

Hispanic Indicators

A statistical review of the Hispanic experience in the United States

by Edwin S. Rubenstein

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I. Demographics

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Population Growth

Following a post-2000 population surge, Hispanics are now the largest minority group in the United States. From April 1, 2000 through July 1, 2002 the nation's Hispanic population increased from 35.3 million to 38.8 million – a leap of 9.8% – to surpass Blacks as the largest minority. Hispanics now make up 13.5% of the nation's population. According to Census Bureau estimates:

- Hispanics accounted for fully one-half of the nation's total population increase since the 2000 Census.
- By 2050 nearly one-quarter of the U.S. population will be Hispanic.
- More than half (53%) of Hispanic population growth between 2000 and 2002 was the result of international migration.
- Two-thirds (66.9%) of Hispanics are of Mexican origin; the population from Mexico is nearly six times larger than the foreign-born population from the next highest country: China.
- Following Mexicans are Central and South Americans (14.3% of all U.S. Hispanics); Puerto Ricans (8.6%); Cubans (3.7%); and other Hispanic origins (the remaining 6.5%).

Of the Hispanics currently in the United States, about 40% are foreign born. By comparison, only 3.6% of non-Hispanic whites and 6.3% of Blacks were born abroad. Only Asians have a larger foreign-born share – 61.3%.

The huge increase in Hispanic immigrants is primarily driven by economics. Workforce participation among Hispanic males is 80%, the highest of any measured group. More than 70% of Hispanic immigrants who lack a high school education are active members of the labor force, either working or looking for work. This is not true for Native dropouts. But many Hispanics come here only to work and expect to return home; only 7.3% of those who arrived between 1990 and 2002 have

become U.S. citizens. Still, partly because children born here are automatically citizens, about 70% of Hispanics have U.S. citizenship.

U.S. Population by Hispanic Origin And Race, 1990-2050

	Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Other
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(Number in Millions)

1990	22.4	188.3	29.3	8.8
2000	35.3	195.6	34.3	16.2
2002	38.8	196.8	35.3	17.3
2025*	61.4	209.3	43.5	23.6
2050*	98.2	213.0	53.5	39.0

(Percent of Total)

1990	9.0%	75.7%	11.8%	3.5%
2000	12.5%	69.5%	12.2%	5.8%
2002	13.5%	68.2%	12.2%	6.1%
2025*	18.2%	62.0%	12.9%	7.0%
2050*	24.3%	52.8%	13.3%	9.7%

*Census Bureau projections

Source: 2002, 2000: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Public Information Office, Press Release, June 18,

2003. <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-100.html>

1990: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2001, Table 17, p. 19.

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/01statab/pop.pdf>

2025, 2050 projections: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2002, Table 1, p. 19.

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/02statab/pop.pdf>

Foreign Born Population by Race, 2000

	Foreign Born (Millions)	% of Foreign Born	% of Group's Total Population
Hispanic	12.8	45.2%	39.1%
Asian	6.7	23.6%	61.4%
White, non-Hispanic	7.0	24.8%	3.6%
Black	2.2	7.8%	6.3%
Total	28.4	100.0%	10.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "Profile of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2000," December 2001. Table 9-1, page 24; Figure 9-1, page 25. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/p23-206.pdf>

Age Distribution

The Hispanic population is younger on average than the population overall. In 2000 the median age of Hispanics in the United States was 26.6 years, or fully 12 years less than that of non-Hispanic whites. More than one-third (34.4%) of the Hispanic population was under 18 in 2002, compared with 22.8% of non-Hispanic whites. Conversely, relatively few Latinos were 65 and

older (5.1%), in contrast with non-Hispanic whites (14.4%).

Mexican-origin Hispanics are the youngest of all Hispanic groups. Since Mexican immigrants are the fastest growing Hispanic group, the age differential between Hispanics and other ethnic groups is sure to increase in the future.

Fertility Rates

Although Hispanics account for 13.5% of the U.S. population, about 21% of all babies born in the United States are born to Hispanic mothers. The disproportionate number of Hispanic births reflects both the relative youth of this population and the propensity of Hispanic women to have babies.

Nearly one-quarter (24.0%) of Hispanic females were in the childbearing ages 19 to 44 years old, in 2002. The comparable figure for non-Hispanic white females was 20.5%.

Hispanic fertility rates are also quite a bit higher than those of the white or black population. In fact they are at levels reminiscent of the baby-boom era of the 1950s. In 2001 the general fertility rate (births per 1,000 women in the child bearing ages, 15 to 44) ranged from 57.7 for non-Hispanic white women to 96.0 for Hispanic women. Fertility rates for all population groups have declined since 1990, with the largest declines reported for non-Hispanic Black women. Hispanics were the only group not to experience reduced fertility between 2000 and 2001.

Another measure of fertility is the hypothetical number of births a woman would have over her

childbearing years if she experienced the age-specific birthrates for her group. Based on 2001 fertility rates, the estimated number of lifetime births per woman in specific groups are: Non-Hispanic white, 1.84; non-Hispanic black, 2.10; Hispanics, 2.75. The “replacement” rate - 2.1 births per women - is considered the value at which a group can exactly replace itself over the course of a generation.

Within the Hispanic community, Mexican-American women are expected to average 3.32 births over their life-time, compared, for example, to 1.7 births for Cuban-American women and 2.2 births for Puerto Rican women, birth rates that are comparable to those of black and non-Hispanic white women.

The figures are further evidence that people of Mexican origin will have an increasing demographic significance in American society. Their birth rates are increasing, while the birth rates of blacks and whites have declined. As a result, even if immigration were suddenly to stop, Hispanics will continue to represent an ever-larger share of the U.S. population.

Median Age by Race/Ethnicity, 2000

Total, All Races	35.9 years
White, non-Hispanic	38.6
Asian/Pacific Islander	32.4
Black, non-Hispanic	30.6
Hispanic	26.6

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, “Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics,” April 2003, Section 1.2, page 9. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003008.pdf>.

Fertility Rates by Ethnic Group
(Births per 1,000 women aged 15-44 years in each group)

	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black	Asian	Hispanic
1990	62.8	89.0	69.5	107.7
2000	58.5	71.4	65.8	95.9
2001	57.7	69.1	64.2	96.0
Percent Change:				
1990-2001	-8.1%	-22.4%	-7.6%	-10.9%
2000-2001	-1.4%	-3.2%	-2.4%	0.1%

Source: National Vital Statistics Report, "Revised Birth and Fertility Rates for the United States," Vol. 51, No.4, February 6, 2003. Figure 1, page 3. http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr51/nvsr51_04.pdf

Teen Pregnancy

Overall birth rates for teenagers have declined for a decade, and were at historic low levels in 2001. In recent years, however, the birth rate for Hispanic teenagers has not declined as rapidly as that of other ethnic groups. Thus, while a decade ago Black teenagers were more likely to give birth than Hispanic teenagers,

the situation is reversed today. There were 86.4 births per 1,000 Hispanic teen-age girls in 2001 compared to 73.5 births for non-Hispanic black teenagers.

Research shows that teenagers who have children are less likely to complete high school than those who postpone childbearing until adulthood.

Teen Birth Rates by Ethnic Group

(Births per 1,000 women 15-19 years of age)

	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Asian	Hispanic
1990	42.5	116.2	26.4	100.3
2000	32.6	79.2	20.5	87.3
2001	30.3	73.5	19.8	86.4
Percent Change:				
1990-2000	-23.3%	-31.8%	-22.3%	-13.0%
2000-2001	-7.1%	-7.2%	-3.4%	-1.0%

Source: National Vital Statistics Report, "Revised Birth and Fertility Rates for the United States," Vol. 51, No. 4, February 6, 2003. Table 2, pages 8-9. http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr51/nvsr51_04.pdf

Illegitimacy

Illegitimacy rates – births per 1,000 unmarried women of childbearing age – have declined for all groups since the mid-1990s, but Hispanics have lagged the overall trend. Thus in 1990 the illegitimacy rate for

Blacks was above the rate for Hispanics, but by 1995 Hispanic rates were above those of Blacks. The most recent data, for 2001, show Hispanics as the only group for which illegitimacy rates did not decline from the prior year. (See table.)

In illegitimacy, as with teenage births, Hispanics have traded places with Blacks as the worst performing group.

A slightly better picture emerges when you look at the percent of all births that are out-of-wedlock. Because Hispanic women of child-bearing age are more likely to be married than black women, a smaller share of all Hispanic births are out-of-wedlock. The percent of births to unmarried women in 2000 was 42.7% for Hispanics, 68.7% for Blacks, and 22.1% for non-Hispanic whites.

It has been said that many, if not most, illegitimate births are followed shortly thereafter by marriage, obviating any problems associated with single parent households. There is some evidence for this hypothesis: The share of Hispanic children living in single-parent families is considerably less than the fraction of out-of-wedlock births. But the numbers are still daunting: 4.3 million, or 35% of Hispanic children under 18, live in single-parent families. Comparable rates for black and

non-Hispanic white children are 63% and 22%, respectively.

Does it matter? In a lecture to the American Enterprise Institute, Professor James Q. Wilson said that the empirical data regarding the importance of family structure is “so strong that even some sociologists believe it.” For instance: Children in one-parent families are twice as likely to drop out of school as children in two-parent families. Boys in one-parent families are much more likely to be both out of school and out of work. Girls in one-parent families are twice as likely to have an out-of-wedlock birth.

Professor Wilson cites a Department of Health and Human Services study of 30,000 American households, which found that for whites, Blacks, and Hispanics at every income level except for the very highest, children raised in single-parent homes are much more likely to be suspended from school, to have emotional problems, and to behave badly.

