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Hispanics at the Starting Line: Poverty among Newborn Infants in Established Gateways and New Destinations

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Born Into Poverty

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High rates of Hispanic fertility raise an important question: Do Hispanic newborn babies start life's race behind the starting line, poor and disadvantaged? To address this question, we link the newborn infants identified with the new fertility question in the 2006–2010 *American Community Survey* (ACS) to the poverty status of mothers. Our results document the disproportionately large share (40 percent) of Hispanic babies who are born into poverty. The prospect of poverty is especially high in new Hispanic destinations, especially those in rural areas. For Hispanic newborn babies, poverty cannot be reduced to supply-side explanations that emphasize maladaptive behavioral decision-making of parents, that is, nonmarital or teen childbearing, low educational attainment, acquisition of English language skills, or other dimensions of human capital. Hispanics in new destinations often start well behind the starting line—in poverty and with limited opportunities for upward mobility and an inadequate welfare safety net. The recent concentration of Hispanic poverty in new immigrant destinations portends continuing intergenerational inequality as today's newborn infants make their way to productive adult roles.

Introduction

The recent spatial dispersion of America's Hispanics from immigrant gateways in the Southwest to new destinations in the Southeast, Pacific Northwest, and agricultural heartland has been both unprecedented and unexpected (Marrow 2013; Singer 2009). In rural America, a burgeoning Hispanic population often provides

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a demographic lifeline to dying small towns (Carr, Lichter, and Kefalas 2012). Hispanics accounted for 56 percent of nonmetro population growth over the early 2000s, but represented only 7 percent of the nonmetro population in 2010 (Lichter 2012). Not surprisingly, a rapidly expanding literature on new Hispanic destinations has focused heavily on immigrant incorporation and community impacts, including poverty and inequality (Parrado and Kandel 2010), local politics and race relations (Okamoto and Ebert 2010), crime and social disorganization (Crowley and Lichter 2009), residential segregation (Hall 2013), and schooling (Dondero and Muller 2012), among other topics. Growing racial and ethnic diversity—and its many social, economic, and political implications—are being played out unevenly across America's cities, suburbs, and small towns.

The current emphasis on immigrant incorporation reflects the commonplace assumption that population growth in new destinations is driven largely by in-migration of the Hispanic foreign-born population. The fact that geographic and social mobility usually go hand-in-hand implies that spatial assimilation with the majority population is a key dimension of Hispanic economic incorporation. Yet, a large but unappreciated share of the recent growth of Hispanics nationally is the result of fertility, not immigration (Johnson and Lichter 2008). Fertility represents a significant second-order effect of past and current immigration. Fertility has fueled rapid population growth, yet we have only a limited understanding of the disadvantaged circumstances of Hispanic newborn infants as they proceed from childhood into productive adult roles. Processes of assimilation—including spatial assimilation—cannot be fully understood in isolation from currently high and uneven rates of fertility and poverty among Hispanics in new receiving areas. Indeed, diversity and economic incorporation are occurring from the "bottom up"—with infants and children leading the way.

In this paper, we examine the comparative economic circumstances of Hispanics in new destinations but, unlike previous studies, we place the emphasis squarely on newly born infants. That is, do Hispanic newborn babies start life's race behind the starting line, poor and materially disadvantaged? The answer has implications for later educational achievement, positive developmental trajectories, and transitions to productive adult roles (Clotfelter, Ladd, and Vigdor 2012; Duncan, Ziol-Guest, and Kalil 2010). Nearly one-quarter of all US births today are to Latinas (Martin et al. 2013); today's Hispanic children and youth will play an important—and growing—role in America's economic future and in the cities and communities in which they now live. In the absence of upward socioeconomic mobility, childhood poverty may breed poverty as adults (Borjas 2011), a statistical fact that takes on special significance during the current period of apparently declining intergenerational mobility and the emergence of a more rigid American class structure (McCall and Percheski 2010).

In this paper, we use the new fertility question in the 2006–2010 American Community Survey (ACS) to link, for the first time, the records of newborn infants to the poverty status of their mothers. We are unaware of any studies that provide up-to-date national estimates of shares of children born into poverty. We have three specific objectives—each framed conceptually by a model of spatial assimilation. First, as an empirical baseline, we document ethnoracial variation in patterns of poverty among America's newborn infants, distinguishing the disadvantaged circumstances of Hispanic newborns from other ethnoracial

groups. Second, we highlight "at risk" infants, focusing on variation in the incidence of poverty in new and established Hispanic destinations. We show that the geographical context of reception matters for Hispanics. Third, we highlight the demographic and sociocultural origins (i.e., risk factors) of high rates of poverty among Hispanic newborn infants, including nativity status, family background, and human capital of parents. Our paper contributes to a growing literature on assimilation in new destinations by focusing specifically on impoverished newborn infants in cities and communities that are often unprepared for rapid population growth and increasing racial and ethnic diversity.

For children, the period in utero and during early infancy is especially critical for brain development and later cognitive, emotional, and physical outcomes (Knudsen et al. 2006). Brooks-Gunn and Duncan (1997), for example, showed that early childhood economic conditions rather than current poverty had the largest effects on adolescent cognitive development and achievement. Poor infants face clear developmental disadvantages that persist into adulthood. For the first time in US history, the US Census Bureau reported that the majority of America's babies in 2011 were born to historically disadvantaged racial and ethnic minority women (i.e., groups other than non-Hispanic whites) (Cauchon and Overberg 2012). As we show here, the growth of the Hispanic population in new destinations, especially in rural areas, is spurred by high fertility, a situation that raises important questions about Hispanic integration and incipient patterns of economic and spatial inequality.

Background: Spatial Assimilation among Hispanics

Fertility and Poverty

Traditional theoretical models of spatial assimilation—those originating from the Chicago School—have been upended by the dispersion of immigrant minority populations to new destinations. The conventional view is that economic, cultural, and political incorporation in established gateways or immigrant enclaves provides a platform for immigrant geographic mobility—to attain better housing elsewhere, and to live in nicer neighborhoods in middle-class communities with more opportunities for their children (e.g., suburban communities). Indeed, to get ahead in life often requires moving elsewhere. Today, however, the unprecedented geographic spread of historically disadvantaged Hispanic populations from established gateways to new destinations represents a singular example of how economic globalism has fundamentally reshaped patterns of transnational labor mobility and a new ghettoization of rural immigrant groups (Crowley and Ebert 2014; Massey 2008).

In the United States, the geographic dispersion of Hispanics has been exacerbated by anti-immigrant legislation in traditional gateway states, the militarization of the Mexican-US border (which has affected points of entry), the restructuring of the meatpacking industry, and America's continuing demand for low-wage, low-skill workers in the service industry and agriculture (e.g., Kandel and Parrado 2005; Massey and Sanchez 2010). The growth of Hispanics in new destinations has raised the specter of concentrated poverty and spatial inequality (e.g., the rise in majority-minority places), rural ghettos, and Hispanic boomtowns

(Burton, Garrett-Peters, and Eason 2011; Lichter, Parisi, and Taquino 2012b). Iconic images of the disadvantaged migrant farmworker (especially during the Bracero period) have also been replaced—at least in part—by a "settling in" of Hispanic workers in local communities (Marrow 2011).[1] Immigrants are increasingly putting down roots, buying homes, and getting married (or bringing their spouses from elsewhere) (Farmer and Moon 2009). They also are having children and raising families (Lichter, Johnson, Turner, and Churilla 2012a).

