosotros, the Hispanic People of Oregon*. Portland, OR: The Oregon Council for the Humanities.
- Gamio, Manuel. 1930. *Mexican Immigration to the United States*. Rpnt. 1969. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gans, Herbert. 1992a. Second Generation Decline: Scenarios for the Economic and Ethnic Futures of the Post- 1965 American Immigrants. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 15:173-92.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1992b). Comment: Ethnic invention and acculturation, a bumpy-line approach. *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 11 (2), pp. 42-52.
- Kao, Grace and Marta Tienda 1998. Educational Aspirations of Minority Youth. *Journal of Education* 106(3):349-84.
- Kibria, N. (1997). The Construction of `Asian American' Reflections on Inter marriage and Ethnic Identity among Second Genera-tion Chinese and Korean Americans. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 20(3):523-544.
- Levitt, P., & Waters, M. (2002). *The changing face of home: The transnational lives of the second generation*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Lopez, David E. & Ricardo D. Stanton-Salazar (2001) Mexican Americans, a Second Generation at Risk. In Rubén G. Rumbaut & Alejandro Portes (eds) *Ethnicities, Children of Immigrant America*. Lon on, England: Univer-city of California Press, pp.57-90.
- Loprinzi, Colleen Marie. 1991. Hispanic Migrant Labor in Oregon, 1940-1990. M.A. Thesis: Portland State University.
- Mahler, Sarah J. 1995. *American Dreaming. Immigrant Life on the Margins*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Martin, P. 1999. The Endless Debate: Immigration and U.S. Agriculture. In P. Duignan and L. Gann (eds.) *The Debate in the United States over Immigration*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, pp.79-101.



## REFERENCES *Cont.*

- Martinez, Ruben. 2001. *Crossing Over. A Mexican Family on the Migrant Trail*. N.Y.: Picador-Henry Holt and Company.
- Massey, Douglas and Rafael Alarcón, Jorge Durand, Humberto Gonzáles. 1987. *Return to Aztlan: The Social Process of International Migration from Western Mexico*. Berkeley: U California Press.
- Massey, Douglas S., Jorge Durand, and Nolan J. Malone. 2002. *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors: Mexican Immigration in an Era of Economic Integration*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Nagel, J. (1994). Constructing ethnicity: Creating and recreating ethnic identity and culture. *Social Problems*, 41(1), 152-176.
- Nevins, Joseph. 2002. *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the "Illegal Alien" and the Making of the U.S.-Mexico boundary*. New York: Routledge.
- Perlmann, J. (2002). Second-generation transnationalism. In P. Levitt and M. Waters (Eds.), *The changing face of home: The transnational lives of the second generation*. (pp. 216-220). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Portes, Alejandro and Rubén Rumbaut. 1996. *Immigrant America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Second Edition.
- Portes, Alejandro and Rubén Rumbaut. 2001. *Legacies: The Story of the New Second Generation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Portes, A., & Zhou, M. (1993). The new second generation: Segmented assimilation and its variants among post-1965 immigrant youth. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 530, 74-98.
- Northwest Federation of Community Organizations. 2006. *In Our Words: Immigrants Experiences in the Northwest*. Seattle, WA. (Available online at [www.nwfc.org](http://www.nwfc.org))
- Rothemberg, Daniel. 1998. *With These Hands. The Hidden World of Migrant Farmworkers Today*. Berkeley University of California Press.
- Rumbaut, Rubén G. 1991. Agony of Exile: A Study of the Migration and Adaptation of Indochinese Refugees in the United States." In Frederick L. Ahearn Jr. and Jean Athey (eds) *Refugee Polity: Canada and the United States* Toronto: York Lanes Press.
- Rumbaut, Ruben G. 1996. The Crucible Within: Ethnic Identity, Self-esteem, and Segmented Assimilation among Children of Immigrants. In Alejandro Portes (ed) *The New Second Generation*. NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Scruggs, Otey M. 1979. "Texas and the Bracero Program 1942-1947." Kiser George and Marta Woody Kiser (eds) *Mexican Workers in the United States: Historical and Political Perspectives*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1988. *Braceros, "Wetbacks," and the Farm Labor Problem: Mexican Agricultural Labor the United States 1942-1954*. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.
- Stonequist, E. (1961). *The marginal man: A study in personality and culture conflict*. New York: Russell & Russell.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publishing.
- Valdés. Guadalups. 1996. *Con Respeto: Bridging the Distances Between Culturally Diverse Families and Schools: An Ethnographic Portrait*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Vélez-Ibáñez, Carlos G., Anna Sampaio, Manono Gonzáles-Estay. 2002. *Transnational Latina/o Communities: Politics, Processes, and Cultures*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Wells, Miriam J. 1976. "Emigrants from the Migrant Stream: Environment and Incentives in Relocation." *Aztlán* 7:2 (Summer 1976):267-289.
- Zhou, M.1999. Coming of age: The The Current