Illegitimacy Rates by Race and Ethnicity

Year	All Races	White, Non-Hispanic	Black	Hispanic
(Live births per 1,000 Unmarried Women 15-44 years old)				
1990	43.8	24.4	90.5	89.6
1995	45.1	28.2	75.9	95.0
2000	44.0	28.0	70.5	87.2
2001	43.8	27.8	68.2	87.8
Percent Change:				
1990-2001	0.0%	13.9%	-24.6%	-2.0%
2000-2001	-0.5%	-0.7%	-3.3%	+0.7

Source: 1990-1999: National Center for Health Statistics, Table 1-18.
<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/statab/t991x18.pdf>.

2000-2001: National Vital Statistics Report, “Revised Birth and Fertility Rates for the United States,” Vol. 51, No. 4, February 6, 2003. Table 5, page 14.
http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr51/nvsr51_04.pdf.

Abortion

Hispanic women are more than twice as likely to

have abortions than non-Hispanic white women, but about one-third less likely than black women. Abortion

rates have been declining for more than a decade. Experts have attributed this trend to many factors- AIDS fears. Abstinence education, increased use of contraceptives, a strong economy, and delayed childbearing.

But when you analyze the data by income, abortions are found to be increasingly common among poor women. In fact, the rate of abortions among poor Hispanic women – 68 per 1,000 women – exceeds the comparable rate for poor Blacks.

Abortion Rate By Race and Poverty Status, 2000
(Abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44)

	White, Non-Hispanic	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total (All Women)	13	49	33
Poor Women	23	62	68

Source: Guttmacher Institute, Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health, Volume 34, Number 5, September/October 2002. Table 1. <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/journals/3422602.pdf>

Experts are not sure why the rate for poor Hispanics increased, and is now so dramatically higher than that of other groups. Some say that welfare reform may have reduced the number of Hispanic women

receiving Medicaid, which covers family planning services. The data we present below on welfare reciprocity among Hispanics show no sign of such a decline, however.

II. Education

Educational Achievement

Americans are better educated than ever. But according to recent data released by the U.S. Census Bureau, one group appears to lag far behind. Hispanics have lower high school graduation rates than whites or blacks and substantially lower college attendance and

graduation rates. In 2001 only 56.5% of adult Hispanics were High School graduates. By comparison, 79.5% of non-Hispanic Blacks and 88.7% of non-Hispanic Whites were high school graduates. And only 11% of Hispanics, compared with 16% of blacks and 29% of non-Hispanic whites, have college degrees.

Highest Level of Education Attained by
Population 25 years and older, 2001
(Percent of Population)

	Hispanic	Black, Non-Hispanic	White, Non-Hispanic
Less than High School	43.5%	20.5%	11.3%
High School Graduate	56.5%	79.5%	88.7%
Bachelor and above	11.2%	16.1%	28.6%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "Digest of Education Statistics 2002," June 2003. Table 9, page 18. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003060.pdf>

As troubling as these statistics are, they don't tell the whole story of sub-par educational achievement among Hispanics. Unlike the overwhelming majority of both whites and blacks, a huge portion of Hispanics are

born – and educated – abroad. Among adults over 25 (the group covered in the Census study) foreign-born Hispanics actually outnumber the U.S.-born by 8.9 million to 7.5 million. To lump together foreign-educated

Hispanics with their American born and educated counterparts distorts the picture of Hispanic educational achievement.

High School Dropout Rates

High school dropout rates are a “leading indicator” of future trends in educational achievement levels. Over

the past 30 years dropout rates have fallen for all races and ethnicities. For Hispanics, however, these declines have not been as sharp as for other groups:

Percent of High School Dropouts (Status Dropouts) Among Persons 16 to 24 Years Old

Hispanic as multiple of:

	All Races	White, Non-Hispanic	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	White, Non-Hispanic	Black, Non-Hispanic
1972	14.6%	12.3%	21.3%	34.3%	2.79	1.61
1980	14.1	11.4	19.1	35.2	3.09	1.84
1990	12.1	9.0	13.2	32.4	3.60	2.45
1995	12.0	8.6	12.1	30.0	3.49	2.48
1996	11.1	7.3	13.0	29.4	4.03	2.26
1997	11.0	7.6	13.4	25.3	3.33	1.89
1998	11.8	7.7	13.8	29.5	3.83	2.14
1999	11.2	7.3	12.6	28.6	3.92	2.27
2000	10.9	6.9	13.1	27.8	4.03	2.12
2001	10.7	7.3	10.9	27.0	3.70	2.47

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, “Digest of Education Statistics 2002,” June 2003. Table 108, page 132. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003060.pdf>.

The percentage of 16- to 24- year olds who are out of school and who have not earned a high school credential, such as a General Educational Development certificate (GED), is called the status dropout rate. In 2001 the status dropout rate for Hispanics was 27.0%, or nearly two and one-half times higher than the Black dropout rate and almost four-times higher than the dropout rate for whites. Although the Hispanic dropout

rate fell by 7.3 percentage points since 1972 (the first year of available data), other ethnicities have experienced greater improvements over that period, and the relative dropout rate disadvantage of Hispanic students has widened.

Immigrants are responsible for most – but not all – of the stubborn trend.

Dropout Rates By Recency of Immigration, 2000

Immigration Status	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	Hispanic as Multiple of Non-Hispanic
Born outside the U.S.	44.2%	7.4%	6.0
First Generation	14.6%	4.6%	3.2

Second Generation	15.9%	8.2%	1.9
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Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center For Education Statistics, "Status And Trends in the Education of Hispanics," April 2003, Supplemental Table 3.3b.
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003008.pdf>

More than half of Hispanic immigrants never enrolled in a U.S. school but are counted as high school dropouts if they did not complete high school in their country of origin. The status dropout rate for Hispanics born outside the U.S. is 44.2%, far greater than the rate for first generation Hispanic youth (14.6%). However, even Hispanic youth born in the U.S., both first and second generation, are more likely to drop out than their counterparts in other race/ethnicities. More troubling is the fact that second generation Hispanic youth have higher dropout rates than first generation.

Problems learning the English language, often made worse by their mandatory enrollment in bi-lingual

education programs, have discouraged many Hispanic students from staying in school. Language is not the only barrier, however. Dr. Lauro Cavazos, the former Secretary of Education and the first Hispanic Cabinet member, was roundly criticized a few years ago for suggesting that Hispanic parents were partly to blame for lower Hispanic educational achievement. Instead of encouraging their kids to continue their education, many Hispanic parents pressure their children to become self-supporting and to contribute to the family income. These youth find themselves in conflict between immediate family obligations and their long-run future.

SAT Scores

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) measures student academic preparation for college by measuring verbal and mathematical skills, and is used as a predictor to success in college. Minorities represent about one-third (36%) of all SAT test takers in 2003. Hispanics

accounted for 10% of all test takers, up from 7% in 1991.

In 2003 Hispanic students scored above Blacks on both the verbal and math SAT, but lagged below the national average and whites.

Average SAT Scores by Race/Ethnicity, 1987-2003

Racial/Ethnic Background	1987	1996	2000	2001	2002	2003	% Change 1987-2003
SAT Verbal							
White	524	526	528	529	527	529	1.0%
Black	428	434	434	433	430	431	0.7%
Hispanic or Latino	464	465	461	460	458	457	-1.5%
Mexican/Mexican American	457	455	453	451	446	448	-2.0%
Puerto Rican	436	452	456	457	455	456	4.6%
Asian American	479	496	499	501	501	508	6.1%
SAT Mathematical							
White	514	523	530	531	533	534	3.9%
Black	411	422	426	426	427	426	3.6%
Hispanic or Latino	462	466	467	465	464	464	0.4%
Mexican/Mexican American	455	459	460	458	457	457	0.4%

Puerto Rican	432	445	451	451	451	453	4.9%
Asian American	541	558	565	566	569	575	6.3%

Note: Possible Scores on each part of the SAT range from 200 to 800.

Source: College Entrance Examination Board, National Report on College-Bound Seniors, various years.

Latinos and Mexican-Americans were the only major ethnic groups for which average verbal SAT scores declined between 1987 and 2003 (-1.3%). Their math scores rose a mere 0.4% over that period, or at a fraction of the 3.9% gain for Whites, the 3.6% gain for Blacks, and the 6.3% gain for Asian-Americans.

As seen in the table, the pattern varies greatly among Hispanic subgroups. Between 1987 and 2003, verbal scores rose by 20 points (4.6%) for Puerto Ricans, but declined by 9 points (-2.0%) for Mexican-Americans and by 7 points (-1.5%) for other Hispanic/Latino groups. In the same period math scores rose for Puerto Ricans by 21 points (4.9%), while Mexican-Americans and other Hispanic/Latinos recorded gains of just 2 points (0.4%).

Many high school students also take the American College Testing (ACT) exam, which is another standardized test used as an entry criterion by a large number of colleges and universities. Composite ACT scores below 19 indicate minimal readiness for college, and students receiving such scores are likely to need remedial courses in college. The average ACT score for

Mexican American/ Chicano students in 2002 was 18.2, and for Puerto Rican/other Hispanic students it was 18.8. Among various racial/ethnic groups, Caucasians in the graduating class of 2002 earned the highest average ACT composite score at 21.7, followed closely by Asian-Americans at 21.6. African-American students were last, scoring an average of 16.8.

Average ACT scores in 2002 were down slightly among students in all racial/ethnic groups compared to the prior year, most by 0.1 to 0.3 points, again due to the expanded pool of test-takers and the larger number of test-takers who were not preparing for college. For Hispanic students, the test-score decline was particularly large, dropping by more than half a point (0.6). This decline can be attributed to the 21-percent increase in the number of Hispanic students tested this year, and the fact that a large number of those students did not take a core college-preparatory curriculum. The average ACT composite score earned by Hispanic students not taking the core curriculum was 17.4. In comparison, Hispanic students who took the core curriculum earned an average composite score of 20.0.

