

PUERTO RICAN MIGRATION: HYBRID IDENTITIES AMONG RETURN MIGRANTS

By

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To my family, for their encouragement and support throughout my lifetime  
Special thank you to Nicholas Simmons, for his incredible love, patience, and kindness

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|      |   |
|------|---|
| PIP  | Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño / Independence Party |
| PNP  | Partido Nuevo Progresista / New Progressive Party           |
| PPD  | Partido Popular Democrático / Popular Democratic Party      |
| USWD | United States War Department                                |

Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School  
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The study I present is an analysis on Puerto Rican circular migration and identity formation. I specifically address how middle class Puerto Rican circular migrants are creating cultural, national, and political identities that differ from traditional modes of identity formation, due to their unique patterns of migration. Previous research on Puerto Rican migration has tended to be somewhat limited, mainly focusing on working class citizens and/or the large diaspora who remain in the United States. My research focuses on urban, middle class Puerto Ricans who frequently migrate between the United States and Puerto Rico. I argue that these transnational migrants are creating hybrid identities and maintaining dual allegiances. A multi-method and multi-sited approach is used to provide an in-depth analysis, using both semi-structured interviews and the 2006 Latino National Survey (LNS). Thirty five semi-structured interviews were conducted among middle class Puerto Ricans over a six week period in Puerto Rico during the 2010 summer. In addition, analyses from the LNS dataset, measuring identity formation, language acquisition, and transnational ties, are taken to assess the levels of hybridity among middle class Puerto Rican migrants. The main findings suggest that these transnational circular migrants are creating hybrid identities that combine aspects

of Puerto Rican and American (U.S.) cultural values as a result of the historical precedent of U.S. interventionism, frequent circular migration, and increased bilingualism. This study is a preliminary examination that will add to our understanding of identity formation among transnational migrants.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The overall goal of my thesis research is to examine how identity formation among Puerto Ricans has been altered as a result of transnational migration. Previous research on transnational migration has tended to be somewhat limited, mainly focusing on working class citizens and/or individuals who remain in the United States. Similarly, the literature on Puerto Rican migration and identity formation has examined the roles of working class migrants and has only speculated about middle and upper class migrants. My research focuses on middle class Puerto Ricans who migrate to the United States and subsequently return to Puerto Rico. The main emphasis of my research is on how transnational migration is altering identity formation. I will explore the role of middle class migrants and compare their experiences to those of their working class counterparts. I will then discuss whether these middle class migrants are adding to the creation of hybrid identities.

Before I begin an analysis of this particular group of migrants, I review the major bodies of work on transnational migration and how they have been applied to the Puerto Rican case. The purpose of conducting a literature review in this field is to inform the research conducted in subsequent chapters. It can also find major gaps within the literature and determine how a study of middle class migrants can provide additional insights into the debates on transnational migration

This thesis is laid out in four separate chapters. In Chapter 1 I conduct a literature review on current transnational migration theories and discuss the research design. In this section I explain the advantages of conducting a multi-method approach and the specific methods that are employed. In Chapter 2 I discuss the intellectual discourse on

cultural and national identity formation. I trace the roots of Puerto Rican identity, beginning with its status as a colony and the effects of U.S. imperialism under an incorporated territory status. By conducting this historical overview, I am exploring how cultural and national identity has traditionally been defined. This will help to understand and contextualize the ways in which transnational migration is altering identity formation today. Chapter 3 will discuss the empirical data. I will use data from the 2006 Latino National Survey, in addition to ethnographic research conducted in the summer of 2010, to discuss transnationalism and language acquisition among middle class Puerto Ricans as a proxy for hybrid identities. Chapter 4 will lay out the major findings of my research and discuss any limitations. I will conclude by arguing the contribution my work presents to the existing literature and possible avenues for future research.

The overarching question this research asks is how are middle class Puerto Rican return migrants creating and defining their cultural and national identity? Do these return migrants display high levels of transnationalism and Spanish retention? Are these return migrants creating a hybrid identity, in other words, maintaining ties and allegiances to both the United States and Puerto Rico? Lastly, if Puerto Rican return migrants are in fact creating dual identities, what are the possible political implications? I expect to find that middle class Puerto Rican return migrants are displaying high levels of transnationalism and Spanish retention. I also expect to find that these migrants are actively creating hybrid identities by maintaining dual allegiances.

### **Literature Review**

As nations become increasingly interconnected and migrants continue to engage in political, economic, and social activities in multiple regions, the strict definitions that delimit what encompasses a nation, identity, and transnational migration may evolve.

These terms can be applied to Puerto Rican migrants in a specific and unique way, due to the nation's colonial heritage and current commonwealth status. One important distinction from other Caribbean nations is Puerto Ricans' status as United States citizens. Because of the existing relationship between Puerto Rico and the U.S., scholars have been able to conduct research on migration patterns without considering the obstacles that other transnational migrants face in regards to visa and citizenship requirements. Holding these obstacles as a constant has allowed for more focused research on the meaning of nationality. This review seeks to examine the ways in which migration to and from the United States by Puerto Ricans is transforming how identity and nation are being defined. Rather than flesh out the major theories of migration, it seeks to address how scholars are applying these dominant theories towards the Puerto Rican case and what, if any, shortcomings exist. I will later argue how my own research fits into this body of literature and its relevance.

In conducting a review on migration patterns and its impacts on identity formation, it is important to consider the main trends that surface from within the existing literature. Included in the sample are recent works by Jorge Duany (2002)<sup>1</sup>, Elizabeth M. Aranda (2007), Teresa Whalen & Víctor Vázquez-Hernández (2005)<sup>2</sup>, Maria del Carmen Baerga & Lanny Thompson (1990), Michael Kearney & Bernadete Beserra (2004), and Amilcar Antonio Barreto (2001). These scholars were chosen based on their extensive research on migration patterns of Puerto Ricans and efforts to address how identity and nationhood are conceptualized. Select chapters were chosen for review in the works by

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<sup>1</sup> Selected Chapter 9, *Mobile Livelihoods: Circular Migration, Transnational Identities, and Cultural Borders between Puerto Rico and the United States*, p 208 -235.

<sup>2</sup> Selected Chapter 10, *Colonialism ,Citizenship, and Community Building in the Puerto Rican Diaspora: A Conclusion*, p 227-244.

Duany (2002) and Aranda (2007) due to their specificity surrounding Puerto Rican migration patterns and its effect on identity. The articles by Baerga & Thompson (1990) and Kearney & Beserra (2004) were chosen for their theoretical contributions. Studies from Barreto (2001) Whalen & Vázquez-Hernández( 2005) were selected to highlight the relationship between Spanish language and Puerto Rican identity.

A recurring thread throughout this literature is how the migration patterns of Puerto Ricans are distinctly unique compared to other Caribbean nations. These scholars also comment on Puerto Rico's unique status as a commonwealth and the implications that accompany U.S. citizenship. This review will discuss these common trends in more depth and determine points of agreement and disagreement within the selected texts. The first section will discuss citizenship in regards to political identity, the second will discuss nationhood in terms of territory and language, and the third will comment on the main theories scholars use to explain Puerto Rican migration. I will conclude by suggesting that research on urban middle class migrant groups may provide additional insights into identity formation among Puerto Ricans.

### **Circular Migration: Citizenship and Identity**

As of the 2000 census, there are over 3.4 million Puerto Ricans residing within the United States, compared to the 3.8 million living in Puerto Rico (Duany 2002). No other nation can claim that nearly half of its population lives outside of its borders,<sup>3</sup> and interestingly enough, hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans choose to migrate back

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<sup>3</sup> Comparisons were taken at national level. Subnational regions with high levels of migrants living abroad are excluded (e.g. Zacatecas, Mexico).

to the island each year.<sup>4</sup> This pattern of circular migration is possible due to Puerto Rico's unrestricted access to travel between the mainland and the island.<sup>5</sup> Citizenship, traditionally defined as a set of rights and obligations bestowed unto members of a political community, has been considered a major component of identity formation (Purvis and Hunt 1999). United States citizenship conferred onto Puerto Ricans has long been a site of contestation. It has also allowed for massive circular migration patterns. Puerto Rican return migrants challenge the importance of citizenship as a defining characteristic of identity.

The motives behind Puerto Rican migration to the United States can largely be attributed to economic factors (García Bedolla 2009). Most studies that have examined migration patterns have focused on individuals who represent the lowest socioeconomic status, as they are the most likely to move in search of better employment opportunity. The reasons why migrants choose to leave the U.S. and return to lower wages in Puerto Rico are not as clear. Aranda (2007), Baerga & Thompson (1990), and Duany (2002) all argue that return migration can largely be attributed to strong cultural ties. Aranda (2007) states that many migrants return to the island after facing discrimination, exclusion, and feelings of being on the periphery of American society. She concludes that for many Puerto Ricans, rights associated with U.S. citizenship status does not equate to sharing an identity with U.S. Americans. In other words, the traditional notions of identity that encompass citizenship do not extend to Puerto Ricans. Baerga &

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<sup>4</sup> For additional figures on migratory patterns refer to the Puerto Rican Planning Board. *A Comparative Study of Labor Market Characteristics of Return Migrants and Non-Migrants in Puerto Rico* (Government Printing Office, San Juan 1973).

<sup>5</sup> Circular migration can also be referred to as return migration. Perhaps the best known literary image that captures circular migration between the Island and mainland is Luis Rafael Sánchez's "La guagua aérea" or "The Flying Bus" (1987).

Thompson (1990, 670) agree with this reasoning, estimating that over 64% of migrants return for social and cultural reasons.

Duany (2002) argues that Puerto Ricans are forming new hybrid identities, as a result of the Puerto Rican diaspora.<sup>6</sup> Historically, the majority of Puerto Ricans have created an identity in opposition to U.S. hegemony, creating a clear division between American and Puerto Rican national identities. Increased circular migration has led to increased exposure to both cultures, allowing for greater tolerance and acceptance of U.S. values. Duany (2002) posits that Puerto Ricans are making strides towards embracing a hybrid identity. The unrestricted access that Puerto Ricans enjoy has increased circular migration, which only reinforces the possibility for hybrid identities. Duany's (2002) argument that migration can alter notions of identity, regardless of citizenship status, supports Aranda (2007) and Baerga and Thompson's (1990) conclusions.

Kearney & Baserra (2004), on the other hand, agree with traditional definitions of identity that encompass citizenship. This definition asserts that when a migrant crosses political barriers (i.e. citizenship status) their identity is transformed. Due to Puerto Rico's special commonwealth status, Puerto Ricans are not crossing political barriers; rather they are crossing cultural barriers. Kearney and Baserra (2004) do not accept Duany's (2002) concept of hybrid identities, nor do they rule out the role citizenship plays in identity formation, as Aranda (2007, 227) and Baerga & Thompson (1990) do. While Kearney & Baserra (2004) are not able to make concrete conclusions, they

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<sup>6</sup> See also Juan Flores' "The Diaspora Strikes Back."

suggest that future research compare classes with regards to citizenship and identity. The research within this study intends to do just that.

### **Migration and Nationality: The Primacy of Territory and Language**

Most political scientists will agree on basic distinctions between the state and the nation; a state is defined as a sovereign entity that has territorial borders, whereas a nation is a group of people that have a collective identity which may include a shared language, religion, history, and/or territorial boundary (Anderson 2006). In order to determine if Puerto Rico's circular migration patterns have altered ideas about nationhood, and in turn identity, the roles of territory and language have been further explored.

Because Puerto Rico is a commonwealth and not a state, it is not difficult to separate its political and cultural boundaries. When Puerto Ricans travel to the United States and back they are not crossing political boundaries, rather they are crossing cultural divides. The diaspora that resides within the territorial United States continues to claim Puerto Rican nationality, even though they are outside of the territorial boundaries of the island. Duany (2002) and Aranda (2007) challenge the notion that territory is intrinsically tied to nationhood. Furthermore, they assert that the diaspora who claim a Puerto Rican nationality are evolving the definition of "Puerto Ricanness," as their conceptualization is different from those on the island. Traditional definitions of nation do not perfectly apply to the Puerto Rican case; perhaps it needs to be expanded, as Duany (2002) and Aranda (2007) suggest.

One main feature that characterizes a nation is a shared language. Each scholar noted the crucial role that Spanish language plays in Puerto Rican identity; however, Whalen & Vázquez-Hernández (2005) and Barreto (2001) delve into the history of

English incorporation and resistance, as well as increasing bilingualism, and the consequences of both. They discuss whether the changing scope of language, due to circular migration, is affecting identity formation.

