



WALKING THE TIGHTROPE: CULTURAL TRANSMISSION FROM FIRST- TO
SECOND- GENERATION SALVADORAN IMMIGRANTS

By

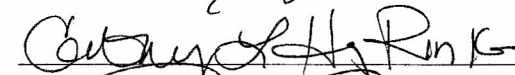
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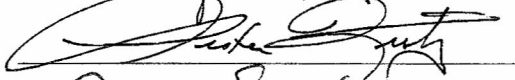
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Walking the Tightrope: Cultural Transmission from First- to Second- Generation
Salvadoran Immigrants

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts at George Mason University

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my loving wife and beautiful daughter.

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I would like to thank Prof. Linda J. Seligmann, for her strong theoretical guidance and constant direction throughout the process. I am also very grateful to Prof. Courtney Rinker for her guidance during my fieldwork and am especially thankful for her flexibility during this process. Thanks go to Justin Lowry for his sharp critique and wit. I am forever grateful to my wife and daughter who attended every single interview with my participants, and asked many insightful questions that furthered my research. Most of all I would like to thank the three families who made this research possible.

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ABSTRACT

WALKING THE TIGHTROPE: CULTURAL TRANSMISSION FROM FIRST- TO SECOND- GENERATION SALVADORAN IMMIGRANTS

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George Mason University, 2014

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This thesis examines how first-generation Salvadoran immigrants transfer their home culture to their children, born in the U.S. It examines the complex dynamics of this transfer, focusing on four different aspects that may play an important role in the transmission of home culture: family, legality/citizenship, border lives, and language. Each of these variables shapes the process by which first-generation Salvadoran immigrants incorporate their feelings about their home culture.

The process of cultural transfer across generations is reflected in the ways Salvadorans interact with and talk to their children about their home culture. Salvadoran first-generation immigrants are continually engaged in selective decisions about whether to include or exclude cultural knowledge when interacting with the second generation. The processes that are involved are both subtle, such as choosing what food to make for dinner, to overt, for example, taking a trip to visit family in El Salvador. The first and second generation interacts in a myriad of complex ways, and these interactions shed

light on the transference of culture. For the first generation, their personal history and socio-economic standing among other factors influence how they pass on their home culture. The second generation actively participates in the exchange, they are constantly choosing what aspects of their parent's culture they accept or reject. They are also navigating the U.S. culture that surrounds them.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Family and culture are intertwined. Parents make decisions every day that affect their children's view of the world around them. For first-generation immigrants, these daily decisions not only influence their children's worldview, but also become a mechanism through which the parents' home culture is passed on to their children born in the U.S. What may appear to be a simple decision of what food to serve for dinner is a choice that conveys cultural values, whether or not parents realize it. The language spoken at home speaks volumes about the value of that language to the children. What type and language of the media (radio, DVDs, newspapers, books, and websites) in the household also passes on cultural information to the second generation. Less subtle activities, such as trips back to see "mom and dad's" home country, long distance calls with relatives still living in the home country, or interactions with older relatives living close by also communicate cultural knowledge. Salvadoran immigrants are no different from other immigrant groups in this respect. In fact, first-generation Salvadoran immigrants constantly make selective decisions about whether to include or exclude cultural knowledge when interacting with the second generation. In addition to the active decisions they make, the first generation also partake in a myriad of passive interactions, which also communicate cultural knowledge.

I examined four different aspects that play an important role in the transmission of home culture: family, legality/citizenship, border lives, and language. Each of these areas influences how first generation Salvadoran immigrants incorporate their feelings about their home culture and how they pass it on to the next generation. Furthermore, these areas also reflect what the second generation incorporates into their own identity. There is a constant interaction between the two generations and the interaction is very complex. In order to better understand this dynamic interaction, this analysis will examine the interplay between first- and second- generation immigrants living in Prince William County, Virginia. Specifically, three interrelated nuclear families will be examined to better understand this dynamic.

Literature Review

Culture, according to Alejandro Portes and Ruben Rumbaut, is transmitted from first- to second-generation immigrant families in three ways: consonant acculturation, dissonant acculturation, and selective acculturation (2006:306). Consonant acculturation takes place when the first and second generations learn the host language and culture at the same pace (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:307). Both generations adjust at the same rate with respect to cultural fluency. Dissonant acculturation is the polar opposite of consonant acculturation. Dissonant acculturation can be seen when the second generation masters the language and culture of a host country much faster than their parents (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:308). This often results in family conflict and diminished parental authority (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:308). Traditional relationships of power and authority are upended, often leaving parents powerless and confused. The third and final

type of acculturation is selective, which Portes and Rumbaut define as fluent bilingualism in the language and culture in the second generation (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:308). The children speak both the host's and home country's language and understand both cultures. The parents may or may not be fluent in both cultures and languages. Furthermore, "the key element in selective acculturation is the absorption by second-generation youths of key values and normative expectations from their original culture and concomitant respect for them" (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:308-309). In this last type of cultural engagement, the traditional power dynamic is preserved between the first and second generation. All three of these types of acculturation are directly influenced by the socioeconomic background of the first generation and the language and the proficiency of the first and second generation within each cultural setting. The first generations' background in their home country does influence their standing in their new home (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:308-309). If the first generation were business owners, or had more access to capital, those skills and money transfer to their new home.

I examine whether or not the members of the three families in my research have experienced or are experiencing any of the three types of cultural interactions. In chapters three and four I show the consequences of each kind of cultural acculturation they have experienced, what the effects have been, what the first generation thinks, and how the second generation embodies Salvadoran identity in America. I also argue that there is a type of cultural confrontation that that Portes and Rumbaut did not specify.

Scholars differ in their understanding of how each of the four variables I have specified affects intergenerational communication among immigrants. Motivations for

immigration may have an impact on the ways these variables affect the transmission of home culture between generations. Portes and Rumbaut emphasize three major pull factors when looking at why people immigrate: (1) “a demand for migrant labor must exist,” (2) “labor demand must be known,” and (3) “the opportunities must be desirable” (2006:17). Carlos Cordova states that Salvadoran immigrants are drawn to the economic opportunities in the U.S., where jobs for unskilled workers are abundant (Cordova 2005:58). Hamilton and Chinchilla point to additional pull factors, such as the U.S. educational system, to explain why Salvadorans migrate to the U.S. They argue that Salvadoran parents feel that the educational system in the U.S. is far superior to that in El Salvador (Hamilton and Chinchilla 2011:166). The schools in the U.S. have funding for resources like computers and updated books, and the teachers are hired based on their expertise and training, not who they are related to. Furthermore, the schools are safer in the U.S. (Hamilton and Chinchilla 2011:166).

Additionally, networks that immigrants build draw other immigrants in and help people once they arrive. However, these networks are not always able to aid new immigrants. Menjivar finds that “immigrant social networks are not impervious to the material and physical conditions within which they exist. Macro-structural forces can serve to facilitate exchanges among immigrants and thus can be conducive to enduring ties, but they can also impede people from helping one another” (2000:235–36). These same networks can also prevent immigrants from helping each other. It is not a given that people will help one another just because they are from the same country or region. This

is especially true after a country has experienced a brutal civil war and the social fabric has broken down.

Pull factors are not the only reason people leave their natal land. “Push” factors also play a major role in immigration patterns. In the case of El Salvador, the most important push factor is the civil war that lasted for decades. This brutal conflict forced many Salvadorans out of El Salvador. Although the civil war ended in the 1990’s, many Salvadorans are still choosing to leave El Salvador because of the pervasive gang violence (Coutin 2000:16). This continued violence has also affected the economy of El Salvador, depressing the job market and pushing people to look elsewhere for employment (Cordova 2005:58). In the case of El Salvador, push factors influenced nearly everyone who left during the Civil War. In chapters two and three, I will examine what drew my participants to the U.S. Was it only push or pull factors that played a role in their decision to come to the U.S.? Or was it some combination of both? Or were there still other factors involved?

Those who left and came to the U.S. grappled with their complicated classification status. They could have been classified as: “unauthorized; legal but temporary; legal and permanent; or as refugees or asylees” (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:21, Mahler 1995:8-12). Immigration status powerfully affects how immigrants interact with their host country and what type of work and activities they partake in. Each status carries meaning and value that vary from group to group, often leaving immigrants without control. It was routine in the 1980s for Central American immigrants in the U.S. to be denied refugee/asylee status because the U.S. government defined them as “economic”

refugees, which was not a criterion for being classified as a refugee or asylee in the U.S. Cubans were one of the few exceptions to this rule, as they were fleeing a communist government. There are also grey areas of immigrant status that place immigrants in categories of “liminal legality” (Menjívar 2006:999). These grey areas create long-term uncertainty for immigrants about their status (Menjívar 2006:999). They find themselves in limbo between one status and another. This could be the result of a deportation hearing, or a pending appeal in a prior court ruling on their status.

Economic background also influences people’s decision to immigrate and this, in turn, has a direct effect on how they adapt to the U.S. Their economic background plays a role in the choices they make about which cultural items to share with their children. An affluent city dweller will talk about different aspects of Salvadoran culture than a peasant from the rural provinces, for example. According to Sarah Mahler, “Most of my informants from rural El Salvador look back upon this life as very hard but much more rewarding than their lives in U.S. because of the strong sense of community people shared” (1995:32). Portes and Rumbaut state that the key difference among different immigrant communities is whether or not the majority of immigrants are laborers or professionals (2006:95). Cordova argues that sometimes, immigrants who can speak English before they arrive are more likely to have been professionals in El Salvador and continue to work as professionals in the U.S. (2005:106). Each of those authors reinforces the importance of the former socio-economic status of immigrants. The way immigrants speak about their home culture depends on several factors, including:

- (1) The history of the immigrant first generation, including the human capital brought by immigrant parents and the context of their reception;
- (2) the

differential pace of acculturation among parents and children, including development of language gaps between them, and its bearing on normative integration and family cohesiveness; (3) the cultural and economic barriers confronted by second-generation youth in their quest for successful adaptation; and (4) the family and community resources for confronting those barriers [Portes and Rumbaut 2006:6].

What occupation(s) the parents have, how quickly each generation learns English, the barriers the second generation encounters in their adaptation to a new culture, and how family members assist the younger generation to cope with these barriers all affect how immigrants assimilate into the host culture. How the generations communicate and confront issues is very important, especially with respect to language issues. If the first generation is not able to assist the second generation due to their lack of fluency in English, this can leave both generations frustrated.

Immigration, by definition, includes both leaving one area and entering into another (Hagan 1995:31). Hagan found that many of her informants missed how polite and caring people were in El Salvador (1995:32). Neighbors would help neighbors and doors were always open to visitors. These memories are clearly romanticized, yet they are important because this is the image that people will project to their children. This relates to a sense of shared values and norms in El Salvador. These memories go beyond the push and pull factors emphasized by some scholars and underline the importance of passing memories and sentiments of culture on to the second generation.

An immigrant family's settlement pattern in the U.S. is very important. Hagan states that "the presence of more than a thousand kin and friends from the same home town or from neighboring departments eases the cultural adjustments and promotes a sense of belonging among the immigrants" (1994:21). Often, immigrants employ the

technique of surrounding themselves with family in their host country, which results in migratory chains such that one person leaves the villages, settles somewhere in the U.S., and sends for his or her family to join them. In time, this spreads and soon the new town in the U.S. is full of immigrants who are related to each other, forming a chain of immigration. This can result in what is known as an ethnic enclave. Mahler also concludes that Salvadorans on Long Island have formed migratory chains that link villages in El Salvador to new villages and clusters on Long Island (1995a:20 and 1995b:104).

In subsequent chapters, I examine whether or not the high concentration of Salvadorans in Prince William County has made it easier for Salvadorans to adjust to life in the U.S. I look at how migratory chains link villages in the home country to the receiving country in my case study families. I looked at how the presence of other Salvadorans affected the transitions each of the families went through. The families all came to the U.S. because they already had relatives there who helped them with everything, from finding work, and a place to live. When immigrants form enclaves they tend not to expand into other areas of American culture and the first- generation often does not need to learn English (Ong 2003:169-171). This can lead to tension between living in the relative safety and comfort of an ethnic enclave and the drawbacks of being constantly surrounded by fellow immigrants which may impede learning and practicing English and incorporating the cultural practices of their new homeland.

The issue of legality and citizenship also plays a role in how Salvadoran immigrants pass on their “home” culture to their children. Susan Coutin points out that in

order to understand why people choose to leave their country, one must understand the history of the country (2000:14). For most Salvadoran immigrants, the civil war in El Salvador was the principal catalyst for their departure. Coutin notes that the civil war in El Salvador did not have a specific start date (2000:14). In fact, Salvadorans describe the war as the escalation of violence and repression that eventually caused many to leave (Coutin 2000:14). The civil war led to economic devastation that was acutely felt by many people (Mahler 1995:42). Many of the immigrants who left during the civil war did so with the intention of coming back to El Salvador once the war was over and the country stabilized (Coutin 2000:15). Because of this assumption, many Salvadorans had no legal status in the U.S. and were without legal papers and had little reason to obtain papers at first (Coutin2000:15, Mahler 1995:47, Cordova 2005:45-52). However, the Immigrant Reform and Control Act (IRCA), passed in 1986, made it harder for undocumented immigrants to find work (Coutin 2000:16).