III. Student Crime

Street Gangs

Hispanic students are more likely to be members and/or victims of street gangs than other ethnic or racial groups. In 1999 28% of Hispanic students ages 12

through 19 reported that gangs were present in their schools, compared to 25% of non-Hispanic Blacks and 13% of non-Hispanic whites.

**Percent of Students Reporting that Gangs Were Present at School
During the Previous 6 Months
(Students Ages 12 through 18)**

	White, Non-Hispanic	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1989	12%	20%	32%
1995	23	35	50
1999	13	25	28

Source: U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice (Bureau of Justice Statistics), "Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2000," October 2000.

Table 16-3. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/2001017.pdf>.

As seen in the table, from 1995 to 1999 the number of students who reported that street gangs were present at their schools decreased. However the 1995 survey showed that half of all Hispanic students experienced gangs, compared to 35% of Blacks and 23% of whites.

This information is from a report released in 2000 by the U.S. Department of Education. The information presented in the report was obtained from many data

sources, including databases from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). While some of the data were universe surveys, most were gathered by sample surveys. Although the numbers are old, they are the most recent national statistics available.

Violence on School Property

School violence is a never-ending concern among policy-makers, administrators, and students. The threat of violence can create, at the minimum, a distraction from class routines for students worried about their safety. At its worst, such violence can endanger the lives

of students and school staff.

Survey data from 2001 show that Black and Hispanic students are twice as likely as white students to feel too unsafe to go to school. Fourteen percent of Hispanic students reported they had been involved in a physical fight on school property within the past 12 months.

School Violence by Race/Ethnicity of Students, 2001
(Percent of Students in Grades 9 to 12 Reporting Incidents)

Incident	White, Non-Hispanic	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Felt too unsafe to go to school	5%	10%	10%
Carried a weapon to school	6%	6%	6%
Threatened or injured with a weapon on school property	9%	9%	9%
Engaged in a physical fight on school property	11%	17%	14%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics," April 2003, Chapter 6.6, page 91. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003008.pdf>.

Drug and Alcohol Use

Engaging in risk by using alcohol or illegal drugs, has been linked to school dropout rates, depression, crime, and violence. In 1999, a greater percentage of Hispanic students (16.8%) than Blacks (8.8%) or Asians (7.1%) reported using alcohol in the past month, but about as

many Hispanics as whites (16.4%) had done so.

Hispanics are also more likely than Blacks or Asians to have used drugs other than marijuana in the past month or year, but the gap between Hispanics and whites is not statistically different.

Drug and Alcohol Use Among Students By Race/Ethnicity, 1999
 (Percent of 12 to 17 year-olds who reported using alcohol or illicit drugs)

	White, Non-Hispanic	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian
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Any illicit drug other than marijuana:

in the past month	4.7%	3.3%	5.3%	1.7%
In the past year	12.6%	8.0%	16.8%	6.0%

Alcohol:

in the past month	16.4%	8.8%	16.8%	7.1%
In the past year	36.3%	21.2%	32.4%	21.4%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics," April 2003, Chapter 6.4, page 87.
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003008.pdf>.

IV. Economic/Labor Force Status

Income Levels

The United States economy boomed in the late 1990s. The national unemployment rate fell to under 4% for the first time since January 1970. Real GDP growth per capita averaged 3.2% per year between 1995 and 2000, breaking out of the 1.9% average annual rate, which prevailed between 1973 and 1990, and the 1.3% averaged between 1990 and 1995.

At first glance, Hispanics did very well during the 1990s boom. The poverty rate of Hispanics reached an all time low, while median per capita income rose to a

record high. The evidence seems to support President Kennedy’s famous statement that “a rising tide lifts all boats.”

But compared to other groups, the rising tide left Hispanics behind. Although Hispanic income is higher now than in 1990, Hispanics have lost ground relative to other groups. For example, in 1990 Hispanic median income (\$14,030 in 2001 dollars) was 3.4% higher than the Black median (\$13,564). By 2001 the positions were reversed, with Hispanic median income nearly 10% less than that of Blacks.

Median Per Capita Income by Race and Hispanic Origin

Year	Income in 2001 Dollars				Hispanic Income as a % of:	
	All Races	Whites	Blacks	Hispanics	Whites	Blacks
1975	\$16,425	\$17,077	\$11,759	\$13,885	81.3%	118.1%
1980	16,164	16,748	11,887	13,649	81.5%	114.8%
1990	18,889	19,745	13,564	14,030	71.1%	103.4%
1995	19,349	20,014	14,846	13,576	67.8%	91.5%
2000	22,117	22,418	18,754	16,680	73.9%	88.9%
2001	21,934	22,418	18,437	16,705	74.5%	90.6%

Source: U.S. Census, “Historical Income Tables % People,” Tables P-7, P-7a, P-7b, P-7c.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/income/histinc/incperdet.html>.

Note: The table shows trends in median per capita income rather than the more frequently cited median household income. Because household size varies among racial groups and over time, the per capita measure is deemed a better measure of living standards.

Per Capita Income by Country of Origin and Ethnic Group, 1999

Ethnicity/Country	Income in 1999 Dollars	As % of U.S. Average
U.S. Total	\$21,587	100.0%
White Only	\$23,918	110.8%
Black Alone	\$14,437	66.9%
Asian Indian	\$27,514	127.5%
Chinese	\$23,756	110.0%
Filipino	\$21,267	98.5%
Hmong	\$6,600	30.6%
Japanese	\$30,075	139.3%
Vietnamese	\$15,655	72.5%
Hispanic	\$12,111	56.1%
Mexican	\$10,918	50.6%
Puerto Rican	\$13,518	62.6%
Cuban	\$20,451	94.7%

Source: Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 4 (SF4) % Sample Data. Table PCT130.
http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTGeoSearchByListServlet?ds_name=DEC_2000_SF4_U&lang=en&_ts=98621250228.

Hispanics of Mexican descent had incomes about half (50.6%) of the national average in 1999. Of the other groups displayed in the table only the Hmong, at 30.6% of U.S. average, had lower per capita incomes. The Hmong are refugees from Laos and Thailand, “most of whom speak no English, lack skills, and have no little concept of this country,” according to a recent newspaper report. [Monica Davey, “Decades After First Refugees, Ready for More Hmong,” New York Times, April 4, 2004.]

Hispanics in every region of the country enjoyed income gains in the 1990s, but in each case their income did not keep pace with that of other ethnic groups. In California, for example, Hispanic per capita income rose 37% between 1990 and 2000 versus a 51% gain for blacks, 46% for whites, and 61% for Asians. In New York State, where Mexican immigrants are far less a factor, the relative disadvantage for Hispanics is considerably less. Thus Hispanic per capita income grew 44% in New York State during the 1990s, just below the 47% of blacks and 45% for Asians. (See table.)

Hispanics in every region of the country enjoyed

Per Capita Income by Hispanic Origin and Race
Selected States, 2000

Arizona			Indiana			Massachusetts		
	Income	% change 1990-2000		Income	% change 1990-2000		Income	% change 1990-2000
White	\$23,088	54.3%	White	\$21,198	56.4%	White	\$27,808	54.5%
Black	\$16,075	65.9%	Black	\$15,049	72.2%	Black	\$16,011	47.3%
Hispanics	\$10,620	44.0%	Hispanics	\$12,921	40.1%	Hispanics	\$11,963	52.7%
Asian	\$21,876	86.8%	Asian	\$22,421	40.6%	Asian	\$21,452	69.4%
California			Florida			New Jersey		
	Income	% change 1990-2000		Income	% change 1990-2000		Income	% change 1990-2000
White	\$27,707	45.6%	White	\$23,919	49.0%	White	\$30,248	48.2%
Black	\$17,447	50.7%	Black	\$12,585	66.7%	Black	\$17,409	50.8%
Hispanics	\$11,674	37.3%	Hispanics	\$15,198	43.6%	Hispanics	\$14,804	37.6%
Asian	\$22,050	60.6%	Asian	\$20,429	63.2%	Asian	\$27,581	54.0%
New York			Pennsylvania			Colorado		
	Income	% change 1990-2000		Income	% change 1990-2000		Income	% change 1990-2000
White	\$27,244	46.6%	White	\$22,056	50.2%	White	\$25,965	67.2%
Black	\$15,498	46.7%	Black	\$13,901	52.1%	Black	\$17,838	54.1%
Hispanics	\$12,789	43.5%	Hispanics	\$11,014	47.1%	Hispanics	\$13,037	58.4%
Asian	\$20,618	44.7%	Asian	\$20,096	52.1%	Asian	\$20,958	93.6%

Sources: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF3) - Sample data. Tables 157A, 157B, 157D and 157H 1990 Summary Tape File 3 (STF 3); Tables P115A

and P116A. <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/sumfile3.html>

http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_ds_name=DEC_1990_STF3_&_program=DEC&_lang=en

In fact, the deterioration of Hispanic income levels relative to Blacks and whites has been a fact of life since the mid-1970s, when race-based data were first collected. In 1975 Hispanic median income was a whopping 18% above black median income and 19% below that of whites. By 2000 Hispanics were 11% below blacks and 26% below the white income figure. The Midwest is the only region in which Hispanic median income exceeds that of Blacks – 111.5% in 2001. The Midwest, interestingly, is also the region with the smallest

density of Hispanics, just 3.7% of the population.

There is a positive correlation between education and income for all racial/ethnic groups. Even after taking education levels into account, however, Hispanics are still at a disadvantage. In fact, the earnings gap between Hispanic and white men increases at higher educational levels. There is about a \$6,300, or 25% difference, at the high school level, and about a \$13,400, or 32% difference, at the bachelor's degree level.

Median Earnings for Males 25 years and Older By Race/ethnicity and Educational Attainment

Highest Degree Attained	Hispanic	White	Black
All education levels	\$23,425	\$36,668	\$28,167
High School	24,973	31,295	25,466
Bachelor's Degree	42,518	55,906	42,591
Master's Degree	47,946	60,450	47,170

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics," April 2003, Chapter 8, p. 117. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003008.pdf>.