Among immigrant populations, low and declining fertility is sometimes regarded as a proxy indicator of economic incorporation and assimilation (Bean, Swicegood, and Berg 2000; Parrado and Morgan 2008). Low fertility both reflects and reinforces upward social mobility, which is revealed in the short- and long-term economic trajectories of children (Stevens 1981). Conversely, current patterns of Hispanic fertility have placed upward demographic pressure on poverty rates in those communities and regions where Hispanic workers and their families have relocated. Growing poverty presumably reflects the fact that: (1) childbearing among Hispanics is higher on average than among non-Hispanics (Tienda and Mitchell 2006); (2) poverty rates are higher on average among fast-growing Hispanic populations (e.g., Mexicans) than other groups (Orrenius and Zavodny 2013); and (3) Hispanic childbearing is highest among the poorest, least educated, and more disadvantaged (e.g., non-citizens, non-English speakers, etc.) (Lichter et al. 2012a). We consider the substantive implications of each point in turn below.

High rates of Hispanic fertility are sometimes couched in cultural rather than economic terms, although "familism" as a driver of Hispanic fertility remains a debatable and contentious issue (Hartnett and Parrado 2012). US Hispanic births peaked in 2007 at nearly 1.1 million, and 2010 produced the lowest annual number of Hispanic births since 2003. With the 2000s Great Recession, traditional patterns of family formation—even among Hispanics—have been disrupted, if measured by declining rates of marriage and fertility. Recent estimates from the National Center of Health Statistics nevertheless continue to show much higher fertility rates among Hispanics than whites or other US minority populations (Martin et al. 2013). For example, the General Fertility Rate (GFR) among Hispanics (i.e., the number of births per 1000 woman of reproductive age) was 80.2 in 2010, well above the overall US rate of 64.1 (Martin et al. 2013). For non-Hispanic whites, the GFR was 58.7. The current total fertility rate among Hispanics also is well above replacement levels (2.34), and 30 percent higher than the rate of Whites. The implication is clear: high Hispanic fertility is driving America's new diversity, starting with newborns.

High rates of Hispanic fertility also have contributed to rapid shifts in the racial and ethnic profile of US poverty. The 2014 March Current Population Survey indicates that 14.7 million US children were poor in 2013, of which 10.6 or over 70 percent were racial or ethnic minorities, that is, children who were identified by membership in groups other than non-Hispanic white (author's calculations; US Census Bureau 2014). Today, over 5.4 million US Latino children live in poverty, a number that exceeds the number of poor white children and every other racial or ethnic minority group (US Census Bureau 2014). Latino children comprise 23.1 percent of America's children, but 37.3 percent of its poor

children. Poverty rates among Hispanics are high by national standards—26.6 percent in 2010 (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, and Smith 2011)—but they are especially high (34.9 percent) among Hispanic children (Lopez and Valasco 2011).[2] In the absence of upward socioeconomic mobility or appropriate policy interventions (e.g., early childhood education or a strong safety net), Hispanic immigration—and the second-order effects of above-replacement fertility—will alter the demographic profile of US poverty as today's minority children proceed toward adulthood.

Finally, previous demographic studies of Hispanic childbearing show clear socioeconomic gradients in the tempo and quantum of fertility; that is, early and cumulative fertility declines with more education, higher family incomes, and lower poverty rates (Carter 2000; Stevens 1981). Low-SES groups contribute disproportionally to the number of Hispanic newborns (DeLeone, Lichter, and Strawderman 2009). The implication—one often drawn without direct evidence—is that the recent uptick in the number of poor children reflects high fertility rates among the most disadvantaged segments of America's diversifying population (i.e., low-educated and poor Hispanics).[3] More importantly, the growth of poor infants will occur disproportionately in places where Hispanics are concentrated—in new destinations and established gateways. Fertility and poverty are inextricably linked, and expressed in disproportionate shares of Hispanic infants who are born into poverty.

Born Poor in Hispanic Receiving Areas

From a theoretical standpoint, high poverty rates among Hispanic newborn infants are a product of the disadvantaged circumstances of Hispanic mothers—impoverished family backgrounds, early family formation, and chronic deficits in human and social capital. Job discrimination (and its correlates of worker exploitation and wage theft) may also play a role in denying access to jobs that pay a living wage. For example, Hispanic mothers of newborn infants are more likely to be high school dropouts, unemployed, or not in the labor force, and presumably they are less skilled and experienced if employed (Crowley, Lichter, and Qian 2006). Traditional gender roles may magnify the lack of opportunity among new mothers.

It also is significant that Latinas on average begin childbearing at younger ages than other minority populations (Lopez and Valasco 2011; Martin et al. 2013), and Hispanic families are typically larger in size, which means that more family income is required to meet or exceed the official poverty threshold. High fertility and family size dilute family resources and elevate the prospect of poverty. For young mothers, in particular, wages are expected to be lower and poverty rates are likely to be higher than for older mothers. Among young mothers, including teen mothers, marriage rates also are lower and nonmarital fertility rates are higher (DeLeone et al. 2009), which diminishes the likelihood of child support or other financial assistance from fathers. One-half of all Hispanic births today are to unmarried women (Martin et al. 2013), and poverty rates of Hispanic children are especially high when children live alone with their unmarried mothers (nearly 60 percent; see Lopez and Valasco [2011]). Hispanic mothers, especially those who have recently arrived in the United States as foreign-born immigrants, may also be ineligible for work-based cash

assistance programs, such as TANF, or other government programs (SNAP) that benefit children (Borjas 2011).

Hispanic newborn infants clearly are "at risk" of poverty due in part to the disadvantaged circumstances of their mothers, current family living arrangements, and limited access to America's social safety net. But poverty is not simply a reflection of selection of mostly disadvantaged Hispanic families (or mothers) into immigrant settlement areas. Poverty also reflects demand-side characteristics (Crowley and Ebert 2014; Hyde, Pais, and Wallace 2015). Our working hypothesis is that poverty is overrepresented among Hispanic newborn infants in immigrant receiving communities, independent of supply-side factors. Although some new destinations have become safe havens from the anti-immigrant political climate increasingly found in some established destinations (e.g., in Arizona and California) (Massey and Sánchez 2010), geographic isolation or spatial concentration elsewhere arguably is no economic panacea. On the demand side, the jobs available to Hispanics in agriculture, nondurable manufacturing (e.g., meat and food processing), and services (e.g., landscaping) often do not pay a living wage (Curtis, Voss, and Long 2012). New Hispanic destinations also lack the institutional support services (e.g., culturally sensitive healthcare) that make economic integration possible, at least as expressed in jobs that pay a decent wage. And, unlike established gateways, new destinations may lack mature or dense social networks that provide informal support and economic assistance to newcomers (Bachmeier 2013).

In Hispanic boomtowns, the extent and depth of poverty also is exacerbated if economically disadvantaged Hispanic families have higher than average rates of fertility. In many new destinations, especially isolated rural communities with aging white populations and chronic net outmigration, the majority of births are to Hispanic mothers Lichter 2012. Recent estimates indicate comparatively high rates of Hispanic childbearing in new immigrant destinations. Using data from the 2005–2009 American Community Survey, Lichter et al. (2012a) reported a GFR of 92 among rural Hispanics compared with a GFR of 76 among their metro counterparts. The demographic implications of high Hispanic fertility are magnified in economically depressed places, where aging-in-place and chronic outmigration have depleted the native-born white population of childbearing age (Johnson and Lichter 2008). Hispanics increased from less than 3 percent of the nonmetro population in 1990 to 7.4 percent in 2010 (Economic Research Service 2013; US Census Bureau 1993).