IRCA included three main requirements. It mandated that employers report their employees' immigration status, making it illegal to hire or recruit undocumented immigrants (Cordova 2005:45-47). It also legalized certain types of seasonal agricultural jobs held by immigrants (Cordova 2005:45-47). Finally, it legalized the status of immigrants who entered the U.S. before January 1, 1982 and had lived in the U.S. continuously, provided that they pay a fine and back taxes, and admitted they had broken the law by living undocumented (Cordova 2005:45-47). When IRCA was passed in 1986, the civil war in El Salvador was not over yet, and those Salvadorans who did not have papers certainly did not wish to go back to their war-torn country (Coutin 2000:16). In

the early 1990's, the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) was established, which allowed immigrants, including Salvadorans, who had been in the U.S. since September of 1990 a way to stay in the country (Ertill 2009:28). Later, the ruling in the court case of *American Baptist Church v Thornburgh* (ABC) allowed immigrants who had arrived before September 1990 to receive a new asylum interview (Cordova 2005:49-50). These three programs formed a path to citizenship that some Salvadorans could follow. However, the larger issue that many Salvadorans struggled with is that they left a war-torn country where they were victimized with the expectation that they would be protected by the U.S., only to encounter stiff resistance to their efforts to become citizens (Rodriguez 2001:387-388).

Citizenship works both ways. In 2000, the government of El Salvador noted that one in four Salvadorans was living abroad, with over 90 percent of those citizens living abroad residing in the U.S. (Coutin 2007:7). It is difficult to establish the total number of Salvadorans living in the U.S. because many are undocumented and therefore unlikely to be counted (Cordova 2005:72). Many Salvadorans remember an idealized El Salvador that does not exist, a feeling shared by many exiles (Coutin 2007:9, Hamilton and Stoltz Chinchilla 2001:176). Nora Hamilton and Norma Stoltz Chinchilla found that when they asked Salvadoran immigrants about their memories they would often speak about the lack of stress and the tranquility of life in El Salvador when they were young before the civil war (2001:176). They also commented on the sense of community and solidarity of living in El Salvador (Hamilton and Stoltz Chinchilla 2001:176). Hamilton and Stoltz Chinchilla also state that many adult Salvadoran immigrants still “retain strong emotional

and cultural attachments to their home country” (2001:177). Beyond the memories, “Citizenship as legal status—who the state recognizes as a citizen and the formal basis for the rights and responsibilities of the individual in the state—shapes the immigrants’ membership in society and their understandings of their place in it” (Menjivar 2006:1003). An immigrant’s status in a country can heavily influence their participation level in their new society. Leo Chavez states that undocumented immigrants often emigrate to join other family members abroad or to look for better paying jobs (Chavez 1997:37). The desire to reunite with family is very strong among many immigrant groups.

Legality and citizenship are intertwined with family. Having family in the U.S. can be a big incentive for someone in El Salvador to leave, and it is a factor in chain migrations. One of the Salvadoran men Chavez spoke with stated that he originally made the decision to immigrate to the U.S. because the civil war in El Salvador made it impossible to find work and he had family in the U.S. (Chavez 1997:40). However, not all Salvadorans were able to take advantage of the earlier citizenship paths even with family already in the U.S., and recent immigrants are not currently eligible for any of the paths outlined by ICRA. This can result in a legal uncertainty with respect to their status that can last for years (Menjivar 2006:1008). Each first-generation member of the families went through or is going through the process of becoming citizens. They all fled the war in their homeland and came to the U.S. because other family members were already there.

Family and citizenship are both connected to language. Why is language integral to understanding cultural transmission? Portes and Rumbaut write that “language defines the limits of communities and nations and leads to bounded national identities and ethnic solidarities” (2001:113). Furthermore, language can either unite or divide a household, based on fluency in a native tongue in each generation living at home (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:301, Thompson 2007:141). If the first generation is not fluent or as fluent as the second in English, it can lead to tensions between generations (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:301). Often, tensions develop when children are asked to translate for their parents. This translation often occurs to people in authority, for example the children translate what a teacher, or doctor or government official is saying. This inverts the parent/child authority relationship.

Ong found this to be true in her work among Cambodian immigrants in California (Ong 2003:169). Ong found that many first-generation immigrants never learned English and depended heavily on their children to navigate American culture (Ong 2003:169). Furthermore, children often struggle to learn the first generation’s language, which increases the tensions felt by both generations (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:301). Ong states that “to teenagers, the parents’ home culture did not seem to have much relevance to their desires and problems” (2003:169). Parents also may feel that their children are becoming too Americanized and losing touch with the first generation’s culture and roots (Ong 2003:169). Children feel that they are unable to ask their parents for help with their homework and other issues and tasks, for example (Ong 2003:170). This breakdown in communications is what Portes and Rumbaut describe as dissonant acculturation (Portes

and Rumbaut 2006:308). The fluency of the first generation, according to Portes and Rumbaut, is what will determine the type of cultural confrontation that takes place (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:308).

The language spoken at home and the fluency of both generations is one key to understanding how culture is transmitted between generations. All three modes of acculturation feature language in one way or another. The importance of language as it relates to cultural transmission is highlighted in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which states that language affects the way its speaker see their world (Barnard 200:108-109).

Rosemary Salomone found that language defines people and allows people to transmit their familial and cultural values to others (2010:95). Robin Lakoff takes this one step further when he states that language is how people construct and analyze reality (2001:20). He also observes that language is how “we construct and understand ourselves as individuals, as coherent creatures, and also as members of cultural a cohesive unit” (Lakoff 2001:21). Language is central to understanding a culture and its values.

Furthermore, language is a big part of how people identify themselves and others. Gabriel Thompson wrote about the life of immigrants in New York, mainly Mexicans who were undocumented. In Thompson’s book, *Enrique*, Thompson’s main informant is worried by some Mexicans who choose to educate their children in English (Thompson 2007:135).

To Enrique, this is a bad idea; the ability to speak Spanish identifies Enrique as a Mexican-American. In his opinion, the second generation can and should speak Spanish fluently because it connects them to their parent’s homeland.

Many scholars discuss the liminality of border crossings (Duran 2007:126, Meeks 2007:88, Smith 2006:44 and Stephens 2007:9-19). Chavez writes that the border represents a chasm that must be crossed and that it is more than just a physical barrier (1997:45). Crossing the border between Mexico and the U.S. is a journey fraught with dangers and liminality often analogous to traversing a war zone (Duran 2007:126). Crossing the border is a harrowing experience that most immigrants never want to do again (Abrego 2011:350-351). Crossing the border is the beginning of the transition that immigrants go through. Every person who crosses the border without papers is changed through the experience, just as a person who goes to war comes back altered by that experience (Pribilsky 2007:167). The US-Mexican border is the last official border that many Central Americans cross; however this hardly guarantees their incorporation into American society (Chavez 1997:65). Chavez writes that incorporation is:

a process marked by a series of experiences, such as finding a job, forming a family, learning the local culture, establishing contacts with family and friends in the area, learning English, and moving from undocumented status to legal residency [Chavez 1997:65].

Children are a very important link between the new society and the old society (Chavez 1997:177). Children absorb aspects of both American culture and their parents' culture, creating a hybrid system of beliefs and practices as well as values and norms (Chavez 1997:179-180). Parents notice that their children are blending two cultures together and, in turn, they become part of this process (Chavez 1997:180). This idea differs slightly from Portes and Rumbaut, but in reality there are multiple processes taking place. These processes are very complex and diverse. In addition to the physical border, there are other borders that immigrants cross all the time. Code switching takes place as immigrants

learn a new language as a kind of navigation of boundaries between Spanish and English. As immigrants interact with their new host culture, they also cross cultural borders.

There are many theories about the four different areas that I examine in this thesis. These four areas interact with and influence each other. Strong family ties resulted in trips back home for my families, as they did for Thompson's informants (Thompson 2007:140). As Coutin points out, remittances may also create economic ties to the motherland (Coutin 2007:7). Coutin states that "migrant remittances are credited with enabling El Salvador to stabilize its economy and remain solvent in the postwar years" (2007:7). What she does not examine is how those remittances affect those in the U.S. Parents may want to give everything they have to their children, to provide a better life for them, but is this at the cost of ignoring what they may consider to be their familial obligations in El Salvador? How does this affect their child and their perception of Salvadoran culture? Does the mother tongue of the first generation create a stronger bond between the parents and children? Does the citizenship status of the parents affect the children? Is the generational transmission of culture a relationship that changes as the child gets older or is it a lived experience of transmission that changes with age? These questions concerning cultural transmission between first- and second-generation Salvadorans are best addressed by examining the ways family, language, citizenship, and border lives structure in a complex fashion in this process.

Methods

I used several different research methods to build on and gather the theoretical and ethnographic research in my thesis. I looked at how the four different aspects of

intergenerational communication played a role in the transference of Salvadoran culture to the second generation children. Most of my research was qualitative and highly contextualized, which allowed me to gain the most insight into the daily life of my participants. I visited the houses of all three families as a participant-observer. I observed how the first generation incorporates their home culture in their daily activities with their children. I paid close attention to the language that the first generation uses with each other and with the second generation. I noticed in which situations a particular language was used. I recorded the foods that the first generations served to their children; as well as how they celebrated different holidays that occurred during the research period (birthdays, Independence Day (U.S.) and anniversaries). I noticed what types of media are consumed in the house, what TV channels the children watched either by choice or what was played for them, in what language the media was broadcast, and what the parents watched with the children. As an observer, I noted micro-interactions that might otherwise go unnoticed, that contributed to how the first generation transferred their home culture to the second generation. I conducted my research with my wife and daughter. The presence of my family allowed me to observe how the children in my study interacted with my daughter, a native English speaker. The presence of my wife and daughter also allowed me to observe gender differences in interactions, which otherwise I might have not seen. I was able to conduct my participant-observation on different days of the week and at different times of the day in order to see possible variations in familial routines. These variations, of course, were partly the result of my presence.

In addition to using participant observation, I was able to use one of my participant's photographic accounts of her first trip back to El Salvador with her children. She had not been back to El Salvador in almost twenty years. It was also the first time her children visited the country and met relatives who stayed in El Salvador. She kept a photographic record of her trip and permitted me to use the photos as a part of my analysis (see Chapter 4). Both of her daughters also took pictures of their first visit back to El Salvador, so I was able compare and contrast the photographic account of mother and daughters as viewed through their own eyes.

In addition to the photographs, I conducted one interview with each first generation member in the three families and one interview with each of the second generation members, ages five and older (two girls and two boys). The more formal setting of the interview allowed me to ask direct questions about the intergenerational transfer of culture. The interviews were held in both English and Spanish. I asked each of first generation members general questions about their background, family, Salvadoran culture, and about the language(s) they speak. I examined what part of El Salvador the first generation informants were from, and what memories they retained from El Salvador. By asking about their extended family, I found out that they still had family in El Salvador and that they still maintained contact with family members in El Salvador. With respect to language, I directly addressed what language(s) were spoken at home and why one or both languages were used and in what proportion to compare the results observed. I was able to better understand what the parents' thoughts were about language

and get some sense of children's fluency in Spanish and/or English. Finally, I asked questions about the cultural practices of the first generation.

When I interviewed the second generation, I varied the length of the interviews. The older members of the second generation were able to answer more complex questions than their younger counterparts. I asked questions to see what the second generation thought about El Salvador. I also asked about the language(s) the second generation spoke at home, what language they spoke with their friends, what type of foods they preferred to eat, and if they had ever been back to El Salvador. By asking similar questions of the first and second generation, I was able to compare their answers to better understand the transfer of Salvadoran culture to second generation. I followed up with additional informal interview sessions for clarification once I reviewed the data from the initial interviews.

I worked with my participants over the course of seven months. I conducted the interviews in July, August and September of 2013. I conducted participant observation from April to December of the same year.

The participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and photographic evidence allowed me to evaluate existing theories with respect to cultural transmission between first- and second-generation immigrants. I noted whether or not my informants demonstrated behavior and practices as laid out in these theories and, if not, why not? Could I ascertain the reasons or variables to explain why my participants did not conform to existing theoretical explanations or models? I was able to see several variables that

may explain the deviation, including the length of time spent in the U.S., chain migration, and local economic opportunities.

Analysis and Structure of this Thesis

The following chapter will examine El Salvador before, during, and after the civil war. It will include an overview of El Salvador, geographically, historically, and economically. I will also examine the seminal moments leading up to the civil war, key points of the war, and what “peace” looks like in the country today. The history of El Salvador, as well as the geographic and economic makeup, forms a significant backdrop to the portrait of the families. I then look at Prince William County itself, its recent history and its transformation from a primarily rural county, to an economically and culturally diverse suburban area. All three of the families live and work in Prince William County. El Salvador is their natal land, but Prince William County is where they are raising their families. Chapter Three will introduce the three families and tell their personal story, including the reasons they left El Salvador and what their lives are like in the U.S. Chapter Four addresses legality/citizenship, language and transborder lives. This chapter includes an analysis of the photos from the trip to El Salvador. The focus of Chapter Four is a re-examination of literature on family, border lives and language in light of the actual lives of the three families. In Chapter Five I discuss my overall findings and suggest other potential areas of study.

CHAPTER 2 EL SALVADOR, THE WAR, AND PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY

A review of El Salvador, its history, and the history of Prince William County provides the context for understanding the first and second generations' interactions. El Salvador is the home country of the first generation and the history of that country has shaped them in many nuanced ways. Each family member has said that, if not for the civil war, they would not have left their country. However, the civil war in El Salvador could not have happened if not for certain conditions with a long history, that were unfolding in El Salvador. Initially, none of the first generation wanted to leave El Salvador. Although the war has ended, none of the first generation now wants to move back to El Salvador. They prefer to remain in the U.S.

