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New Voices in U.S. Immigration Debates: Latino and Asian American Attitudes Toward the Building Blocks of Comprehensive Immigration Reform

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That U.S. immigration policy has shaped the demography, size, and potential for routine political influence of Latino and Asian American populations is a truism. What is perhaps less acknowledged, but also increasingly clear is that debates over U.S. immigration policy (and Congressional and Executive inaction and posturing) are shaping the politics of Latino and Asian American communities for the next generation. In this paper, I examine the factors that shape Latino and Asian American attitudes toward U.S. immigration policy with a particular eye to whether generational differences in Latino and Asian American communities predict different preferred outcomes of the national debate on immigration policy. This generational question is one that will take on increasing influence in coming years as the children and grandchildren of today's immigrants make up a larger and larger share of these populations.

Although it is not the focus of this paper, it is worth observing that immigration policy has taken on a increasingly salient role in shaping the political behavior and candidate choices of Latinos and Asian Americans. While immigration policy has rarely topped the political agenda for either of these communities, opinion polls demonstrate that its salience has steadily increased over the past twenty years. Recent periods of focused challenge to the status of immigrants in the United States have seen surges in Latino and Asian American naturalization and higher than average increases in Asian American and Latino voting. This period has also seen a steady shift in the Asian American vote from majority support for Republicans to equally large support for the Democrats. Latinos have maintained their support for the Democrats throughout this period; their margin of support for the Democrats increases, however, in periods when immigration debates are more salient and decreases somewhat when immigration policy declines in salience. The focus of Latino civil rights organizations has also steadily shifted to questions of immigration policy and the rights of immigrants and the children of immigrants (regardless of their place of birth).

This paper will speak to three sets of scholarly questions. First, it will examine predictors of attitudes toward immigration policies in the contemporary debate among Latinos and Asian Americans. Second, it will assess whether there are predictable differences in these attitudes across immigrant generations. Finally, it will compare Latino and Asian American attitudes. As will be evident, the surveys that I rely on ask different questions about immigration policy outcomes, so the comparison will not be as clean as I would like. This cross-pan-ethnic group comparison is, nevertheless, absent in much of the scholarship, but necessary to better understand the likely future directions of U.S. politics.

Political Changes Across Immigrant Generations

The political significance of immigrant generation, rather than simply contrasting immigrants to natives, is a topic that has generated theoretical insights that have, for the most part, not been able to be rigorously tested in civic and political research. Most of these theories of immigrant political change across generations emerged late in the period of turn-of the-Twentieth Century migration. By the time these theories appeared (largely in the 1950s and 1960s), there was only a limited first generation (people born abroad) and the "immigrant-stock" population included a mix of second (U.S.-born children of

immigrants), third (grandchildren of immigrants), and fourth and beyond generation immigrants. It is only in the present era that a single immigrant ethnic population has a sizeable 1st, 2nd, and 3rd plus generation population, that is Mexican immigrants/Mexican Americans. In the near future, however, most of the post-1965 immigrant populations will see a dramatic growth in the 2nd generation and the emergence of the sufficiently large adult third generation that will allow for rigorous cross-generation analysis (see Ramakrishnan 2005; DeSipio and Uhlaner 2007 for contemporary efforts to examine generational differences in political behaviors and attitudes).

Scholarly theory offers a variety of expectations for intergenerational change, including steady incorporation across the first three generations (Dahl 1961); assimilation to some but not all native-stock values and civic/political behaviors in the second generation, but little movement after the second generation (Wolfinger 1965; Parenti 1967); hyper-assimilation between the first and second generation, with a return to some first generation values and identification in the third generation (Hansen 1938); and a yet-to-be-named political science version of segmented assimilation with selective group-based movement away from native-stock values in the second and third generation based on failed social and economic incorporation and the maintenance of ties to countries of origin/ancestry and ethnic groups (Huntington 2004).

These theories, except perhaps for Huntington's, focus more on political behavior and political influence, than on attitudes toward specific issues. They would appear to assume, however, that with the move toward political influence comparable to that of native populations, political behaviors will be accompanied by attitudinal changes across immigrant generations such that later generation immigrants come to have attitudes comparable to similarly situated Americans of more distant immigrant ancestry.