Barreto (2001) traces the history of Puerto Rican resistance to English acquisition in public institutions and ties this resistance to an overall rejection of U.S. imperialism and culture. Some pro-statehood advocates have tried to argue that the English language can be formally adopted without losing Puerto Rican identity, but many islanders do not readily accept that the two can coincide. Barreto's (2001, 92) own study finds that 47.7% of islanders can speak English, yet little have had formal instruction. Barreto (2001) determines that bilingualism is indicative of massive migration, not formal language classes.<sup>7</sup> Whalen & Vázquez-Hernández (2005, 227) agree with Barreto (2001) on these points. They state that Puerto Ricans are increasingly becoming bilingual as a result of migration, not assimilation. They argue that Puerto Ricans desire to retain a national culture and language, while acquiring English language skills, is indicative of a new "biculturalism," or hybrid identity as Duany (2002) suggested. The Spanish language is intimately tied to cultural nationalism, and the growing number of island residents who speak English is a sign of transnational ties and interconnectedness, but not necessarily assimilation into American culture.

One area in which the literature is vague is the impact that subsequent generations will have on identity formation. The residents who spend the majority of their time on the island will be Spanish monolinguals or speak Spanish as their primary language, but the primary language spoken for further generations of the diaspora may

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<sup>7</sup> Formal English Instruction began in 1904, as cited by Cabán (2002,131).

be moving towards English (Whalen and Vázquez-Hernández 2005). The U.S. has had a steady flow of immigrants for centuries, most of who have eventually adopted English as their primary language. According to assimilationist theory (Warner and Strole 1945), it is increasingly common for second and third generations to learn English and speak it as their primary language.<sup>8</sup> Puerto Ricans provide an interesting divergence due to their strong national ties and resistance to adopting English as a primary language.

Unfortunately the literature provides little to no information on the role of future generations, and I can only speculate as to the changes that might occur. Perhaps by testing for English language acquisition by age I will be able to determine if younger generations are becoming increasingly bilingual.<sup>9</sup> This could provide preliminary research for expected levels of bilingualism among subsequent generations. The focus, however, will be to determine if English language acquisition among circular migrants is altering traditional notions of identity.

### **Transnational Migration Theories**

As previously discussed, Puerto Rican migration patterns are altering conceptualizations of identity as well as blurring the importance of territorial lines and English language acquisition. Scholars have sought to apply the dominant theories of transnational migration to the Puerto Rican case in order to bring some understanding about the effects of their migration patterns. When reviewing the current literature on Puerto Rican migration, there were various trends that emerged. There were several points of agreement among authors and little dissent. What is interesting to note is

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<sup>8</sup>Classical assimilationist theory interprets assimilation as the successful integration of immigrant groups into the American middle class.

<sup>9</sup> Testing English language acquisition by age will be possible with data from the 2006 LNS dataset.

that each scholar within this representative literature review tries to apply a different theory to explain the Puerto Rican case. This could indicate that Puerto Rico is simply an outlier and cannot be explained by the dominant theories, or that more research needs to be conducted before a conclusion can be reached. Fleshing out the scholars' arguments will help to clarify this point.

Duany (2002) provides the most comprehensive analysis of circular migration, questioning whether Puerto Rican migrants should be considered transnational migrants in the first place. He argues that these migration patterns are challenging, if not undermining, the traditional ideas of what a nation is. He reasons that current transnational migration theories are not able to explain the Puerto Rican case, and instead uses the concept of circular migration. Duany (2002, 211) argues that the blurring lines between sending and receiving nations are convoluting the strong cultural ties each nation assigns to territory, language, citizenship, and ultimately, identity. International migrants are those that transcend both political and cultural barriers; Puerto Ricans only pass through cultural ones, thus they cannot be deemed international migrants. Duany (2002) posits that scholars may need to reassess how transnational migrants are defined, perhaps categorizing them based on their citizenship status, or nationality.

Baerga & Thompson (1990) draw on the dual economy thesis to explain the blurring lines of nationhood. Briefly stated, a dual economy occurs when one country has two separate economies running simultaneously. Puerto Rico has been economically dependent on the U.S. for centuries, due to its protectorate status. It shares a common currency with the U.S., and is prohibited from conducting trade

unless approved by the U.S. These factors combined make it impossible for Puerto Rico to sustain its own economy without U.S. intervention. Puerto Rico must rely on the U.S. to boost and aid its economy. Baerga & Thompson (1990) apply the dual economy thesis to explain migration from the island to the mainland. In other words, migrants leave the island to head towards the dominant economy and secure their financial status. While this theory can explain migration to the mainland it fails to explain migration in the opposite direction. Baerga & Thompson (1990) acknowledge the weakness in their argument and counter-argue that because Puerto Rico is not a traditional periphery zone, it does not adhere to the theory perfectly. They attempt to resolve this by labeling Puerto Rico a semi-periphery but are ultimately unable to clearly and convincingly make their case.

Barreto (2001, 89) does not specifically address the theories of transnational migration but examines the consequences of Americanization ideology, a U.S. federal policy that sought to culturally assimilate Puerto Ricans through the incorporation of English within schools and institutions. He also breaks down the arguments of two schools: the separatists and statehooders.<sup>10</sup> The separatists are islanders who argue for a continued commonwealth status, whereas the statehooders support becoming the U.S.' 51<sup>st</sup> state. Neither school can fully explain the migration patterns yet Barreto (2001) concludes that no matter their viewpoints, they are first and foremost Puerto Rican nationalists.

An important agreement among these scholars was between Aranda (2007) and Whalen & Vázquez-Hernández (2005) in their gendered approach to transnational

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<sup>10</sup> Independistas make up less than 1% and therefore, are excluded from the study.

migration. Until very recently, the literature on migration has generally denied the importance of gendered migration.<sup>11</sup> Aranda (2007) argues that different research has shown that migrants' abilities and desires to assimilate are due to a variety of factors. These factors include the context of departure and the financial and educational status migrants bring to the host country. Migrants have traditionally been male labor migrants; however, recent Census data suggests that Puerto Rico is experiencing a feminization of migration. Whalen and Vazquez (2005) too argue the importance of gendered studies, as women in the diaspora have been the most vocal in obtaining educational equality and bilingual classes for Puerto Rican children. Incorporating women into the transnational migration conversation provides a more inclusive overview.

### **Ties to Literature on International Migration and Final Thoughts**

The selected literature focuses on various aspects relevant for understanding Puerto Rican identity, including the role of nationhood and citizenship, transnational versus international migration, and the importance of transnational ties. Each scholar suggests that the emphasis on maintaining clear boundaries does not apply when discussing Puerto Rican migration. This is due in part to its colonial heritage, the close proximity of the nations, and of course a shared U.S. citizenship status. Puerto Ricans do not cross political boundaries, thus breaking down classic definitions of territory, or as Basch et al. (1994) call it, the deterritorialization of the (U.S.) state. Breaking down these classic understandings is altering concepts of identity formation.

Most literature does not distinguish between international and transnational migration; however, in order to examine the Puerto Rican case a differentiation is

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<sup>11</sup> See Hondagneu-Sotelo and Goldring for additional studies on gendered migration to the U.S.

necessary. Duany (2002, 218) provides the most convincing argument when he asserts that Puerto Ricans are circular migrants, passing through cultural spaces rather than political spaces, thus rendering them transnational migrants, not international migrants. As transnational migrants continue to apply for U.S. citizenship and assimilate into American culture, it will be important to study how Puerto Ricans fit within or delineate from transnational migration theories. I suspect that as Puerto Ricans continue to participate in circular migration, hybrid identities will become more pronounced for those on the mainland and island.

In reviewing the current literature on Puerto Rican migration and its effects on national identity, it is apparent that Puerto Rican migration is unique from other international migration patterns. This uniqueness is largely attributed to Puerto Rico's commonwealth status and U.S. citizenship. Scholars are able to control for these factors and examine how identity is affected by the blurring lines of territory and language. They are able to conclude that Puerto Ricans are migrating to the United States for predominately economic reasons and returning for cultural ones. They are also able to determine that many circular migrants are obtaining English language skills, while retaining their cultural ties to the island. This acquisition of English language, while simultaneous maintenance of Puerto Rican culture (including Spanish) is more indicative of hybridity, rather than assimilation. Lastly, they recognize that most research has focused on working class migrants, as they represent the largest sector of Puerto Rican return migrants.

The scholars propose that further study should focus on gendered migration (Aranda 2007; Whalen & Vázquez-Hernández 2005) or second and third generation

migrants to determine the changing dynamics of identity. While these studies are important to advancing our understanding of Puerto Rican migration, researching differences between socio-economic classes could provide the best insight into identity formation. Lower class migrants, regardless of gender, have typically migrated for economic reasons. As middle and upper class citizens increasingly migrate to the U.S., it will be important to research the motivations underlying migration, as they will likely differ from lower classes. This could indicate that middle and upper classes assess their national identity in ways that differ from lower classes. Understanding the reasoning that classes invoke to formulate identity could clarify how migration is affecting identity. Scholars have not been able to successfully identify the main connections between Puerto Rican migration and national identity. My study on middle class migrants seeks to fill an existing gap within the literature and provide a comparison to previous studies of working class migrants.

### **Research Design**

The methods that political scientists have employed in their research are varied, and yet a schism has separated qualitative and quantitative methodologies for decades (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2004)<sup>12</sup>. Recent scholars argue that multi-method research designs are better suited for providing generalizable findings and identifying causal mechanisms (Haverkamp, Morrow, and Ponterotto 2005). There are strengths and weakness within each tradition, which will be briefly discussed.

According to González Castro et al. (2010) there are four major strengths to quantitative approaches. These include the capacity to operationalize variables, conduct

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<sup>12</sup> For a complete overview of qualitative and quantitative methods refer to Tashakkori and Teddlie's analysis in Chapter 1.

cross comparisons, test the strength of association between two or more variables, and test hypotheses. Viruell-Fuentes (2007, 1525) argues that one major shortcoming of this approach is *decontextualization*.<sup>13</sup> In other words, quantitative analysis is limited in that it removes information from its original “real-world” framework.

The opposite argument can be made of qualitative analysis, in that it completely contextualizes the subject, taking its environment into consideration. The strengths of conducting qualitative analysis, therefore, would include obtaining detailed accounts of the human experience, situated within social, cultural, economic, and political contexts, and that those accounts are studied within their original “real-world” context. Qualitative analysis of the human experience is better able to explain factors such as human emotion and cultural values that quantitative analysis alone cannot (Plano Clark et al. 2008). Qualitative approaches lack in their ability to assign uniform definitions across observations and leave conclusions open for interpretation. These approaches have been critiqued for their small and non-random samples, which can make conclusions difficult to generalize.

There are benefits and shortcomings within both traditions and the decision to apply one method versus the other should be driven by the research questions themselves and the availability of data. The type of research I am primarily concerned with deals with concepts of identity, cultural values, and language. Perspectives on these issues can be difficult to assess through survey data, and for that reason I conducted ethnographic interviews among participants. The participants I interviewed, however, are part of a much larger diaspora of transnational migrants, and interviews

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<sup>13</sup> Viruell-Fuentes (2007, 1525) refers to *decontextualization* as “the lack of attention paid to the interplay of culture with social structures and immigrants’ agency.”

alone are not able to adequately represent the target population. Including quantitative data into the study helps to paint a fuller empirical picture. By using a mixed methods approach, I am able to test the relationships among multiple variables while providing a broader context.

The specific methodological model that I chose to follow is a sequential exploratory design. This design “is characterized by an initial phase of qualitative data collection and analysis, followed by a phase of quantitative data collection and analysis. Therefore, the priority is given to the qualitative aspects of the study” (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003, 227). The main research questions of my study are concerned with the human experience, which can be better assessed using quantitative methods. The subsequent data analysis is used to support the ethnographic findings.

The ethnographic interviews were conducted over a six week period in the summer of 2010 in Puerto Rico. Throughout this period I interviewed thirty-five respondents, all over the age of eighteen, in the cities of San Juan, Humacao, Mayaguez, Cabo Rojo, and Aguadilla.<sup>14</sup> Initial contacts were made through personal connections, and subsequent respondents were contacted through the use of snowball sampling.<sup>15</sup> This technique requires the researcher to ask initial respondents to recommend other potential participants. The second group of participants then recommends other individuals, and a snowball effect occurs.

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<sup>14</sup> Respondents were selected from similar socio-economic urban backgrounds.

<sup>15</sup> Snowball sampling is a technique often used in the Social Sciences to identify possible subjects in an area that may be difficult to detect, or when similar respondents are essential to the study; snowball sampling was used in this study to easily find respondents within same the middle socio-economic class. For additional studies on the benefits and limitations of snowball sampling, refer to Biernacki and Waldorf (1981).