El Salvador

El Salvador is the smallest and most densely populated non-island nation in Latin America (White 2009:1). It is comparable to the size and density of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (White 2009:1). Yet the country is very poor, with a per capita income of \$4,900 (White 2009:1). Geographically speaking, there are over 20 volcanoes in El Salvador, the land is very rugged, and most of it is not well-suited for farming (White 2009:1). The landscape includes lush jungles, sandy beaches, and jagged peaks. Like

most tropical countries, it has two seasons, wet and dry. Due to the infrastructure and soil composition, the torrential rains in the wet season often erode roads, especially in the countryside (White 2009:3). The roads tend to be unpaved, making a washout even more likely. Despite the jungle terrain, the country has experienced vast deforestation due to long periods of human activity, demand for land, and fuel for fires (White 2009:3-4). El Salvador sits on top of three tectonic plates, which has resulted in very strong earthquakes over the years (<http://earthquake.usgs.gov>). Between earthquakes, floods and volcanoes, the country is not as hospitable as it might appear. Administratively, El Salvador is divided into fourteen departments: Ahuachapán, Cabañas, Chalatenango, Cuscatlán, La Libertad, La Paz, Morazán, San Miguel, San Salvador, San Vicente, Santa Ana, Sonsonate and Usulután.

Pre-War

Coutin argues that in order to comprehend why immigrants leave their home country, you have to first understand the history of their homeland (2000:14). Christopher White notes that “the road to the civil war in El Salvador is a chronology of desperation” (2009:91). In the six decades before the civil war, there were five military coups (Uclés 1996:12). Since its founding as an independent country, El Salvador never experienced a long peaceful period. However, despite all of the political turmoil, the economy of El Salvador continued to grow at a staggering pace after World War II. In fact, the gross domestic product increased by a factor of six between the 1940’s up the 1980’s (Uclés 1996:13). This was a huge increase for a small country. Although the GDP increased at a dramatic rate, the Salvadoran economy was still based on agriculture, with coffee as the

dominant cash crop (Uclés 1996:13). Furthermore, all of the staggering economic growth did not lead to more opportunities for the lower classes. Instead, the landed elite consolidated their control of the country, economically and politically (Uclés 1996:13).

In 1961, around 12 percent of rural families were landless; this figure increased to 29 percent in 1971, and jumped to 40 percent by 1975 (Uclés 1996:13). Fewer and fewer people owned land, translating to an unequal distribution of land and wealth. The city did not provide any relief either. Pre-civil war, a young, growing, urban population found little opportunity for economic success (Uclés 1996:13). In fact, the overall income inequality before the civil war meant that 63 percent of Salvadorans earned less than 28 percent of the total income in the country (Uclés 1996:13). The vast majority of people were very poor. Just over five percent of the rich land owners controlled over 57 percent of the wealth in El Salvador (Montgomery 1995:69). This amounted to 14 extended families (Montgomery 1995:69). The high concentration of land and money in the hands of so few people was a major contributing factor to the civil war. The end result was an increasingly hostile environment. In the late 1970's,

El Salvador was buffeted by a rising spiral of mass demonstrations and protests, government repression, left-wing kidnappings, occupations of public hearings, labor strikes and death squad murders [Montgomery 1995:73].

Mahler notes that death squads began forming to squash dissidents as early as the 1970's (1995:35-36). The economic and political unease led to the bloodiest conflict the country had ever seen, a dramatic juxtaposition to the idyllic version of El Salvador that many first generation immigrants cherish as a memory.

Civil War

The civil war in El Salvador, like most conflicts, did not start on a specific date. Instead, many describe it as an escalation of violence (Coutin 2000:14). Most scholars put the start of the war sometime in the late 1970's to early 1980's (Montgomery 1995:151, White 2009:95 and Uclés 1996:41). In 1979, "death squads" were officially formed and sanctioned by the right-leaning military government (Cordova 2005:12). In 1980, the Archbishop of San Salvador, Monsignor Oscar Romero, was assassinated while saying mass (White 2009:99). By 1981, the violence had reached a point where whole villages were routinely being terrorized and mass graves were the norm (White 2009:95). The year culminated with the massacre at El Mozote, where over 900 unarmed civilians were killed by the military (White 2009:101). This was the largest massacre of the entire war, but it was by no means an anomaly. According to a close friend of one of my informants, the government believed that by killing an entire village, they would send a clear message to the rebels. However, the government's action at El Mozote had the opposite fact, galvanizing the guerrillas. By 1982, a full civil war gripped El Salvador. By 1982, over 4,400 people had been killed and some 1,000 had disappeared (Montgomery 1995:171). This number continued to climb higher and higher as the fighting intensified. The entire decade was marked by the continued escalation of violence (Cordova 2005:14).

The war had many participants but the two main players in the war were the right-wing, military-led government and the left-leaning guerrillas. The right-leaning government of El Salvador received substantial backing from the U.S. government (Cordova 2005:14). The government of the United States supported the Salvadoran

government because they feared that if the left-leaning rebels won, a communist state would form in El Salvador (Cordova 2005:14). This was at the height of the Cold War, and the U.S. was supporting several other right leaning governments in the region (Cordova 2005:14). The largest group fighting against the Salvadoran government forces was the *Frente Farabundo Marti de la Liberación Nacional* or FMLN (Coutin 2000:76). The FMLN was actually a coalition of groups whose members held different political viewpoints. It was not a unified party. The coalition members were sometimes at odds with each other, both in their rhetoric and theoretical/political position and in practice (White 2009:105). In fact, in 1982, a top female FMLN leader was killed by other FMLN members due to her stance on certain issues (White 2009:105). Despite this, the FMLN was the main group that fought against the Salvadoran government.

The Salvadoran government was financed by the landed elites and the U.S. government. During the 1980's the U.S. government supplied over four billion dollars in aid to El Salvador to ensure the status quo was preserved (Cordova 2005:14). At the same time, the guerrillas were trying to address the vast differences in wealth and political power in the country (Coutin 2000:77). The government took the stance that anyone suspected of supporting the rebels had to be killed (Coutin 2000:77). This scorched earth policy in the early eighties led to a number of massacres that killed hundreds of people in various parts of El Salvador, including the Mozote massacre (Cordova 2005:14). In 1984, the ranks of the FMLN had swelled to over 12,000 members in a country of only five million people (White 2009:105). This was due in part to the forced recruitment of young boys in the countryside (White 2009:105). By 1988, the war was no longer confined to

the rural departments; the war had spread all the way to the capital of San Salvador (Cordova 2005:15). The push by the FMLN to take control of the capital led the government to start an indiscriminate bombing campaign, targeting working class neighborhoods and resulting in the killing and wounding of hundreds of civilians (Cordova 2005:16). By 1989, it was clear that the war was nearing a stalemate. Despite this, atrocities were still occurring; in 1989, six Jesuits, their housekeeper, and the housekeeper's daughter were slaughtered by the same military outfit that annihilated the village of El Mozote (White 2009:107-108). When the war finally ground to a halt, more than 80,000 people had lost their lives (Cordova 2005:17). Many of the deceased were noncombatants. Both the FMLN and the military were responsible for the killing of civilians as well as those that simply disappeared.

After the War

In addition to the killing of civilians in the civil war, the economic devastation was acute. Many people lost their way of life due to the war (Mahler 1995:42). As both sides moved through the countryside, they took whatever they needed for the war effort. This often meant livestock, farming equipment and harvested crops were taken away from the people that had worked so hard to obtain them in the first place. It also meant that many young men were conscripted either to the FLMN or the army as the war moved from village to village. The end result of the war was a breakdown in the social fabric of El Salvador (Cordova 2005:17). During the war, no one knew who to trust or what the truth was anymore. Neighbors would report other neighbors to whatever side was more convenient, sometimes to settle personal scores or simply out of fear for their lives

(Cordova 2005:17). Furthermore, after the peace accords, many of the death squad members and FMLN rebels went to the countryside and set up small fiefdoms (Cordova 2005:18). This resulted in the formation of gangs, mainly composed of former FLMN and army personal, that were financed through criminal activities and local businessmen who wanted to retain their hold on the local economy (Cordova 2005:18).

Many of the immigrants who left during the civil war did so with the intention of coming back to El Salvador once the war was over and the country stabilized (Coutin 2000:15). After all, they had only left because of the war; El Salvador was still their home. However, the end of the war did not bring an end to violence. Instead, violent gangs formed, forcing more Salvadorans out of their still violent and turbulent country (Coutin 2000:16). This continued violence has also affected the economy of El Salvador, depressing the job market, and pushing people to look elsewhere for employment (Cordova 2005:58). For many Salvadorans, the most promising economic possibilities were in the U.S. None of the second generation in my thesis have a desire to live in El Salvador. María has been back several times to El Salvador with her mother Ana. However, whenever they are in San Salvador, María does not leave the house by herself. Recently, one of her aunts who lives in San Salvador was mugged at knife-point just around the corner from the house María and her mother stay at when they visit.

In order to reach the U.S., Salvadorans travelled great distances through several countries, and crossed three major rivers (Mahler 1995:47). All of the first generation undertook this journey. Most of these immigrants undertook their journey without papers, especially since it was a long and expensive process to obtain a visa or citizenship in the

U.S. (Mahler 1995:47). The first generation in my study all crossed into the U.S. without papers. Salvadorans chose the U.S. over other countries because they were looking for security and economic opportunities (Mahler 1995:46). Nicaragua and Guatemala were out of the question as they were also experiencing their own upheavals during and after the Salvadoran civil war (Mahler 1995:46). Honduras was also a high-risk because many Salvadorans had previously been expelled for not having a visa; furthermore, there was little economic opportunity in Honduras. Mexico's economy was depressed as well during this time period (Mahler 1995:46). Although the U.S. was the best and closest opportunity, the U.S. government was supporting the right-leaning government of El Salvador in order to fight the perceived threat of Communism in Latin America (Coutin 2000:14). This meant that the Salvadoran immigrants fleeing the brutal civil war were defined as economic immigrants and could not receive official permission or papers, to settle in the U.S. (Coutin 2000:14). Their lack of legal recognition in the U.S. did not matter to most immigrants until the passage of the Immigrant Reform and Control Act (IRCA) in 1986. ICRA made it much harder for immigrants to find work in the U.S. (Coutin 2000:16).

Once Salvadoran immigrants arrived in the U.S., they had to decide where to settle. Los Angeles and New York City were the two easiest choices, as they were already the home of immigrants from many countries. Texas was also high on the list of many Salvadoran immigrants. It was close to the border, many other Hispanic populations had settled there, and Spanish was widely spoken. However, Washington, D.C. and its surrounding suburbs also drew its significant share of Salvadoran immigrants

because jobs, including construction, retail and office jobs, were widely available and other Hispanics were present.

The two tables below demonstrate the official census number for Hispanic's in the U.S. and in Prince William County, Virginia. These numbers demonstrate how strong the Salvadoran presence is in Prince William County and how that compares to their total, nation-wide presence. Salvadorans represent the fourth largest Hispanic or Latino type in the United States, with over 1.6 million Salvadorans living in the U.S. In Prince William County, Salvadorans represent, by far, the largest Hispanic or Latino type, with over 27,000 calling the county home.

2010 Census Summary – United States	Number	Percent
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Total population	308,745,538	100.0
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	50,477,594	16.3
Not Hispanic or Latino	258,267,944	83.7
HISPANIC OR LATINO BY TYPE		
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	50,477,594	16.3
Mexican	31,798,258	10.3
Puerto Rican	4,623,716	1.5
Cuban	1,785,547	0.6
Dominican (Dominican Republic)	1,414,703	0.5
Central American (excludes Mexican)	3,998,280	1.3
Costa Rican	126,418	0.0
Guatemalan	1,044,209	0.3
Honduran	633,401	0.2
Nicaraguan	348,202	0.1
Panamanian	165,456	0.1
Salvadoran	1,648,968	0.5
Other Central American	31,626	0.0
South American	2,769,434	0.9

Argentinean	224,952	0.1
Bolivian	99,210	0.0
Chilean	126,810	0.0
Colombian	908,734	0.3
Ecuadorian	564,631	0.2
Paraguayan	20,023	0.0
Peruvian	531,358	0.2
Uruguayan	56,884	0.0
Venezuelan	215,023	0.1
Other South American	21,809	0.0
Other Hispanic or Latino	4,087,656	1.3
Spaniard	635,253	0.2
Spanish	455,157	0.1
Spanish American	35,346	0.0
All other Hispanic or Latino	2,961,900	1.0

Table 1. U.S. Hispanic or Latino Population

2010 Census Summary - Prince William County	Number	Percent
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Total population	402,002	100.0
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	81,460	20.3
Not Hispanic or Latino	320,542	79.7
HISPANIC OR LATINO BY TYPE		
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	81,460	20.3
Mexican	14,908	3.7
Puerto Rican	7,037	1.8
Cuban	866	0.2
Dominican (Dominican Republic)	1,167	0.3
Central American (excludes Mexican)	38,155	9.5
Costa Rican	251	0.1
Guatemalan	4,495	1.1
Honduran	3,721	0.9
Nicaraguan	1,301	0.3
Panamanian	866	0.2
Salvadoran	27,269	6.8
Other Central American	252	0.1

South American	10,732	2.7
Argentinean	490	0.1
Bolivian	2,747	0.7
Chilean	365	0.1
Colombian	1,452	0.4
Ecuadorian	744	0.2
Paraguayan	58	0.0
Peruvian	4,068	1.0
Uruguayan	219	0.1
Venezuelan	471	0.1
Other South American	118	0.0
Other Hispanic or Latino	8,595	2.1
Spaniard	755	0.2
Spanish	814	0.2
Spanish American	89	0.0
All other Hispanic or Latino	6,937	1.7