Poor Hispanic populations also have become increasingly concentrated in poor neighborhoods, communities, or regions, which exacerbates the problems of poor families (e.g., lack of job opportunities or educational opportunities). A recent USDA study, for example, showed that nearly 40 percent of rural Hispanics lived in high-poverty counties, defined as having poverty rates of 20 percent or more (Farrigan and Parker 2012); this figure compared with about 18 percent of poor Hispanics living in poor metro areas. The share of all Hispanics living in high-poverty counties increased during the early 2000s by nearly 10 percentage points. The number of high-poverty areas also increased after declining in the 1990s (cf. Lichter et al. 2012b), as did the number of poor suburban communities located outside principal cities (Kneebone, Nadeau, and Berube 2011). Farrigan and Parker (2012) identified 193 new high-poverty nonmetro

counties and 55 new high-poverty metro counties that emerged in the 2000s. For people living in low-income communities, poverty is chronic, reinforced by high unemployment and too few jobs. Such areas also are home to underfunded schools and limited opportunities for upward mobility as children grow into adolescence and young adulthood (Dondero and Muller 2012).

Poor minority communities often lack access to reproductive health services, including low-cost contraception, and nearby abortion providers in many rural communities and states (e.g., the Dakotas, Mississippi, Idaho, etc.) are limited (National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unintended Pregnancy 2013). Under the circumstances—and regardless of the economic circumstances of minority families—nonmarital childbearing is often higher than average in economically depressed neighborhoods and communities (South and Crowder 2010), which reinforces poverty from generation to generation and further concentrates minority poverty in poor communities. These problems are expected to be most acute in rural areas with large recent influxes of low-wage, low-skill Hispanic workers. The implication is clear: fertility and assimilation, including spatial assimilation, are inexorably linked.

Current Study

For many Hispanic areas of new settlement, an older, largely nonpoor white population will increasingly be replaced over the foreseeable future by today's younger, disproportionately poor minority population (Lichter 2013). This racial and ethnic transformation will occur first and most rapidly in today's established and new Hispanic boomtowns, which are rapidly diversifying from the "bottom up." As we have argued here, current patterns of childbearing may exacerbate poverty and spatial inequality, and slow the process of economic incorporation, especially if births to poor Hispanic populations are concentrated in poor and neglected places.

We hypothesize that (1) Hispanic newborn infants will experience very high rates of poverty, an empirical fact that we document here for the first time; (2) recent poverty rates are overrepresented among Hispanic newborn infants, especially in the new Hispanic destinations located in rural areas; and (3) significant shares of the Hispanic infant poverty gap—but not all of it—can be attributed to the social, economic, and spatial disadvantages faced by Hispanic mothers and their families. We also assume here that infant and child development occurs in context. Today's immigrant settlement patterns suggest that America's newest generation of poor Hispanic children faces major obstacles to success—in local school, the workforce, and family life—which ultimately threaten long-term social and economic incorporation and social integration into mainstream society.

Methods

American Community Survey: Fertility and Poverty Data

Our goal, quite literally, is to identify only those infants who were born during a period when their mothers were officially defined by the Census Bureau as poor (i.e., they were "born poor"). Economic information about newborn babies (or their mothers or families) is unavailable from the birth registration system of

the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). Moreover, although it is sometimes possible to link fertility (and newborns) to the economic circumstances of their mothers in periodic nationally representative surveys (e.g., National Survey of Family Growth), such efforts typically face serious sample size limitations because fertility is a relatively rare event annually. Another alternative approach, which we ultimately discarded, would be to identify poverty among the 0–1 population using the decennial Census (such as the Public Use Microdata files), but the problem here is that the long form, which included questions on family income used to measure poverty, was eliminated in 2010. And, while the annual March Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS) includes the 0–1 population and information on family poverty, the sample sizes are insufficient for our purposes. The time referents for measuring recent fertility and infant poverty in the CPC also are mismatched.

Fortunately, the release of the annual American Community Survey (ACS) now makes it possible for the first time to identify infants born into impoverished families. The sample is of sufficient size to facilitate analyses of rural as well as urban areas and minority populations, including Hispanics. For our purposes, we use annual data from the 2006 through 2010 ACS microdata files to identify newborns and their mothers. First, we identify infants aged 1 year or younger at the time of the survey. Second, we link infants with parent and household information (including poverty status) by merging their files with the mother and household files. Third, to ensure that infants are properly linked to their biological mothers, we use the ACS fertility question (i.e., "Has this person given birth to any children in the past 12 months?") along with ACS individual and household ID variables.

The time referent of the fertility question (i.e., childbearing in past 12 months) is identical to the time referent for the family income question (i.e., family income in the past 12 months), which is used by the Census Bureau to estimate poverty. By linking infant data to mother and household data, it is possible to estimate the number and share born into poverty. Specifically, infants are identified as poor at birth if they lived in families with incomes below the official poverty income thresholds, as defined by the US Office of Management and Budget. These poverty income thresholds take into account the incomes of all family members, and provide equivalent family incomes for different-sized families (to take into account economies of scale). Whether a newborn is defined as poor depends on total family income, family size, number of children in the family, and age of the householder.

Measurement

In this paper, we first identify all Hispanic newborns from the Hispanic question of the ACS (i.e., Hispanic origin). Hispanics can be of any race. All other newborns are classified as non-Hispanic, that is, non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic black, and so forth. To identify racial and ethnic variation in poverty, we consider a variety of demographic characteristics, including immigration status and the marital status of the new mother (see Appendix table A1). We identify "at risk" infants whose mothers were teenagers when they began childbearing or were

unmarried at the time of birth. We also consider the number of siblings in the household (at the time of the survey), as well as the number of related adults (who can provide family income as primary and secondary workers). Poverty rates typically increase—quite mechanically—with family size because more family income is required to meet or exceed the higher poverty income thresholds. Two dummy variables are included to differentiate foreign-born mothers who are established immigrants (immigrated to the United States before 2000) from those foreign-born mothers who immigrated to the United States in 2000 or more recently. Previous research shows that economic incorporation increases with duration in the United States (Van Hook, Brown, and Kwenda 2004). Migrant status (whether foreign born or native born) is determined by moves to a different Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA) during the past 12 months (US Census Bureau 2013). We expect recent domestic or international migration to increase the likelihood of poverty due to the potential lack of a support network among transient populations.

We also consider several supply-side factors commonly associated with maternal employment and human capital (Appendix table A1). Specifically, dummy variables indicate whether the mothers of newborn infants speak no or poor English, whether mothers have a high school education or less, or alternatively have some college (with college graduate serving as the reference category), and whether mothers are currently employed. We expect that higher levels of human capital and maternal employment will decrease the likelihood of an infant being born into poverty.