Admittedly, immigration policy may trigger a stronger ethnic resonance than other issues. The memories of one's own or one's ancestors challenges with the immigration system potentially reinvigorate primordial ties (or, in Hansen's model, offer a resource to distinguish the second generation from their immigrant parents and for the third generation to remake the connections to the immigrant experience). Equally importantly, the tone of immigration debates often includes nativist and racist rhetoric that challenges the ethnic identification of later-generation immigrants. At different points in U.S. history, immigration policy debates have created the foundation for cross-generational alliances in support of incorporative immigration policies and served as the fulcrum for division within immigrant/ethnic groups. In sum, immigration policy offers a test case of cross-generational political attitudes that may not be fully representative of U.S. political attitudes across immigrant generations.

Studies of Contemporary Latino Attitudes toward Immigration Policy

Empirical scholarship in the current era has sought to identify predictors of attitudes toward immigration policy focus more on Latinos than on Asian Americans. This scholarship offers many important insights, but it generally examines whether similar predictors shape Latino and Anglo attitudes. This is a critical question for the nation as Latinos become increasingly central to national political outcomes. It does, however, neglect the question of whether Latinos speak with one or multiple voices on immigration policy. A more complete understanding of Latino community attitudes toward immigration policy will ensure that advocates and polemicists will not be able to misrepresent Latino views or to paint all Latinos with a single brush.

Hood, Morris, and Shirkey (1997) analyze Latino attitudes toward levels of legal immigration using the 1992 American National Election Study (ANES, which limits the sample to 138 U.S. citizen Latinos). On the core question of the volume of legal immigration to the U.S., they find that slightly more than 50 percent of respondents believe that legal immigration should be kept at current levels or increased and slightly less than 50 percent believe that it should be decreased (see also de la Garza and DeSipio 1998). In terms of predictors of different attitudes, acculturation (here defined as generational status and language competence) proved to be a strong predictor of restrictive attitudes. Fears about immigrant effects on U.S. society and culture proved to be positive predictors of support for reducing the levels of

immigration to the U.S. Older Latino U.S. citizens were also somewhat more likely to support restrictions and Central Americans somewhat less likely than other Hispanics to support restriction.

In a study tapping a somewhat larger and more representative sample of Latinos, Branton (2007) also found that acculturation (defined similarly in terms of generational status and language competence) is a significant predictor of Latino support for reduced immigration levels. More acculturated respondents supported reducing immigration levels, as did older respondents to a very slight degree. Cuban and Puerto Ricans were also somewhat more likely to support reduced levels of legal immigration. With acculturation in the model, none of the demographic variables achieved statistical significance.

The Branton study also assesses Latino attitudes toward the impact of unauthorized immigrants on the economy. Acculturated immigrants were generally more likely to believe that unauthorized immigrants hurt the economy. However, this question saw significant national-origin group variation. Respondents of Mexican origin or ancestry were less likely to see a negative economic impact from unauthorized immigrants; Puerto Rican and Cuban respondents were more likely to take this view. These findings generally replicate those of a Texas study on Latino attitudes on a previous immigration reform—the debates in the 1980s that led to the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act—which showed that U.S.-born Latinos were more likely to see immigration as a "problem" (Polinard, Wrinkle, and de la Garza 1984).

Sánchez (2006) sought to gain a better understanding of the role of group consciousness on Latino immigration attitudes and found that those who share a strong Latino collective identity and who have been engaged in their community or in electoral politics to promote Latino goals were more likely to support leaving current levels of immigration unchanged or increasing immigration. Latinos who have engaged in collective action to improve the disadvantaged position of Latinos and Latinos who have participated in politics in the ten years prior to the survey to support a Latino cause or candidate were more likely to support leaving immigration unchanged. The native-born, the English proficient, immigrants with longer periods of residence, and Latinos who trace their ancestry to the Caribbean were less likely to take this position. Support for increased levels of immigration appeared among Latinos who perceive discrimination, were older, have participated in politics in the ten years prior to the survey to support a Latino cause or candidate, or were Cuban. U.S. citizens were less likely to support increasing immigration. Interestingly, demographic characteristics have little predictive value in his models.