Table 2. Prince William County Hispanic or Latino Population

Prince William County, Virginia

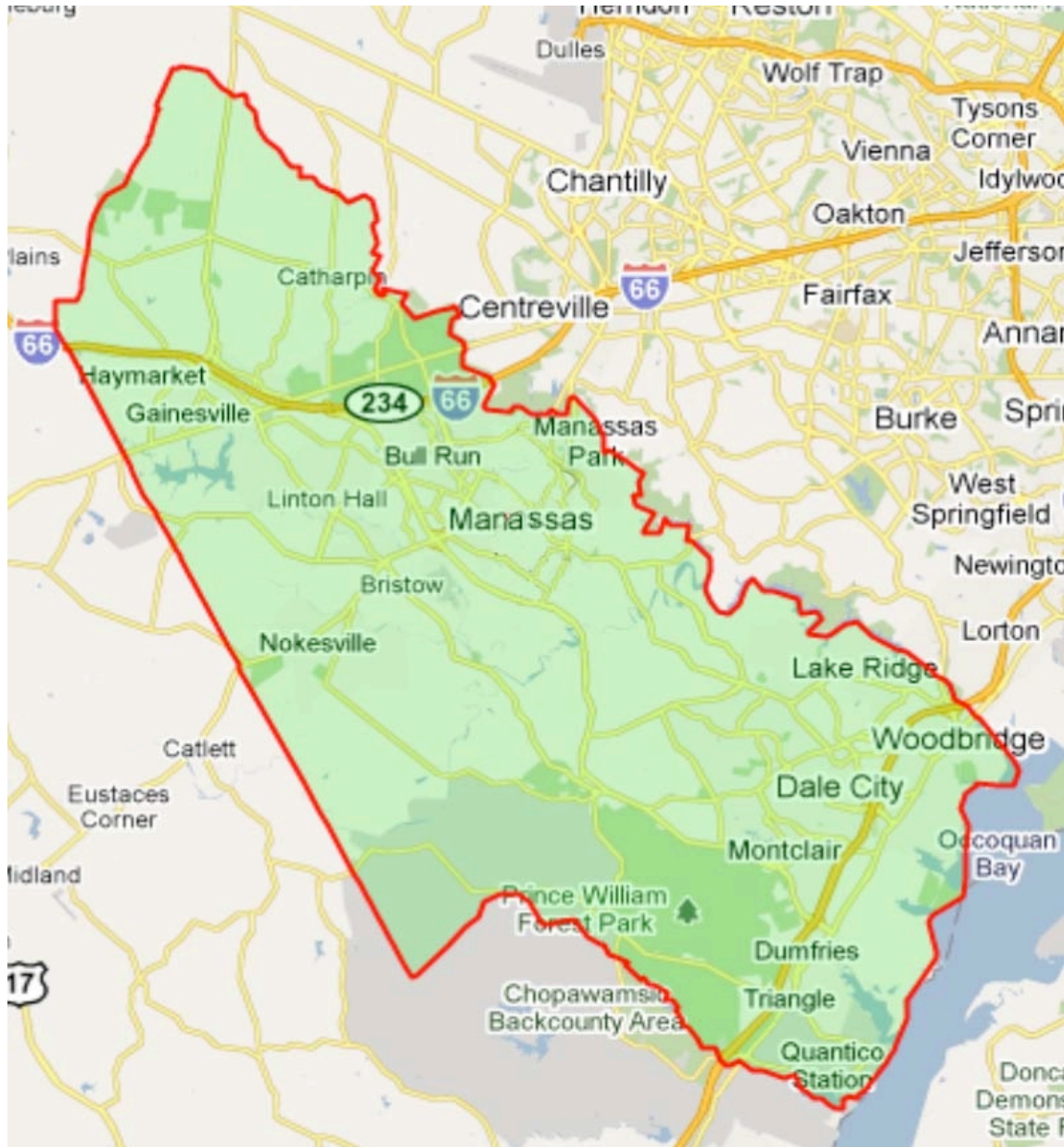


Figure 1. Prince William County

Prince William County is located in the Commonwealth of Virginia, about thirty miles south of Washington D.C. It is bordered on the east by the Potomac River, to the south by Stafford County, to the west by Fauquier County, and to the north by both Fairfax and Loudoun Counties. The County itself is older than the U.S.; it was formed by an act of the General Assembly in 1731 (Curtis 2006:6-8).

Prince William County is included in an area that is colloquially referred to as Northern Virginia. Northern Virginia currently has a population of over 2.4 million people, but this was not always the case (Keating and Morello 2011:1-2). Despite being so close to Washington D.C., Prince William County had many farms and small towns until after World War II, when the entire Washington D.C. area experienced slow population growth. In the 1980s, what had been slow population growth became an explosion (Buske 2011:1-2). In the last ten years, the population of the county grew forty percent, officially increasing to over 400,000 people (Buske 2011:1-2). The 2010 census marked the first time that the county became a majority-minority county, meaning that racial and ethnic minorities outnumbered non-minorities (Buske 2011:1-2). Furthermore, most of the county is young with almost a third of the populace being under eighteen (Buske 2011:1-2). Twenty percent of the population is Hispanic according to the census (Buske 2011:1-2). The reported number is perhaps lower than the actual number as the Prince William Board of County Supervisors required the police to check the immigration status of anyone arrested (Buske 2011:1-2). This caused many immigrants to leave the county. Some left for neighboring counties, like Fairfax, Montgomery and Prince George's County, other's left the area completely.

Most residents of Prince William County live at the east and western ends of the county. Woodbridge, where my informants live and work, is on the eastern end and includes the Route One and Interstate 95 corridors, both of which run north to south and connect the county to Washington D.C. Woodbridge is home to several large pockets of Salvadorans. Manassas is the other major population center in the county. It sits on the north-western side of the county, with Interstate 66 cutting through it from east to west. I-66 also connects Manassas to the inner suburbs and extends to Washington D.C. Manassas also has several large pockets of Salvadorans, many concentrated around the core of Manassas and Manassas Park. In between these two areas are various subdivisions, some newer than others. Farms are still found in the county, mainly in the central and southwestern parts, known as the rural crescent. These areas are not connected to any major transportation routes but are also slowly being subdivided as well. Quantico Marine Corp Base anchors the southeastern edge of the county with Prince William Forest abutting the Base.

Economically speaking, Woodbridge is home to Potomac Mills, a large retail shopping center that employs over a thousand people. Many of the store employees are Salvadorans, and there are several restaurants around the mall that exclusively serve Salvadoran food. Due to the size of Potomac Mills, it is a major economic powerhouse in the county. There are over two hundred stores at the Mall with thousands of visitors per week, including large tour groups. Wal-Mart and Sam's Club, two large retailers are on the border of Potomac Mills, and there are host of other large retail shops including Target, Best Buy, Shopper's, Bed Bath and Beyond, within one mile of Potomac Mills.

There are many other shopping centers and employers in the county, including the local government, nonprofits and manufacturing. A drive down Route One reveals many small shops, most with Spanish names like Doña Tere's, La Roca Pupusería Taquería, Don Alberto's Charcoal Chicken and, Pupusería Doña Azuceña. These shops are highly visible and cater to Hispanics in general. The same is true for many parts of Manassas. All over the county there are many small strip malls that contain small corner stores staffed by Salvadorans. In fact, small businesses throughout the county are owned and operated by Salvadorans. They also almost exclusively cater to Salvadorans.

Is Woodbridge an enclave?

Ethnic enclaves are areas of concentrated immigrant entrepreneurship (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:28). Immigrants own and work at the majority of the businesses in a given geographic area. Enclaves emerge based on three factors: numerous immigrants with business experience, access to capital, and access to labor (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:28). Immigrants who form the core of an enclave have some business experience, and the monetary means as well as the connections necessary to start and run a business. The core immigrants in an enclave often come from the middle or upper class. When the businesses first begin, the labor for the store is usually drawn from family members (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:28). Ethnic enclaves further are defined as:

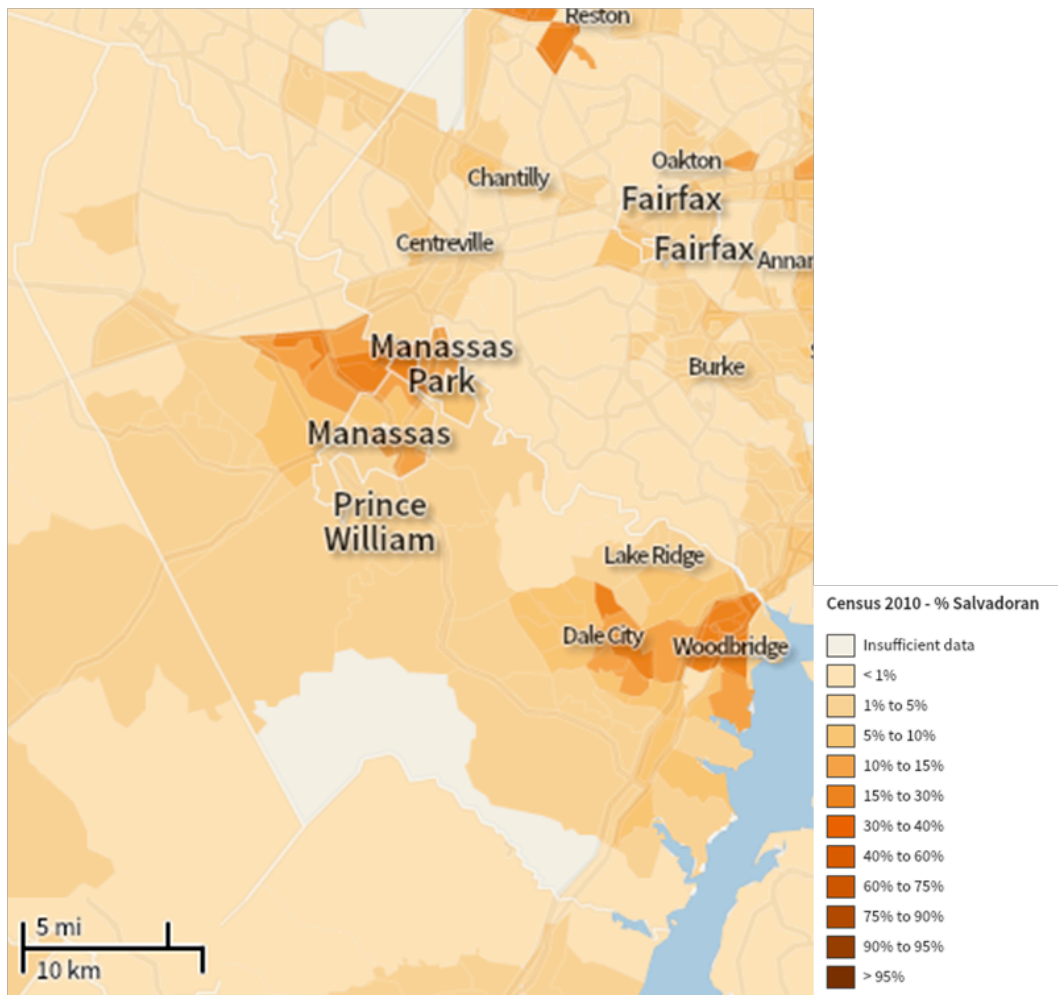
A segmented sector of the larger economy, a partially autonomous enclave economic structure constituting a distinct labor market... [it] is structured in a way similar to the larger economy, but it functions to support ethnic businesses, and to help them compete more successfully in the larger economic system. With the existence of such an alternative, immigrants do not necessarily start from the secondary economy or the lowest rung of the societal ladder. Instead they organize themselves to trade exclusively or primarily within the enclave [Zhou 1992:4].

Ethnic enclaves are cut off figuratively and literally from the larger population that surrounds them. These borders may be social and physical. Enclave residents have few reasons to go outside the enclaves boundaries. They live, work and play in a community that is set off from the surrounding neighborhoods. This does not mean they do not travel outside the enclave at all, but rather on a daily basis they have little incentive to leave the enclave because their needs are met within it. This social isolation helps the people living in enclaves as well as the businesses that call the enclave home. People who live in the enclave work and spend their money within the enclave. However in the long run, this is not always beneficial to enclave residents. Because of this, they are less likely to learn the host country's language or culture. In fact, many first generation parents often struggle to learn the new language or never learn it well enough to fend for themselves and must rely on their children to translate for them on the rare occasion they do go outside the confines of the enclave.

On the other hand, enclaves offer a social and economic mobility and comfort that would not otherwise be available to those living outside of it (Mahler 1995:12).

Jacqueline Hagan states that "the presence of more than a thousand kin and friends from the same home town or from neighboring cantons eases the cultural adjustments and promotes a sense of belonging among the immigrants" (1994:21). The enclave community acts as a magnet, and immigrants who live in enclaves are able to better adjust to live in a new country because the people, the language, and customs surrounding them are not foreign to them. At a certain point, an enclave becomes self-sustaining, continuing to draw new immigrants in because of what it can offer to them.

Portes and Rumbaut note that modest but tight-knit immigrant communities have some of the best access to resources (Portes and Rumbaut 2001:65). Surrounding oneself with family is common, and immigrants often employ this technique for several reasons, including access to family resources. This leads to the formation of migratory chains. When one person leaves the village, settles somewhere in the U.S. and sends for his or her family to join them; this catalyzes the formation of an ethnic enclave. In time, the news spreads and soon the new town in the U.S. is full of immigrants who are related to each other thus forming a chain of migration. Immigration to the U.S. is a social process in which family, hometown, ethnicity and ties to the community all play a role. Together, they facilitate the relocation process as well as enabling an adjustment to a new country of residence (Cordova 2005:78). Carlos Cordova states that an enclave “allows immigrants to receive legal, educational, immigration, medical, dental, accounting, income tax consulting, counseling, employment training and referrals, food services and others” (Cordova 2005:110).