The widening gap may reflect the fact that many college educated Hispanics were educated in their native country or at inferior institutions in the United States. Or there may be another factor – English language proficiency, for example – that prevents highly educated Hispanics from earning as much as comparably educated whites and blacks.

Hispanics are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to work in service occupations (22.1% versus 11.6%, respectively, in 2002) and were twice as likely to be

employed as operators and laborers than non-Hispanic whites (20.8% versus 10.9%, respectively). Conversely, only 14.2% of Hispanics were in managerial or professional occupations compared with 35.1% of non-Hispanic whites.

Among Latino groups, Central and South Americans were more likely than other groups to work in service occupations (27.3%), while Mexicans were the least likely to work in managerial or professional occupations (11.9%).

Unemployment

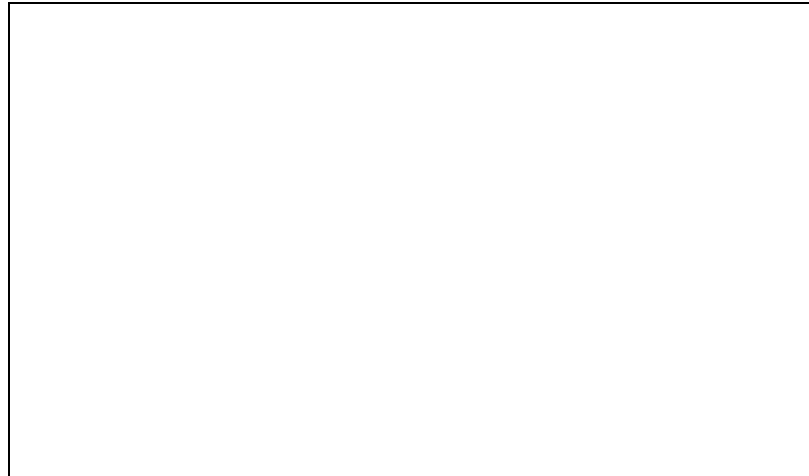
Hispanics are much more likely to be unemployed than whites, but less likely than Blacks. In July 2003 the unemployment rate for Hispanics 16 years old and over was 8.2%, versus 5.5% for whites and 12.0% for blacks. Among younger Hispanics, the unemployment rate is higher: 22.3% for ages 16 to 19. The same pattern is evident for young whites and Blacks, and presumably

relates to the fact that teenagers have fewer skills and less experience than the population that is 20 and older.

High unemployment does not imply lack of a work ethic among the Hispanic population. On the contrary, Hispanics place a high value on work – maybe too high for their own good. Hispanic labor force participation rose sharply in the late 1990s and as of July 2003 remains above that of whites and Blacks:

Labor Force Participation Rates

**by Race and
Hispanic Origin,
1990-2003**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Instead of continuing their education, many young Hispanics get jobs immediately after graduating high school, or drop out of school to help support their family. Immigrant “dropouts” are far more likely to be in the

labor force than U.S.-born dropouts. The different attitudes toward work are reflected in labor force participation rates and employment/population ratios:

**Labor Force Participation By Race, Ethnicity, and Education Level, 2001
(25 years and Older)**

Race/Ethnicity	Labor Force Participation Rate (1)		Employment/Population Ratio (2)	
	High School Dropouts	High School Graduates	High School Dropouts	High School Graduates
Hispanic	59.4%	73.9%	54.9%	70.7%
White, Non-Hispanic	38.5	62.5	34.4	60.3
Black	40.0	69.2	35.2	64.0

Source: Department of Education, “Digest of Education Statistics, 2002,” Table 378.
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003060.pdf>.

Nearly 60% of Hispanics who did not graduate high school are in the labor force, and 55% of them are

employed. Immigrant dropouts (not shown separately) are even more likely to be in the labor force than their

U.S.-born counterparts. More than 70% of Hispanic immigrants who lack a high school education are active members of the labor force, either working or looking for work. This is not true for native dropouts. About 60% of Blacks and 62% of whites who lack a diploma, for example, are out of the labor force altogether.

The Hispanic work ethic is also apparent among high school graduates. More than 70% of Hispanics who completed high school (and did not go to college) were employed in 2001. Comparable rates for non-Hispanic

whites and blacks: 60.3% and 64%.

The strong work ethic explains much of the low educational attainment in the Hispanic population. Instead of encouraging their kids to continue their education, many Hispanic parents are anxious for their children not only to become self-supporting but also to contribute their paychecks to the family's income. As a result, many young Hispanics are caught between family obligations and self-improvement.

Hispanics Displace Other Workers In the Jobless Economic Recovery

Latinos landed a disproportionate share of the jobs created in 2003. The media interpreted this trend as evidence that employers prefer more appreciative and less demanding immigrants. Behind the Latino job boom lie several troubling trends, however. First, the growth in immigrant employment did not keep pace with growth in the immigrant population. A study by the Pew Hispanic Center shows that between the fourth quarters of 2002

and 2003:

- The number of employed Latinos rose by almost 660,000, or 3.9%.
- Non-Latino employment rose by just 371,100, or by 0.3%
- The working-age Latino population (age 16+) grew 5.0%

Here are the details:

Labor Market Status of Hispanics and Non-Hispanics 2002-Q4 to 2003-Q4

	<u>2002-Q4</u>	<u>2003-Q4</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Hispanics				
Population (Age 16+)	26,679,616	28,009,420	1,329,804	5.0%
Labor Force	18,501,881	19,055,970	554,089	3.0%
Labor Force Participation Rate	69.3%	68.0%	-1.3%	-1.9%
Employment	17,050,550	17,710,191	659,641	3.9%
Employment-to-Population Ratio	63.9	63.2	-0.7	-1.1
Non-Hispanics				
Population (Age 16+)	192,578,469	194,222,382	1,643,693	0.9%
Labor Force	127,363,377	127,968,576	695,199	0.5%
Labor Force Participation Rate	66.1%	65.9%	-0.2%	-0.3%
Employment	120,727,584	121,098,550	371,066	0.3%
Employment-to-Population Ratio	62.7%	62.4%	-0.3%	-0.5%

Source: Pew Hispanic Center, "Latino Labor Report, 2003; Strong But Uneven Gains in Employment," February 2004. Table 1.

Employers prefer Latinos because they come cheap. Latino wages declined last year because the

supply of unskilled Latino labor exceeded the demand. From 2002-Q4 to 2003-Q4:

- Average wages for Latinos fell 2.6%
- Average wages for Whites and Blacks rose 0.8% and 4.8%, respectively

Although Latino immigrants are getting jobs, they're driving wages down for native-born Hispanics and other low-skilled workers. In the process they are displacing first and second generation Hispanics, many of whom are too discouraged to remain in the labor force. As a result, the overall labor force participation rate for

Hispanics fell in 2003 despite the increase in Hispanic employment.

When people leave the labor force they are no longer counted as unemployed. Had these labor force leavers been accounted for, Hispanic unemployment would double – to 14.3% from the official 7.1% rate reported for 2003-Q4. On this basis unemployment remained unchanged for Hispanics in the last six months of 2003 while declining for all other ethnic groups.

Official and Alternative Unemployment Rates for Hispanics and Non-Hispanics, 2003

	Official Unemployment Rate		Alternative Unemployment Rate (a)	
	2003-Q3	2003-Q4	2003-Q3	2003-Q4
All Workers	6.0%	5.6%	10.4%	10.0%
Hispanics	7.8%	7.1%	14.3%	14.3%
Non-Hispanic Whites	4.8%	4.5%	8.5%	8.0%
Non-Hispanic Blacks	11.2%	10.3%	17.4%	16.2%

Source: Pew Hispanic Center, "Latino Labor Report, 2003: Strong But Uneven Gains in Employment," February 2004. Table 2.

(a) Alternative unemployment rate includes discouraged workers currently not looking for work.

The inescapable conclusion: mass immigration of unskilled workers hurts Hispanics more than it hurts other ethnic groups.

Poverty

More than one in five Hispanics are poor. In 2002 8.6 million Hispanics, or 21.8% of the Hispanic population, had incomes below the poverty line. That compares to poverty rates of 8.0% for non-Hispanic whites (white alone) and 24.1% for Blacks (Black alone.)

Hispanics are over-represented among the working poor. In fact, 6.5% of Hispanics who worked full-time are poor, compared with 4.4% and 1.7% of

full-time Black and white workers, respectively. The persistence of poverty among full-time workers reflects the menial nature of the jobs, many of which are minimum wage positions.

While the Hispanic poverty rate remains nearly three times that of non-Hispanic whites, the decline in the Hispanic poverty rate was one of the bright spots of the 1990s economic expansion:

Hispanic Poverty Rate, 1974-2002

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "Poverty in the United States 2002," September 2003. Tables A-1 and A-2.
<http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/poverty02/tables02.html>.

After hitting an all-time high of 30.7% in 1994, the Hispanic poverty rate fell steadily to 21.4% in 2001. Hispanic poverty that year reached its lowest rate since the data were first collected in 1972. In 2002 the Hispanic poverty rate rose to 21.8% – a statistically insignificant move.

Poverty rates for Hispanic children under 18 have remained consistently above the overall Hispanic poverty rate, and – as the table below shows – are approaching the poverty rate of Black children. More than one-quarter – 28% - of Hispanic children live in poverty – compared to 9.5% of non-Hispanic white children and 30.2% of Black children. Child poverty rates for Hispanics have remained about three-times the comparable rate for non-Hispanic whites throughout the 1990s.