Tapping the Latino National Survey which is further analyzed here, DeSipio (2013) analyzes demographic, identity, political, and generational factors predicting Latinos' preferred immigration policy outcome. Immigrant generation proves to have strong predictive value for predicting support for legalization or closing the border as the preferred policy outcome. Immigrants prefer legalization more than later generation Latinos. Support for closing the border as the preferred policy outcome increases across each generation and is highest among the 4th+ generation. In this analysis, DeSipio disaggregates the 1.5 generation (immigrants who migrated to the United States as children or teens) from immigrants who migrated as adults. On each of these preferred policy outcomes, the 1.5 generation have attitudes distinct from both the 1.0 and 2nd generation and have attitudes that fall roughly in-between those of these two groups.

Demographic, identity, and political factors also proved to be predictive in this analysis of preferred U.S. immigration policy. Lower SES respondents, Mexican Americans, and frequent remitters were more supportive of legalization as the preferred policy outcome. Regardless of national origin/ancestry, higher Latino group consciousness also predicted support for legalization. Mexican Americans were also less likely to support enforcement-based immigration policy outcomes (again, as the preferred outcome). Union households were less likely to support legalization as the preferred outcome. Conservatives were more likely to support closing the border as were respondents who rarely or never remitted.

In sum, the existing scholarship identifies several factors that reliably predict Latino attitudes toward immigration policy. These include the demographic characteristics of the respondent and measures of identity, group consciousness, and acculturation. Each of these analyses was limited by the availability of survey data that allow for detailed analysis of Latino attitudes toward immigration policy.

Relative to data on Asian Americans, of course, the pool of Latino data is quite rich. Over the past several years, however, this dearth of data has been partially solved and nationally-representative surveys of each population are now available for analysis.

Data Sources

My analysis is based on the 2006 Latino National Survey (Fraga et al. 2008) and the 2008 National Asian American Survey (Ramakrishnan et al. 2012). As will be evident, these two surveys asked the question of preferred immigration policy outcomes somewhat differently, so the comparative analysis is not as clean as I might like. The two data sets, however, offer the best foundations to date for a comparative analysis of these two populations on questions of immigration policy outcomes.

The LNS was in the field from November 17, 2005, to August 4, 2006, which overlaps with a period of considerable Latino and immigrant interest in immigration policy making. Its sample – 8,634 respondents – allows for rich subgroup analysis. The sample is drawn to be representative of approximately 88 percent of Latinos nationally and allows for state-level analysis. It includes a rich battery of questions on immigrant civic engagement abroad and several items on immigration policy.

Central to my analysis is the effect of immigrant generation on attitudes toward immigration policy. The large sample size of the LNS offers a considerable advantage in this regard. The sample includes large numbers of immigrants (66.7%), 2nd generation (15.4%), 3rd generation (7.2%), and 4th+ generation (10.7%). For the purposes of this analysis, I treat Puerto Ricans born in Puerto Rico as "immigrants" and their descendants as nth generation "immigrants" in a manner similar to Latinos from other parts of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Generation categories, of course, are rough measures of the depth of ancestral ties to the U.S. and political socialization. The parents of a U.S.-born child may include a recent immigrant on one side of the family and a Mayflower descendant on the other. An immigrant could also be the descendant of someone born in the U.S. who subsequently emigrated or simply had a child abroad. The LNS seems particularly prone to this latter phenomenon, as a large share of respondents who identify as immigrants also report that they have one more grandparents who were born in the U.S. I suspect that this may be a function of question wording: "How many of your grandparents, if any, were born outside the U.S.A.?" / "¿Cuántos de sus abuelos, si alguno, nacieron afuera de los Estados Unidos?" Approximately one-third of immigrants in the sample report ancestral ties to the U.S., a figure that I believe is well higher than the actual number. A particularly high share report grandparents born in the U.S. I can only suspect that the respondents reversed the question and meant that none were born in the U.S., rather than that all were. That said, I do not have a means to distinguish who among these foreign-born respondents do, in fact, have U.S.-born ancestors. The models reported here collapse all immigrants, regardless of parental/grandparental nativity. Separately (and not reported here), I ran each of the models with the two immigrant populations separated. In no case were the immigrants with U.S. parents/grandparents statistically distinct from the immigrants with no U.S.-born parents or grandparents.

With this caveat in mind, I use relatively strict definitions for second-, third-, and fourth-generation Latinos. The second-generation respondents have two foreign-born parents. The third-generation respondents have one or more U.S.-born parents and no U.S.-born grandparents. Finally, all fourth-plus-generation respondents have at least one U.S. born grandparent (and were themselves born in the U.S. or Puerto Rico).