Figure

2. Salvadoran Population in Prince William County

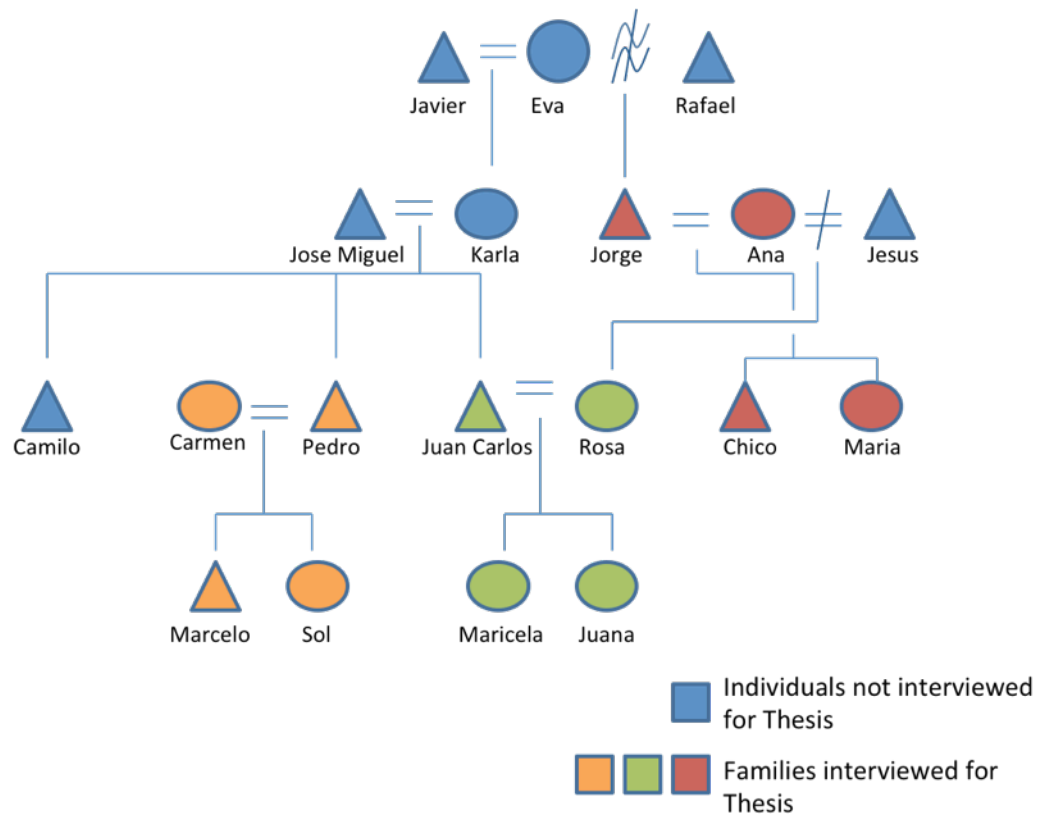
Despite the presence of thousands of immigrants, and many immigrant owned businesses, Prince William County nevertheless does not fit into the classical definition of an ethnic enclave; although it has many similarities to an ethnic enclave. Instead, it borrows ideas from the classic definition, and discards others, in the process forming a new type of enclave. The Salvadoran population is clustered alongside other ethnicities, in what Marie Price and Audrey Singer refer to as an “edge gateway” (2008:8).

Immigrants were draw to the suburbs due to the availability of “housing, transportation,

jobs, goods and services” (Price and Singer 2008:6-7). For example, it is possible to live and work in the county without speaking English, but that is true for people who speak Farsi or Spanish, among other languages. According to my families, there are plenty of Salvadoran-owned businesses in the county. Furthermore, many of these shops employ Salvadorans as well. However, none of the first generation works for other co-ethnics. This fits into the idea of an Edge Gateway (Price and Singer 2008:9). Salvadoran food is easy to find, and many of the restaurants that serve traditional Salvadoran fare are frequented by my informants. Several migratory chains can be found, linking villages in El Salvador to Prince William County. There are many Salvadorans in the county. At the same time, however, many other ethnicities have also settled in the county. The county covers a much larger area than other enclaves, which spreads the total population out and increases the amount of external interaction. The first and second generation family members all know English and according to them, all of their extended family and friends in the county do as well. Also, my informants do not work for other Salvadorans, and most of their colleagues are not Salvadoran either. Hence, the county is not a classical enclave; rather it is forming a new hybrid, shaped by the large geographic area, politics and businesses in the county. There are large pockets of Salvadorans in the county, especially along the I-95 and Route One corridors in Woodbridge, as well as downtown Manassas and Manassas Park. Although there are thousands of Salvadorans living in these pockets, they do move in and out of these communities for work, school and leisure activities. It has its own distinct integrative and interaction spheres that do not conform

to the isolationism associated with classical enclaves and it more closely resembles an Edge Gateway.

CHAPTER 3 THE FAMILIES



I have changed all the names of the families I worked with and their relatives and friends referenced in my thesis to protect their identity.

Figure 3. Family Tree

I worked with three families. All of them shared a common relative, Eva. She is either: mother, grandmother, or great-grandmother to the participants in my work. Eva's

two children, Karla and Jorge, are half siblings and represent the first division in the family tree. Jorge is married to Ana, and their two children, Chico and María, represent Family 1. They are one of the nuclear families that I worked with and they are marked in red in the chart above. Ana was previously married to Jesús, and their child, Rosa, is the mother of the second family that I worked with. Family 2 consists of Rosa who is married to Juan Carlos and together they have two daughters, Maricela and Juana. Family 2 is marked in green. Juan Carlos is also the nephew to Jorge from Family 1 because he, Juan Carlos, is the son of Karla and José Miguel. Through his marriage to Rosa, Juan Carlos is also the son-in-law to Jorge and Ana. Family 3 consists of Pedro, Carmen and their two children Marcelo and Sol. Pedro is Juan Carlos's older brother. Family 3 is marked in orange. Marcelo (Family 3), Sol (Family 3), Maricela (Family 2) and Juana (Family 2) are paternal cousins. Pedro (Family 3) and Juan Carlos (Family 2) are nephews to Jorge (Family 1) and Ana (Family 1). Juan Carlos (Family 2) is also the brother-in-law (marriage) and first cousin (consanguine) to Chico (Family 1) and María (Family 1). Maricela (Family 2) and Juana (Family 2) are therefore first cousins-once-removed to Chico (Family 1) and María (Family 2) through their father and also nieces to Chico and María through their maternal line. These intertwined relationships are not uncommon according to families, with many Salvadorans being related on both sides (maternal and paternal). This happens in both the U.S. and El Salvador, but it becoming more common in the U.S. as Salvadorans tend settle where other Salvadorans already live. All three families currently live in Prince William County. The first generation arrived in the U.S. in the late eighties and early nineties; all of the families left El Salvador due to the war.

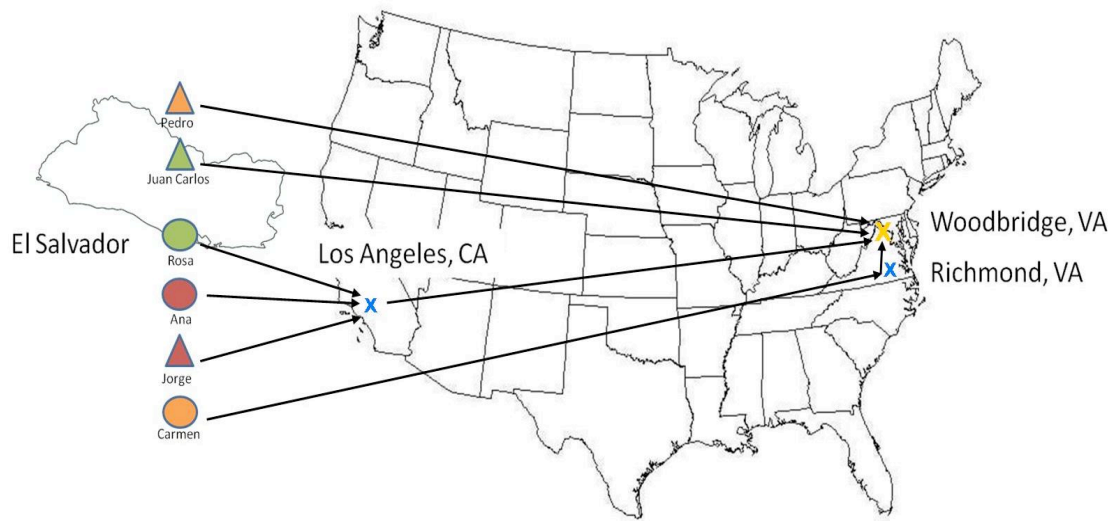


Figure 4. Path to the United States

Rosa (Family 2) is in her thirties and lives in Prince William County with her husband Juan Carlos (Family 2). They have two children together: Maricela, age five, and Juana, age three. Juan Carlos came to the U.S. because the FLMN was recruiting near his home town. Juan Carlos's mother was worried that the FLMN would forcibly recruit Juan Carlos and make him fight in the war. The government had already tried to conscript him earlier that year and his mother paid a bribe to prevent the government from taking him away to fight. Juan Carlos's oldest brother, Camilo, was already in Prince William County at the time and working in the construction industry. His mother sent Juan Carlos to live with his brother in the U.S. in order to prevent him from being recruited by the FLMN. She would have rather had her child thousands of miles away than fighting for either side in the brutal conflict. Rosa came to the U.S. a few years later, also at the request of family, in this case, her mother, who preceded her. Among her immediate

relatives, Ana (Family 1) left El Salvador first; she and Jorge (Family 1) had been living together since Rosa (Family 2) was a young child. Ana settled in Los Angeles and sent for Jorge after a few months. Rosa followed two years after that. All three lived in Los Angeles when they first arrived. Chico (Family 1) was born in Los Angeles shortly after Rosa arrived. Ana and Jorge then heard that there was work in Prince William County from Jorge's nephews. The three brothers (Camilo, Juan Carlos and Pedro) paid for Jorge to come out to Virginia. They also helped him find a job, and once he had worked for a few months, he sent for Ana, Rosa and Chico to come live with him. Carmen (Family 3) arrived in Virginia at the request of her father, who had been living in Richmond, Virginia for many years. She also left El Salvador to escape the war and because she had family already in the U.S.

The six adults in the first generation are between thirty-five and sixty-five years old. They all lived through part of the civil war. Rosa (Family 2), Ana (Family 1), and Jorge (Family 1) are from the Santa Ana area of El Salvador. Santa Ana is in the Northwest corner of El Salvador. Juan Carlos (Family 2), Pedro (Family 3) and Carmen (Family 3) are from the opposite side of the country; they are from the La Unión area, on the border with Honduras. All of the adults grew up in small villages and their families worked the land, but did not own it. Jorge (Family 1) lived and worked in San Salvador as an adult. Ana (Family 1) would work in the city during the week, at a garment factory, and return to her village on the weekends. This meant that Rosa (Family 2) was raised mostly by her maternal aunts. Pedro (Family 3) and Juan Carlos (Family 2), along with their six siblings, were raised by their parents, along with their six siblings. The area that

the brothers came from was much more fertile; fruit was abundant, and the river provided fish as well as fresh water. The river where they fished and played formed the border between El Salvador and Honduras. The boy's paternal grandfather lived across the river. By their account, it was a care-free life. They would often play in the river or take trips to visit their grandfather.

The children that comprise the second generation range in ages from three to 21. Each family has two children in the second generation, and all of the second generation members were born in the U.S. Of the six children, only Chico (Family 1) was not born in Prince William County. Chico is currently attending a community college and has been accepted to a four year college. He has been working in various retail jobs since he was sixteen. Marcelo (Family 3), María (Family 1), Sol (Family 3), and Maricela (Family 2) all attend public school in the county. Juana (Family 2) is not yet old enough to attend school, and is dropped off daily at the babysitter by either her mom or dad. Each of the children speaks English and Spanish fluently. Rosa's baby sitter is a Bolivian woman whom she has known for several years. Rosa and Juan Carlos would prefer to have family watch Juana, and are trying to bring one of Rosa's cousins from El Salvador for this purpose. However, they like Juana's babysitter and have no complaints about her. They also like that the babysitter speaks Spanish to Juana and feel that it helps Juana to hear Spanish both at daycare and at home, even if the accent is different.

Ana (Family 1) works at a local retail center. She has worked there for the last fourteen years. She arrived in the U.S. before Jorge (Family 1) and Rosa (Family 2). She was not legally married to Jorge until they arrived in the U.S. Jorge has worked in the

auto industry for the last fifteen years. In El Salvador he received a Master's degree. Ana and Jorge met in El Salvador when they lived in the same apartment building in San Salvador. Both have done shift work since they arrived in the U.S. They live in an area of Woodbridge, with a high concentration of Salvadorans. Their house is small; it is a Cape Cod style house that is common in the area. It has a large, fenced backyard and a walk out basement. They have a lot of family pictures and other mementos from El Salvador on the wall and on shelves. Chico and María live there with them. Rosa (Family 2) lived in the house as well before she married Juan Carlos (Family 2). Before Ana's family bought their current house, they lived in an apartment along the Route One corridor in Woodbridge, Virginia. In addition to the house in Virginia, Ana and Jorge own a house in San Salvador. They have owned that house for many years and when they go back to visit, they stay there. Ana and Jorge are in the middle class in the U.S. but in El Salvador they are considered upper middle class due to their jobs in the U.S. Ana and Jorge are the oldest members of the first generation. They are both in their sixties. They experienced the war in a very different manner due to their age. They also have clear memories about before the war. When they are not in the country, a family member maintains it. Ana and Jorge try to return to El Salvador once every two years, but it is expensive to make the trip, especially when they bring their two children. When they do go, they stay for at least a week and sometimes as long as month. They want to go back more often, but only to visit.