Poverty Rates of Children, by Race and Hispanic Origin, 1974-2002

					Hispanic as Multiple of:	
	All Races	White, Non- Hispanic	Black	Hispanic	White, Non- Hispanic	Black
1974	15.4%	9.5%	39.8%	28.6%	3.01	0.72
1980	18.3	11.8	42.3	33.2	2.81	0.78
1990	20.6	12.3	44.8	38.4	3.12	0.86
1995	20.8	11.2	41.9	40.0	3.57	0.95
1996	20.5	11.1	39.9	40.3	3.63	1.01
1997	19.9	11.4	37.2	36.8	3.23	0.99
1998	18.9	10.6	36.7	34.4	3.25	0.94
1999	16.9	9.4	33.1	30.3	3.22	0.92
2000	16.1	9.3	31.2	28.4	3.05	0.91
2001	16.3	9.5	30.2	28.0	2.95	0.93
2002	16.7	9.4	31.5	28.6	3.04	0.91

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "Poverty in the United States 2001," September 2003. Take A-2.
<http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/poverty02/tables02.html>.

Note: Poverty rate of children under 18 years of age. Racial categories were changed in 2002 making precise comparisons with earlier years difficult.

Family structure matters, with married-couple families less likely to be poor than families headed by women with no husband present. For example, 14% of Hispanic married couple families live in poverty compared to 34% of Hispanic families headed by

women. A similar pattern emerges for Whites and Blacks, but Hispanic married-couple families are far more likely to be poor than comparable families of other races:

Poverty Rates by Family Structure and Race/Ethnicity, 2000

	Married Couples	Female-headed Households
All Races	5%	25%
White, non-Hispanic	3%	17%
Black	6%	35%
Hispanic	14%	43%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center For Education Statistics, "Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics," April 2003, Chapter 1, p.13.
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003008.pdf>

Apparently low skills and education levels keep poverty high, even among intact Hispanic families.

The overarching factor in Hispanic poverty is immigration. Poverty rates for foreign-born Hispanics –

especially those from Mexico and the Dominican Republic – are demonstrably higher than those of native-born Hispanics. Here is data by country of origin for 2001:

Poverty Rate For Immigrants, 2001

Country of Origin	% in Poverty
Dominican Republic	25.8%
Mexico	24.4%
ALL U.S. HISPANICS	21.4%
Cuba	19.8%
Honduras	19.8%
Haiti	12.0%
El Salvador	12.0%
ALL U.S. NATIVES	11.1%
Ecuador	8.9%

Jamaica	8.3%
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Source: Center For Immigration Studies, "Immigrants in the United States – 2002: A Snapshot of America's Foreign-Born Population," November 2002. <http://www.cis.org/articles/2002/back1302.pdf>

Ironically, the rate of immigration from Mexico and the Dominican Republic is increasing faster than from other Latin countries. From 1990 to 2000 the Mexican born population rose 82%, and the Dominican born virtually doubled (up 99.8%). Mexican immigrants and their children account for two-thirds of all U.S. Hispanics.

Census data also allow us to compare poverty rates of native-born versus foreign-born persons from a variety of countries and ethnic groups. As seen in the next table, immigrant Hispanics are far more likely to be poor than immigrant whites or blacks. Among non-Hispanic immigrants, only the Hmong have higher poverty rates.

Poverty Rates by Nativity and Place of Birth, 2000

<u>Ethnicity/Place of Birth</u>	<u>Poverty Rate (%)</u>		
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Native</u>	<u>Foreign Born</u>
U.S. Total	12.4%	11.7%	17.9%
White Only	9.1%	8.6%	16.7%
Black Only	24.9%	25.4%	17.0%
<u>Hispanic</u>	<u>22.6%</u>	<u>21.9%</u>	<u>23.6%</u>
India	9.7%	10.1%	9.5%
China	13.5%	10.9%	14.6%
Filipino	6.3%	7.3%	5.8%
Hmong	38.1%	37.3%	38.7%
Japanese	9.8%	4.9%	17.3%
Vietnamese	16.1%	18.7%	15.3%
Mexican	23.5%	21.6%	26.2%
Puerto Rican	25.8%	25.8%	26.1%
Cuban	14.6%	12.4%	15.5%

Source: Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 4 (SF4)- Sample Data. Table PCT147.

http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTGeoSearchByListServlet?ds_name=DEC_2000_SF4_U&_lang=en&_ts=98621250228

In general we would expect to find lower poverty rates for natives than foreign born, and this is the case for Hispanics and whites. Among Blacks, however, poverty rates are higher for natives than for immigrants. Immigrants represent a far smaller share of the Black population than they do of whites or Hispanics.

Immigrant Blacks are more likely to be admitted on the basis of particular skills than on the basis of family reunification – and this helps explain their lower poverty rates. The same relationship appears to obtain for immigrant Indians, Vietnamese, and Filipinos.

V. Welfare Reciprocity

By Region of Birth

In the late 1990s researchers were confident that Hispanic welfare participation had peaked. A strong job market coupled with restrictions on immigrant eligibility contained in the 1996 welfare reform law were expected to narrow the reciprocity gap between Hispanics and other ethnicities.

Those expectations have not been realized. As with poverty data, the figures on welfare use show that Hispanics have remained well above the national average. In 2001 the Census Bureau reported that 41.8% of Hispanic households received at least one major means-tested benefit. No major racial group is more dependent on government benefits.

Welfare Reciprocity by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2001

Program	All Persons	White non-Hispanic	Black	Hispanic
	(Percent Receiving Benefits)			
Any means-tested Non-cash Benefit	20.0%	14.0%	39.0%	41.8%
Medicaid	14.5%	10.4%	27.3%	28.6%
Food Stamps	5.4%	3.6%	13.5%	9.5%
Subsidized Housing	4.6%	3.0%	12.9%	6.2%
School Lunch	7.3%	3.8%	16.5%	22.7%

Source: U.S. Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Demographic Survey, 2001.
http://ferret.bls.census.gov/macro/032002/noncash/nc1_000.htm

Hispanic households are about three-times more likely to be on welfare than non-Hispanic whites (14.0%), and more than twice as likely as the average U.S. household (20.0%). Even Black households are less likely to receive welfare (39.0%) than Hispanics. As recently as 1995 the situation was reversed. (See table on page 21.)

The trend in Hispanic welfare usage is driven primarily by immigrants. There are enormous differences in welfare usage among immigrants from different regions and countries:

- In 2000 immigrants from Mexico and the Caribbean participated in means-tested programs at about three-times the rate of immigrants from Europe. (See table below.)
- The most welfare dependent nationalities? Mexicans and Dominicans. They participate in major welfare programs at 35.7% and 58.7%, respectively – versus 24.5% for all immigrants and 16.3% for U.S. natives. (See table below.)
- By contrast, immigrants from Europe, North America, and even Africa have lower welfare participation rates than native U.S. households.
- The reason? Education. Only 50% of the Latin American born population 25 years and older are HS graduates – many from schools in their native countries. Within this group the percentage ranges from 80% for South American born to only 34% for Mexican-born. (By comparison, 87% of U.S. natives have HS degrees.)
- As a result, poverty rates for Mexican immigrants

(25.8%) and those from the Dominican Republic (32.5%) are significantly higher than poverty rates for all immigrants (16.8%) and natives (11.2%).

- Although they comprise 4.2% of total U.S. population, Mexican immigrants and their U.S.-born children account for 10.2% of all persons in poverty.

Many immigrants get welfare through the automatic eligibility of their U.S.-born children. Such children are a major reason why an estimated 25% of households headed by *illegal* Mexican immigrants receive at least one major welfare program, in contrast to 15% of native households. And when a child turns 18, it can sponsor the immigration of its relatives. (Source: CIS, “Immigration From Mexico: Assessing the Impact on the United States,” July 2001. Figure 16, page 39. <http://www.cis.org/articles/2001/mexico/mexico.pdf>.)

The great hope, of course, was that welfare dependency would decline the longer immigrants remained in the United States. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. Mexican immigrants who have lived in the United States for more than 20 years, almost all of whom are legal residents, still have double the welfare use of natives. The inescapable conclusion: Mexican immigrants are assimilating into the welfare system.

Not surprisingly, Mexican immigrant households account for a significant share of the welfare caseload in a number of states. In California almost one-fourth of all households receiving welfare are headed by a Mexican immigrant. In Arizona, Mexican households account for 22% of the total welfare caseload; in Texas,

14% of households receiving welfare are headed by a Mexican immigrant. Moreover, in every state Mexican immigrants and their children are more than twice as likely to be without health insurance. In California, Mexican immigrants and their children comprise more than one-third of the uninsured. (Source: CIS, "Characteristics of Mexican Immigrants by State," July 2001. <http://www.cis.org/articles/2001/mexico/characteristics.html>)

The most "immigrant friendly" benefit is not a welfare program at all, but part of the tax code. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) gives cash refunds to low-income workers with children.

- Immigrants receive EITC at nearly twice the rate of natives – 25.5% of immigrant households versus 13.2% of natives.
- Nearly half (49.2%) of Mexican immigrants receive EITC benefits, a significantly higher reciprocity rate than other nationalities.
- The good news: Technically only immigrants who obtain legal work status are eligible for EITC.
- The bad news: IRS allows immigrants to claim EITC benefits for years prior to obtaining legal work status, thereby paying refunds to people who paid no taxes.

Although the 1996 welfare law did not affect EITC eligibility, it explicitly banned new immigrants from receiving traditional welfare benefits. There is strong evidence that immigrants have circumvented the law's intent by becoming U.S. citizens:

- Between 1994 and 1998 the fraction of the foreign-born population that was naturalized rose from 40.9% to 50.3%.
- Immigrants from countries with high welfare rates saw the largest increases in naturalization.
- Mexican immigrants increased their naturalization rates from 16.5% to 28.2%; By contrast, rates for Canadian immigrants barely budged, going from 54.1% to 54.3% over that period.
- In California naturalization rates rose faster than in the rest of the country (from 28.5% in 1994 to 45.2% in 1998), possibly in response to the aggressive immigrant welfare policies in the state's Proposition 187 law.