I chose to use a semi-structured format when conducting interviews among all thirty-five respondents. I conducted a questionnaire and asked respondents to answer each question fully, but allowed for divergences and new topics to be introduced. As opposed to a structured format that has a limited set of questions, a semi-structured format allows the respondents to explore and discuss the suggested themes more fully. Interviews typically lasted between fifteen and thirty minutes, and respondents were given the option to conduct the interview in either English or Spanish. Twenty-three respondents chose to conduct the interview in Spanish and twelve in English. I used a digital recorder during all interviews as well as took notes. I did not conduct follow up interviews due to time constraints.

All quantitative data is taken from the 2006 Latino National Survey (LNS), which is hosted by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. According to the LNS website (2010), the 2006 Survey “contains 8,634 completed interviews (unweighted) of self-identified Latino/Hispanic residents of the United States.” Respondents were all over eighteen years of age, allowed to conduct the interview in English or Spanish, and asked approximately 165 questions “ranging from demographic descriptions to political attitudes and policy preferences, as well as a variety of social indicators and experiences.”<sup>16</sup> Only respondents of Puerto Rican descent (both island and mainland born) who answered questions regarding transnationalism and language were used in my study. All analyses are conducted using the Survey Documentation

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<sup>16</sup> Information taken from the 2006 LNS online website.

and Analysis (SDA) system.<sup>17</sup> The quantitative data provides a more representative sample of the Puerto Rican migrant diaspora.

The literature review provided in Chapter 1 seeks to inform the character of Puerto Rican return migration. By applying the prevailing theories of international migration to this case study, I am able to determine that a detailed account of identity formation within the Puerto Rican context will provide additional depth and clarity. Chapter 2 aims to discuss the intellectual discourses surrounding the formation of Puerto Rican identity. By doing so, I will expose the complexities of class structure and challenge basic assumptions on Puerto Rican identity.

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<sup>17</sup> SDA is provided by 2006 LNS online website for use among participating universities.

## CHAPTER 2 IDENTITY FORMATION

Identity is a complex concept, incorporating multiple aspects of culture, politics, economics, and social norms into a single ideology. Identity can be scaled down, meaning that an individual has an identity on a personal or micro level, and it can be scaled up, where an individual has a shared identity with other members of his/her society, at the communal, regional, national, and transnational level. The function of a national identity is to unify multiple people, who have shared values and beliefs and are oftentimes delimited by a certain territory. The most basic way to interpret a national identity is to study a society as a whole. Attributing values and cultural norms to an entire society tends to homogenize a nation, rather than highlight the multiple factions within subnational and regional identities. This lens of analysis has been used to study the Puerto Rican case throughout most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Puerto Rican identity has continued to evolve since the first Spanish colonizers introduced their culture to the indigenous populations. Additionally, the island has been (and still is) greatly influenced by its unique relationship with the United States. As the number of transnational migrants becomes ever increasing, new studies must incorporate them into the discourse on identity formation. In tracing the roots of Puerto Rican identity, and later discussing how intellectual discourses have analyzed national and cultural identity formation, I will determine how circular migrants fit into the discourse and argue for their inclusion in understanding identity formation. I will also discuss why studying identity formation as an essentialist process, in other words applying an unalterable homogenizing perspective, has been counterproductive to understanding the complexities of the Puerto Rican case. By fleshing out these

arguments, the need for specific studies, namely those that pay attention to other categories of difference such as class, will become apparent.

### **Roots of Puerto Rican Identity**

Little is known about the original inhabitants of Puerto Rico before the 1500s. Known as the Arawaks or Taínos, they are said to have been a peaceful, agriculturally minded civilization who gave the island its native name, *boriquen*. Spanish conquistadors began arriving in large numbers during the sixteenth century, enslaving the Taínos and working them to near extinction. These harsh working conditions, in combination with exposure to infectious diseases brought by the Spaniards, had severely reduced the native population in the 50 years after conquest. One such documented case is the smallpox outbreak in 1518. In 1520, King Carlos I of Spain emancipated the Taínos, but the damage to the native civilization was irreparable. It was not until the early 1900s that the Taínos would be recognized as an important aspect of Puerto Rican history and culture.

In the mid-1700s, the Spanish began importing large numbers of African slaves from the Sub-Saharan region. The demand for slave labor escalated as the Taínos dwindled under Spanish oppression. By the late 1830s nearly 50,000 African slave laborers resided in Puerto Rico, heavily concentrated in coastal regions (Curet 1980). By the 1840s dependency on slave labor reduced as economic growth tapered off. In the decades that followed, emancipation movements surfaced. “Antislavery arose in Puerto Rico not because of slavery’s marginality to the island’s economy and society...but as a projected solution...to the island’s economic decline and political subordination” (Schmidt-Nowara 2009, 7). In 1873 slavery was abolished, freeing the Africans to intertwine with native Puerto Ricans and Spaniards. Over the next several

decades the distinct ethnic and racial divides blurred as miscegenation and interracial marriages occurred. By the turn of the twentieth century, the influence of the United States would yet again alter the cultural makeup of Puerto Rico (Cabán 2002).

### **Colonialism and U.S. Imperialism**

Puerto Rico has a unique history with the U.S. in comparison to its Caribbean counterparts, as the only nation to become an incorporated territory in the aftermath of the Spanish-American war. In the late eighteenth century Puerto Rico and Cuba were among the last two colonies still under Spanish rule. On July 25, 1898 the U.S. invaded Puerto Rico in an attempt to gain control of the Caribbean islands over Spain. “Puerto Rico, more than any other former Spanish possession, was the hapless victim of an explosive U.S. drive to assert military and naval hegemony in the Caribbean” (Cabán 2002, 35). The U.S. became increasingly aware of Puerto Rico as a strategic advantage militarily, as well as economically. The island could potentially serve as a cultural link between the U.S. and Latin America. Juan Huyke, the first Puerto Rican education commissioner, later commented that “Porto Rico is about halfway between North and South America” and would be a “proper location...for training of students for the important work of uniting the Americas” (USWD Annual Report 1929, 375).<sup>1</sup> The U.S. military moved quickly to gain power over the island after realizing its potential profit. Spain ceded Puerto Rico to the U.S. in 1898 under the Treaty of Paris, and many Puerto Ricans believed that the U.S. would grant the island sovereignty. Rather than allow the small nation independence, the U.S. set about “Americanizing” the Puerto Rican peoples.

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<sup>1</sup> To find texts cited in original sources, refer to the series of *Annual Report of the Governor of Porto Rico*; addresses from Juan Huyke can also be found in Cabán (2002).

The Americanization process was far reaching and sought to replace Puerto Rican governmental, economic, and socio-cultural ideologies with American values. The government was run by a string of various U.S. military leaders in the two short years following Spanish cession. The U.S. quickly asserted its dominance over Puerto Rico, establishing the Foraker Act of 1900, which called for a new civilian government. U.S. officials not only had their own interests in mind, but they believed Americanization policies were in the best interests of the islanders.

These inhabitants, all of a foreign race and tongue, largely illiterate and without experience in conducting a government in accordance with Anglo Saxon practice, or indeed to carry on any government, were not deemed to be fitted and qualified, unaided and without effective supervision, to fully appreciate the responsibilities and exercise the power of complete self government. (General George W. Davis Brigadier, 1909)

The U.S. installed new branches of government including an executive council, House of Representatives, judicial system, and U.S. appointed governor. In addition, a non-voting Resident Commissioner was placed in the U.S. Congress to speak on behalf of the island. This position still exists today, and unfortunately, remains a non-voting seat.

The U.S. continued its quest to Americanize the presumably “inferior natives” by drastic measures such as replacing all Spanish instruction within school systems with English. English language instruction within school systems was the primary focus of Americanization efforts. “Education officials understood the ideological function of the school system as an agent for Americanization” (Cabán 2002, 133).

The goal was to encourage American patriotism through training programs related to civic, social, and development issues, as well as courses in U.S. history. Evidence of the belief that English instruction would foster an acceptance of American values can be

found in statements from U.S. officials. The U.S. Secretary of War in 1920 stated, “The people of Porto Rico are American citizens. Perhaps the most important factor in their complete Americanization is the spreading of the English language” (USWD Annual Report 1920, 54). Education Commissioner Brumbaugh (1907) wrote, “The first business of the American republic, in its attempts to universalize its educational ideals in America, is to give these Spanish-speaking races the symbols of the English language.” The education sector was viewed as the primary vehicle for properly colonizing Puerto Rico.

Cabán’s (2002) study of the U.S. efforts to restructure the Puerto Rican education system provides an in depth examination of the Americanization process and its limited successes. He argues that its shortcomings can be attributed to several factors. These include insufficient funds, low rates of enrollment among the school age population (less than 35.1%)<sup>2</sup>, and a high concentration of rural residents (79% of Puerto Rico’s 1.2 million population)<sup>3</sup>, most of whom were illiterate (70%)<sup>4</sup>. These factors, in addition to some resistance among native populations, created tensions between U.S. and Puerto Rican cultural values.

Economically, the U.S. sought to integrate Puerto Rico into its monetary system by replacing the peso with the dollar. The U.S. further asserted its dominance over the island by severely restricting its imports and exports and by controlling all treaties and tariffs. Puerto Ricans were strictly limited in their options and were confronted with a complete overhaul of their political, economic, and cultural institutions. Many of the

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<sup>2</sup> Figure taken from the USDW Annual Report 1917, 461

<sup>3</sup> Figures taken from the USDW Annual Report 1914, 5

<sup>4</sup> Figures taken from the USDW Annual Report 1914, 5

policies that the U.S. installed during its Americanization process were met with resistance, yet remain present today. The island's status as an incorporated territory shaped the way in which Puerto Ricans formed their identities.

### **Incorporated Territory**

Just nineteen years after Spain ceded Puerto Rico, U.S. citizenship, though met with some opposition,<sup>5</sup> was conferred onto all Puerto Ricans. The Jones Act of 1917 granted a statutory citizenship status, which is granted by law rather than by birth.<sup>6</sup> In other words, although it is unlikely that the Jones Act will be repealed in the foreseeable future, “there is no constitutional guarantee that U.S. citizenship will continue to be granted by Congress” (*Puerto Rico Herald* 1999). Provisions within the Jones Act detailed the rights and responsibilities of these new citizens; however, did not provide full voting rights, such as during presidential elections. The Jones Act is a classic example of U.S. imperialism in action.

Citizenship has many implications for how an individual determines his/her identity and cannot be solely viewed as a legal status that grants rights and responsibilities. I argue that it does not create or promote a monolithic identity that unifies all citizens. For many Puerto Ricans, U.S. citizenship allows unrestricted travel between the mainland and island, the opportunity to reside within the U.S., and easier access to political arenas within the U.S., as compared to other Latino groups (DeSipio and Pantoja 1997). Puerto Ricans take advantage of these opportunities and yet, they have been hesitant

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<sup>5</sup> Though the U.S. was met with sporadic opposition, mobilization persisted over the course of several decades. For additional readings on the success of opposition groups, refer to Lisa García Bedolla (2009).

<sup>6</sup> To view the Jones-Shafroth Act of 1917 in its entirety, refer to the Library of Congress.

to assimilate into American culture, as evidenced by Spanish retention. Interestingly, obtaining U.S. citizenship and maintaining a distinct Puerto Rican culture have not proven to be antithetical. Recent scholars such as Duany (2002) believe that transnationalism has helped to create a hybrid culture, one in which Puerto Ricans are able to negotiate their national and individual identities. I will discuss how middle class migration fits into this discussion in Chapter 3 and explore this idea of a multifaceted identity.

### **Discourses on Identity Formation**

Benedict Anderson (2006, 6) argues that nations are “imagined communities,” suggesting that a substantial amount of people create the idea of nationhood based on mutual feelings of commonality, even though many of these people will never know or meet one another. Duany (2002, 8) states that within these imagined communities the “debate between constructionist and essentialist views of the nation remains sterile unless it is recognized that all forms of identity are imagined, invented, and represented—but not necessarily arbitrary, immaterial, and irrelevant.” Duany (2002) argues that even though a national identity may be an imagined concept, it has real implications for how individuals perceive themselves and interact with others. National identity of Puerto Ricans has been analyzed through various intellectual lenses, such as nationalism, Insularism<sup>7</sup>, and migration theory. Each of these discourses serves a function in understanding the various aspects of Puerto Rican identity. I suspect that middle class Puerto Ricans are creating hybrid identities as a result of the increase in circular migration, unlike their lower class counterparts who are slower to learn English

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<sup>7</sup> Insularism was a term coined by Antonio Pedreira in 1932 to situate Puerto Rico within the intellectual discourse of Puerto Rican identity and was used until quite recently.

or identity with the U.S. Previous scholars have typically excluded the diaspora from the discussion; however, with such a large portion of the diaspora moving between the mainland and island, their inclusion is critical to understanding the formation of a national identity.