Ana was married to Jesús, Rosa's father in El Salvador. She left him when Rosa was very young, in part because he denied the paternity of Rosa. Ever since Rosa was

five, Ana and Jorge have lived together. Both of Rosa's children refer to him as grandfather. They call him grandfather because, according to Rosa, he fulfills that role. He likes to get them small gifts and spend time with them. It was not until July of 2013 that Maricela and Juana met their biological grandfather. Rosa was very nervous about this because she did not know how her biological father would react. When Ana was pregnant with Rosa, he denied he was the father. Jesús said that because Rosa was born a month early, but was the size of a full term infant, he could not be the father. Furthermore, when Ana was pregnant, Jesús took Ana to a clinic for a "pre-natal visit". However, he had asked one of the nurses at the clinic to terminate the pregnancy without telling Ana. However, another nurse intervened. At this point, Ana left him. However, Jesús was the administrator at the school that Rosa attended, so Rosa still saw him occasionally.

Ana (Family 1) does all of the shopping, cleaning and cooking for her household. She prefers to cook Salvadoran food, and speaks mostly Spanish to her children. Chico (Family 1) will reply to his mother and father in English, regardless of what language they speak to him. He speaks Spanish fluently, and switches between the two languages easily. María (Family 1) will reply in whatever language the person who is speaking with her uses. They both love their mother's cooking, especially her papusas. She makes papusas every few months and does several varieties, usually meat and cheese, cheese, and occasionally squash and cheese. When she does make them, it is often for a family or church event. She makes them outside, and the family gathers around to talk, relax, and eat her freshly made papusas. Jorge (Family 1) also prefers to speak Spanish to his (step)

children, wife and grandchildren. He does not cook, but eats whatever his wife makes for him. He works a lot of hours, and often comes home exhausted from a long day of work. Chico and Rosa were well behaved children according to Ana, but María often acts out. Ana says that she is very strong-willed, much like Jorge. Jorge said that when he was younger, he often acted out. On one occasion, his mother punished him by tying him upside down to a tree and lighting some corn husks on fire underneath him. He as positioned high enough to avoid being hurt, but the punishment worked and he was much better behaved after that. He feels that it is harder to be a parent in the U.S. because he could never punish María in a similar fashion.

Rosa (Family 2) and Juan Carlos (Family 2) live in a much larger house. They live in a newer neighborhood in the middle of Prince William County. It was a new construction when they bought the house. None of their neighbors are Salvadoran, and very few are Hispanic. Like her mother, Rosa does the shopping, cleaning, and cooking. Unlike her mother, Rosa has a white-collar, desk job and works from 9am-5pm Monday through Friday. Rosa prefers to make Salvadoran food, but also makes American food like hot dogs, hamburgers, and pre-made frozen food such as taquitos. Rosa almost always serves homemade corn tortillas with the meals she makes. She also enjoys her mother's cooking and says her mother is a much better cook. In fact, Rosa does not make her own papusas, but rather assists her mother. Rosa says Ana's papusas are so much better than her own. Recently, Rosa made her first trip back to El Salvador since her migration to the U.S. as a teenager. She went with Ana (Family 1), Jorge (Family 1), María (Family 1), Maricela (Family 2), and Juana (Family 2). It was her children's first

trip to El Salvador. Juan Carlos (Family 2) has been back twice since he arrived and he owns a house in his village. His sister lives there, and takes care of it for him. Juan Carlos likes to grill any meat they may have, and he prefers to eat Salvadoran food as well. In the summer, he often grills meat on a gas grill after he has marinated it for several hours. When they have company over, either family or friends, he will do several different cuts of meat to go with whatever his wife is serving. He works in construction and has been with the same company for years. He works with his brother Pedro, and they are the only Hispanic people on the entire crew. Their work is both seasonal and hourly and shift work. They are also in the middle class in the U.S. They earn enough to afford their mortgage and take the occasional trip to El Salvador. They also take vacations within the U.S. Both Rosa and Juan Carlos speak English and Spanish as do their children. In general, the adults almost always address each other in Spanish, and switch between the two languages with their children. All four family members mix the two languages together, into “Spanglish”.

Pedro (Family 3) and Carmen (Family 3) live in between the other two families. They are in an older neighborhood as well. Carmen and Pedro work opposite shifts so that someone is always home when their children are home. The result of their schedule means that there are few times when the entire family is home together, yet both adults agree that it is an acceptable arrangement in order to spend time with the children. They want to be as involved as their children’s lives as possible and are very interested in their academic success. Carmen lived in Richmond, Virginia when she first arrived in the U.S. Her father, Luis, arrived decades before her and lived in Richmond the entire time he was

in the U.S. He returned to El Salvador several years ago and died from a heart attack. His death is one of the reasons Carmen and Pedro have no desire to return home. They said that he died from a heart attack because the roads were so poor and the hospital was so far away. Both Carmen and Pedro are from the same village in El Salvador and have known each other for most of their lives. They did not start dating until they were both in the U.S. Just six months after they reconnected in Richmond, they married. Carmen loves to cook, and she takes great pride in her ability to cook traditional Salvadoran fare for her family. Sol especially loves her mother's cooking. Carmen was very pleased to hear that my daughter ate all the soup Carmen had made during one of our visits. She said it was good that my daughter liked to try foods from other cultures, and would gladly make more soup for her anytime. Sol said she was not surprised that my daughter liked it because her mother's cooking was so good. Carmen and Pedro speak both Spanish and English, but prefer to speak in Spanish with each other and their children. They take a great interest in the academic success of both their children. They also have made multiple trips back to El Salvador over their years and have taken their children with them. They are also in the lower middle class in the U.S. They own their own house and take trips back to El Salvador.

All three of the first generation mothers shop for the best deals when it comes to food and household goods. They have always budget their money and seek to take advantage of coupons and sales as much as possible. They also utilize both outlet and thrift stores and clothing exchanges with friends. Each mother does most of the child rearing and household work, in addition to working full time jobs. Chico (Family 1) and

Marcelo (Family 3), who are both old enough to work, do work. They contribute to their household income, but also keep some for themselves. The men of the first generation all work full time. They are hourly employees who work. Jorge (Family 1) works in the auto servicing industry, whereas Pedro (Family 3) and Juan Carlos (Family 2) work on the same construction crew. Pedro (Family 3) and Juan Carlos (Family 2) both said they make every effort to balance work and family commitments.

Between Two Worlds

Portes and Rumbaut define consonant acculturation as taking place when the first and second generations learn the host language and culture at the same pace (2006:307). Both generations adjust at the same rate with respect to cultural fluency. None of the three families fit this model. For example, Juan Carlos and Rosa have lived and worked in the U.S. many years before having children. They learned the culture and language long before their children were born. Ana and Jorge's children are much older and neither Ana nor Jorge have learned the host language or culture as well as their children. On the other end of acculturation spectrum is dissonant acculturation.

Dissonant acculturation takes place when the second generation masters the language and culture of a host country much faster than their parents (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:308). This often results in family conflict and diminished parental authority (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:308). Traditional relationships of power and authority are upended, often leaving parents powerless and confused. Both Ana's family and Carmen's family fit this model at first glance. Their children clearly have mastered the language and culture much faster than the first generation. Nevertheless, in the

interviews and observations, I did not see any trace of resentment or intergenerational conflict. The children listened to their parents and seemed to respect their positions of power. The parents know how their children are doing in school, and are involved in their children's lives in general. Carmen and Pedro have made the choice to sacrifice togetherness in order to ensure they spend time with their children. They want to be close to their children and know what is going on in their children's lives. Ana works odd shifts, but she will often take María over to Rosa's house so that María is not home alone. Ana (Family 1), Jorge (Family 1), Carmen (Family 3) and Pedro (Family 3) all understand English to some degree and have some familiarity with American culture. They know what musicians, T.V. shows and movies are popular in the U.S. They also have been living in the U.S. for some time, Rosa (Family 2), Carmen (Family 3), and Juan Carlos (Family 2) all went to high school in Virginia. These first generation parents are able to continue to assert their authority because they have made a conscious effort to remain active in their children's life and asserting their authority as parents when needed.

Selective acculturation is the third type of acculturation defined by Portes and Rumbaut. In this paradigm, the second generation exhibits fluent bilingualism in the language and culture (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:308). The children are a part of both cultures, home and host, at the same time, whether or not the parents are. Additionally, the second generation internalizes the values and expectations of the home culture of their parents (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:308-309). In this way, the traditional power dynamic is preserved between the first and second generation. Again, this one type of acculturation would seem to fit all three families. However, that is not necessarily the

case. All six of the children are, in fact, fluent in English and Spanish. But the young age of three of the children makes it difficult to discern if they respect their parent's values or not. María (Family 1) is barely a teenager. She is very close to her mother and respects her father. However, both her parents work a lot and she is often left with her half-sister Rosa (Family 2) and Rosa's children, or with her friends at the mall. Her older brother Chico (Family 1) is now in college. Most of his life he was raised by other family friends or his older sister Rosa. He prefers to speak in English, and will reply to his parents' requests in English. He does not self-identify as Salvadoran, but rather he says is he just an American. Marcelo (Family 3) prefers to speak in Spanish, most of his friends are Salvadoran; and he considers himself to be American, with no qualifications.

None of the three types of cultural confrontation fully applies to the three families. In fact, the issue that I am looking at is how one culture is passed on while living in another, separate culture, which implies an interaction both between the generations and the cultures. To this end, none of the three types fully incorporate both the first and second generation as they each navigate *both* cultures. This is the key to the dynamic that I am examining. Both generations are a part of both cultures, and therefore move between each culture daily. When the children go to school, or are with family or friends, they move in between each culture. All of the first generation interacts with both cultures daily as well. They all have American co-workers and most have American managers as well. When the women are out shopping for food or household items, they interact with American as well as Salvadorans. Furthermore, host and home cultures interact with each other and with individuals from both generations. The two cultures

push and pull, exerting influence on each other. Salvadoran food may be served alongside American soda. Maricela (Family 2) and Juana (Family 2) may be watching a movie in English, only to be interrupted by their father's request in Spanish to come eat dinner. Maricela and Juana would be playing with each other and they would switch between English and Spanish a half dozen times. The home culture is projected by the parents in their everyday interactions; it is by no means passive. However, the host culture also shapes the values and behavior of both generations. Projected acculturation is perhaps a better way to describe the interactions between generations and the cultures. Salvadoran culture is projected by the first generation against the backdrop of American culture, which is also being projected onto the children and their first generation parents.

Each first generation member decides, on a daily basis and in their own way, what they want to pass on. They teach their children about their home culture through their actions and words. It can be as simple as what meals each of the first generation prepare. Or what restaurant they visit. Do they buy Salvadoran *queso fresco* or the Mexican version? Do they make the traditional food such as *papusas*, or serve something else? What radio station is on in the car? Do they allow their children to watch movies in English or Spanish? Do they ask their children to only speak Spanish in the house? What types of decorations are in the house? For the younger children, are the movies and TV shows they watch in English or Spanish? What language are the books in? Do their toys speak in English or Spanish? Each of these small decisions and facts tells the children something about what it means to be Salvadoran. Each family is teaching the second generation about El Salvador every day and each individual does it in their own way. For

example, Carmen prefers to cook only traditional Salvadoran food. Ana also prefers to make traditional food, but does like to go to McDonald's. María (Family 1), Maricela (Family 2), and Juana (Family 2) all watch television and movies only in English. All of Maricela and Juana's toys speak or sing in English. Rosa did not have any Salvadoran decorations in her house before her trip to El Salvador. She did bring several pieces of Salvadoran art back with her. What the children do or do not absorb in these examples is a complex and nuanced issue. One child may fully reject the home culture in favor of the host culture, but that does not mean the first generation failed, or that conflict will result. That child's sibling may choose to adopt both cultures, becoming fluent in host and home cultures. Given that the parents also project the culture, they exert some control over the choices their children make. Their personal history and economic means play important roles in how they interact with their children.

All six of the first generation are employed, with each working at least forty hours a week. Ana (Family 1), Jorge (Family 1), Carmen (Family 3), Pedro (Family 3), and Juan Carlos (Family 2) work blue collar jobs. Rosa (Family 2) is the exception, but she is no more educated than her family members. In fact, her husband has an Associate's Degree. Rosa has a high school diploma. Her step-father has a Master's degree from El Salvador, yet does shift work servicing cars. All six first generation members know English, but Rosa and Juan Carlos are much more comfortable in English than the other four adults. Ana (Family 1) is currently taking English classes, which she has done occasionally for the last ten years. In reality, Juan Carlos (Family 2) and Rosa (Family 2) have many more opportunities to practice English than the other adults in their daily

lives. Rosa works in a leasing office with predominantly monolingual English speakers. Juan Carlos works with his brother, but all the other members of the construction crew speak only English. They are also the youngest, and Juan Carlos has been in the U.S. the longest. They have had more time to practice English. The three couples have assimilated or adapted to various degrees to life in the U.S. But they are still Salvadoran, and remained tied to the mother land. Their extended families are still in El Salvador. Ana and Jorge as well as Juan Carlos maintain a house in El Salvador. All the families are projecting their natal Salvadoran culture onto their children. Rosa brought back several pieces of art from El Salvador from her trip. She had two small clay figures of a torogoz, the national bird of El Salvador. She also had bought a large ceramic bowl of fruit.