In his study of the 1996 welfare reform law, George Borjas writes: "Many immigrants will chose to become citizens not because they want to fully participate in the political system, but because naturalization is the price they have to pay to receive welfare benefits."

Unintended consequences for sure.

Welfare Reciprocity Rates by Race and Hispanic Origin, 1995

Program	All Persons	White non-Hispanic	Black	Hispanic
	(Percent Receiving Benefits)			
Any mans-tested Non-cash Benefit	14.9%	9.2%	35.0%	30.6%
General Assistance	5.2%	2.4%	15.6%	12.3%
SSI	2.0%	1.4%	4.9%	3.0%
Food Stamps	9.2%	5.0%	23.7%	21.0%
Medicaid	11.2%	6.8%	27.2%	22.2%
Housing Assistance	4.6%	2.6%	12.6%	9.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "Dynamics of Economic Well-Being, 1993 to 1995. Who Gets Assistance?" Current Population Reports, P70-77, Table A-1, September 2001. <http://www.bls.census.gov/sipp/p70s/p70-77.pdf>

Welfare Reciprocity by Region of Birth, 2000
(Percent of Households Receiving Benefits)

<u>Region</u>	<u>Cash Benefits</u>	<u>Non-Cash Benefits</u>
Caribbean	12.3%	31.6%
Mexico	9.2%	30.9%
Asia	8.8%	16.7%
South America	7.8%	21.4%
Africa	5.0%	13.1%
Europe	4.7%	10.1%
North America	1.6%	4.5%
All Immigrants	8.0%	21.2%
U.S. Natives	5.6%	14.6%

Source: U.S. Census, "Profile of Foreign Born Population in the United States: 2000," December 2001. Figure 20-3, page 49. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/p23-206.pdf>

Note: Cash benefits include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), General Assistance (GA), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI); Non-cash benefits include food stamps, housing assistance, and Medicaid.

Public Assistance Reciprocity Rates by Race and Country of Origin, 2000
(Percent of Households Receiving Public Assistance)

		Households with Public Assistance	Percent with Public Assistance
<u>Race/Country of Origin</u>	<u>Total Households (in millions)</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Income</u>
U.S. Total	105.539	3.630	3.4%
White Only	83.698	1.980	2.4%
Black Alone	12.024	0.988	8.2%
Asian Alone	3.129	0.126	4.0%
India	0.532	0.008	1.5%
China	0.806	0.026	3.2%
Filipino	0.514	0.018	3.5%
Hmong	0.027	0.008	30.4%
Japanese	0.337	0.004	1.3%
Vietnamese	0.294	0.030	10.3%
Hispanic	9.273	0.670	7.2%
Mexican	5.051	0.328	6.5%
Puerto Rican	1.091	0.135	12.3%

Cuban	0.481	0.030	6.3%
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Source: Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File (SF4)- Sample Data. Table PCT100.
http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=010000US&-reg=DEC_2000_SF4_U_PCT100:001|002&-ds_name=DEC_2000_SF4_U&-_lang=en&-format=&-mt_name=DEC_2000_SF4_U_PCT100&-CONTEXT=dt

Welfare Participation by Country of Origin, 2001
(Percent Receiving Benefits)

<u>Country</u>	<u>Major Means-Tested Programs</u>	<u>Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)</u>
Dominican Republic	58.7%	38.4%
Mexico	35.7%	49.3%
Cuba	35.3%	18.1%
Haiti	32.6%	43.9%
Russia	31.1%	5.3%
Vietnam	30.9%	29.3%
El Salvador	30.1%	46.3%
Honduras	29.9%	43.0%
Colombia	28.4%	28.3%
Guatemala	28.2%	32.4%
Ecuador	27.8%	35.6%
Pakistan	25.8%	33.0%
Ukraine	25.0%	18.3%
All Immigrants	24.5%	28.8%
Iran	23.1%	15.4%
Korea	20.9%	19.7%
Jamaica	19.3%	31.6%
Philippines	15.5%	16.8%
U.S. Natives	16.3%	16.6%
China/Taiwan/Hong Kong	13.8%	16.2%
Italy	13.3%	11.9%
Poland	11.1%	15.0%
India	10.2%	17.4%
United Kingdom	9.2%	11.2%
Japan	8.0%	8.4%
Germany	7.3%	9.1%
Canada	7.1	7.9%

Note: Major means-tested programs include TANF (cash assistance), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Food Stamps, and Medicaid.

Source: Center For Immigration Studies, "Immigrants in the United States – 2002:A

Snapshot of America's Foreign Born Population," November 2002.
<http://www.cis.org/articles/2002/back1302.pdf>

Naturalization Rates Pre- and Post-Welfare Reform (Percent of Immigrants Naturalized)

Country of Origin	1994-95	1997-98
Mexico	16.5%	28.2%
Dominican Republic	28.8%	44.5%
Vietnam	64.0%	73.1%
U.S.S.R.	65.7%	81.2%
Canada	54.1%	54.3%
United Kingdom	54.7%	46.3%
All Immigrants	40.9%	53.6%

Source: Borjas, George J., "The Impact of Welfare Reform on Immigrant Welfare Use," Center For Immigration Studies, March 2002. Table 10.

<http://www.cis.org/articles/2002/borjas.htm>

VI. Crime, Incarceration, and Victimization

Hispanics are nearly twice as likely to be in prison as whites, but about one-third as likely as Blacks. In 2001 just over one in every hundred (1.2%) of adult male Hispanics was imprisoned, versus 3.5% of non-Hispanic blacks and 0.5% of non-Hispanic whites

More troubling is the fact that Hispanic incarceration rates are growing faster than those of other racial groups. In the period 1985 to 1997 the percent of adult Hispanics imprisoned more than doubled, rising 125%, compared to increases of 115% and 91% in imprisonment rates of Blacks and whites, respectively.

The enormous increase in minority prison population has attracted the attention of liberal groups. In 2001 the National Center on Institutions and Alternatives (NCIA), a liberal think tank advocating less imprisonment, released a report arguing that "The overuse of incarceration is causing severe and irreparable divisions in society." It urges society to "turn the justice system off its racist path and begin to repair the damage it is causing."

As evidence for "overuse" the NCIA cited statistics: "During the twelve years we examined (1985 to 1997), the U.S. prisoner population more than doubled from 502,376 to 1,240,962. Nationally, non-whites accounted for 70% of this growth in state and federal prisons."

Data in the NCIA report (presented below) show that Hispanics accounted for 19.2% of the growth in

national inmate population during this period. In three states with large Hispanic populations, Hispanics accounted for more than one-third of total inmate growth: New York (38.2%), California (37.6%), and Arizona (37.2%). Hispanics accounted for a whopping 62.3% of new prison inmates in New Mexico, but just 9.6% in Florida, possibly because Florida is home to a large middle-class, primarily white Cuban population.

The NCIA claims that this high minority imprisonment rate is unfair: "Whites seem to go to jail in smaller numbers than their share of serious crimes would indicate. During the 1990s, whites committed 66 percent of violent crimes and 62% of felonies in the United States according to Justice Department Statistics."

In fact, the crime statistics cited by NCIA are notoriously misleading. What the FBI calls "Whites" is really a conglomeration of whites, Hispanics, and others. So comparing prison statistics, in which Hispanics are a separate category, with crime statistics, where they are lumped together with whites, gives the impression that white criminals are less likely to be incarcerated.

For meaningful data on Hispanic crime we can go to the FBI's Supplementary Homicide Report, which lists the actual data submitted by 10,000 law enforcement agencies before it is sanitized by the FBI. Five of the states – Arizona, California, Oklahoma, Oregon and Texas – still keep track of Hispanic crime as a separate category. In one year in these five states, under

murderers we find: 1,156 Whites, 2,015 Hispanics, 1,526 Blacks, 134 Asians, and 54 American Indians. Adjusted for population, Hispanics are 4.8-times as likely to murder as non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks are 10-times more likely to murder, and Indians twice as

likely to murder.

The California Department of Justice provided us with a racial breakdown of arrests, from which we constructed the following chart:

Racial Distribution of Persons Arrested In California, 2000

<u>Race of Person</u> <u>Arrested</u>	<u>% of all</u> <u>Felony Arrests</u>	<u>% of Murder</u> <u>Arrests</u>	<u>% of California</u> <u>Population</u>
White	35.1%	21.0%	46.7%
Hispanic	36.5%	43.8%	32.4%
Black	22.5%	25.7%	6.4%
Other	5.9%	9.5%	14.5%

Source: California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center.
http://justice.hdcdojnet.state.ca.us/cjsc_stats/prof00/00/22.htm.
 Population: California Statistical Abstract, Table B-6.
http://www.dof.ca.gov/HTML/FS_DATA/stat-abs/sec_B.htm

Hispanics comprise 32.4% of California’s population, but account for 36.5% of all felony arrests and 43.8% of murder arrests. By comparison, whites comprise nearly half (46.7%) of the state population but account for just 21% of murder arrests and 35.1% of felony arrests. In other words, California Hispanics are 3.0-times more likely to be arrested for murder than California whites and 1.5-times more likely to be arrested for a felony.

Most murderers kill someone of the same race. According to some estimates, over 90% of violent crime against Hispanics is committed by Hispanics. (And much of the remaining 10% is committed by African-Americans.) Thus the murder rate is a valid indicator of relative criminality. In California, the murder rate gap between Hispanics and whites is even greater than the murder arrest gap. And it is rising. In 1988, Hispanics in California were murdered at a rate 2.3-times that of whites; by 1997, 3.6 times.

A closer look at homicide data in California reveals other differences among racial and ethnic groups. Hispanics are not only more likely to kill and to be killed than whites, they also tend to be killed in different ways and for different reasons. Specifically:

- Hispanic homicide victims are generally younger. In 1997 391 juveniles were murdered in California. Nearly half were Hispanic, and 44% were

Mexican.