## **Nationalism**

Puerto Rican nationalism is quite unique from that of other nations due to the island's commonwealth status. State orchestrated nationalism is defined as allegiance and commitment to a sovereign nation and its political system (Anderson 2006). When discussing the nationalist discourse of the early 1930s, a distinction must be made between political and cultural nationalism. Political nationalism is based on the assumption that a nation has a sovereign government, whereas cultural nationalism is "a sense of national consciousness exalting one nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on [the] promotion of its culture and interest."<sup>8</sup> For many Puerto Ricans, nationalism and sovereignty are not mutually exclusive. Political nationalism to the commonwealth is a minority viewpoint; however, cultural nationalism holds true for most Puerto Ricans, including the diaspora.

In the years following Americanization policies, nationalism took on a defensive stance, a protection of cultural values and norms against U.S. influence. There are documented cases of strikes and armed conflict between Puerto Rican nationalists and U.S. officials. The Spanish language became a fundamental component of cultural values in response to the implementation of English instruction within school systems. Likewise, the sustainability of Catholicism, like language, became a defense against U.S. values (in this case Protestantism).

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<sup>8</sup> *Merriam-Webster Online Political Science Dictionary*, s.v. "Nationalism."

The use of nationalism to define Puerto Rican identity can be critiqued on various levels. Most importantly, it sets up Puerto Rican and U.S. culture as antithetical to one another. Quite simply, this does not hold true for middle class migrants. Contemporary migrant groups are increasingly bilingual, as well as bicultural. Many migrants may feel that certain cultural aspects rooted in the island are more salient than American values, yet they acknowledge the influence of both when self-identifying (2006 LNS). The idea that all Latinos are Catholic is a stereotype, sometimes reinforced by Latinos themselves to promote unity. Latinos, including Puerto Ricans, are not a homogenous group with nearly one-fourth self-identifying as Protestants (Espinosa et al. 2003). Nationalism homogenizes all Puerto Ricans, embracing an essentialist collective identity. Middle class migrants self-identity on multiple dimensions such as gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, religion and other indicators. To suggest that middle class migrants create their collective identities based on a nationalist ideology is to ignore the complexities of the migrant experience.

### **Insularism**

The text *Insularismo* (or Insularism) is one of, if not the, most classic studies written about Puerto Rican identity. Its author, Dr. Antonio Pedreira (1932), was greatly concerned about the cultural survival of Puerto Ricans in the 1930s. He posited the question of how Puerto Ricans collectively viewed themselves and in turn, how they were viewed internationally. Pedreira (1932) determined that three main factors contributed to their identity formation: (a) geographic isolation, (b) racial makeup, and (c) the legacy of being a culturally Hispanic colony. The island's geographic isolation and small size greatly contributed to its dependence on Spain, and later the U.S.

Pedreira's (1932) work argues that while racial diversity and the historic precedence of Hispanic culture play an important role in Puerto Ricanness, the island's isolation, or insularism, dominated the cultural ideology. Pedreira's (1932) framework, currently 70+ years old, still permeates the current discourse on Puerto Rican identity (Duany 2002). *Insularismo* is considered the foundation of contemporary studies on Puerto Ricanness; however, massive waves of transnational migration are challenging this. I agree with Duany (2002) in that Pedreira's findings do not grasp the complexities of human behavior and are a result of geographic reductionism. Duany (2002) argues that studying the complexities of Puerto Ricanness must now include the large diaspora, as well as the constant influx of circular migrants. His study on circular migrants suggests that Puerto Ricans are creating new hybrid identities. I will discuss to what degree hybridity can be applied to middle class circular migrants.

### **Hybridity**

The definition and application of the term hybridity has evolved from a simple term meaning mixture, to a complex theory on social interactions. The term hybridity originates from the biological sciences; animals and plants that are the offspring of two different breeds are considered hybrids. In the nineteenth century social scientists began applying the term to linguistics and racial theory to explain the mixing of languages and people. It was often applied in a negative light, inferring that bilingualism and racial mixing would lead to the degradation of a society (Brah and Coombes 2000).

Dr. Homi Bhabha (2004) was one of the first scholars to apply the term hybridity to explain the interaction and blending of multiple cultures. Bhabha's (2004) working theory of cultural hybridity attempts to connect the influences of colonialism with present day globalization. His work emerged as a critique of cultural imperialism, the idea that

one nation imposes its cultural values onto another nation. He argues that culture is not a rigid, fixed set of values. Bhabha (2004) states that the cultural influences that occur during colonialism create multicultural identities.

The influence of colonialism is ever present and ongoing in Puerto Rico as a result of the current commonwealth status. Puerto Rico has been exposed to U.S. culture for over a century. I argue that the constant flux of circular migration is also reinforcing Bhabha's (2004) working theory of multiculturalism. Puerto Rican identity cannot be explained without now including the impact of multiculturalism, or hybridity, in contrast to the fixed, island-bound conception of identity posited by insularismo.

### **Transnationalism**

Hernández Cruz (1994), a Puerto Rican scholar, argues that the earliest migrants to leave the island were in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Small numbers of Spaniards left the island in search of other Spanish colonies for better economic advancements. The first example of a relatively large migration to Puerto Rico was African slaves in the eighteenth century. Between 1900 and 1901, Rosario Natal estimates that nearly 6,000 Puerto Ricans migrated to Hawaii (Natal 1990, 5). Estimates of early migrations indicate that small numbers of migrants were moving to and from the island nearly five centuries ago. The earliest migrants were the first transmitters of Puerto Rican culture. The large scale of migration in the twentieth century and current waves of circular migration are once more altering notions of cultural identity but in ways distinct from previous migrants.

## **Twentieth Century Migration**

### **1900s – 1940s.**

In the beginning of the twentieth century, Americanization policies drastically altered the Puerto Rican economy. As agricultural jobs disappeared under the industrialization process, rural Puerto Ricans gravitated towards urban cities. Unemployment increased and small numbers of Puerto Ricans began migrating to the United States in search of better economic stability (García Bedolla 2009). Widespread poverty made early migration difficult for the average Puerto Rican and by 1920, there were roughly 5,000 Puerto Ricans living in New York City. During WWI, an estimated 236,000 Puerto Ricans on the mainland and island registered for the draft, with roughly 18,000 serving (Pike 2010). Migration to the United States increased during WWI, as many Puerto Ricans went to the mainland to work in factories and serve in the mainland military units. The vast majority remained after WWI, taking up residence in working class Latino communities (Whalen and Vázquez-Hernández 2005). The number of Puerto Rican soldiers in the U.S. military soared during WWII, with estimates ranging from 250,000 to 500,000 (Pike 2010). In the 1940s migrants were transporting to the mainland by boat. Submarine warfare in the Caribbean stopped all migration, and it was not until the early 1950s that migration renewed on a large scale (Hernández Cruz 1994).

### **1950s – 1980s.**

Hernandez Cruz (1994) uses the 1980 Census to estimate that in the beginning of the 1950s, 34,155 migrants either entered or exited Puerto Rico. By the end of the decade, more than 46,000 had exited. Migration to the mainland slowed in the 1960s as industrialization picked up, creating thousands of new jobs. Some years boasted higher

numbers of return Puerto Ricans migrants. In 1969, 1972, and 1976 record numbers of Puerto Ricans returned to Puerto Rico, 7,047, 21,297 and 5,230 respectively. With the exception of 1972 and 1976, the years between 1971 through 1979 averaged 24,479 Puerto Ricans leaving the island in search of jobs. High numbers of migrants to the U.S. continued throughout the 1980s, with yearly averages of 38,184. Migrants in the 1980s boasted higher educational levels; however, interviews taken in 1990 by *El Nuevo Dia*, indicate that 1980s migrants were also in search of better job opportunities.<sup>9</sup>

### **1980s – 2000.**

“Migration has traditionally been considered as a single, one-way, and permanent change of residence” (Duany 2002, 208).<sup>10</sup> For the greater part of the twentieth century this definition of migration applied to Puerto Ricans. The economic cost associated with migration deterred many from returning to the island, and those who did were not likely to return to the U.S. Douglas Massey et al. (1998) agree that within intellectual circles even transnational migration is defined within this nineteenth century framework. The growing literature on circular migration must now include the Puerto Rican case. “Circular migration (also known as commuter, swallow, or revolving door migration) is an increasingly common feature of international population movements” and greatly characterizes the Caribbean region (Duany 2002, 208).

Hernández Cruz (1994), previously cited for his study on migratory trends of Puerto Ricans, viewed migration as a unidirectional move in which migrants would break ties from their home country and assimilate into the host country. However,

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<sup>9</sup> Data analysis completed by Hernández Cruz, p: 91-98.

<sup>10</sup> See Pedraza and Rumbaut (1996); Portes and Rumbaut (1996).

technological advances in communication and transportation have made circular migration a reality for many Puerto Ricans. The acceleration of bidirectional migration has increased tremendously since the 1980s. Puerto Rican scholars are now faced with the challenge of incorporating circular migration into the discourse of transnational migration. Transnational migrants are defined in terms of unidirectional patterns, whereas circular migrants travel in both directions. To leave out this group is to deny their influence on the changing nature of Puerto Rican identity.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

By tracing the roots of Puerto Rican identity, starting with the introduction of African slaves by Spanish colonizers to the indigenous Taíno population, the rejection and incorporation of Americanization policies, and now the increasingly important phenomena of circular migration, it is quite clear that Puerto Rican identity is complex and continually evolving. To think of identity as a fixed concept, as one-dimensional, is to misunderstand identity formation entirely. Within the last 20 years or so Puerto Rican scholars have been searching for alternative methods to study Puerto Rican identity. Duany (2002, 210) best captures the importance of including circular migration arguing “(P)eople who frequently cross geopolitical frontiers also move along the edges of cultural borders, such as those created by language, citizenship, race, ethnicity, and gender ideology.” I agree that this constant movement is blurring the conventional lines of nationhood (territorial, linguistic, jurisdictional).

The importance of tracing intellectual discourses on identity formation was to understand how previous scholars have conceptualized national and cultural identity. A common shortcoming has been treating Puerto Ricans as a homogenous group. Past attempts to define a national culture have typically omitted racial and ethnic minorities

(sometimes referred to as “others”). Throughout most of the twentieth century, attempts to define Puerto Rican values and customs were “characterized by Hispanophilia, anti-Americanism, racism, androcentrism, homophobia, and more recently xenophobia” (Duany 2002, 24). This is not to say that all scholars have ignored various class, race, ethnic, and gender differences, but unfortunately very few studies focusing on these individual categories of difference, within the Puerto Rican context, exist. Further research that highlights these areas will determine how circular migration fits into the discussion of identity formation.

Where one fits within a hierarchal class system can often account for perceived differences among race, ethnicity, educational levels, bilingualism, and gender differences. Class can be a useful tool in understanding national culture. It is common for scholars to conduct initial studies among lower and working classes, as they are easily accessible and tend to be less guarded about their social, economic, and political beliefs. Some preliminary studies on lower classes exist; therefore, my research focuses on middle class migrants to determine their defining characteristics and look for consistency or lack of consistency between socio-economic classes. As circular migrants increasingly come from middle class families, it will be important to track how they are changing traditional notions of cultural identity.

### CHAPTER 3 TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

“We are permanently isolated, to the margins of progress of the United States, if we commit the error of believing that to be proficient in English is an option and not a necessity.”<sup>1</sup> Dr. Rosselló González, the Governor of Puerto Rico from 1993 to 2001, commenting on the importance of English language acquisition in *La Voz* (1999), unintentionally hinted at the changes Puerto Ricans are making to their identity via language.<sup>2</sup> Spanish is still the dominant vernacular spoken on the island; however, the increasing number of circular migrants bring with them English language skills. Language is a defining characteristic of culture and identity. Many U.S. Latinos view Spanish as a marker of authenticity, believe that the second and third generations who only speak English are denying a part of their cultural identity.

Lisa García Bedolla, a political scientist and researcher of cultural identity, asserts that the Spanish language is an essential element in how Latinos identify ethnically. In a study conducted among Latinos about language and identity, García Bedolla (2003, 12) asks a Mexican woman about the importance of maintaining Spanish. The respondent replied:

Yes it is important that they always maintain their language, whether they come from another country or are born here. It is important because we will always have our roots there, and one day we go and the child cannot speak with his grandmother, or with anyone. That is not correct, no? He can carry the two languages, and any other languages he can learn. If he learns all the languages, that is not a sin. That he forget our language, that is a sin.  
(Marta, MAS, 1st gen. Mexican)

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<sup>1</sup> Author's translation of Dr. Rosselló González; to find original text in Spanish consult *La Voz*, "Proficiente bilinguismo necesario para el éxito.