Journey's End

Juan Carlos was the first person among the families to arrive in Prince William County. At the behest of his mother and in order to escape the war, Juan Carlos crossed the border with a *coyote* and made his way to Prince William County to live and work with his brother. When Juan Carlos first arrived in the U.S., he started attending high school and also worked construction with his brother in his free time. None of the teachers spoke Spanish, and Juan Carlos barely spoke any English. He took several ESL classes, but he did not understand most of what was going on around him. When teachers would pass out pop quizzes in class, he would not fill them out or hand them back. Instead he would pocket them and leave the class. When the graded tests were being handed back, his teachers would ask what happened to his. They remembered him attending class, but did not receive his completed quiz. He simply did not understand

enough English to complete the quizzes and he did not understand why he had to complete them. He did not have any friends to ask for guidance or help. His lack of fluency worked against him at work as well as school. One weekend, he was riding up to a work site with the foreman. They started arguing about the wages that Juan Carlos was owed. The foreman insisted that he was owed much less than Juan Carlos had agreed to work for. Their argument continued until they arrived at the work site. At that point the foreman said that if Juan Carlos was so upset that he should just quit on the spot. Juan Carlos, being young and hot tempered, did just that. He had no idea where he was and no idea how to get home. And, he did not speak English. He started walking down the highway, not knowing where he was going. He came to a 7-11 about a mile away and stepped inside. The only phone number he knew was his brother's number, but, he could not speak enough English to ask for the change he needed to make the call. Eventually, someone came into the store who spoke Spanish and gave him the money to place the call. Juan Carlos called his brother Camilo, but could not explain where he was. He told his brother he was at a 7-11, and his brother laughed, saying that did not help and he needed more details. Juan Carlos was finally able to describe the area well enough that his brother realized he was by Dulles International Airport, over thirty miles from home. His brother arrived several hours later to pick him up. Camilo then told Juan Carlos that he was not going to let him work anymore, and that from now on Juan Carlos needed to go to school full time and learn English before he could work again. If Juan Carlos were to walk into a 7-11 today, he could easily communicate with most of the people inside, in either English or Spanish. In fact, in many neighborhoods, the odds are he could get a

ride anywhere from a complete stranger. Salvadorans currently represent the largest group of Spanish speakers in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. There are more Spanish speakers, native and non-native, who call the greater Washington D.C. area home now. Salvadorans can now easily find someone who speaks their native language.

To reiterate, Ana (Family 1) was the first of her immediate family to arrive in the U.S. She came to escape the violence as well. She was in San Salvador when the FLMN pushed into the city, and that is when she decided she needed to leave the country. Jorge followed her a year later. Rosa (Family 2) followed two years after that. Rosa lived in Los Angeles for just under a year before coming to Prince William County. Jorge (Family 1) and Ana (Family 1) had trouble finding good paying jobs and a safe neighborhood to live in while they lived in Los Angeles and wanted to move to a better area of the country. Jorge reached out to his three nephews living in Virginia to ask about job prospects in that part of the country. His nephews encouraged him to move out to the Virginia area, and even sent funds for him to buy an airplane ticket. Jorge (Family 1) did not use the funds to move. Instead he spent it elsewhere. Juan Carlos (Family 2) and Pedro (Family 3) never found out what he used the money on. A month later, he reached out again, apologized for not flying out, but told his nephews he was still interested in moving. They sent more money to their uncle. Again, Jorge did not arrive as expected. Another month passed, and he asked a third time. Juan Carlos said they would send money once more, but if he failed to come, they would not be able to send any more of their hard earned money to him for the trip. Juan Carlos was very frustrated at this point because his uncle would not say how the money was spent. He wanted his uncle to come

live in Virginia, but he was unwilling to help if Jorge was not really interested in following through. Jorge did arrive, and found a job. After a few months passed, he sent for Ana, Rosa and Chico to come to Virginia. Ana quickly found a job and started working as well. Rosa transferred schools, but had a harder time in Virginia than in Los Angeles because so few people spoke Spanish. In Los Angeles Rosa had been surrounded by other native Spanish speakers, some Salvadorans, but also Mexicans, Nicaraguans, and Guatemalans. That was not the case in Prince William County. There were only a handful of other Spanish speakers in her class.

Pedro (Family 3) arrived in the U.S. shortly after Juan Carlos (Family 2). They lived together with their oldest brother Camilo. They all worked for the same company, and lived in a small, one bedroom apartment. Juan Carlos (Family 2) went to school and worked, whereas Pedro (Family 3) and Camilo worked full time. Carmen (Family 3) lived in Richmond when she first arrived. Carmen's father, Luis, had arrived over a decade before any of the other family members. Luis married an American woman and obtained citizenship through her. In this way, he was able to sponsor and pay for each of his children's trips to the U.S. Carmen lived with her father until she married Pedro. They then moved to Woodbridge. They met because Juan Carlos (Family 2) had heard that some people from their village were living in Richmond and Juan Carlos wanted to learn of news from home. He made the drive down one weekend with a cousin. The next time he visited Carmen's family, he brought Pedro with him. Pedro and Carmen met each other, began dating, and eventually they married.

Hagan (1994:21) notes that kin and friends from back home make it easier for immigrants to adjust to a new country and to fit in. Immigrants often employ migratory chains, with one person leaving a village and then sending for kin. Eventually the chain can lead to a high concentration of people from the same part of the home country. Mahler notes that this is what happened on Long Island, where most of the people are from the same villages (1995:20 and 1995b:104). According to the families with which I worked, Camilo, the eldest brother of Juan Carlos and Pedro was one of the first Salvadorans to come to Prince William County. He came because the company for which he worked moved to the Northern Virginia area. He, in turn, paid for both of his brothers to come and join him. This also led to Jorge and his family coming to Virginia. Both Pedro and Juan Carlos believe that Camilo is the reason that most Salvadorans have come to Prince William County. Camilo is definitely the reason each of the families I worked with are in the county. In turn Juan Carlos (Family 2), Pedro (Family 3), Jorge (Family 1), Rosa (Family 2), Ana (Family 1), and Carmen (Family 3) have all helped other family members come to the county. The civil war is the principal reason that many Salvadorans left El Salvador. In short, if not for Camilo and the civil war, Prince William County would not be home to the sizeable Salvadoran population that it has today.

The three families are interrelated, a standard feature in many enclave communities. They all have their reasons for coming to the U.S., but every single first generation member was touched by the civil war in some way. Juan Carlos (Family 2) was almost recruited by both sides; Ana (Family 1) witnessed the bloody battle in San Salvador. Rosa (Family 2) still remembers seeing bullet holes in the sides of houses in

her village. The families ended up living in Prince William County because Camilo's company moved and Camilo went with it. He was the first in the migratory chain that spanned thousands of miles, linking El Salvador to Prince William County. Today, although the county is a mere thirty miles from the Embassy of El Salvador, the Salvadoran government has established a Consulate in Woodbridge, in part due to the sheer number of its citizens now residing there.

CHAPTER 4 PASSING IT ON

As I have demonstrated in the previous chapter, family is complex. It includes complicated kinship ties, whereby the members of different families can be related to each via both paternal and maternal links. Although ideas around chain migration appear to be straightforward, in practice, they are not. Each first generation was also touched by the civil war affecting how and what they choose to share with their children. The daily interactions between the first generation and the second are intricate. The different theories I use to frame this thesis do not fully explain the transfer of culture between them. Neither do my observations. It is only when theory and participant observation are combined that a fuller picture emerges.

Legality/Citizenship

When IRCA was passed in 1986, the civil war in El Salvador was in full swing. Furthermore, the date of January 1, 1982 meant that most Salvadoran immigrants did not qualify under the Act. The war was just beginning in the first part of 1982 and most immigrants did not leave right away. Nevertheless Juan Carlos (Family 2), Pedro (Family 3), and Carmen (Family 3) were able to qualify for this path to citizenship. Although the

law was passed twenty-seven years ago and they qualified for citizenship under it, Juan Carlos only received his citizenship in 2008. Pedro became a citizen in October of 2013, and Carmen was granted citizenship in August of 2013. They each spent thousands of dollars to go through this process, paying different attorneys, legal advisors, and advocates and it took decades. They are happy to have their citizenship, but acknowledge how the process itself was very long and expensive.

The second way Salvadorans could become citizens was through Temporary Protected Status (TPS) which was established for El Salvador in the early 1990's. TPS permitted immigrants who had arrived prior to September 1990 to stay in the country (Ertill 2009:28). TPS was established because the situation in El Salvador was deemed to be dangerous for nationals to return to (Ertill 2009:29). This applied to more Salvadorans, as many left in the late 80's, after the FLMN pushed into San Salvador. Rosa (Family 2) currently qualifies for citizenship under TPS. She also has a work permit, which allows her to work in the U.S., but both her TPS and work permit must be regularly renewed. She has to renew her work permit every 18 months. Furthermore, Rosa has to get special permission to leave the country. She would have been able to become a permanent resident much earlier, had she been a little younger when she arrived with her mother, Ana. However, because she turned 21 before Ana was able to qualify as resident, Rosa became an asylee. Four years ago, she received TPS. She took a trip back to El Salvador in the summer of 2013 in order to speed up the process of becoming a citizen. Since she had entered the U.S. originally without papers, and she now had TPS and a work permit, she was told if she went to El Salvador and returned through customs, it would speed up

her application for permanent residency. By entering the U.S. with all the correct stamps on her passport, she would be able to apply for her permanent residency and the odds of it being approved would increase. She was worried that despite going through all the required steps and having the required paperwork, that she would not be allowed to return to the U.S.

The final major way for Salvadorans to stay in U.S. is through the ruling in the court case of *American Baptist Church v Thornburgh* (ABC). This landmark case allowed immigrants who had arrived prior to September 1990 to receive a new asylum interview (Cordova 2005:49-50). This meant that people who were being processed for deportation could delay and perhaps overturn the process if they had been in the United States for a given length of time. This did not provide a path to citizenship per se, but it did provide a reprieve and a second chance for immigrants to plead their case that they would be put to death if they returned to their home country. Many Salvadorans left under cover of darkness for fear that their neighbors would report them to the FLMN or the military. Their lives were, in fact, in danger, but the U.S. immigration policy defined them as economic immigrants, so Salvadorans who claimed asylum had to prove that they really would be killed if they returned.

The sheer number of Salvadorans living in the United State is hard to determine. Many undocumented Salvadorans are unlikely to be counted in a census (Cordova 2005:72). The government of El Salvador noted that the vast majority of Salvadorans living abroad live in the U.S. (Coutin 2007:7). Legal recognition by a host country shapes the immigrant's roles in their new society (Menjivar 2006:1003). Whether or not an

immigrant has legal documentation determines their level of participation in their host society. All of the six adults of the first generation currently have some kind of documentation. Juan Carlos, Pedro, and Carmen are citizens. Ana and Jorge are permanent residents, and took their citizenship tests in December 2013. Rosa has TPS and a work permit. Without formal citizenship their status is constrained. Rosa had to go through a lot of hoops just to show her daughters where she and their father grew up. She also fears that her status may not be renewed the next time she reapplies. Furthermore, she feels that its hard to go out and find a better paying job due to her status. All of the first generation agrees that becoming a citizen is their ultimate goal. A citizen has more rights and is able to pursue all of their dreams. They can move from job to job as they see fit, visit El Salvador for as long as they want, and, in general, enjoy much more freedom than non-citizens.

Juan Carlos has been a citizen of the U.S. since 2008. Despite this, he tells his coworkers he is undocumented. He finds humor in telling other people he does not have his citizenship and entered the country covertly. He likes to elicit a reaction from his coworkers when he tells them, incorrectly, that he is receiving many government benefits, despite not paying taxes. His coworkers often grumble that life would be easier if they too received these “benefits” and did not have to pay taxes. Yet, at the same time, Juan Carlos recognizes that the life as an undocumented immigrant is very different. He has a cousin, who does not have papers. He was arrested at his house, and detained for processing. The cousin’s wife was unable to afford the mortgage without her husband’s income, and lost the house while her husband was in custody. She had to find a place to

rent, and juggle child care and work. It was very hard for the family, but Juan Carlos has heard this type of story time and again. A few years ago, Rosa had several friends who did not have any type of recognized status. They worked shift work and had been living in Prince William County for almost a decade. Then Prince William County passed a law that required the police to check the identity of anyone who was stopped for probable cause (Borden 2012:1). Rosa remembers that many of her undocumented friends left the county, fearing that they would be arrested and deported. She also recalls that her friends who were mothers were afraid that their children would be deported, even if they had been born in the U.S. She says she knew several mothers who taped copies of their children's passports or birth certificates to the inside of their book bags in case they were detained by the police. She remembers how empty the stores and shopping centers were the weeks after the law came into effect. People were too scared to leave their homes.

The first generation thinks it is important to obtain some sort of legal paperwork. They believe that there is more opportunity to advance if they are recognized as citizens. They all believe the second generation is very blessed to not know what it is like to live without papers. If you are undocumented, you do not have the same ability to pursue your dreams. It is hard to get a credit card, attend college, find better employment, buy a car etc. Being a citizen is the gold standard in the eyes of the first generation. Rosa is working towards her citizenship, but despite being in this country for more than half her life, she only has TPS and a work permit. This means that when she attended classes at NOVA Community College, she had to pay out of state tuition. This amounts to three times more than if she were a citizen. She owns a house, works, and pays taxes in

Virginia, but because she is not a citizen, she cannot be considered a Virginia resident for tuition purposes. In contrast, the second generation does not have to think about these things. They were born into citizenship, and have never had to deal with the costs or time commitment to go through the legal process. Both Chico (Family 1) and Marcelo (Family 3) have not really thought about it, but when asked about citizenship, they do not think being a U.S. citizen is very important. They do not comprehend the struggles and worries that their parents had as noncitizens. They also have not heard much about how their parents came to the U.S. Carmen (Family 3), Pedro (Family 3), Jorge (Family 1), and Ana (Family 1) have not shared their stories of crossing the border or their early lives in the U.S. Furthermore, all of Chico and Marcelo's friends were born in the U.S. Not being a citizen is a foreign concept to the boys. Rosa (Family 2) and Juan Carlos (Family 2) understand Chico and Marcelo's reaction. Even though Rosa is currently taking steps to become a permanent resident, and feels that her current status is holding her back from securing a high paying job, she does not feel the need to share her story with the boys. In her words, they would not really understand, because they have no reason too, they have always been citizens and not having that status just does not compute. The remaining children are too young to comprehend much about citizenship.