One final note of caution with Latino immigrant generation data: most third- and fourth-plus-generation Latinos are of Mexican ancestry, reflecting the sources of immigrants to the U.S. in the 1950s and before (the period of immigration that could produce today's third and fourth generation of adults). Puerto Ricans are the next largest group. These two national origin groups account for almost 90 percent of the third- and fourth-plus-generation Latinos.

The National Asian American Survey (NAAS) is similarly rich, all the more so because there were fewer previous national studies of Asian Americans. The NAAS includes 5,159 respondents who

were interviewed between August and October 2008. Survey interviews were conducted in eight languages – English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Japanese, and Hindi. The sample included 1,350 Chinese, 1,150 Asian Indian, 719 Vietnamese, 614 Korean, 603 Filipino, and 541 Japanese origin respondents, and 182 respondents who are either from other countries in Asia or who identify as multi-racial or multi-ethnic.

Reflecting the composition of Asian migration to the United States, the NAAS has a high share of immigrants and does not include a variable that allows for the calculation of 4th+ generation immigrants. Slightly more than 88 percent of NAAS respondents are immigrants, 6 percent are second generation, and 5 percent are 3rd+ generation.

The two surveys asked about immigration preferences differently. The LNS asked a single question with four options for preferred outcome of the current immigration policy debate – a) legalization; b) a guest worker program that would lead to legalization for the guest workers; c) a terminal guest worker program; and d) closing the border. The NAAS asked respondents about their support/opposition to a range of policy issues, including two immigration-related policies – a) rewarding skilled migration over family preferences and b) legalization. Based on NAAS respondents' answers to these questions, I calculated an immigration preference measure between these two options. Many respondents didn't like either of these options, so a the measure based on the NAAS has a large share who respond "neither" who might well prefer some other option. Many of these respondents probably do have a preferred outcome of the immigration debate, but it was not asked. With these caveats in mind, tables 1 and 2 present the preferred immigration policy outcome for each of these communities by immigrant generation.

Table 1. Preferred Immigration Policy, Asian American

	Neither %	Rewarding Skilled Migration %	Legalization %	Both Skilled Migration & Legalization %
Immigrants	37.7	36.9	15.3	10.2
2nd Generation	39.5	28.2	21.9	10.3
3rd+ Generation	45.7	20.1	28.3	5.9
Total	38.2	35.6	16.3	10.0
$n = 5,141$				

Note: Calculations by the author, compiled from two separate questions assessing respondent attitudes toward several public policies including immigration policy.
Source: National Asian American Survey, 2008

Table 2. Preferred Immigration Policy, Latinos.

	Guest Worker Leading to Legalization %	Legalization %	Terminal Guest Worker %	Close Border %
Immigrants	27.4	59.1	11.3	2.3
2nd Generation	48.2	26.9	16.0	8.9
3rd Generation	52.3	20.0	17.6	10.1
4th+ Generation 5	3.3	16.3	15.9	14.5
Total	34.9	47.1	12.9	5.1
$n = 9,036$				

Source: Latino National Survey, 2006.

Modeling the Determinants of Preferred Immigration Policies in Asian American and Latino Communities

The models seek to test factors identified in the previous scholarship as shaping attitudes toward immigration policy. As will be evident, I am not able to include all of the same variables in models testing Latino and Asian American attitudes, nor am I able to specify similar variables in the same way. Both sets of models broadly include immigration and ethnic characteristics, demographic characteristics, and political characteristics. In each case, I use multinomial logistic regression to test the models, though the excluded category is different for Latinos and Asian Americans. For Asian Americans, the policy preference I exclude is respondents who like neither of the two options, so the results compare rewarding skilled migration, legalization, or both policies to respondents who prefer neither of these options. In the model testing Latino attitudes, the excluded category is a guest worker program leading to legalization for the guest workers. This policy option seemed to be more of a middle ground than the others – legalization, a terminal guest worker policy, or closing the border – so I treated it as the excluded category. I realize, though, that a guest worker program leading to legalization for the guest workers is much more in the popular debate than the excluded category in the Asian American models, so the comparison is potentially weakened.

I present two sets of models for Asian Americans and one for Latinos. For Asian Americans, I look both at a multi-generation model and a model just of immigrant respondents in which I control for the share of life spent in the United States. The goal for this second model is to see if the patterns that appear to distinguish immigrant generations among Asian Americans appear within the immigrant generation as well. The generational distribution of Latinos has more variation, so I do not test an immigrant-only model.