<sup>2</sup> *La Voz* is a popular Puerto Rican newspaper

Marta's response is typical of many first generation Latinos and can be applied to the Puerto Rican case. Many Puerto Ricans, especially circular migrants, understand and accept that English language skills are essential to educational and socioeconomic advancement within the U.S. and increasingly so within Puerto Rico. While they accept an increasingly bilingual population, they preserve their cultural identity through the maintenance of Spanish.

As noted above, language is a key characteristic of identity; therefore, I presuppose that with the increase of bilingualism, middle class circular migrants are creating hybrid identities and altering the cultural identity of those on the island and mainland. I test this hypothesis using ethnographic interviews and the 2006 Latino National Survey. A combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis is used in determining levels of transnationalism, as well as the role of language in identity formation.

## **Transnationalism**

### **Qualitative Research**

Previous studies on Puerto Rican migration have attributed the root causes of migration to the U.S. as a result of economic difficulty, prolonged unemployment, U.S. recruitment, and family reunification. The causes cited for returning to the island often include dissatisfaction or misconceptions about life in the U.S. and family reunification, as opposed to the inability to find stable work (Hernández Cruz 1994). Due to the relative economic stability of the middle class, I expect to find that the respondents were motivated to migrate to the U.S. and back by non-economic factors. I also expect these circular migrants to cite familial ties or cultural preferences as the main reasons for

moving, regardless of the direction. The following questions were asked in regards to migration and economic stability<sup>3</sup>:

- What were the main factors that contributed to your move to the United States?
- What were the main factors that contributed to your return to Puerto Rico?
- Would you consider moving back to the United States? Explain.
- Were you employed in Puerto Rico prior to your first move to the United States? If yes, in what field? If no, how did you supplement your income?
- While living in the United States, were you employed? If yes, in what field? If no, how did you supplement your income?
- Were you able to find employment once you returned to Puerto Rico?
- If you become unemployed in the future, would you consider moving back to the United States?

### **Factors in migration to the U.S.**

Contrary to my initial thoughts, respondents cited job opportunities and the desire for a better quality of life as the top reasons for their primary move to the U.S. The second highest answer was military service, followed closely by education and familial obligations. About half of those who gave job opportunities as a reason also indicated that the move was involuntary; their parents were in search of economic betterment and their children (the respondent) moved with them. This can be read in two ways. One interpretation is that the initial move can be categorized under familial obligation. The other interpretation coincides with the mass migrations of the 1980s. The majority of respondents who moved with their parents did so in the 1980s. I subtracted the birth dates of those same respondents to the year 1985 to test whether or not the respondents were teenagers during the 1980s. For example, if Lucia said she was, she

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<sup>3</sup> To find the questionnaire in its entirety, refer to Appendix A for English and Appendix B for Spanish.

was born in 1974. Therefore, in 1985 Lucia was 11, making her a (pre)teenager (a minor) during her first move. Almost every teenager who moved with a parent(s) in the 1980s did so for the economic advancement of the family. I asked respondents to list the main factors that contributed to their initial move to the U.S. Annalisse's response was a common reply.

Annalisse: My parents took us to the U.S., because they were looking for better opportunities and a better way of life.

### **Factors in return migration.**

Motivations for moving back to Puerto Rico proved to be quite different from the primary reasons to leave. Almost all respondents cited family as the main factor for returning, naming health related issues and missing familial connectedness as major components. A few indicated they had obtained better job opportunities, and even less cited the U.S. as too costly. The one factor that came as a surprise is the lack of perceived discrimination and violence (against Latinos) in the U.S. Only one respondent indicated this as a primary reason for leaving. A few mentioned they had experienced discrimination; however, the topic was almost absent from the interviews.

The overwhelming majority of respondents listed missing family members, or obligations to care for family members as the primary reason for returning.<sup>4</sup>

Osvaldo: As a family, we came back to Puerto Rico, because my grandmother was very ill, and my father wanted to care for her.

Lucia: My father wanted my brother and I to spend more time with our family.

Many respondents simply gave me a one word answer, "familia." After asking them to elaborate, I often heard stories of nostalgia for life on the island and longing to be with

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<sup>4</sup> Personal Interviews

family members. Family ties are an integral part of Puerto Rican culture, and many migrants will return to the island for those ties, not because of downward mobility.

### **Weighing unemployment.**

The question of whether a respondent would consider moving back to the U.S. was asked two separate times during the interview. The first time was directly following a series of questions about motivations for moving to and from the U.S. The second time was after a series of questions related to language, politics, and economics. The first question read, “Would you consider moving back to the United States? Explain.” The second question included the possibility of a job loss: “If you become unemployed in the future, would you consider moving back to the United States?” The second question, tied to job loss, was to draw out any evidence of middle class migrants moving for economic factors. The first time the question was asked one-third responded no, while two-thirds responded maybe or yes. The second time the rephrased question was asked a slight shift towards the affirmative occurred. The slight shift indicates that middle class Puerto Ricans, much like their working class counterparts, can be motivated to migrate based on economic factors. This slight shift in attitudes can be seen in these two responses:

Christina: That is a hard question; because I have all my friends there and my sister, brother, and nieces and nephews live there... *Only for that reason* would I move back. I find that every time I return back to the U.S. it changes for the worse. I can no longer take the hustle and bustle in the U.S. It seems as if everyone is either too busy or too mad to even say hello or good morning. It has changed so much from 20 years ago. I wouldn't go back if I didn't have to.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Response to question 1

Christina: I would have to *think about it*. It would not be my option. The U.S. is just, if not worse, than we (Puerto Ricans) are right now as far as the job market goes.<sup>6</sup>

In the first response Christina weighs her options and decides that she would only move because of familial ties. In the second response she rethinks her position and opens up the possibility of future migration, in the event that she lost her job in Puerto Rico.

### **Downward mobility.**

Within the economic section of the survey participants were asked about their employment history in both the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Those who were unemployed were asked how they supplemented their income. Ninety nine percent who listed unemployment were minors at the time of their first migration to the U.S. and were supported by their parent(s). Those who were employed in Puerto Rico (prior to migrating) listed jobs such as educators, social workers, and receptionists. The same participants listed their jobs in the U.S as factory workers, baby sitters, Spanish teachers, and student counselors. A general downward mobility in class occurs when (middle class) migrants move to the U.S.<sup>7</sup> This downward mobility occurs in spite of increased bilingualism among Puerto Ricans. Perhaps other factors, such as discrimination, are at play. The constant flux of circular migration makes it difficult to measure the level of intersectionality among Puerto Ricans.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Response to question 2

<sup>7</sup> For a comparative study of the Mexican case, see Roger Rouse and his classification of “class transformation,” one that involves a rural (peasant) to urban (wage earner) change.

<sup>8</sup> In this case, “intersectionality” is defined as the socially constructed categories of identity (gender, class, race, etc) simultaneously interacting and reflecting various levels of societal discrimination.

While interviewing respondents, the issue of perceived discrimination was relatively low. Of those who stated they had experienced discrimination, their accounts seemed to indicate indirect confrontation. While I did not include a series that directly asked about experiences of discrimination, the issue arose when asking respondents how they self identified, and attitudes towards Puerto Rico's commonwealth status. One such respondent stated:

Wilfredo: I am sure when you walk into a white neighborhood to buy a house or into a restaurant in the white part of town, they do not stare at you because they are saying in their minds, "Oh, look. Here comes our North American citizens." They are saying, "What is this Puerto Rican doing in our neighborhood?" I experienced this.

Statements like Wilfredo's were rare during my personal interviews, but this issue of perceived discrimination should be included in future research to account for any variation between lower and middle class migrants.

### **Quantitative Research**

The 2006 Latino National Survey (LNS) contains 8,364 interviews taken from self identified Latinos or Hispanics in the U.S. The LNS website includes a user friendly Survey Documentation and Analysis (SDA) system which enables users to conduct statistical analyses such as bivariate cross tabulation, multiple regression, and analysis of variance. The majority of tests included in the study are bivariate cross tabulations.

For the purposes of this study, only the respondents who self identified as being of Puerto Rican ancestry were included. The survey asks respondents of Latino or Hispanic origin to indicate which country they trace their Latino heritage to. Within the demographic section the survey asks from which country the respondent's family is from, other than the United States. The respondents who traced their Latino heritage to Puerto Rico are coded as 17. Tables 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-5, 3-6, and 3-7 control for the

country code. In addition, age and income were included as controls. The age range was selected from 18 to 65 in all tables. The variable income controlled for middle class wages from \$35,000 to \$65,000. The income variable was controlled for in Tables 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-5 and 3-6.

Tables 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-6, and 3-7 include the country where the respondent was born. These sections are divided into three categories: mainland U.S., Puerto Rico, and other. Many scholars have ignored the diaspora's influence on identity formation, and for this reason country of birth is included. The second reason for including country of birth is to single out circular migrants. The survey does not ask the participants to specify if they are circular migrants or not; however, it does include questions about the frequency of contact with family and friends on the island, frequency of visiting, and plans to return permanently. These are all good indicators of behavioral and attitudinal traits of circular migrants.

### **Contact.**

As the frequency of contact between a transnational migrant and his/her family members or friends in the sending community increases, the active maintenance of the culture increases. The facilitation of contact has increased tremendously within the past few decades as technology has made communication readily available. Forms of contact can include phone calls, email, internet chats, blogs, and mail, to name a few. Regardless of the method of contact, it is obvious that Puerto Rican migrants keep in close contact with those on the island.

An astonishing 57.8% of Puerto Rican born migrants communicate with islanders more than once a week. The percentage for U.S. born (25%) is also quite high. The Pew Hispanic Center released a study in 2007 with estimates that 4.1 million Puerto

Table 3-1. Contact with family and friends in P.R. by birthplace.

|               | Once a week or more | Once a month or more | Once every several months | Never | Don't Know | N of Cases | TOTAL |
|---------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------|------------|------------|-------|
| Mainland U.S. | 25.0                | 20.7                 | 26.1                      | 27.2  | 1.1        | 92         | 100.0 |
| Puerto Rico   | 57.8                | 21.1                 | 13.3                      | 7.8   | .0         | 90         | 100.0 |
| Other         | 35.7                | 50.0                 | 7.1                       | .0    | 7.1        | 14         | 100.0 |

Source: LNS 2006 Valid Cases 196

P = 0.00 ChiSq = 8

Ricans live in the U.S. According to the findings in Table 3-1, more than 75% of middle income Puerto Ricans report keeping in contact with friends and family once every few months or more.

### Visit frequency.

The frequency with which Puerto Ricans, who are residing in the U.S. travel back and forth between Puerto Rico and the U.S. indicates how many times per year respondents cross cultural borders. Each time a Puerto Rican crosses the cultural border between the U.S. and Puerto Rico, he/she is sharing information, ideas, cultural values, norms, and customs, or what the literature refers to as “social remittances”. It can be argued that increased exposure to both American and Puerto Rican culture contributes to multiculturalism, rather than a zero-sum tradeoff. Table 3-2 compares the frequency of visits to Puerto Rico by Latinos of Puerto Rican descent who were born in the U.S. verses those born on the island.

Of the Puerto Ricans who were born in the U.S. mainland, 27.2% report never visiting Puerto Rico, closely followed by once in the past three years (20.7%) and more than five years ago (19.6%). Still, a sizeable percentage (16.3%) report visiting the island at least once a year. As for those born on the island, the frequency of visits is

substantially higher. The majority visit between once a year (24.4%) and once every three years (22.2%). More than 18% visit more than one time per year. On average, 60.5% of middle income Puerto Ricans currently living in the U.S. return to visit Puerto Rico once or more every three years. In other words, over one million Puerto Ricans are entering and exiting the small island every three years.

Table 3-2. Frequency of visits to Puerto Rico by birthplace.

|               | More than once a year | Once a Year | Once in the past three years | Once in the past five years | More than five years ago | Never | N of Cases | TOTAL |
|---------------|-----------------------|-------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------|------------|-------|
| Mainland U.S. | 7.6                   | 16.3        | 20.7                         | 8.7                         | 19.6                     | 27.2  | 92         | 100.0 |
| Puerto Rico   | 18.9                  | 24.4        | 22.2                         | 10.0                        | 14.4                     | 10.0  | 90         | 100.0 |
| Other         | 21.4                  | 21.4        | 28.6                         | 21.4                        | .0                       | 7.1   | 14         | 100.0 |

Source: LNS 2006 Valid Cases 196  
P = 0.01 Chi sq = 22.45

### Permanent movement.

Studies of Caribbean migrant groups show that most migrants who keep up transnational ties leave open the possibility of moving back to the home country. This is also known as the exit option, or myth of return, typically one that is never realized (Rogers 2006). This exit option has multiple political implications for how migrants engage and disengage in U.S. politics, but less is known about the cultural ramifications. It can be argued that when a migrant keeps transnational ties to the home country and has the option of returning, they are more likely to maintain aspects of their native cultural identity.