Previous research has used many different levels of geography to define new destinations, including regions, states, counties, and places. The ACS microdata lacks county identifiers, so we identify new destinations here by state of residence, following the practice of other recent studies. We define Hispanic gateways or established destinations as comprising 10 states that, in 1990, accounted for roughly 90 percent of all US Hispanics (US Census Bureau 1993). Established gateways include Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, New Mexico, and Texas. As expected, these gateway states accounted for a large percentage of all recent Hispanic births (i.e., 76.3 percent). Since 1990, the geographic spread of the nation's Hispanics has accelerated (Johnson and Lichter 2008; Massey 2008). For our purposes, a new Hispanic destination state is one that experienced a 250 percent or more increase in the size of its Hispanic population between 1990 and 2010. Twenty-one states meet this criterion: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. These states resonate with our understanding of the geographical location of new destinations, which dominate today in the Southeast (e.g., North Carolina), Mississippi Delta region (Arkansas and Mississippi), agricultural heartland (Iowa and Minnesota), and Pacific Northwest (Oregon and Washington). The residual category of 20 states (including the District of Columbia) also represents slower-growing new destinations (with comparatively small Hispanic populations) outside traditional gateway states (i.e., those with large percentages of Hispanics in 1990).[4]

Analytical Framework

We identify comparative fertility and poverty rates among Hispanic newborn infants in new and established destinations. Logistic regression is appropriate for our purposes because the probability of an infant being born into a family that is either below or above the poverty line is a binary outcome. We adjust standard errors for clustering of births within states and for design effects, as well as conduct additional robustness checks using multilevel modeling techniques.[5] Adjusting for the design effects of the ACS helps ensure that the results are consistent with the population estimates from the Population Estimations Program of the Census Bureau (US Census Bureau 2009). The relatively unrestrictive assumptions of logistic models are also appropriate when analyzing non-normally distributed variables often associated with poverty. In our analysis, the binary logistic model is expressed as

$$z = \log(\rho(\gamma_2))/(1 - \rho(\gamma_1)) = \alpha_0 + \sum \beta_k \chi_{ik},$$

where α_0 is a constant and β_k is the effect of a unit change in independent variable χ_{ik} on z, the log odds of the dichotomous outcome variable (Hosmer and Lemeshow 2004). We report β_k in terms of odds ratios: values greater than 1 indicate that the newborn in family k was more likely to be born into an impoverished family (outcome γ_2) than those in the reference group; values less than 1 indicate that newborns in family k were less likely to be born poor.

Findings

Hispanic Fertility in New Destinations

The results in table 1 reveal a national GFR of 67.7 for 2006–2010 (column 1, line 1). The conventional view of rural America as a repository of traditional family values, at least as measured by fertility, is not evident in the observed GFRs reported in table 1. There are only very modest differences between fertility levels in metro and nonmetro areas.

Yet, Hispanic fertility rates are roughly 20 percent higher than non-Hispanic fertility (77.3 versus 64.2).[6] Hispanic/non-Hispanic differences in fertility also are larger in nonmetro (88.7 versus 66.6) than metro areas (76.9 versus 63.6). High rates of Hispanic fertility in nonmetro areas are driven largely (but not entirely) by the high fertility of Mexican-origin Hispanics, who tend to be the least educated and skilled, and who typically have poverty rates well in excess of the native-born white population. With a GFR of 92.1 per 1,000 women, the fertility of rural Mexican-origin Hispanics exceeds rates of other historically disadvantaged minority populations, including blacks (71.9) and American Indians (87.1).

The results in table 1 suggest no difference in the fertility rates for those in new destinations, gateways, and other destinations. Spatial differentials in fertility, however, are evident when comparing Hispanics and non-Hispanics. The GFR was 88.9 among Mexican-origin Hispanics in gateway states, but 25 percent higher

Table 1. General Fertility Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Metropolitan Status

	Total	Metro	Nonmetro	Gateway	New destination	Other
Total	67.7	67.5	68.9	67.6	68.5	65.8
Hispanic	77.3	76.9	88.7	79.6	99.0	87.2
Mexican	83.2	82	92.1	88.9	111.1	88.8
Other	76.4	70.5	88.4	70.8	90.1	81.8
Non-Hispanic	64.2	63.6	66.6	62.0	66.2	65.7
White	65.8	64.9	67.1	60.2	64.5	64.1
Black	69.9	69.6	71.9	66.6	71.1	72.7
Asian	70.0	70.0	71.8	67.4	76.2	74.1
American Indian	81.2	76.5	87.1	74.1	82.9	85.2

Source: American Community Survey, 2006–2010

in new destinations (GFR = 111.1). High rates of childbearing among Hispanics, especially Mexican-origin Hispanics, clearly are giving demographic impetus to new diversity—from the bottom up. And this is occurring most rapidly in nonmetropolitan areas and new destinations.

Differentials in Poverty among Hispanic Newborns

Our estimates from the 2006–2010 ACS show that 23 percent of America's infants are born into poverty (table 2). But there are large racial and ethnic differences around this national average. Over one-third (i.e., 34.8 percent) of all Hispanic infants today are born into poor families, a significant figure if considered in tandem with high Hispanic fertility (table 1). Moreover, Hispanic poverty rates are exceptionally high among rural newborn infants (40 percent) and those born in new destinations (41.2 percent). Incorporation clearly is highly segmented geographically. In these Hispanic immigrant-receiving areas, poverty is most pronounced among Mexican-origin infants. Rural poverty rates remain lower among Hispanics than other historically disadvantaged minorities, including rural blacks (55.2 percent) and American Indians (46.6 percent).

The successful integration into American society among today's newborn infants is likely to be experienced unequally across population subgroups. For example, as shown in table 3 (column 3, line 1), an exceptionally large percentage—70 percent—of all Hispanic infants today are born to mothers with a high school degree or less, and the poverty rate among the infants of these mothers is 42.9 percent.[7] The low educational levels of Latinas place their newborn infants "at risk" of poverty and other forms of deprivation. Only 12 percent of all Hispanic newborn infants have college-educated mothers, compared with a national figure of 32 percent (see Appendix table A1). Economic incorporation is also highly segmented by place of residence. Indeed, the disadvantaged circumstances of newborn Hispanic infants, if measured by mothers' education, are most

Table 2. Infant Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Metropolitan Status

	Total	Metro	Nonmetro	Gateway	New destination	Other
Total	23.0	21.6	29.0	23.0	24.1	21.4
Hispanic	34.8	33.2	40.0	33.7	41.2	35.7
Mexican	37.8	36.2	41.6	35.5	43.1	40.9
Other	30.3	30.1	33.6	29.1	38.8	27.5
Non-Hispanic	19.9	17.8	27.8	17.5	22.8	19.5
White	16.1	13.5	24.3	22.1	20.3	18.7
Black	40.9	38.9	55.2	37.5	42.3	37.6
Asian	11.9	9.6	21.1	10.9	12.5	10.0
American Indian	42.2	36.9	46.6	41.1	44.1	38.5

Source: American Community Survey, 2006–2010

apparent in rural areas, where 76.1 percent have mothers with a high school education or less. Among whites, only 28.7 percent of newborn infants have mothers with a high school degree or less (data not shown).

The life course trajectories of newborn infants also are compromised by other familial and environmental conditions that place them "at risk." For example, larger shares of rural than urban Hispanic infants are born to teenage mothers (11.7 versus 9.4 percent). About one in four Hispanic newborn infants have mothers who began childbearing as teenagers. The share of Hispanics born to teen mothers was especially high among those who were "born poor" (34.4 percent; data not shown), a figure roughly twice as large as the national figure (17.2 percent) (appendix table A1). And, perhaps most significantly, over 50 percent of all Hispanic infants born to single mothers (i.e., never married or previously married) were poor (i.e., 53.8 percent). This figure is striking, considering that roughly 40 percent of all Hispanic infants are born to single mothers (table 3). Out-of-wedlock childbearing is strongly associated with newborn infant poverty.