In addition to immigrant generation (or share of life spent in the United States, for Asian immigrants in Table 4), each of the models includes standard demographic variables – age, education, and income; national origin/ancestry; measures of pan-ethnic linked fate; and ideology. In the Asian American models, I also include English-speaking ability. In the Latino model, I supplement the core comparative variables with two transnational variables (frequencies of home-country visits and frequency of remittances), gender, state of residence, and residence in a household with a union member.

Results

Among Asian American migrants and Asian Americans, immigrants are distinctly more likely to prefer an immigration system that rewards skilled migrants than are later-generation Asian Americans (3rd+ generation migrants are used as the excluded category). Asian immigrants are also more likely to prefer a policy rewarding skilled migrants than to support neither of these immigration policy outcomes used as the excluded category in the model. Although the model offers somewhat less confidence in this result, Asian immigrants are also somewhat more likely to support both policy options than are later generation immigrants (see Table 3). Interestingly, these preferences for policies rewarding skilled migration or both rewarding skilled migration and legalization as the preferred policy outcome atrophy with a higher share of life spent in the United States, so they are particularly strong preferences among Asian immigrants with short periods of residence in the United States (see Table 4). Immigrant generation does not achieve statistical significance is predicting Asian American preferences for legalization as the preferred policy outcome. Interestingly, and somewhat predictably, linked fate, however, is a positive predictor of preference for legalization as the desired immigration reform outcome, a finding that also holds among Asian immigrants.

Table 3. Multinomial logistic regression model of predictors of preferred immigration policy, Asian Americans.

	Rewarding Skilled Migration		Legalization		Both Policies	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Immigration and Ethnic Characteristics						
National Origin (Other Asian excluded)						
Chinese	0.636***	0.201	-0.577***	0.221	0.441	0.299
Asian Indian	0.397**	0.205	-0.333	0.223	0.145	0.306
Filipino	0.253	0.216	0.053	0.233	0.219	0.321
Japanese	-0.266	0.225	-0.204	0.236	-0.367	0.342
Korean	-0.111	0.220	0.269	0.228	0.569*	0.314
Vietnamese	-0.464**	0.214	-1.180***	0.239	-0.837**	0.330
Immigrant generation (3rd+ excluded)						
Immigrant	**0.602***	**0.190**	**-0.259**	**0.185**	**0.579***	**0.304**
2nd	**0.354**	**0.229**	**-0.090**	**0.228**	**0.509**	**0.352**
English-speaking ability	0.173*	0.100	-0.050	0.126	0.555***	0.154
Asian American linked fate	0.106	0.069	0.337***	0.087	0.293***	0.104
Demographic Characteristics						
Age Cohorts (Missing excluded)						
18-30	-0.322*	0.181	0.437*	0.227	-0.118	0.267
31-45	.0.001	0.141	0.302	0.195	-0.058	0.219
46-60	-0.092	0.138	0.278	0.191	-0.136	0.215
61+	0.019	0.138	-0.060	0.194	-0.022	0.213
Education (Other excluded)						
LT High School	-0.379*	0.214	0.228	0.270	0.034	0.320
HS Graduate	0.158	0.191	0.024	0.249	0.203	0.290
Some College	0.106	0.201	-0.038	0.257	0.189	0.301
College Graduate	0.343*	0.178	0.027	0.234	0.028	0.274
Graduate Degree	0.432**	0.185	0.056	0.243	0.142	0.283
Income (Refused excluded)						
$20,000 or less	0.455***	0.140	0.303*	0.182	0.668***	0.203
$20,001-$50,000	0.288***	0.109	0.157	0.139	0.411**	0.163
$50,001-$75,000	0.283**	0.123	0.274*	0.151	0.409**	0.181
$75,001-$100,000	0.277**	0.133	0.321**	0.163	0.074	0.215
$100,001+	0.179*	0.103	0.241*	0.129	0.332**	0.156
Political Characteristics						
Ideology (Conservative excluded)						
Moderate/not sure	-0.454***	0.093	-0.159	0.126	-0.447***	0.147
Liberal	0.149*	0.081	0.594***	0.103	0.264**	0.119
Intercept	-1.414***	0.327	-1.347***	0.367	-3.132***	0.506
			n=5,159			
			r^2 = 0.130			

Key: *** p <= 0.01; ** p <= 0.05; * p <= 0.1.
Note: Excluded policy – neither
Source: National Asian American Survey, 2008

Table 4. Multinomial logistic regression model of predictors of preferred immigration policy, Asian American *immigrants*.