Table 3-3. Plans to live in Puerto Rico permanently by birthplace.

|               | Yes  | No   | Don't Know | N of Cases | TOTAL |
|---------------|------|------|------------|------------|-------|
| Mainland U.S. | 10.9 | 88.0 | 1.1        | 92         | 100.0 |
| Puerto Rico   | 23.3 | 71.1 | 5.6        | 90         | 100.0 |
| Other         | 28.6 | 57.1 | 7.1        | 14         | 100.0 |

Source: LNS 2006 Valid Cases 196

P = 0.00 ChiSq = 23.56

The Puerto Rican case presents an interesting challenge to the exit option. The majority of transnational migrants never permanently return to the home country, whereas a substantial number of Puerto Ricans do, due to their legal means to do so. Not only do they return to their home country, but they inverse the original exit option concept, leaving open the option to return to the U.S. Table 3-3 is a snapshot view of how many middle class Puerto Ricans plan to permanently return to Puerto Rico. Unsurprisingly, those born on the island are more than twice as likely to have plans to return as those born on the mainland. The “don’t know” category was included to show the level of uncertainty that exists.

## **Language and Identity**

### **Qualitative Research**

In my qualitative interviews, the respondents were asked seven questions about the role that Spanish and English play in their everyday lives, and the lives of their children. The purpose of the questions were to determine the level of bilingualism among middle class migrants, the importance of maintaining the Spanish language whether living in the U.S. or in Puerto Rico, attitudes about English acquisition and finally, how Spanish is tied to Puerto Rican cultural and national identity. The following questions were asked:

- Did you learn English before you moved to the U.S, while you lived there, or neither?
- Would you consider yourself bilingual?
- Do you have any children? If so, are they bilingual?
- Do you speak Spanish, English, or both languages at home?
- If you had remained in the U.S., how important would it have been to continue speaking Spanish?
- How is speaking Spanish an aspect of your identity as a Puerto Rican?
- How do you feel about mandatory English instruction within Spanish school systems?

### **Measuring bilingualism.**

The respondent's answers provided noteworthy insights into how middle class Puerto Ricans view the role of language and how they would like others to perceive them. Almost all of the respondents considered themselves to be bilingual, though the level of bilingualism varied greatly. Of those who self-identified as bilingual, about one-third are considered proficient or fluent, with high levels of oral and written skills. One-third are able to communicate using mostly English, inserting Spanish or Spanglish words when the English idiom was unknown or the respondent felt that a Spanish word better conveyed the meaning (also known as code-switching). The remaining one-third could understand English but had difficulty responding. I was unable to determine the level of proficiency among those who chose to conduct the interview in Spanish.

The majority of respondents with children indicated that their offspring are also bilingual, and typically, at higher levels of proficiency than the parent. To illustrate this point, I will include brief excerpts from three separate interviews where the respondents referred to the level of bilingualism among family members.

Wilfredo: My three daughters are bilingual. We speak mostly Spanish, but sometimes revert to English when the phrases seem more appropriate [in English].

Julia: Yes, I have children, and they are bilingual. When they speak to me, they speak mostly in English...with their father, they speak in Spanish because even though he can speak and understand English, he does not use English as well as we do.”

Carmen: My parents and siblings are bilingual. I speak Spanish with my parents and English with my siblings.

People tend to speak the language they are most familiar and comfortable with within the privacy of their own homes and among family members. The younger respondents in my study not only indicated their ability to speak English with ease but their ownership over the language.

The respondents are given the option to conduct the interview in Spanish or English, 44.1% choosing English. Those most likely to choose English were between the ages of 18 and 30, while those 45 and above are more likely to choose Spanish. The younger participants within the sample are more comfortable speaking

Table 3-4. Respondents’ language preference by age.

| Age Range | English | Spanish | N of Cases | Total % |
|-----------|---------|---------|------------|---------|
| 18-30     | 100.0   | --      | 9          | 100.0   |
| 30-40     | 100.0   | --      | 1          | 100.0   |
| 40-50     | 60.0    | 40.0    | 5          | 100.0   |
| 50-60     | 28.6    | 71.4    | 7          | 100.0   |
| 60+       | --      | 100.0   | 12         | 100.0   |

Source: Personal Interviews, Puerto Rico. Summer of 2010

English than their older counterparts, and typically have higher levels of English proficiency. There is some variance within the 40 to 50 and 50 to 60 age groups, with 60% and 28.6% choosing English, respectively. The preference for Spanish is positively correlated to the respondent’s age. Refer to Table 3-4 for a breakdown of age versus language preference. There are a total of 34 participants, with the largest group of

participants split between the youngest category, 18 to 30 year olds (9 cases), and the oldest category, 60 years or older (12 cases).

### **Spanish maintenance.**

In order to gauge the connection between the Spanish language and Puerto Rican identity, I asked about the importance of speaking Spanish in everyday conversations, on the island and mainland. Puerto Ricans not only maintain their language in the U.S., but ensure its survival through their children.

Natalia: When we moved to the U.S. my parents, especially my father, always made it a point to speak to us in Spanish. He also made it a rule that we could not speak English at home. We were to speak English out of the home and Spanish always in the home. I applied the same rule when we moved to P.R. with my children, but it was the other way around. They were to speak English always in the home and Spanish out of the home.

This particular interview made clear the distinct roles that Spanish and English play in the everyday lives of circular Puerto Rican migrants. They associate Spanish with Puerto Ricanness and English with American values. Rather than reject their language in the U.S. or English upon return, these migrants understand the increased benefits of bilingualism. Not only are they acquiring new skills, but they are accepting aspects of the American culture.

Many respondents felt that maintaining Spanish was also a way to tie them to their families and communities. When asked the same series of questions María not only linked Spanish to her culture, but to a set of family values and belonging.

María: Our roots are important and our language is sacred, just like our heritage. We should never be ashamed to speak our language, but we should be ashamed when we are not able to speak it. Not teaching your child their native language is like depriving them of part of their culture. It is sad and shameful that a child back in the U.S. can't communicate with their grandparents in Puerto Rico simply because he/she cannot speak Spanish.

The importance of family is a central theme within the Puerto Rican community and many migrants feel that maintaining their language is way to stay connected and plugged in to their home countries. Interestingly, María responded to this question in English. Her response not only signifies a high level of bilingualism, but her ability to navigate the importance of both English and Spanish.

### **Attitudes.**

I was able to gauge attitudes towards language skills through various questions on culture, identity, bilingualism, etc.; however, I was specifically interested in how the responses would vary when I inquired about English instruction within the Puerto Rican school systems. Instruction is in Spanish, but children are taught English as a second language and are assigned various homework tasks that incorporate English. The major division of language occurs at the university level, where instruction is in Spanish, but all textbooks are in English. Students who wish to further their academic careers must be proficient in both English and Spanish, unless they enroll in a Spanish language university.

The older respondents felt that English instruction was a useful tool that could lead to economic advancement. Many indicated that English was becoming more commonly used on the island and that the younger generations were showing more signs of bilingualism. The benefits of English language skills within the job market, as well Puerto Rico's relationship with the U.S., are slowly turning the island into a bilingual nation.

### **Spanish, culture, and identity.**

The respondents were asked multiple questions about Spanish usage in the U.S. and the words/phrases most frequently used to describe the importance of speaking

Spanish were “our language, our identity, culture, nation, and history.” When asked about the use of Spanish in the U.S., Jorge replied,

Jorge: El español es nuestro idioma principal y parte de nuestra identidad y cultura. Aún cuando voy a los E.E.U.U, utilizo el inglés solo para comunicarme con las personas que no entienden español.” [Author’s translation: “Spanish is our first language and a part of our identity and culture. Whenever I go to the U.S., I only use English to communicate with people who don’t understand Spanish.”]

Jorge sees Spanish as a fundamental aspect of his culture, whereas English is a language skill. Again, the increased level of bilingualism indicates a strong desire to maintain a Puerto Rican identity.

I asked Maria if Spanish was specifically tied to her identity as a Puerto Rican. Her response echoes that of many circular migrants.

Maria: It is part of who we are. It is like arroz and gandules with pasteles for Christmas!<sup>9</sup> It is what makes us unique, but at the same time it is what unites us with other (Latino) cultures. Spanish may sound the same to those who do not know the language, but the Spanish spoken in Puerto Rico is not the same Spanish spoken in Mexico or in Santo Domingo or Spain.

María sees herself and other Puerto Ricans as tied together by a shared language. Just as Maria sees Spanish as a cultural tie to other Spanish speakers, it could be argued that as these migrants learn English, they feel a sense of connectedness with other English speakers, namely U.S. Americans.

## **Quantitative Research**

### **Measuring bilingualism.**

Using the same SDA methods for Tables 3-1, 3-2, and 3-3, the next series of Tables (3-5 and 3-6) aim to measure how middle class Puerto Ricans respond to questions about maintaining Spanish and the rising level of bilingualism. The ability to

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<sup>9</sup> Traditional Puerto Rican meal of rice and beans and a “meat pie.”

speak and understand English by native Spanish speakers is becoming an essential skill necessary to advance economically. The connection between income and bilingualism is readily apparent. The majority of low income earners, those who earned

Table 3-5. Ability to understand and speak English by income.

|               | BELOW<br>\$15k | \$15 k -<br>24,999 | \$25 k-<br>34,999 | \$35 k-<br>44,999 | \$45 k-<br>54,999 | \$55 k-<br>64,999 | Above<br>\$65,000 |
|---------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Not at all    | 17.1           | 3.1                | 7.7               | 10.3              | .0                | .0                | .0                |
| Just a little | 43.9           | 46.9               | 46.2              | 13.8              | 7.1               | .0                | 14.8              |
| Pretty well   | 22.0           | 21.9               | 34.6              | 31.0              | 64.3              | 16.7              | 25.9              |
| Very well     | 17.1           | 28.1               | 11.5              | 44.8              | 28.6              | 83.3              | 59.3              |
| Total         | 100.0          | 100.0              | 100.0             | 100.0             | 100.0             | 100.0             | 100.0             |
| N of Cases    | 41             | 32                 | 26                | 29                | 14                | 12                | 27                |

Source: LNS 2006 Valid Cases<sup>10</sup> 225  
P = 0.00 Chi Sq = 61.05

below \$15,000 per year, rated their ability to speak and understand English as “just a little” (43.9%). The majority of high income earners, those who earned above \$65,000 per year, reported their ability to speak and understand English as “very well” (59.3%). Upper middle class income earners, who earned \$55,000 to \$64,999 per year, reported the highest levels of ability to speak and understand English as “very well” (83.3%). Lower and middle class income earners, who earned \$35,000 to \$44,999 and \$45,000 to \$54,999, reported high levels of ability of speak and understand English, responding “very well” at 44.8% and “pretty well” at 64.3% respectively. While the highest level of bilingualism (indicated by “very well”) peaked at \$55,000 to \$64,999 (83.3%), there is

<sup>10</sup> The tables that do not control for “income” witness an increase in the number of case studies.

general trend that indicates the more income a participant earned the greater skill he/she has in English.

**Spanish maintenance.**

Table 3-6 asks participants to rate the importance of maintaining Spanish on a four point scale, from not at all important to very important. What was interesting about this particular model was that when I ran the cross tabulation including all middle income

Table 3-6. Importance to maintain Spanish language by birthplace.

|               | Not at all important | Not very important | Somewhat important | Very Important | N of Cases | TOTAL |
|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------|-------|
| Mainland U.S. | 2.1                  | 3.5                | 16.6               | 77.9           | 289        | 100.0 |
| Puerto Rico   | .9                   | 1.8                | 9.2                | 88.1           | 336        | 100.0 |
| Other         | .0                   | .0                 | 6.4                | 93.6           | 47         | 100.0 |

Source: LNS 2006 Valid Cases 672  
P = 0.01 Chi Sq = 16.16

groups, the only income group that was statistically significant ranged from \$45,000 to \$54,000. When I included other controls for middle class incomes ranging from \$30,000 to \$45,000 and \$55,000 to \$65,000, the model was no longer statistically significant.