- Roughly 70% of Hispanic murder victims are killed by a handgun versus just over 40% of whites.
- Gang-related violence is far more prevalent among California Hispanics. Only about one in 14 white homicides are gang- or drug- related compared to more than two out of five among Hispanics.
- White homicides are far more likely to be family related. About one out of five white victims in 1997 was the spouse, child, or parent of the killer compared to one in 12 among Hispanics.

(Source: Public Policy Institute of California, “A Portrait of Race and Ethnicity in California: An Assessment of Social and Economic Well-Being,” Belinda I. Reyes, editor, 2001. Chapter 8: Crime and Criminal Justice. http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/R_201BRR.pdf.)

The fact is, much of Hispanic crime is fueled by the illicit drug trade and gang rivalry. In Los Angeles alone there are approximately 1,250 street gangs with about 150,000 gang members. Although crime statistics do not identify the citizenship status of the arrestees, many are illegal aliens. (One piece of evidence: 7 of the 10 individuals in the Department of Homeland Security’s “Most Wanted Fugitive Criminal Aliens” list are from Mexico or the Caribbean.)

Although crime has fallen considerably from its recent peaks in the early 1990s, violent crime in

California, as in the United States as a whole, remains high compared to rates in industrial societies in Europe and Asia. The rapid growth in prison population, by taking many repeat offenders “off the streets,” is a major reason for the lower crime rates.

More notable than the rising number of people behind bars is the changing racial composition the California prison population. The overall number of men admitted to prison rose almost tenfold since 1970, from 4,426 to 43,752. The number of white male felons admitted to prison was 417% higher in 1998 than in 1970. It was 644% higher for non-Hispanic black men, and an amazing 2,299% higher for Hispanic men.

In 1970 Hispanics accounted for 12% of California’s population and 16% of new prison admissions. By 1998, they accounted for 30% of the population and 42% of new admissions.

During the past thirty years the Hispanic share of California’s prison population has increased while the non-Hispanic share has increased. Demographic shifts in California’s population can explain only part of the change. Increased criminality among the Hispanic population, coupled with aggressive anti-drug and anti-gang measures, are major factors in the sharp rise of Hispanic prisoners. Four tables follow:

Incarceration Rates of Sentenced Prisoners by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2001
(Rates per 100,000 Male Residents of Each Group)

All Races	896
White, Non-Hispanic	462
Black, Non-Hispanic	3,536
Hispanic	1,177

Source: Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 2001, Table 6.28.
<http://www.albany.edu/sourcebook/1995/pdf/t628.pdf>

Prison Population Increase Accounted for by Hispanics, 1985-1997

Jurisdiction	Change	Percent
U.S. Total	144,001	19.5
New Mexico	1,479	62.3
New York	13,148	38.2
California	39,787	37.6
Arizona	5,568	37.2
Massachusetts	2,092	31.9
Connecticut	3,309	29.8
Colorado	2,898	28.7
Illinois	2,804	12.7
Florida	3,454	9.6

Source: National Center on Institutions and Alternatives (NCIA), “Masking the Divide: How Officially Reported Prison Statistics Distort the Racial and Ethnic Realities of Prison Growth,” May 2001. Appendix 3.
<http://66.165.94.98/stories/maskdiv0501.pdf>

Incarceration Rate Growth By Race/Ethnicity
(Rate per 100,000 Adult Residents)

Jurisdiction	Non-Hispanic Whites			Non-Hispanic Blacks			Hispanics		
	1997	1985	% Change	1997	1985	% Change	1997	1985	% Change
U.S. Total	289	151	91.4%	2,629	1,221	115.3%	1,058	471	124.6%
New Mexico	209	138	51.4%	2,166	1,356	59.7%	589	342	72.2%
New York	136	94	44.7%	1,739	946	83.8%	1,294	725	78.5%
California	366	138	165.2%	3,128	1,266	147.1%	865	372	132.5%
Arizona	473	261	81.2%	3,510	2,300	52.65	1,281	657	95.0%
Texas	467	181	158.0%	4,115	1,226	235.6%	1,045	340	207.4%
Massachusetts	137	75	82.7%	1,652	1,039	59.0%	1,187	429	176.7%
Connecticut	224	104	115.4%	4,240	1,780	138.3%	2,697	1,157	133.1%
Colorado	259	91	184.6%	3,067	857	257.9%	1,062	341	211.4%
Illinois	151	90	67.8%	2,220	1,028	116.0%	561	284	97.5%
Florida	289	179	61.5%	2,610	1,476	76.8%	350	234	49.6%

Source: National Center on Institutions and Alternatives (NCIA), "Masking the Divide: How Officially Reported Prison Statistics Distort the Racial and Ethnic Realities of Prison Growth," May 2001. Appendix 4. <http://66.165.94.98/stories/maskdiv0501.pdf>

Incarceration Rates of Sentenced Prisoners
by Sex, Hispanic Origin, and Race, 2001
(Rates per 100,000 Residents of each group)

Males	896
White, Non-Hispanic	462
Black, Non-Hispanic	3,535
Hispanic	1,177
Females	68
White-Non-Hispanic	38
Black, Non-Hispanic	199
Hispanic	61

Source: Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics
2001, Table 6.28.

<http://www.albany.edu/sourcebook/1995/pdf/t628.pdf>

VII. Assimilation

Political Participation

In democratic societies, political participation is a key indicator of social integration and influence. Voter registration and turnout rates have long been regarded as valid measures of a group's engagement in civil society and its perceived stake in the future of the nation.

Hispanic voter participation rates are significantly below those of non-Hispanic whites and blacks, but slightly above Asians. Only 45.1% of eligible Hispanic voters voted in the 2000 general election. Comparable rates for non-Hispanic whites and blacks were 61.8% and 56.8%, respectively. (See table.)

Voting and Registration Rates by Race and Hispanic Origin, November 2000

	% of Voting-age Citizens Registered to Vote	% of Voting-age Citizens Reported Voting	% of Registered Voters Reported Voting
White Non-Hispanic	71.6%	61.8%	86.4%
Black	67.5%	56.8%	84.2%
Hispanic	57.3%	45.1%	78.6%
Asian	52.4%	43.3%	82.8%
Total - 18 years and older	69.5%	59.5%	85.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2000," February 2002. Table A. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/p20-542.pdf>

Between 1996 and 2000 voting rates for white non-Hispanics increased by about 1 percentage point while voting rates for blacks rose by 4 percentage points, decreasing the gap between the two groups by 3 percentage points. In contrast, the voting rates for

Hispanics and Asians did not increase significantly. (The number of Asian and Hispanic voters increased about 20%, however, reflecting the increase in the voting-age citizen population in these two groups.)

Voting Rates, 1996 and 2000
(Percent of Voting-Age Citizens Voting)

Race/Ethnicity	1996	2000
White, Non-Hispanic	60.7%	61.8%
Black	53.0%	56.8%
Hispanic	44.0%	45.1%
Asian	45.0%	43.3%
Total 18 years and older	58.4%	59.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2000," February 2002. Table A. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/p20-542.pdf>

The data for gubernatorial elections show an abrupt decline in Latino participation. The Latino share of California's population has, of course, been increasing. And Latinos were mobilized to vote as never before by the 187 fight. But the Latino share of the overall vote started out small and has grown by only a few percentage points (in part because Latinos don't register in proportion to their share of the population and in part because the turnout of Latinos on election day seems to be erratic). Here is the Latino share of the vote in the last three gubernatorial elections, according to the *Los Angeles Times*: 1994: 8%, 1998: 13%, 2002: 10%.

The Hispanic political shortfall is even more pronounced when total population shares are compared to voting population shares. The nation's 35 million

Hispanics comprise nearly 13% of the U.S. population. However, in the November 2000 election as estimated 5.9 million Latinos voted, comprising 5% of the total vote. The Latino population is overwhelmingly young. Immigrants make up more than half the voting age population and a small share of them have become citizens.

Although a large proportion of Hispanics are ineligible to vote, this factor alone does not explain their large under representation in the voting population. Low levels of education and a relatively young voting age population account for some of the low Hispanic voting rate – but even these factor are not decisive. For example, looking at just young voting-age citizens, Hispanics lag other ethnic groups in voter participation:

Voting Rates of 18- to 24-Year olds, 2000

<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>	<u>U.S. Citizens (in thousands)</u>	<u>Reported Voted (in thousands)</u>	<u>Percent Voted</u>
All Races	23,915	8,635	36.1%
Non-Hispanic White	16,874	6,425	38.1
Non-Hispanic Black	3,614	1,309	36.2%
Hispanic	2,516	644	25.6%
Asian	721	196	27.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. "Reported Voting and Registration by Race, Hispanic Origin, Sex and Age for the United States, November 2000," Table 2, February 27, 2002. <http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/voting/p20-542/tab02.pdf>

Young Hispanic citizens are significantly less likely to vote than young non-Hispanic whites and non-Hispanic blacks. This means that age differences alone cannot not explain – or excuse - the poor voting record of the Hispanic population.

Education is another variable which experts have used to explain differences in electoral participation. Yet here too, when you compare voting rates of similarly educated individuals, large differences remain:

Voting Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Education, November 2000
(Percent of Voting-Age Citizens Voting)

	Less than High School Completion	High School Completer	BA Degree or Higher
White, Non-Hispanic	37%	53%	77%
Black, Non-Hispanic	42%	49%	71%
Hispanic	15%	29%	51%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center For Education Statistics, "Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics," April 2003. Chapter 8, page 125.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003008.pdf>

In all groups – whites, Blacks, and Hispanics – completion of higher levels of education is associated with more active voting behavior. For example, the voting rate among Hispanics who had a BA degree or higher was 51%, or more than three-times the voting rate for Hispanics with less than a high school education (15%). At all levels of education, however, voting rates for Hispanics are significantly below those for similarly

educated Whites and Blacks. This implies that bringing the educational level of Hispanics up to that of other groups would not close the political participation gap.