	Rewarding Skilled Migration		Legalization		Both Policies	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Immigration and Ethnic Characteristics						
National Origin (Other Asian excluded)						
Chinese	0.479**	0.241	-0.616**	0.270	0.206	0.339
Asian Indian	0.332	0.249	-0.570**	0.282	-0.123	0.534
Filipino	0.148	0.260	-0.039	0.286	0.108	0.363
Japanese	-0.169	0.279	-0.265	0.305	-0.709*	0.427
Korean	-0.215	0.256	0.170	0.272	0.325	0.350
Vietnamese	-0.577**	0.250	-1.248***	0.282	-1.111***	0.367
Share of life spent in U.S.	**-0.749***	**0.206**	**-0.084**	**0.260**	**-0.533***	**0.306**
English-speaking ability	0.156	0.109	-0.048	0.135	0.533***	0.164
Asian American linked fate	0.079	0.078	0.318***	0.100	0.302***	0.302
Demographic Characteristics						
Education (Other excluded)						
LT High School	-0.043	0.307	0.663	0.410	0.211	0.442
HS Graduate	0.447	0.292	0.567	0.398	0.394	0.422
Some College	0.369	0.304	0.470	0.411	0.392	0.436
College Graduate	0.639**	0.286	0.483	0.391	0.149	0.414
Graduate Degree	0.814***	0.293	0.498	0.400	0.407	0.422
Income (Refused excluded)						
$20,000 or less	0.512***	0.148	0.240	0.192	0.697***	0.217
$20,001-$50,000	0.291**	0.119	0.165	0.155	0.468***	0.177
$50,001-$75,000	0.314**	0.135	0.374**	0.170	0.483**	0.198
$75,001-$100,000	0.305**	0.145	0.414**	0.184	0.067	0.234
$100,001+	0.222*	0.116	0.432***	0.150	0.343**	0.175
Political Characteristics						
Ideology (Conservative excluded)						
Moderate/not sure	-0.531***	0.109	-0.127	0.145	-0.583***	0.169
Liberal	0.097	0.092	0.473***	0.119	0.098	0.133
Intercept	-0.686*	0.393	-1.718***	0.500	-2.275***	0.570
			n= 3,951			
			$r^2 = 0.127$			

Key: *** p <= 0.01; ** p <= 0.05; * p <= 0.1.
Note: Excluded policy – neither
Source: National Asian American Survey, 2008

Immigrant generation is certainly not the only factor that predicts Asian American preferences for an immigration policy that rewards skilled migration or that both rewards skilled migration and legalizes unauthorized immigrants as the preferred policy outcome of immigration reform debates. Asians of different national origins or ancestries have widely different policy preferences. Chinese and Asian Indians strongly support a policy rewarding skilled migration as the preferred policy outcome relative to the excluded category of Other Asians and the excluded policy of neither policy as a preference. Vietnamese immigrants and Vietnamese Americans, other the other hand were well less likely to prefer a policy rewarding skilled migration. English-speaking ability had a modest, positive effect on supporting such a policy. Age and education proved largely irrelevant, except for respondents with relatively high

levels of education. Political moderates and, to a lesser degree, liberals were less likely to support a policy that rewarded skilled migrants than were conservatives. These patterns generally also appeared, though in a modestly more muted form, in the model testing Asian immigrants and controlling for share of life spent in the United States.

Among Asian immigrants and Asian Americans preferring an immigration reform outcome that included both a reward for skilled migrants and a legalization program, English-speaking ability and perceptions of Asian American liked fate proved strong positive predictors, stronger than the power of immigrant generation in the model. Income and ideology also proved to be significant predictors. Again, Vietnamese respondents were less likely to support these outcomes than were the excluded group and the excluded policy category. Korean respondents were slightly more likely to support a policy outcome that included both policies than were other national origin groups. Among Asian immigrants, these patterns largely repeated, though it should be noted that share of life spent in the United States only achieved a modest level of statistical significance in predicting preference for both policies as the preferred policy outcome.