While this model provides information on a portion of middle income holders, it does not account for all middle class groups. Table 3-6 provides evidence in support of the following claim: maintaining Spanish is very importance to a vast majority of Puerto Ricans, regardless of birthplace. Over 88% of those born in Puerto Rico indicated “very important” while 77.9% of their mainland born counterparts answered “very important.” A very small minority (3.0%) answered “not at all important.”

**Political identity.**

Measuring political identity can provide clues as to how Puerto Ricans will be incorporated into the American political system if they choose to maintain a permanent

residence, or alternately, how hybridity might interact with or influence one’s political identity after a return trip to the island.<sup>11</sup> Testing the level of political interest among return migrants may provide some clues as to how they will engage in future politics. Table 3-7 is an analysis of the level of political interest among Puerto Ricans born in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Participants were asked, “How interested are you in politics and public affairs? Would you say you are very interested, somewhat interested, or not at all interested?” (2006 LNS).

Table 3-7. Level of interest in politics and public affairs by birthplace.

|               | Not Interested | Somewhat Interested | Very Interested | N of Cases | TOTAL |
|---------------|----------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------|-------|
| Mainland U.S. | 19.0           | 52.6                | 26.6            | 289        | 100.0 |
| Puerto Rico   | 28.0           | 42.9                | 25.3            | 336        | 100.0 |
| Other         | 34.0           | 40.4                | 25.5            | 47         | 100.0 |

Source: LNS 2006 Valid Cases<sup>12</sup> 672  
P = 0.03 Chi Sq = 17.02

Regardless of birth place, the majority of participants indicated being “somewhat interested” or “very interested” in politics and public affairs.<sup>13</sup> In Chapter 4 I discuss possible political implications of middle class return migrants within Puerto Rico.

### Concluding Thoughts

The initial goal of combing studies on transnational ties and language was to examine how they were both connected to cultural identity. I concluded that they were not only significantly contributing to how migrants think of identity, but how they conceptualize the functions of language and movement in relation to identity. The three

<sup>11</sup> Permanent residence does not refer to a legal status in this instance.

<sup>12</sup> Number of valid cases does not control for income. When the control for income was introduced into the model, the analysis was no longer statistically significant.

<sup>13</sup> Those who indicated “don’t know/not sure” or “refuse” were less than 4% of the total sample and therefore, excluded from Table 3-7.

concepts intertwine on multiple levels. I was able to trace how transnationalism leads to further language acquisition, which alters notions of identity. The relationship is not linear, or uni-directional, however. National identity alters perceptions of cultural identity, which includes language. These can shape the decisions and movements of circular migrants.

I found that the cultural identity of Puerto Rican circular migrants is becoming increasingly complex, not only for the migrants themselves, but for Puerto Ricans in general. By singling out middle class migrants, I was able to provide an analysis on a specific group and weigh their decisions against the whole. By comparing the findings on middle class migrants to previous studies on lower class migrants, I was able to find some continuity between the two. The main similarity is the use of English as a tool of economic advancement. The groups differ, however, in how they perceive the effects of English on their culture.

The studies conducted on lower classes show that these migrants tend to view English as simply a tool to be utilized, not a value that can be incorporated into cultural identity. Middle class migrants, on the other hand, display higher levels of bilingualism and emphasize the importance of teaching both English and Spanish to their children. The respondents identified language as an important aspect of cultural identity. Younger generations, as well as the children of the respondents, are learning English at the same time they learn Spanish. They are not treating English as simply a tool, but part of their cultural makeup. Both languages are tied to various aspects of cultural identity.

The acceptance of English as a cultural marker among middle class migrants and not lower class migrants cannot entirely be attributed to levels of bilingualism. Other

factors, such as perceived discrimination, should be taken into account. The absence of perceived discrimination among middle class migrants provides some insight. Lower class migrants, who more readily identify as racially black, display high levels of perceived discrimination within the U.S. Perhaps views towards English (and therefore American values) are impacted by experiences of discrimination in the U.S. It can be argued that middle class migrants, who experience low levels of discrimination, are less likely to reject American values such as English. Additional studies that test for perceived discrimination among middle class Puerto Ricans would help explain why these migrants deviate from their lower class counterparts.

The way in which Puerto Ricans, on and off the island, construct their cultural and national identity is being shaped by middle class circular migrants. These migrant groups are increasingly bilingual, and see English and Spanish as tied to identity. Younger and subsequent generations are more likely to identify English as an intrinsic value, rather than an economic tool. As this pattern continues, circular migrants will increasingly identify with English and move towards bicultural identities.

## CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION

The goals of this study are to determine how middle class Puerto Rican return migrants are constructing their cultural and national identity. I argue that these migrants are creating hybrid identities as a result of their unique migratory patterns and relationship with the U.S. In order to test my hypothesis, I conducted a multi-method and multi-site analysis. I conducted 35 semi-structured ethnographic interviews to determine how Puerto Rican migrants define concepts such as cultural, national, and political identity. I asked respondents to detail the importance of maintaining transnational ties and language, as a proxy for or an element of cultural and national identity. In addition, I used the 2006 LNS dataset to test for levels of transnationalism and bilingualism. These methods were combined to present findings that are representative of the largest possible demographic.

### **Major Findings**

The major findings of the study indicate that middle class migrants are creating hybrid identities by maintaining dual allegiances to both the U.S. and Puerto Rico. I found evidence of high levels of transnationalism and bilingualism, which were both used to measure cultural ties and ultimately, how these migrants construct their identity. In order to gauge levels of transnationalism I tested the level of contact with family members and friends in Puerto Rico, the frequency of visits to Puerto Rico, and plans to permanently live in Puerto Rico. These tests controlled for Puerto Ricans born in the United States compared to those born on the island to determine whether Puerto Rican natives are creating dual identities. In addition, I asked respondents about major factors in migration (both directions), and desires to return to the U.S. In order to gauge levels

of bilingualism I tested the importance of maintaining Spanish in the U.S. and the ability to understand and speak English across income. Additionally, I asked respondents about English language acquisition and how strong language is tied to identity. Finally, I measured interest in political and public affairs by birthplace to determine if political culture plays an important role in the identity formation of return migrants.

### **Transnationalism.**

The LNS analyses indicated high levels of transnationalism among these middle class migrants. Contact between migrants and their family and friends in Puerto Rico is quite high, with 58.7% indicating they remain in contact “more than once a week.” The frequency of visits is particularly important to measure as these visits can amount to the transfer of social remittances (Levitt 2001). Puerto Rican migrants travel to the island frequently, with 18.9% visiting “more than once a year” and 24.4% visiting “once a year.” Only 10% marked “never,” revealing a staggering 90% of Puerto Ricans who make trips between the island and mainland at least every five years. There are approximately 4.1 million Puerto Rican residing in the U.S., meaning almost 3.7 million middle class migrants are transmitting cultural values between the island and mainland.<sup>1</sup> As for plans to live in Puerto Rico permanently, those born on the island are twice as likely as those born on the mainland to leave an “exit option” open (23.3% to 10.9% respectively).

Interviews conducted in Puerto Rico resulted in similar findings. My research suggested that Puerto Rican migrants initially move to the U.S. in search of better job opportunities, whereas the factors in returning are centered on familial ties and

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<sup>1</sup> Figures do not include permanent Puerto Rican residents who travel to the U.S

obligations. I found that migrants are able to find employment after moving to the U.S.; however, many experience a downward social mobility. Many indicated a desire to return to the U.S. in the future. Surprisingly, perceived discrimination was not a factor in returning to the island.

### **Bilingualism.**

The LNS analyses that measure the importance of Spanish maintenance and English acquisition among middle class migrants indicate high levels in both tests. When asked to indicate the level of importance for maintaining Spanish, those born on the island overwhelmingly mark “very important” at 88.1%. Similarly, the vast majority of those born in the U.S. also mark “very important” at 77.9%. By contrast, only .9% of island-born and 2.1% of mainland-born migrants determine the importance of maintaining Spanish to be “not important at all.” From the literature we know that working class Puerto Rican migrants associate the Spanish language with Puerto Rican culture. The same claim can be made of middle class migrants.

Because language is strongly associated with identity, I measure the ability to understand and speak English across income brackets. By doing so I am able to provide a language acquisition comparison of middle class migrants to their lower and upper class counterparts. Unsurprisingly, as income increases the ability to understand and speak English increases. The largest subset that marked “very well” is among income earners of \$55,000 to \$64,999 at 83.3%. The income bracket \$45,000 to \$54,999 also have significant English language skills, 28.6% marking “very well” and 64.3% marking “pretty well.” On average, 45.6% of income earners below \$35,000 mark “just a little” as their English language ability. The data strongly suggest that middle class income earners have high levels of English skills.

The interviews allow me to establish the importance of Spanish as a marker of Puerto Rican identity, as well as the importance of English, not only as a tool for economic advancement, but as a cultural value. I am interested in determining the respondents' level of bilingualism, importance of maintaining Spanish and acquiring English, attitudes towards English instruction within school systems, and the connection between language, culture, and identity.

The most significant finding is that while older respondents associate English with job skills, younger respondents are beginning to view English as a U.S. cultural value. The shift from viewing English as a utilitarian value to a cultural one may be the result of when the respondent learns English, and under what context. Respondents between the ages of 35 and 65 frequently asserted that learning English was necessary to obtain better employment and higher education. They were aware of the economic benefits of bilingualism and ensured that their children would too be bilingual speakers. Their offspring, however, are being raised under very different settings. Many members of this second generation are learning English at the same time as Spanish and do not distinguish one as a cultural value and the other as an utilitarian value, as their parents have. They are also learning both languages across national borders which enables them to assign cultural values to both languages. Future studies that follow this generation and other young bilingual speakers will help provide evidence on the formation of hybrid identities among return migrants.

### **Limitations**

Within any given study research will be conducted with a specific agenda and goal, though biases will (hopefully) be kept to a minimum. This study was conducted with the goal of contributing to the current debate on Puerto Rican migration and

broadening our understanding of the complexities of identity formation. I was able to control for a specific socioeconomic class and use that cross-section to complicate the homogenous views surrounding Puerto Rican return migration. By doing so, I was able to provide a more in-depth understanding of hybridity in the Puerto Rican context. The study I present is a first step towards understanding this phenomenon and due to various limitations is not generalizable for all middle class return migrants.

An important limitation can be attributed to the time frame under which the research was conducted. I was able to conduct 35 semi-structured interviews within a six week period, reaching a point of saturation.<sup>2</sup> Due to strict time limits I was unable to conduct follow up interviews. In light of the importance of age and familial ties, it would have been beneficial to conduct interviews with entire family units to determine differences between generations.

As a native English speaker from the U.S., I found that respondents were increasingly interested in determining my own nationality before answering questions; I cannot be sure if this was done for the purpose of tailoring answers or to determine if I was trustworthy. I offered to conduct interviews in both Spanish and English to encourage respondents to participate, though I felt a native Puerto Rican speaker/translator would have been better able to determine colloquialisms, as well as establish trust. These key insights would have been beneficial during the interviews conducted in Spanish.

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<sup>2</sup> Point of saturation: point at which no new information is being presented.

## **Situating Findings within the Literature and Contributions**

The current theories on Puerto Rican transnational migration try to address how identity and nationhood are conceptualized within the Puerto Rican context. The theories discuss how Puerto Rican migrants as U.S. citizens represent an outlier compared to traditional migrant groups. The theories also focus on three main areas of Puerto Rican migration: citizenship and political identity, nationhood in terms of territory and language, and the increasing importance of transnational ties as a result the island's commonwealth status under the U.S.

The phenomenon of circular migration is a relatively new pattern in terms of volume and frequency. Duany (2002) is a leading scholar on Puerto Rican circular migration, and his work has influenced how Puerto Rican migrants are characterized. Several theorists have tried to explain Puerto Rican migration using various models, such as the dual economy theory, a gendered approach, and assimilationist theory; however, I argue that Duany's (2002) theory on circular migration best explains the Puerto Rican case.

His work tends to take a broad view of Puerto Rican migration, defining cultural identity based on the large diaspora within the U.S., and on those within Puerto Rico. He makes the argument that bilingualism is an increasing necessity for Puerto Ricans, and the boundaries (i.e. territorial, linguistic, and juridical) that divide Puerto Rican culture from U.S. are becoming increasingly blurred with the increase of circular migration (2002, 211). He refers to circular migrants as having "mobile livelihoods" and asserts that their mobilization is defying "fixed and static conceptions of cultural identity" (2002, 219). Duany's work is based on a sample of islanders who circulate between the

U.S. and Puerto Rico, but he cautions not to generalize his findings to the entire migrant population.