Hispanic newborn infants also are likely to have larger numbers of siblings than their non-Hispanic counterparts. Just over 27 percent of Hispanic newborn infants have two or more siblings in the household (table 3). This is higher than non-Hispanics newborns, where only 21.4 percent have two or more siblings (data not shown). In general, poverty rates are highest among families with the most siblings (e.g., over 45 percent among rural Hispanics). Hispanic infants, especially in rural areas, also are much more likely to live in households with additional adult family members, a fact suggesting greater availability of secondary workers and potential adult caretakers. Indeed, over one-half of all Hispanic newborn infants in rural areas were living in households with three or more related adults, compared with only about 20 percent of their newborn counterparts in urban areas. Such results suggest that "doubling up" provides a hedge against poverty in rural areas.

Table 3 also shows that nearly one-half (i.e., 46.9 percent) of all rural Hispanic newborn infants have foreign-born mothers; these newborn infants had

Table 3. Parental Characteristics of Hispanic Newborn Infants and Percentage Poor (% Hispanic newborns in poverty in parentheses)

	Metro	Nonmetro	Total
Education of mother			
High school or less	69.4	76.1	70.0
	(42.5)	(46.1)	(42.9)
Some college	17.9	16.8	17.8
	(20.6)	(25.4)	(21.0)
College+	12.8	7.2	12.2
	(8.7)	(8.9)	(8.7)
Age of mother			
Less than 20	9.4	11.7	9.6
	(46.9)	(50.8)	(46.9)
20–24	23.3	28.2	23.7
	(40.2)	(44.1)	(40.2)
25+	67.4	60.1	66.7
	(30.3)	(35.9)	(30.4)
Marital status			
Single/never married	39.8	40.2	39.8
	(53.3)	(58.9)	(53.8)
Married	60.2	59.9	60.1
	(21.6)	(27.2)	(22.1)
Nativity of mother			
Native born	47.8	53.2	48.3
	(30.8)	(36.6)	(31.4)
Immigrant	52.2	46.9	51.7
	(37.3)	(43.8)	(37.9)
First teen birth			
First birth as a teen	25.8	31.0	26.3
	(44.9)	(49.8)	(45.5)
First birth as adult	74.2	69.0	73.8
	(30.5)	(35.6)	(30.9)
English ability			
No/poor English	12.2	13.3	12.3
	(52.1)	(55.1)	(52.4)
Good/excellent English	87.8	86.8	87.7
	(31.7)	(37.7)	(32.3)
Employed	42.2	39.3	41.9
	(19.1)	(24.7)	(19.6)

(Continued)

Table 3. ***continued***

	Metro	Nonmetro	Total
Unemployed	57.8	60.7	58.1
	(45.2)	(49.9)	(45.7)
Number of siblings			
0	47.7	46.5	47.6
	(33.9)	(40.0)	(34.5)
1	25.2	25.1	25.2
	(26.3)	(34.1)	(27.1)
2+	27.13	28.4	27.3
	(42.0)	(45.1)	(42.3)
Number of adults in household			
1–2	79.2	48.7	76.3
	(39.5)	(45.1)	(40.1)
3–4	13.6	35.6	15.8
	(20.7)	(24.7)	(29.6)
5+	7.1	15.7	7.9
	(23.5)	(29.8)	(24.0)
Migrant household			
Migrant	24.6	25.5	24.6
	(44.2)	(49.2)	(44.6)
Non-migrant	75.5	74.5	75.4
	(30.9)	(36.8)	(31.5)
Geography			
Traditional gateway	79.2	48.7	76.3
	(33.6)	(39.1)	(33.9)
New destination	13.6	35.6	15.8
	(36.5)	(44.8)	(38.8)
Other destination	7.1	15.7	7.9
	(37.7)	(36.4)	(37.4)
Sample size	33,693	3,449	37,142

Source: American Community Survey Five-Year Sample, 2006–2010

a poverty rate of 43.8 percent. The share of newborns to foreign-born Hispanic parents is very similar in rural (47 percent) and urban (52 percent) areas. And a disproportionately large share (about 12 percent) of Hispanic newborns have parents who speak no English or poor English. This compares with only 2.7 percent of all the parents. Not surprisingly, poverty rates are exceptionally high for the infants of foreign-born parents (37.9 percent) and those who speak English poorly (52.4 percent).

The conventional view of spatial assimilation is that metro gateways provide an initial point of entry for Hispanic immigrant populations. Over time and across generations, upwardly mobile (and culturally assimilated) immigrants and their descendants then spread geographically to find new opportunities. Our results instead suggest both large shares of newborn Hispanics living in new rural destinations and high rates of poverty—higher than in established gateways (table 3). The implication is that young foreign-born (and disadvantaged) Hispanics in the family-building stages may have bypassed urban gateways altogether for rural areas.

Modeling Poverty among Newborn Infants

High rates of poverty among Hispanic newborn infants in new destinations and rural areas undoubtedly reflect both negative selection and other causative factors rooted in local opportunity structures. In this section, logistic regression is used to estimate the sources of poverty among Hispanic newborn infants. Table 4 provides odds ratios for all newborn infants (models 1–3) and for Hispanic newborn infants (models 4–5). Odds ratios identify the relative risks of poverty for different demographic segments of the population of newborn infants. Odds ratios above 1 indicate greater relative odds of poverty at birth relative to the reference group.

Our baseline estimates from model 1 reveal an exceptionally high relative risk of poverty among Hispanic newborns. Specifically, the odds of Hispanic poverty are 2.78 times greater than the odds of poverty experienced by non-Hispanic white newborn infants. The odds are even higher among blacks (OR = 3.33), but lower among Native Americans (OR = 1.97). For 2006–2010, babies with Asian mothers were least likely to be born into poverty; that is, among Asian newborns, the odds of being poor were 38 percent lower than white newborn babies (OR = .62).

These racial and ethnic differences in poverty are not due to differences in rural-urban residence patterns, which are controlled in model 1 (table 4). In fact, the relative risk of poverty among nonmetro newborn infants is 1.80 times greater than for infants born to metro mothers. Racial composition cannot fully explain high rates of poverty in nonmetro areas. And, in some additional analysis (not shown), with the race dummies removed from the regressions, the nonmetro estimate is actually slightly larger (OR = 1.88) than in model 1. Because newborn infants in rural areas are disproportionately white, race in this case acts as a suppressor variable, masking the large spatial or rural-urban differential in infant poverty.

Model 2 includes dummy variables that identify newborns living in fast-growing and other new destinations, with established gateway states serving as the reference category. These analyses reveal unexpectedly lower odds of poverty among newborns in fast-growing new destinations (OR = .94), but higher odds in slower-growing areas (OR = 1.13) that perhaps provide fewer job opportunities or less institutional social support. Any evidence of relative disadvantage (shown in tables 2 and 3) seemingly reflects differences in urban-rural residence and racial composition. Previous research examining the economic effects of new

Table 4. Logistic Regression of Poverty of Newborn Infants, 2006–2010 (models are adjusted for ACS clustering and design effects)