Among Latinos, immigrant generation proves significant and highly predictive of attitudes on the preferred outcome of the immigrant reform debate (see Table 5 below). The bivariate findings reported in Table 1, appear in stark relief even after controlling for many other factors that have a possible relationship to immigration attitudes. Latino immigrants are much more likely to prefer legalization as the desired policy outcome relative to later-generation immigrants and to the excluded preferred policy outcome (a guest worker program leading to legal status). Support for legalization declines across each generation. Support for the most draconian policy outcome (closing the border) steadily increases across each generation. Controlling for the other variables in the model, immigrant generation does not shape attitudes toward the third policy preference – a terminal guest worker program.

Immigrant generation was certainly not the only factor that shaped Latino attitudes toward the preferred outcome of immigration policy debates. In terms of factors that proved significant in predicting Asian American attitudes toward immigration, most also proved significant and in similar directions than for Latinos. Linked fate proved a predictor of a preference for legalization, with respondents with limited or no sense of linked fate being much less likely to support legalization as the desired policy outcome. Linked fate did not prove to have any predictive value for preferring a terminal guest worker program or for closing the border. Conservatives were more likely to support closing the border. Respondents who did not feel comfortable placing themselves on the ideological scale – most likely recent immigrants new to U.S. society – were more likely than middle of the road respondents to support legalization. Lower levels of education were predictive of both support for legalization and support for closing the border. Lower levels of household income increased support for legalization as the desired policy outcome; lower household incomes decreased support for closing the border. National origin was less predictive than for Asian Americans. Mexican immigrants/Mexican Americans were slightly more likely than the excluded category (non-Mexicans, -Puerto Ricans, or –Cubans) to support legalization and considerably less likely to support a policy of closing the border.

The model testing Latino attitudes also included several sets of variables that were not tested for Asian Americans. The transnational variables (visits and remittances) had the strongest effects in predicting support for closing the border. Not surprisingly, Latinos with the most limited contact with their countries of origin/ancestry were most likely to support this outcome. Men were somewhat less likely to support legalization and more likely to support the other policy outcomes than were women. No state of residence variations appeared. Respondents in union households were more likely to support legalization as the desired policy outcome than respondents in non-union households. Union membership did not prove salient to predicting the other policy outcomes.

Table 5. Multinomial logistic regression model of predictors of preferred immigration policy, Latinos.

	Legalization		Terminal Guest Worker		Close Border	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Immigration and Ethnic Characteristics						
National Origin/Ancestry (Other excluded)						
Mexico	0.217***	0.071	0.205**	0.102	-0.748***	0.143
Puerto Rico	0.162	0.129	0.242	0.156	-0.244	0.192
Cuba	-0.029	0.148	-0.130	0.213	-0.081	0.247
Civic Linked Fate ("A Lot" excluded)						
None	-0.146*	0.089	0.169	0.123	0.078	0.186
Little	-0.277***	0.079	0.120	0.107	0.176	0.151
Don't know/no answer	0.068	0.137	0.076	0.191	-0.167	0.281
Some	-0.393***	0.070	-0.001	0.097	-0.230	0.144
Frequency of Visits to Country of Origin/Ancestry (More than once a year excluded)						
Never/Don't know	0.250***	0.093	0.070	0.123	0.867***	0.218
More than five years ago -	0.014	0.106	-0.166	0.139	0.538**	0.233
In last 3-5 years	0.070	0.096	-0.031	0.126	0.461**	0.226
Once a year	0.001	0.097	0.157	0.125	0.574**	0.230
Frequency of remittances (Once a month or more excluded)						
Never/Don't know	-0.399***	0.068	0.141	0.096	0.481***	0.173
Yearly or less	-0.073	0.100	0.325**	0.137	0.455*	0.237
Once every few months	-0.067	0.089	0.018	0.134	-0.179	0.276
Immigrant Generation (immigrant excluded)						
2nd generation	**-0.951***	**0.087** -	**0.138**	**0.108**	**0.872***	**0.163**
3rd generation	**-1.241***	**0.121** -	**0.121**	**0.133**	**0.921***	**0.190**
4th+ generation	**-1.449***	**0.108** -	**0.171**	**0.117**	**1.376***	**0.160**
Demographic Characteristics						
Age	0.002	0.002	0.006**	0.002	0.012***	0.003
Gender (Female)	-0.107**	0.054	0.360***	0.072	0.366***	0.108
Education (Graduate/Professional degree excluded)						
8th grade or less	0.853***	0.129	0.304*	0.171	0.861***	0.260
Some high school	0.544***	0.128	0.414**	0.164	0.711***	0.249
HS graduate	0.425***	0.122	0.300*	0.154	0.710***	0.222
Some college	0.068	0.123	-0.013	0.154	0.295	0.218
College degree	-0.173	0.142	0.127	0.169	0.403*	0.234
Household income ($65,000+ excluded)						
Refused	0.823***	0.113	0.387***	0.138	-0.258	0.187
LT $15,000	0.662***	0.121	0.590***	0.147	-0.077	0.206
$15,000-$24,999	0.505***	0.113	-0.148	0.146	-0.677***	0.203
$25,000-$44,999	0.404***	0.107	0.158	0.127	-0.475***	0.168
$45,000-$64,999	0.225*	0.121	0.186	0.139	0.266	0.175
State (Non-Texas/California excluded)						
Texas	0.021	0.097	0.103	0.123	0.089	0.183
California	0.105	0.078	0.010	0.106	-0.276	0.182