My study attempts to address this gap in two important ways. First, I conduct a multi-sited study that incorporates migrants living in both the U.S. and Puerto Rico. This approach tries to represent both groups by exploring quantitative analysis taken from mainland residents and qualitative interviews among Puerto Rican residents. Although the migrant groups are surveyed using different methodologies, previous research suggests that circular migrants on the island versus the mainland do not differ substantially in terms of basic characteristics, such as gender and occupation (Olmeda 1997).

The second gap my study addresses is the lack of information on Puerto Rican return migrants by socioeconomic class. The large migrant waves of the 1950s and 1980s are characterized by a one-directional flow, from the island to mainland. Migrants were typically from working class backgrounds and once settled in the U.S. rarely returned to Puerto Rico (to live). The late 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries have experienced two important shifts. First, a significant increase in middle class migrants altered the demographic. Second, these middle class migrants participated in circular migration, perhaps due to their economic means to do so. The discussion of Puerto Rican migration tends to only address the one-directional flows of working class migration. Middle class return migrants now constitute a substantial percentage of Puerto Ricans who migrate each year.<sup>3</sup> Their inclusion in the study of Puerto Rican migration is necessary due to the increased levels of transnationalism and bilingualism, which I

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<sup>3</sup> Refer to Table 3-2 and 3-3.

argue, are altering traditional notions of cultural identity. My study provides a preliminary look into the creation of hybrid identities.

### **Political Implications**

Puerto Rico's status as a U.S. colony (1898) and later a free associated state, or commonwealth (1950), has been the center of intense debate within Puerto Rican politics for over a century. Over the course of multiple referenda Puerto Ricans have had the option to vote for independence, to remain a commonwealth, or to become the next U.S. state. Puerto Rico's dominant political parties base their platforms around this issue of sovereignty. The influence of working class migrants on Puerto Rican political parties has been relatively minor, or virtually non-existent, as they typically settle within the U.S. As middle class migrants continue to form hybrid identities and participate in Puerto Rican politics, their dual allegiances may alter Puerto Rican political parties. A brief discussion of the three major referenda will illustrate the importance of Puerto Rico's status to political parties.

#### **Three Plebiscites: 1967, 1993, 1998**

##### **1967 Referendum.**

There was much debate about the status of Puerto Rico in the mid 1960s among two political parties, the New Progressive Party (Partido Nuevo Progresista, PNP), that was pro-statehood and the Independence Party (Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño, PIP), that was pro-independence. The Puerto Rican Assembly passed a plebiscite calling for a vote among these three options: statehood, commonwealth, or independence. Both parties boycotted the vote, stating that the process was illegitimate and against international law norms, as the U.S. did not recognize the voting process. As a result of the boycott the commonwealth option, backed by the Popular Democratic

Party (Partido Popular Democrático, PPD), won with a majority of 60.4% (Álvarez-Rivera, 2009a).

### **1993 Referendum.**

The island brought its status to a vote once more in November of 1993, with the commonwealth status winning a majority vote. The commonwealth option, backed by the PPD, won with 48.6%, the PNP backed statehood option gained 46.3%, leaving the independence option at just 4.4% (backed by PIP). The PPD was able to win out over the PNP by 38,030 votes with an overall turnout rate of 73.5%, or approximately 1.7 million voters. The winning margin of just 2.3% created hostile tensions between the PPD and PNP (Álvarez-Rivera, 2009b).

### **1998 Referendum.**

The third and most recent plebiscite is distinct from the 1967 and 1993 tickets in that a “none of the above” option won a majority with 50.3%. The PPD heavily campaigned for voters to select “none of the above” in protest to specific verbiage on the ballot, where the commonwealth option was defined as “territorial.” The PNP held a majority at the time and pushed for the ballot to list “territorial” commonwealth. The PPD argued that defining Puerto Rico as a “territorial” commonwealth indicated a lack of sovereignty. In addition, the PPD saw the new definition in opposition to its constitutional meaning. It has been speculated that many voters who chose “none of the above” were lifetime supporters of the PPD and voted along party lines to help secure a “none of the above” win. The statehood option came in at a close second with 46.5%, an even smaller margin than the 1993 plebiscite (Álvarez-Rivera 2009c).

## **Future of Parties**

The issue of pro-statehood versus pro-commonwealth has become a central theme to political platforms, dominating politics on the island. Political parties are able to capitalize on the debate by garnering votes for elections based on voters' desire for statehood or commonwealth status. Recent studies indicate upper classes tend to vote pro-statehood while middle and lower classes vote pro-commonwealth (Álvarez-Rivera, 2009c). Less is known as to the motives underlying these voting patterns. If class is a strong indicator of how Puerto Rican migrants vote in elections, the influence of middle class return migrants could have a significant impact on political parties. I argued earlier that middle class return migrants are creating dual identities, as well as dual allegiances. If this trend continues, middle class Puerto Ricans may be inclined to support the commonwealth status more vocally. Remaining a commonwealth would allow middle class Puerto Ricans to maintain dual allegiances.

## **Future Avenues of Research**

Working within the scope of middle class migration, one important factor that may be an indicator of hybrid identities is the lack of perceived discrimination within the U.S. The context of reception can be an important factor in migrants' ability to negotiate cultural values. The Cuban example has been used as a model to explore how migrant groups are able to integrate into American society, or remain isolated minorities. The first wave of Cuban migrants were from upper socioeconomic classes and entered into the U.S. under positive conditions. Subsequent waves, such as the Mariel boatlift wave, were met with hostility and faced discrimination. The inability to integrate into mainstream society is one possible outcome of negative contexts of reception.

The middle class return Puerto Ricans who participated in the ethnographic interviews showed evidence of hybrid identities and stated low levels of perceived discrimination while in the U.S. Additional research could determine if a correlation between these two variables exists. If so, positive contexts of reception would encourage hybrid identities and facilitate the integration of future migrants. This could have an impact on second and third generation migrants who may have to negotiate between U.S. and Puerto Rican values. Along with perceived discrimination is the issue of race. Previous studies have shown race is correlated to both income and perceived discrimination (Schildkraut 2005). Incorporating race into a study of discrimination would identify if race is a significant factor for these return migrants.

A substantial amount of Puerto Ricans join the U.S. military every year in hopes of economic stability or higher education; however, this is not a recent phenomena. Puerto Ricans have served and died in the U.S. military for generations. Thousands of Puerto Ricans soldiers fought during WWI, WWII, the Vietnam War, the Korean War, and are currently serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Could Puerto Rican service be indicative of more than just an avenue to higher income and education? Could their service be indicative of patriotism to the U.S.? A study that examined linkages between military service and dual allegiances could add to the discussion on Puerto Rican hybridity (Dempsey and Shapiro 2009).

One other possible avenue of research could include a gendered approach to this study (Colón Warren 2003). The feminization of migration has become an important factor in determining economic impacts on sending and receiving countries, as well as family cohesion (Poster and Wilson 2008). While remittances are not a likely

determinant among Puerto Rican migrants, family cohesion could be an important factor. The respondents in my study gave significant importance to maintaining familial ties, often citing “family” as the primary reason for return migration to the island. It would be interesting to examine if men and women are creating hybrid identities alike, or if one group influences the other. These, and other studies, are necessary to broaden our understanding of circular migration and to assess the possible implications of hybrid cultures.

APPENDIX A  
QUESTIONNAIRE IN ENGLISH

**Basic Information:**

1. Age:
2. Sex:
3. Year moved to the U.S.:
4. Year moved back to P.R.:

**Migration:**

5. What were the major reasons for migrating to the U.S.?
6. What were the major reasons for migrating back to P.R.?
7. Would you ever consider moving back to the U.S.? Why or why not?

**Language:**

8. Did you learn English before you moved to the U.S., during, or neither?
9. Would you consider yourself bilingual?
10. How important is it to speak Spanish everyday?
11. Do you have any children? If so, are they bilingual? Do you speak Spanish, English, or both languages at home?
12. If you had remained in the states, how important would it have been to continue speaking Spanish?
13. How is speaking Spanish part of your identity as a Puerto Rican?
14. How do you feel about mandatory English instruction in schools?

**Politics:**

15. Are you registered voter in Puerto Rico?
16. How often would you say you vote?

17. When you lived in the states, did you register to vote?
18. Did you vote in the U.S. primaries?
19. How do you feel about the fact that Puerto Ricans cannot vote in the U.S. presidential election?
20. Does you or your family have strong political ties and if so, to whom?
21. Do you think Puerto Rico should become a U.S. state? Why or why not?

**Economics:**

22. Were you employed in Puerto Rico prior to moving to the U.S.?
- a. If yes, in what field?
  - b. If no, how did you supplement your income?
23. Were you employed in the United States?
- a. If yes, in what field?
  - b. If no, how did you supplement your income?
24. Were you able to find employment once you returned to Puerto Rico?
25. If you become unemployed in Puerto Rico, would you consider moving back to the U.S.?

**Identity:**

26. All Puerto Ricans have U.S. citizenship. Do you consider yourself to be Boricua, North American, or a mixture of the two?
27. If Puerto Rico became a U.S. state, would you consider yourself the same way?
28. How you feel about the new law recently passed requiring all Puerto Ricans to renew their birth certificates?

APPENDIX B  
QUESTIONNAIRE IN SPANISH

**Información Básica:**

1. Edad:
2. Sexo:
3. El año que usted se mudó a los Estados Unidos:
4. El año que usted regresó a Puerto Rico:

**La Migración:**

5. ¿Cuáles fueron las razones más importantes porque usted se mudó a los Estados Unidos?
6. ¿Cuáles fueron las razones más importantes porque usted regresó a Puerto Rico?
7. ¿Hay alguna posibilidad de que usted regrese a vivir a los Estados Unidos?  
Explique el sí o el no.

**La Lengua:**

8. ¿Aprendió inglés antes de moverse a los Estados Unidos, después de su estadía, o nunca lo aprendió?
9. ¿Es usted bilingüe?
10. ¿Para usted, es importante el hablar español cada día?
11. ¿Tiene hijos? (Si la contestación es si), ¿Son sus hijos bilingües? ¿En su casa se habla español, inglés, o los dos lenguajes?
12. ¿Cuando vivía en los Estados Unidos, era importante para usted y su familia el continuar hablando en español? Explique.
13. ¿En qué manera es el lenguaje español parte de su identidad como un/a Puertorriqueño/a?

14. ¿Cómo se siente sobre el uso del lenguaje inglés en las escuelas de Puerto Rico?

### **Lo Político:**

15. ¿Es usted un votante registrado en Puerto Rico?

16. ¿Cuántas veces ha votado?

17. ¿Fue usted un votante registrado en los Estados Unidos?

18. ¿Votó en las primarias de los EE.UU.?

19. ¿Cómo se siente usted sobre el hecho de que los puertorriqueños no pueden votar en la elección presidencial de los EE.UU.?

20. ¿Tiene su familia lazos políticos? ¿En qué partido están ustedes envueltos?

21. ¿Usted piensa que Puerto Rico necesita ser aparte de los EE.UU.? ¿Por qué si o no?

### **Lo Económico:**

22. ¿Tuvo usted un trabajo en P.R. antes de mudarse a los Estados Unidos?

a) Si la contestación es si, ¿Qué tipo de trabajo tenía usted?

b) Si la contestación es no, ¿cómo usted pagaba su renta?

23. ¿Tuvo usted un trabajo en los EE.UU.?

a) Si la contestación es si, ¿qué tipo de trabajo tenía usted?

b) Si la contestación es no, ¿cómo usted pagaba su renta?

24. Cuando regresó a Puerto Rico, ¿pudo usted encontrar un trabajo?

25. ¿Si usted pierde su trabajo en Puerto Rico, considera usted moverse nuevamente a los Estados Unidos?

### **Identidad**

26. Cada Puertorriqueño es considerado un ciudadano Americano. ¿Usted se

considera un Puertorriqueño, un Norte Americano o una mezcla de los dos?

27. ¿Si Puerto Rico fuese un estado, piensa sentirse de la misma manera?

28. ¿Cómo se siente usted sobre la nueva ley mandando a todos los Puertorriqueños a renovar sus certificados de nacimiento?

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Whitney Marisa Lopez-Hardin was born in Fort Bragg, North Carolina in 1986. The daughter of military parents, she grew up in Germany and the United States, graduating from S.R. Butler High School in 2004. She attended the University of Alabama at Birmingham, earning a double Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and international studies in 2008. At the University of Florida she earned a Master of Arts in Latin American Studies, with a concentration in political science. Whitney completed a thesis on Puerto Rican Return Migration in fulfillment of the master's program and graduated in May of 2011. Whitney is currently a graduate student at Vanderbilt University, earning a Ph.D. in political science, where she continues to work in migration studies.