				Hispanics only	Hispanics only
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Variables	Odds ratio	Odds ratio	Odds ratio	Odds ratio	Odds ratio
Household in nonmetro area	1.80***	1.76***	1.45***	1.16**	1.24**
Hispanic	2.78***	2.92***	1.45***	–	–
Black	3.33***	3.33***	1.54***	–	–
Asian	.62***	.64***	.99	–	–
American Indian	1.97***	1.97***	1.27***	–	–
New Hispanic destination		.94***	.95***	.98*	.99
Other destination		1.13***	1.13***	1.20*	1.26*
First birth as a teenager			1.30***	1.26***	1.26***
Unmarried mother			7.24***	6.25***	6.28***
Number of siblings in the household			1.21***	1.19**	1.19**
Number of adults in the household			.66***	.71***	.70***
Foreign-born mother, immigration before 2000			1.12*	.91	.92
Foreign-born mother, immigration after 2000			1.20**	1.36*	1.35*
Migrant household			1.69***	1.48***	1.48***
Mother with no/poor English			1.57***	1.55***	1.55***
Mother education, high school dropout			2.57***	2.54***	2.54***
Mother education, college graduate			.34***	.47***	.47***
Mother employed			.24***	.25***	.25***
Nonmetro × New Hispanic destination					1.20*
Nonmetro × Other state					1.01
Constant	.05	.04	.78	1.35	1.98
Log likelihood	–91651.484	–91572.201	–63423.163	–17675.498	–17672.169
Sample size	181,427	181,427	181,427	37,142	37,142

*$p < .05$ **$p < .0$ ***$p < .001$

Hispanic destination counties has reported few negative effects on economic conditions and well-being (Crowley and Lichter 2009). The results from model 2 indicate that the odds of poverty are lowest for newborn infants in new destination states.[8] But, as we show later (with models that include interaction terms), these baseline findings hide the large socioeconomic disadvantages between new destinations in urban and rural areas.

To be sure, racial and spatial disparities in poverty are due, at least in part, to the overrepresentation of "risk factors" among Hispanic newborn infants and those born in rural areas. This inference is drawn from a model that incorporates several risk factors (e.g., teen mothers, whether the mother was married, etc.) for infant poverty (model 3, table 4). When these variables are added to the model (i.e., model 3), the size of the Hispanic odds ratio is cut in half, declining from 2.92 to 1.45.[9] Much of the difference—but clearly not all—is located in comparative risk factors of Hispanic families vis-à-vis non-Hispanic families. Indeed, based on our calculations from this model (model 3, table 4), the predicted percent poor for Latino newborns is 27.1 percent compared to 20.0 percent among whites, holding everything else in the model constant.

The size of the effects associated with blacks and American Indians is also greatly reduced in model 3. Model 3 accounts for substantially more variation in the infant poverty rates than did model 2, as indicated by the large reduction in the log-likelihood statistic. Still, even with the increased explanatory power of the full model, the odds of poverty remain substantially higher among the newborn infants of historically disadvantaged minority populations. A comparison of models 2 and 3 also underscores the point that the higher odds of poverty among nonmetro newborn infants (OR = 1.76 in model 2 to 1.45 in model 3) and the lower odds among those living in new destinations (.94 to .95) remain intact when all of the risk factors are included in the models. The drop from 1.76 to 1.45 clearly indicates that rural children have many characteristics (e.g., teen mothers, etc.) that place them at greater risk for poverty than their same-race metro counterparts.

This is especially true of Hispanic newborn infants. Model 4 is limited to Hispanics, with the goal of identifying sources of variation in poverty among Hispanic newborns. As with the national sample, these models provide evidence of higher rates of poverty among newborn Hispanic infants in nonmetro areas (OR = 1.16).[10] The results also show that Hispanic infants face significantly higher rates of poverty if their mothers began childbearing as teenagers (OR = 1.26), were unmarried (OR = 6.25), lived in a migrant household (OR = 1.48; i.e., as a measure of transience), or were foreign born, especially if they arrived in the United States after 2000 (OR = 1.36). Newborn Hispanics also face high rates of poverty if their mothers speak little or no English (OR = 1.57), have less than a high school education (OR = 2.57), or are not currently employed (OR = 1/.25 or 4.00).

To put these poverty estimates in perspective, the newborn infants of an unmarried, recent foreign-born immigrant, teen mother who speaks little or no English have an odds ratio of poverty at birth of over 25 vis-à-vis their otherwise similar newborn counterparts whose mothers were married, native born, age 20 or older, and spoke English well. The newborn children of low-educated, low-skilled Hispanic mothers face an exceptionally high risk of poverty. These odds

ratios among single mothers are especially relevant at a time when roughly one-half of all Hispanic births are to unmarried women (Martin et al. 2013).

In some additional analysis, we also tested the hypothesis that Hispanic newborn infants in new rural destinations have greater relative odds of poverty. Specifically, we estimated a final model (model 5, table 4) that includes interaction effects between nonmetro residence and new destinations. These results reveal a large and statistically significant interaction term (OR = 1.20). The pattern of interaction—and the large disadvantage facing Hispanic infants in new rural destinations—is illustrated in figure 1. This figure shows that poverty among Hispanic newborn infants is 1.50 times greater in rural new destinations than in metro established gateways. Or, interpreted differently, any deleterious effects associated with being born in a new Hispanic destination are largely limited to rural areas.[11]

Finally, because a large share of all poor newborn infants have Hispanic foreign-born mothers (i.e., 37.9 percent), we also estimated models separately by nativity status. The results in table 5 show that newborn Hispanic infants of immigrant mothers face especially high rates of poverty vis-à-vis foreign-born white mothers. The odds ratio is nearly 2, which is higher than the odds ratio for other racial groups. In addition, these ethnoracial differences are larger than those observed among the native-born population (compare columns 1 and 2, table 5). We also compare models of the infants of native-born (column 3) and foreign-born (column 4) Hispanic mothers. For the most part, the relative sizes of the estimates are similar in direction and magnitude. The largest difference is observed for mother's education attainment, whether she was a high school dropout or not. Among the newborn infants of native-born mothers who are high school dropouts, the relative risk of poverty was just 1.13 times greater than among the infants of high school graduates. The corresponding relative risk ratio among the infants of foreign-born mothers was much larger—2.65. Clearly, the infants of the less educated foreign-born Hispanic mothers face exceptionally high risks of poverty in comparison to their more educated counterparts.

Figure 1. Interaction effects between nonmetro residence and new destinations for Hispanic newborns

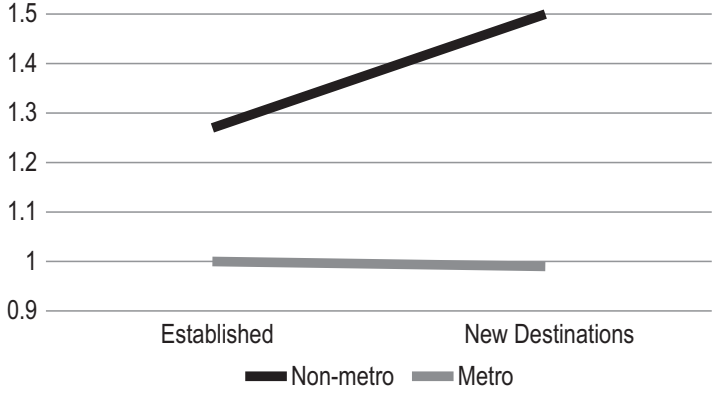

Table 5. Logistic Regression of Poverty of Newborn Infants, by Nativity Status of Mothers