Place of birth is another powerful determinant of voting participation. Studies have consistently found that U.S.-born registrants participate at higher rates than foreign-born voters. Whites, Blacks, and Asians fit this traditional model, as their U.S.-born voters participate at rates higher than or equal to their foreign born counterparts. Hispanics do not fit this mold, however:

Voting Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Place of Birth, 2000

Race/Ethnicity	Native-born Citizens	Naturalized Citizens
All Races	60.0%	50.6%
Non-Hispanic White	62.0%	55.9%
Black	56.8%	56.8%
Hispanic	43.6%	49.6%
Asian	43.2%	43.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Reported Voting and Registration Among Native and Naturalized Citizens, by ace, and Region of Origin, November 2000,” February 27, 2002.
<http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/voting/p20-542/tab13.pdf>

In the 2000 election U.S.-born Hispanics voted at much lower rates than U.S.-born whites and blacks. In fact, U.S.-born Hispanics voted at significantly lower rates than their foreign-born peers. This pattern may reflect different age distributions among U.S.-born and naturalized Hispanics.

Does a low voting rate imply a lack of trust in government? This correlation does not seem to hold for Latinos. When asked in a Pew Foundation survey how often they trust the government to do what is right, 43% of Latinos said either “just about always” (14%) or “most of the time” (29%). About half (47%) said “some

of the time and 4% said never. Whites expressed similar views, with 46% taking a generally positive view of government and 52% saying it could be trusted to do the right thing only “some of the time” (48%) or “never” (4%). African-Americans reported far less confidence in government than Hispanics or whites, with 69% saying it could be trusted to do the right thing only “some of the time” (62%) or never (7%).

(Source: Pew Hispanic Center/Kaiser Family Foundation *National Survey of Latinos*, December 2002 (conducted April-June 2002)

English Proficiency

Inability to speak proper English is often associated with poverty, inadequate health care, depression, and – most obviously – alienation from the mainstream American culture. The economic penalty imposed by

poor English skills has been quantified: Immigrants who are not proficient in English earn 17% less than immigrants of similar backgrounds, experience, and education, who are proficient in English.

(Source: Chiswick, B.R. and Miller, P.W., “Language in the

Immigrant Labor Market,” in *Immigration, Language, and Ethnicity: Canada and the United States*, Washington D.C., American Enterprise Institute, 1992.)

The Census has a term – “linguistic isolation” (LI) – to measure the failure of households to master basic English skills. Its definition of “linguistic isolation:” *households in which no adult speaks only English; and no adult speaks English “very well.”* The Census Bureau counts all the members of such households as linguistically isolated. (This includes members under 14

years of age, although some may speak English.)

In 2000 4.4 million households, or 22% of all non-English speaking households, were classified LI. Nearly one-quarter (23.9%) of Spanish speakers were LI, compared to just 7.9% of households which speak other Indo-European languages (Italian, German, French, Portuguese, etc.) The Spanish speakers now form the largest LI community in the United States, comprising about 60% of those who do not speak English well.

Linguistic Isolation by Language, 2000
(Percent of Households in which all members 14 years and older have difficulty with English)

<u>Language Spoken</u>			<u>% Linguistically Isolated</u>
Spanish	10,771,168	2,571,597	23.9%
Other Indo-European	5,509,602	855,080	7.9%
Asian Languages	2,755,826	804,731	29.2%
Other Languages	868,907	130,230	4.7%
All Non-English	19,905,503	4,361,638	21.9%

Source: Census Bureau, Census 2000, Detailed Tables, Table P20.
http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTable?_ts=81285087920

In California alone 3.5 million persons – about 11% of the population 5 years and over - live in linguistically isolated households. In general, states with a large

Hispanic presence have experienced above-average growth in their linguistically isolated populations:

Persons in Linguistically Isolated Households
(Population 5 Years Old and Over, in millions)

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Percent Increase</u>
United States	7,741,259	11,893,572	53.6%
California	2,680,665	3,472,270	29.5%
Texas	988,458	1,503,924	52.1%
New York	1,006,857	1,226,406	21.8%
Florida	547,169	892,295	63.1%
Illinois	370,081	603,221	63.0%
New Jersey	329,111	479,959	45.8%
Arizona	143,397	309,761	116.0%
Massachusetts	199,367	263,971	32.4%
Washington	89,268	206,283	131.1%

Pennsylvania	141,473	191,233	35.2%
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Source: U.S. Census Bureau, internet site: <http://landview.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/phc-t20.html>

Research shows Spanish language immigrants are slower at acquiring English language skills and the intergenerational shift toward English proficiency is less intense among the Spanish speaking population. The sheer size of the Spanish speaking community, with its

Spanish language institutions and media (print and electronic), obviates the need for English proficiency. Lower levels of schooling, bi-lingual education, and a greater likelihood that Mexican immigrants view their stay in the U.S. as temporary or to be combined with frequent return migrations to Mexico, are other factors.

Asians are the only major ethnic group more linguistically isolated than Hispanics:

Linguistic Isolation Rates by Ethnic Group, 2000

<u>Ethnic Group</u>	<u>Total Households</u>	<u>Linguistically Isolated Households</u>	<u>% Linguistically Isolated</u>
U. S. Total	105,539,122	4,361,638	4.1%
White	83,697,584	2,064,466	2.5%
Black	12,023,966	153,677	1.3%
Asian	3,129,127	828,001	26.5%
Asian Indian	532,364	57,533	10.8%
Chinese	806,379	284,652	35.3%
Filipino	513,743	57,136	11.1%
Hmong	27,298	9,506	34.8%
Japanese	337,015	72,996	21.7%
Vietnamese	293,621	135,290	46.1%
Hispanic	9,272,610	2,445,711	26.4%
Mexican	5,051,374	1,389,823	27.5%
Cuban	480,518	167,457	34.8%

Source: Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 4 (SF4)- Sample Data. Table PCT142.

http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=01000US&-reg=DEC_2000_SF4_U_PCT042:001|002|004|012|013|016|019|020|022|029|400|401|402|403&-ds_name=DEC_2000_SF4_U_PCT042&-CONTEXT=dt

Vietnamese, Chinese, and Hmong households are considerably more likely to be linguistically isolated than are Hispanics. This is in part due to the “linguistic distance” between English and the Asiatic languages which hamper the acquisition of English language skills for many Asian immigrants. Another factor is the

tendency of many Asian groups to live in small, homogeneous enclaves in which only the mother tongue is spoken. Hopefully higher economic mobility among second generation Asians and their increasing intermarriage rates will reduce linguistic isolation rates for this group. Higher immigration rates could offset this

favorable trend, however.

Nativity is another determinant of English proficiency. Not surprisingly, persons speaking a

language other than English at home are more likely to be proficient in English if they are born in the U.S.:

English Language Proficiency of Persons* Speaking a Language Other than English at Home, by Spanish/Non-Spanish Language and Nativity, 2000

	U.S. Born		Foreign Born	
	<u>Spanish</u>	<u>Non-Spanish</u>	<u>Spanish</u>	<u>Non-Spanish</u>
<u>Speaks English (%)</u>				
Very Well	71.8%	77.7%	28.1%	50.0%
Well	17.8%	14.9%	23.9%	28.9%
Not Well	8.9%	6.8%	28.6%	16.7%
Not at All	1.5%	0.5%	19.4%	4.4%

* Note: Population 5 years and older.

Source: Census Bureau, Census 2000, Detailed Tables, Table PCT 12.

http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTTable?_ts=81279693520

Among the U.S. born there are minor differences between the Spanish language group and other language groups. Thus, around 90% of U.S. born who speak a language other than English at home speak English “very well” or “well.” Seven to 10% speak English “not well” and about 1.5% or less speak English “Not at all.”

Among the foreign-born, there are enormous differences among the Spanish and other language groups. Among the foreign born: only 52% of the Spanish speakers are fluent in English (i.e., speak it

“well” or “very well”) compared to about 80% of the other language groups. Or to put it another way, 48% of the Spanish language group lack English language fluency, as do only 20% of the other language groups. Moreover, 19.4% of the group who speak Spanish at home reported that they could not speak English at all, compared to only 4.4% of the non-Spanish group.

The relative disadvantage of Spanish speaking immigrants in speaking English is apparent even when the data are adjusted for age and citizenship status.

Adult Literacy

Hispanic adults have lower average literacy scores and are also less likely to read regularly than their White and Black peers.

The National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) defines literacy as “using printed and written information

to function in society, to achieve one’s goals, and to develop one’s knowledge and potential.” The NALS reported on three scales of literacy (prose, document, and quantitative), divides the scores into five ranges, each representing a level of proficiency:

Average Proficiency Scores of Adults by Literacy Scale and Race/Ethnicity, 1992

<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>	<u>Prose</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>Quantitative</u>
White	296	290	287
Black	237	230	224
Hispanic	216	214	212

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center For Education Statistics, "Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics," April 2003. Supplemental Table 8.4a.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003008.pdf>.

Prose literacy reflects the knowledge and skills needed to understand and use information from texts that include editorials, news stories, poems, and fiction. Hispanics scored 27% below whites and 9% below Blacks in prose literacy.

Document literacy encompasses the skills and knowledge required to make sense of materials such as job applications, payroll forms, compensation schedules, maps, tables and graphs. Hispanic document literacy scores are 26% below those of whites and 7% below

Blacks.

Quantitative literacy scores reflect ability to apply basic arithmetical operations, either alone or sequentially, using numbers embedded in print materials. Hispanic quantitative literacy scores are 26% below those of whites and 5% those of Blacks.

Hispanic adults also differ from white and Black adults in the material they read. They are less likely to read the newspaper daily or to have read a book in the past six months than whites and Blacks. •