Table Five. Multinomial logistic regression model of predictors of preferred immigration policy, Latinos, (continued).

	Legalization		Terminal Guest Worker		Close Border	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Political Characteristics						
Ideology (Middle of the road excluded)						
Conservative	0.100	0.084	0.208*	0.113	0.716***	0.162
Liberal	0.118	0.094	0.068	0.126	0.076	0.191
Don't know/not ideological	0.238***	0.074	0.263***	0.101	0.279*	0.159
Union Member						
Household (No)	0.254***	0.087	0.126	0.107	0.100	0.144
Intercept	-0.532***	0.204	-2.377***	0.264	-4.224***	0.395
			n= 7,337			
			r^2 = 0.248			

Key: *** p <= 0.01; ** p <= 0.05; * p <= 0.1.
Note: Excluded policy – Guest worker leading to legalization
Source: Latino National Survey, 2006.

Discussion and Conclusions

Latinos and Asian Americans do not speak with one voice on immigration reform. While the different specifications of the preferred immigration policy variable should offer some caution in interpreting these results, it is safe to say that each pan-ethnic community has a different modal position on the preferred outcome of debates over comprehensive immigration reform. Interestingly, the starkest differences are seen in the immigrant generations in these communities. Latino immigrants are more likely than other Latinos to prefer legalization as the core policy outcome. Asian immigrants are more likely than other Asian Americans to prefer a policy outcome that creates opportunities for migrants with skills to migrate. Needless to say, these are not mutually exclusive as bills being debated in Congress today include both elements, but they certainly offer a different staring point for shaping policy.

What explains these differences between Latino immigrants and Asian American immigrants? Here, I would argue that there is more commonality across these pan-ethnic populations. Family is important in explaining preferences expressed in both populations. Latino immigrants are more likely themselves to be unauthorized or to have family members and friends who are unauthorized than are Asian immigrants (Hoeffer, Rytina, and Baker 2012). Thus, the urgency of regularizing legal status takes precedence over other aspects of immigration reform. Family needs arguably also arguably shape Asian immigrant policy preferences. Allowing a higher share of skilled migration might speed immigration of family members who are currently in long backlogs for family member visas subject to numerical restrictions. For Latino and Asian immigrants, then, maintaining or expanding legal immigration is central to the understanding of desired policy outcomes.

What do these results suggest about future Latino and Asian American influence on immigration policy debates? This is, of course, difficult to predict too far into the future. The political and community stimuli that shape today's political and policy attitudes may well change in the coming years, particularly if Congress is able to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill that reduces public attention to immigration issues and dampens anti-immigrant rhetoric. Even in today's heated immigration debates, second and beyond generation Latinos and Asian Americans express policy preferences different than their immigrant co-ethnics and closer to those of White non-Hispanics. Thus, the compositional change in Latino and Asian American communities that will steadily increase the share of U.S.-born Latinos and Asian Americans will likely moderate the differences across racial/ethnic communities in immigration

policy. Should this pattern of preferences continue, the case of immigration policy may offer support for the immigrant incorporation models proposed by Wolfinger and Parenti. The second generation does move closer to the mainstream, but maintains some ethnic difference that does not necessarily disappear in the third generation as Dahl might have anticipated.

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