	All Native born	All Foreign born	Native-born Hispanic	Foreign-born Hispanic
Variables	Odds ratio	Odds ratio	Odds ratio	Odds ratio
Household in nonmetro area	1.67***	1.26***	1.20***	1.25***
Hispanic	1.51***	1.99***	–	–
Black	1.59***	1.44***	–	–
Asian	.81**	.91	–	–
American Indian	1.35***	–	–	–
New Hispanic destination	1.17***	1.01	1.11*	1.20**
Other destination	1.01	.98	.99	.98
First birth as a teenager	1.23***	1.26***	1.29**	1.17***
Unmarried mother	12.09***	7.04***	7.13***	6.46***
Number of siblings in the household	1.37***	1.28***	1.18***	1.19***
Number of adults in the household	.65***	.67***	.68***	.72***
Migrant household	1.91***	1.35***	1.33***	1.70***
Mother with no/poor English	2.42***	2.20***	1.88***	2.27***
Mother education, high school dropout	2.53***	1.04*	1.13**	2.65***
Mother education, college graduate	.42***	.34***	.40***	.54***
Mother employed	.22***	.28***	.23***	.25***
Constant	.07	.51	.90	.42
Log likelihood	–55389.37	–17240.58	–9137.61	–10789.62
Sample size	143,268	38,159	17,927	19,215

*$p < .05$ **$p < .01$ ***$p < .001$

A Coda on the Social "Safety Net"

From a policy standpoint, one concern is whether the families of newborn Hispanic infants are dependent on government "handouts" or whether they are "falling through the cracks" in America's welfare safety net. As a starting point for discussion, it is important to recognize that Hispanic infants born in the United States are citizens, with the same rights and obligations as other native-born populations. Table 6 provides estimates of the "dependence" of poor Hispanic newborns on government largesse, as measured by the shares using safety net programs (i.e., cash assistance and food stamps, or SNAP), along with information on the depth of poverty, as measured by average ratio of family income to the poverty threshold.

These results show that only a small fraction of poor Hispanic infants reside in families accessing government cash assistance (roughly 12 percent). The differences

Table 6. Safety Net for Poor Newborn Children, 2006–2010

	Poor Hispanic newborn households			All poor newborn households		
	Metro	Nonmetro	Total	Metro	Nonmetro	Total
Receiving welfare (%)	12.1	9.9	11.9	15.4	13.3	14.9
Receiving food stamps (%)	48.4	52.4	48.8	56.2	63.4	57.9
Average total family income ($)	11,215	11,025	11,194	10,276	9,854	10,175
Average family income-to-poverty ratio	.46	.45	.46	.44	.44	.44

between metro and nonmetro newborns are very small (about two percentage points). This likely reflects the high shares of Hispanic newborn infants with immigrant parents, who may be unaware or ineligible for government cash programs. On the other hand, about one-half of the families of poor Hispanic newborn infants receive food stamps (or SNAP), which virtually all of these infants should be eligible to receive. Note also that for both welfare and food stamps, the proportion of Hispanic newborns receiving assistance is lower than the overall proportion of newborns receiving assistance in both metro and nonmetro areas. Clearly, these estimates uncover high levels of unmet need among poor Hispanic families.

Our results also provide little evidence that Hispanic newborns are ineligible for government benefits because they are only marginally poor. In fact, the average family income is only $11,194 annually (over the 2006–2010 period) for poor Hispanic families including newborn infants. For comparison, median US family income in 2008 was almost six times greater—$62,621 (see DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, and Smith 2009). The Hispanic poor at birth are deeply impoverished. The income-to-poverty ratio for poor Hispanic newborns is only .46, with almost no variation between metro and nonmetro areas. Our calculations (not shown) indicate that 18.1 percent of all Hispanic newborns are deeply impoverished (with income-to-poverty thresholds of less than .5). This compares with 12.6 percent of all newborns.

Discussion and Conclusion

The rapid growth and geographic dispersion of Hispanics raises new theoretical and empirical questions about concentrated poverty and spatially uneven patterns of economic incorporation and social integration (Lichter 2012; Parrado and Morgan 2008). As we have emphasized here, Hispanic population growth is now fueled mostly by births rather than by an influx of new immigrants. Our goal, using mother-child linked data for the first time from the ACS, has been to provide baseline estimates of poverty among Hispanic newborn infants. Our working assumption is that poverty in utero and at birth represents critical periods that shape children's long-term cognitive development and the prospect of incorporation into American society.

The empirical results support several general conclusions. First, our estimates of the general fertility rate highlight the high fertility of Hispanics and, by implication, the pace of cultural and economic assimilation (Parrado and Morgan 2008). Our empirical approach also demonstrated the utility of the ACS fertility question, which remains an underutilized resource for monitoring racial and ethnic variation in US childbearing and economic incorporation. We showed that rates of Hispanic fertility are particularly high in rural areas, including new Hispanic destinations. Rapid population growth is now driven, at least in part, by high fertility rates among Hispanics, who are disadvantaged along many dimensions (e.g., nativity, education, etc.).

Second, our results show that poverty—like racial and ethnic diversity—starts from the "bottom up." Long-term prospects for incorporation and upward social mobility are heavily influenced by an infant's economic circumstances at birth. Although a question for future studies, early childhood poverty may set into motion a series of lifecycle disadvantages (e.g., inadequate parenting, bad neighborhoods, underfunded schools, poor healthcare, etc.) that culminate in poverty in adulthood. Geographic mobility patterns also may serve to concentrate poor Hispanics spatially and reduce spatial assimilation with the majority population (Foulkes and Schafft 2010). Here, we shifted the discussion to fertility by providing evidence of exceptionally high poverty among Hispanic newborns, especially in rural areas. Over 40 percent of all rural Mexican-origin Hispanic babies were born poor. Poverty among recent Hispanic newborns clearly raises the specter of new rural Hispanic ghettos and growing physical, social, and cultural isolation from the mainstream (see Burton et al. 2011). The prospect of full incorporation into American society is jeopardized.

Third, the results from the multivariate analyses indicated that high rates of poverty among Hispanic newborn babies are a product of negative selection into new destinations, as well as parenthood and demand-side factors that limit job opportunities and social support networks. Spatial isolation or concentration may also reinforce cultural expressions of Hispanicity, including familism and high fertility. Indeed, even when well-known supply-side "risk factors" (e.g., teen unmarried mothers, etc.) are taken into account, the odds of poverty among Hispanic newborns were still roughly 45 percent higher than their white counterparts. Hispanic poverty—in either rural or urban areas—cannot be reduced to simplistic explanations that emphasize maladaptive behavioral decision-making, that is, nonmarital or teen childbearing, low educational attainment, acquisition of English language skills, or other dimensions of human capital. Emerging patterns of Hispanic spatial concentration in new destinations also matter. Our analysis revealed especially large disadvantages among rural Hispanic newborns in new destinations. The substantive implication is that the lack of income from work and government (e.g., cash assistance) in new destinations is experienced disproportionately by Hispanics, even when they follow the behavioral prescriptions advocated by some politicians and pundits to "play by the rules" (i.e., get a good education, work hard, and get married before having children). Hispanics have contributed to the revitalization of dying rural communities (Carr, Lichter, and Kefalas 2012), but the payback, if measured in lower poverty rates, has been modest.

Our findings place the spotlight squarely on newly born Hispanic children. We find that newborn Hispanic infants often start life well behind the starting line, living in fast-growing boomtowns where they may never catch up. Indeed, our results highlight the need to investigate the intergenerational roots of Hispanic poverty and material hardship, and to track the developmental and economic trajectories of newborn infants in immigrant receiving areas. Failing to invest in families and children today has long-term implications that are likely to be revealed when today's disadvantaged newborns take their place (or not) in the adult world. For poor Hispanic women, new investments in rural reproductive health services, prenatal care, and nutrition programs (including SNAP and WIC) may pay large dividends in the form of healthy birth outcomes (e.g., fewer low-weight births) and better infant and child health. Unmet need is substantial in rural poor communities, which raises the specter of chronic poverty. New destinations—especially in rural areas—are too often ignored in metro-centric studies of immigrant adaptation and social integration (Lichter 2012).

Although policymakers sometimes forget, the disadvantages faced by low-wage, low-skill immigrant Hispanic workers are often most keenly felt by their US-born infants and children who, through no fault of their own, suffer the immediate and long-term consequences of low family income and concentrated poverty. We showed, for example, that the newborns of foreign-born mothers are often at greatest risk. Yet, restrictive welfare cash assistance programs and employment assistance and training programs often limit program participation among new immigrants (e.g., waiting periods). Undocumented parents (who cannot be identified in the ACS) face their own economic challenges in the workforce, including workplace exploitation and wage theft (Donato and Armenta 2011). Second-generation children—native-born US citizens—are often caught in the political crossfire. For newborn children, trajectories of cognitive and emotional development and, ultimately, full economic incorporation into American society will be shaped by the families and communities in which they live. Whether today's minority and immigrant children will assimilate into America's economic mainstream—however this is defined—is an open question that will only be answered fully in the long term, perhaps after several generations (Marrow 2013). This is a pipeline issue that will reshape America's future but also one that requires public policy attention now.

Notes

1. The Bracero period refers to a period (1942–1964) when Mexico and the United States entered into an agreement that allowed the United States to bring in temporary migrants from Mexico to work in agriculture and other manual occupations.
2. Unlike most studies of Hispanics, which include both black Hispanics and white Hispanics, Lopez and Valasco (2011) restrict their sample to Hispanics who self-identify as non-black. This means that all black Hispanics were classified as black for the purposes of their study. Since black Hispanics from the Caribbean have poverty rates that are typically lower than those of other Hispanics or blacks, classifying black Hispanics

as non-Hispanic has the effect of evaluating their estimates of "Hispanic" poverty vis-à-vis Hispanic poverty rates calculated on the basis of Hispanics of all races.

3. To illustrate this point, we examined the numerical contribution of poor Hispanics to the growth of the US poor population. In 2000, 23.0 percent of all poor people were of Hispanic origin. By 2010, this figure had increased to 29.2 percent. The population of poor Hispanics nearly doubled between 2000 and 2010, from 7.6 million to 13.5 million (Dalaker 2001; DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, and Smith 2011).
4. There is no clear consensus on how "new destinations" are or should be defined. We are limited to state data, but we have also sought to determine whether our results are robust to alternative definitions of gateways, new destinations, and residual status. For example, we replicated the analysis, while defining new destinations as including only the 10 fastest-growing states. We also limited our analyses of new destinations to states with the fastest-growing Hispanic populations (e.g., over 200 percent between 1990 and 2010), but where Hispanic represented a sizeable population (i.e., 15 states with Hispanic populations exceeding 250,000). In each case, our basic conclusions held up to these robustness checks. These results are available from the authors upon request.
5. To adjust for the clustering in the ACS data, ACS-generated personal-level replicate weights were used with all logistic regression models. This was done using the "svyset" and "svy" commands in Stata 13.
6. GFR estimates here are based on the fertility of women age 15–44 (for the 2006–2010 period). Fortunately, our ACS-based estimate of overall GFR is 67 (see table 1), which is similar to the average of the 2006–2010 rate (67.3) based on the same age group using vital registration data from NCHS (Martin et al. 2013). This speaks to the validity of ACS in reporting recent childbearing.
7. In comparison, 81.1 percent of the mothers of poor Hispanic newborn infants have low education (data not shown). These figures compare to 45.3 and 61.1 percent, respectively, of all US newborn infants (see Appendix table A1).
8. We also replicated all of our models using a multilevel modeling approach (HLM). The specific results and conclusions show little difference from those reported here (which adjust for clustering and design effects). For example, the replication of model 2 using HLM reveals a Hispanic "effect" of 3.05 (rather than 2.92, as reported in table 4, model 2). Also, the odds of poverty in rural areas is 1.44 using HLM rather than 1.51 (table 4), and the odds of poverty in fast-growing new destinations is .95 rather than .94. Our results are robust to alternative modeling approaches.
9. These results are robust to alternative definitions of new destinations. When new destinations were limited to the 10 states with the fastest-growing Hispanic populations, the OR for Hispanic poverty was even higher than those reported in table 4 (i.e., 1.98 versus 1.45).
10. This OR is 1.19 if we redefine new destinations as the 10 states with the fastest-growing Hispanic populations.
11. In some additional analysis, we also added interaction terms to model 3 between nonmetro residence and new immigrant destinations. The results (OR = 1.04) indicate that, compared with metro new destinations, the odds of poverty are 1.47 times greater in new rural destinations ($1.04 \times 1.51 \times .94 = 1.47$) than in established metro destinations. Not surprisingly, the interaction effects for the total sample are smaller in magnitude than those for Hispanics (model 5); they nevertheless are large and statistically significant. One interpretation is that new destinations in rural areas pose substantial risk for poverty for all newborn children, but the largest risk for Hispanic newborn babies.

Appendix

Table A1. Parental Characteristics of All and Poor US Newborn Infants, 2006–2010

	All newborns			All poor newborns		
	Metro	Nonmetro	Total	Metro	Nonmetro	Total
Education of mother						
High school or less	43.9	51.0	45.3	61.8	59.0	61.1
Some college	21.5	29.3	22.9	32.2	37.5	33.5
College +	34.5	19.8	31.8	6.0	3.6	5.4
Age of mother						
Less than 20	6.0	8.4	6.4	12.5	14.5	13.0
20–24	18.1	27.0	19.8	31.4	38.2	33.0
25+	75.9	64.7	73.8	56.1	47.3	54.0
Marital status						
Single/never married	31.0	35.5	31.8	68.8	68.4	68.7
Married	69.0	64.5	68.2	31.2	31.6	31.3
Nativity of mother						
Native born	75.8	92.7	79.0	71.7	91.1	76.2
Immigrant	24.2	7.3	21.0	28.3	8.9	23.8
First teen birth						
First birth as a teen	16.1	21.9	17.2	32.1	35.0	32.8
First birth after teenage	83.9	78.1	82.8	67.9	65.0	67.2
English ability						
No/poor English	3.0	1.4	2.7	7.2	2.7	6.1
Good/excellent English	97.0	98.6	97.3	92.8	97.3	93.9
Employment of mother						
Employed	53.4	53.5	53.2	28.1	31.4	28.9
Unemployed	46.6	47.6	46.8	71.9	68.6	71.1
Number of siblings						
0	48.3	47.4	48.1	49.9	50.3	50.0
1	29.5	28.3	29.2	21.3	22.6	21.6
2+	22.2	24.4	22.6	28.9	27.1	28.4
Number of adults in household						
1–2	80.9	82.4	81.2	84.2	85.9	84.6
3–4	11.0	10.0	10.8	7.7	7.1	7.5
5+	8.2	7.6	8.0	8.1	7.0	7.8
Migrant household						
Migrant	23.7	25.4	24.0	37.3	38.7	37.6
Non-migrant	76.3	74.6	75.9	62.7	61.3	62.4
Geography						
Traditional gateway	52.2	20.3	46.2	54.0	21.3	46.3
New destination	25.3	55.3	30.9	25.7	54.4	32.4
Other destination	22.6	24.4	22.9	20.4	24.3	21.3

Source: American Community Survey Five-Year Sample, 2006–2010

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