Legality/citizenship intersects with everyday life in many different ways. It is not simply a matter of asking someone what their thoughts are on having papers. The first generation has a different story; they are older and have experienced the trip to the U.S. They know what it is like to wonder if they might be detained, to worry what would happen to their children. They all know someone that this has happened to. They have all

been or are currently going through the process to become citizens. It is an expensive and time consuming process, yet each first generation member agrees that is worth it. Not having papers is something they never want to go through again. Citizens are able to change jobs at will; they have rights and are treated as such. Yet, it is hard to talk to the second generation about this. The second generation was given their citizenship at birth, automatically receiving something their parents had to struggle to obtain. The second generation hears the stories, but does not have the same connection. Their view is very different from that of their parents.

Language

Language defines people, both at the group level and on the national stage (Portes and Rumbaut 2001:113). Language can divide people. If the second generation does not speak the native tongue of their parents, they are viewed differently by their parents and their parents' compatriots (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:301 and Thompson 2007:141). This can lead to intergenerational tension (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:301). It is not just the first generation is disappointed if the second generation is more fluent in English than Spanish. In fact, as Portes and Rumbaut pointed out, language is directly related to their ideas about the three stages of acculturation. If the second generation is asked to translate and navigate American culture on behalf of the first generation, be it for doctor's appointments, parent-teacher conferences, etc, strain is put on the parent-child dynamic (Ong 2003:169). Furthermore, if the children do not learn or use their parent's mother tongue, conflict can erupt (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:301). Parents may start to feel that their children are losing touch with their roots (Ong 2003:169). In turn, children are

unable to ask their parents for help (Ong 2003:170). In short, this is what Portes and Rumbaut describe as a consequence of dissonant acculturation.

What language is spoken by the first and second generation and when is very important to my work. The three modes of acculturation described by Portes and Rumbaut as well as projected culture all involve language. The first generation takes pride in being able to speak both Spanish and English. The second generation is much more comfortable speaking English. Chico (Family 1), Marcelo (Family 3) and María (Family 1) all said they preferred English. The boys also self-identified as American. They were perfectly comfortable in navigating American culture. Yet they also spoke to their parents in Spanish, and they moved from one cultural to the other fluidly. The younger girls also preferred English. They watched movies in English, they listened to English songs on the radio and Juana even played games on her mother's smart-phone in English.

Every member of the first generation speaks Spanish and some degree of English. Every member of the second generation speaks English and Spanish. The code switching that takes place between the two generations is very interesting. Pedro (Family 3) and Carmen (Family 3) speak only Spanish to their children and they expect their children to reply in Spanish. When I first met Marcelo (Family 3), he told me he did not speak English, even though I knew he did. His claim was made in only slightly accented English. His sister, Sol, was very willing to speak English to me. Marcelo eventually started speaking in English as we talked about his life in the U.S. He spoke to his sister in both English and Spanish, telling her what certain words were when she asked.

According to Marcelo, both he and his sister learned English via the television, specifically the show, Sesame Street. Chico (Family 1) and María (Family 1) speak fluent English. Chico says that he also learned English through watching television as a young child. He prefers to speak in English. He will reply to a query from his mother, father or really any family member in English. He says he just prefers the language, he does not really know why. He speaks to all of his friends in English, with the occasional Spanish word thrown in. He speaks in Spanish occasionally, usually with María (Family 1), Juan Carlos (Family 2) and Rosa (Family 2), but he also uses some English with them. María, his younger sister, will switch between the two languages, depending on the situation. She will respond to her family in Spanish if asked a question. She speaks to her friends in either language. María (Family 1) spends a lot of time with her nieces, Maricela (Family 2) and Juana (Family 2). She predominately speaks to them in English. Maricela speaks English more often than her younger sister. She often responds in English to questions or commands from her parents and relatives, regardless of what language they are speaking. Juana is more likely to speak in Spanish to her parents. Both girls speak to each other in Spanish and English, often using a mix of the two languages in the same sentence. They rarely spoke to me in Spanish, even when I asked them questions in Spanish. When Maricela, Juana, and my daughter were playing in the basement, Juana stubbed her toe. She came over to tell me about it, saying she hurt her *pulgarcito*. She asked me to kiss it better and then returned to play with her sister and my daughter. The only Spanish word she used during her exchange was *pulgarcito*. This was one the only times that she spoke any Spanish to me.

Rosa and Juan Carlos are comfortable speaking in either English or Spanish. Juan Carlos claims that his English is not very good, but he graduated from high school in Prince William County and obtained his Associate of Arts degree from NOVA Community College. Rosa speaks fluent English. She also learned English in the U.S., and graduated from high school in Prince William County. Her job requires her to switch between the two languages constantly. Juan Carlos works construction with his brother Pedro (Family 3). They speak Spanish to each other at work and in their personal lives. The people they work with have strong Appalachian accents that Rosa has a hard time understanding them. Juan Carlos and Pedro both understand their co-workers, despite their accents. Juan Carlos and Rosa predominately spoke in English to me, but would switch between the two languages with each other. This usually occurred when one of the other could not recall a word in English and would ask the other one what the word or concept was in English.

Juan Carlos and Rosa speak Spanish to each other and to the other first generation members. Occasionally, Rosa will address Juan Carlos in English, but that is usually because the entire conversation taking place around them is in English. Whenever, they ask their children to do anything, it is in Spanish. This includes both commands: “sit down,” “come here,” “answer the question,” as well as questions: “what happened?” “what are you doing?” “what do you want?”, and “what did you do?”. Whenever Juan Carlos spoke to his children, he would begin by addressing them in Spanish, but sometimes he would switch to English. This change would happen more often with Maricela than Juana.

I want to sit contigo

All of the children mixed English and Spanish together. Chico (Family 1) said he wanted his future children to at least be able to speak some “Spanglish,” even if they were not fluent in Spanish. The three youngest girls mix the two languages together more than the others. Juana (Family 2) does it more often and with other people than anyone else in this study. She does it with her parents, her sister, her aunts and uncles and even with other non-Spanish speakers. During dinner one night, she approached her father and announced “I want to sit *contigo*.” She could have chosen to complete the entire sentence in one language, or used more than just one word in Spanish. Instead, she composed a grammatically correct sentence using two languages, and expressed her wish to sit with her father. Her parents commented that both of the girls do this often; substituting English and Spanish words, but maintaining the grammatical structure and word order of whatever language is predominate in their sentence. Both Maricela and Juana combine two words, one from each language to form a new one. The most common combination word is “*Agrabalo*”, a combination of *agárralo* and grab. Both the words have the same meaning, yet Maricela and Juana have combined them into one, Spanglish word. Rosa and Juan Carlos also use a mix of the two languages around their daughters, and with each other. They will switch mid-sentence, much like Juana did at dinner. They only do this when speaking Spanish, inserting English words to their native tongue. They both said they do this for convenience. To them, the English word is easier, or shorter, and therefore, more convenient. They do not think about what word to insert, it is a simply something they do. In my observations, when they inserted an English word into a

predominately Spanish sentence, it was usually done around their children or amongst the two of them. They did not do it with Pedro (Family 3) or Carmen (Family 3), or Ana (Family 1) and Jorge (Family 1). Pedro, Carmen, Ana and Jorge almost never used Spanglish. They would insert Spanish words into their English sentences, usually because they could more easily recall the Spanish word.

The language that is spoken between the first and second generations is very important. However, the spoken word is not the only example of language being used in a household. Every time I was visiting one of the families, the television was on. Sometimes it was a cable channel. Often, it was a movie. The kids would come and go, sometimes watching the entire movie, other times, watching a scene or two, then moving on to the next thing that caught their eye. María knew how to operate the television and DVD player and would put on movies for the younger children. Rosa would also play movies for her children. All of the movies were animated, Disney or Pixar productions. When María put on a movie, she always selected English. Rosa made the same choice. Rosa said that she played the movies in English because she did not like the accents of the dubbed voices. She said they had a Mexican accent and to her, it did not sound right. She preferred the English versions. María (Family 1), Sol (Family 3), Maricela (Family 2) and Juana (Family 2) knew every song from the movies they watched; they would often sing along and quote the movie lines as it played. The Lion King, Rio, and the Lorax were three movies that they played most often.

In addition to the language the children spoke to the parents and watched on television, they were exposed to a variety of other sources of language in the house.

Many of the toys that Maricela (Family 2) and Juana (Family 2) played with talked. Sometimes, they repeated the same phrase over and over. Other toys said a variety of phrases. With the exception of Dora the Explorer, every toy spoke in English. Some of the toys had a toggle that allowed the children to switch between English and Spanish, but the toys were all set on English during my observations. The children also played games on their mother's iPhone. These games had instructions and voiceovers, all of which were also in English.

Language communicates more than most people realize. Words are powerful, and the language words are in can give insight into how language affects cultural transmission processes. In Rosa's case, she actively made a choice to have her children watch movies in English. She preferred that they hear them in English. Although Spanish was an option, the Spanish in the movies was not the Spanish she wanted her children to hear. Because of this choice, her children can now fully quote several movies in English. Language is also fluid; it can change and adapt. Rosa and her family mix both English and Spanish as they need to. Using Spanglish comes naturally to them and they actively use it to their benefit, making new words or using the more convenient or easier word.

Language involves choices. A speaker can choose to say one word or phrase instead of another that communicates similar information. In English, a flower could be red, or ruby or a fiery red or even a brilliant red. All of these communicate something about the speaker and the person listening. The first generation chooses what language to use in a given situation and the second generation observes and internalizes this choice. Juana said "I want to sit *contigo*" but she did this because she observed her parents and

her older sister mixing the two languages together before. Rosa made a choice, based her own preferences, to show her children movies in English instead of Spanish. Juan Carlos chooses to speak to his children in Spanish, especially when giving commands. Pedro and Carmen both choose to speak to their children only in Spanish, and did not actively teach them English. Ana and Jorge made a similar choice with their children.

Border Lives

Border lives refers to several different things. First and foremost, it refers to the liminality of crossing the border for immigrants. Salvadoran immigrants crossed many borders in order to reach the U.S. They comprised physical borders, which included three rivers, as well as mental borders, including leaving family behind in a poor and war torn country. Chavez states that borders are a chasm that must be crossed, but are more than just physical in nature (1997:45). And after the borders are crossed, there still remains the issue of incorporation. Incorporation is defined as steps that people take in order to change their legal status in a host country (Chavez 1997:65). Included in incorporation is learning the language and culture as well as having a family (Chavez 1997:65). Children not only serve to help incorporate the first generation into the host culture, but they also serve as a link between the home and host countries (Chavez 1997:177). The second generation picks up pieces of both culture, and melds them into their own world view (Chavez 1997:179-180). There are also borders involved in leaning a new language as well as navigating a new culture. Any time the first generation interacts with the host culture, a multitude of borders are crossed. The first generation interacts with the host culture, but they are also tied in many ways to their natal land. This includes trips back

home, as well as remittances. In the case of El Salvador, the remittances allowed the economy to stabilize after the war (Coutin 2007:7).

Each of the first generation came to the country without papers. All six fled the war in order find peace, and crossed many borders to find it. They all made the journey overland, crossing by several international borders as they went. Even after arriving in the U.S., this was not the end of their border crossings. Jorge (Family 1), Ana (Family 1), and Rosa (Family 2) all had a short-term stop in Los Angeles. They were surrounded by their home culture and cousin-cultures. Spanish was spoken by almost everyone around them, and it was easy to find the familiar. Their status was that of many of their neighbors. It was not a radical change, at least not in comparison to the next stage of their trip. Crossing the entire U.S., they arrived in Virginia and eventually had their own families.

Children are an important aspect of incorporation. Incorporation is an important aspect of Border Lives. It serves to link the two countries that immigrants call home. The six members of the second generation serve as a link to El Salvador and to the U.S. They all easily switch between the two languages. Maricela (Family 2) is in elementary school, and is in an English only class. She moves between the two languages at home easily. However, in school, she often will place the adjective after the noun in English. This turns “the red car” into “the car red.” The syntactical structure is Spanish, but not English. Her teachers would like to put in her in an English as a Second Language (ESL) class because of this issue. However, both Juan Carlos (Family 2) and Rosa (Family 2) feel that given time, Maricela will correct this behavior on her own. This means that Juan

Carlos and Rosa will have to explain their view point to the teacher about moving Maricela to an ESL class. Marcelo (Family 3) and Chico (Family 1), the oldest two of the second generation, have often been asked to assist their parents when it comes to language. They both speak English more fluently than their parents and have been asked to translate at various times for them, acting as the bridge between two cultures. Border lives is also about maintaining ties.

Returning Home

Each member of the first and second generation has returned to El Salvador with members of the first generation. This is the one of the most overt ways borders are crossed after arrival. It is a statement to return home, to maintain those ties. Recently, Rosa made her first trip back to El Salvador since she left half a life time ago. She travelled with her two children, Maricela and Juana, as well as her mother, step-father and sister. She had to go through many steps in order to make the trip happen. This included working with different immigration officials to ensure that she would be able to make the trip and not compromise her status within the U.S. It took her several months to complete all the forms and submit the information that was requested of her, but in the long run it she felt it was very important for her to go and to take her children with her.

Rosa took a camera with to document her trip to El Salvador. She wanted to show me what El Salvador looked like as well as have pictures for her girls to look at once they returned to the U.S. She also allowed her girls to take several pictures of their trip. They took pictures of family as well as landscapes. After she returned from her trip, she showed me each of the pictures and explained what was going on in each one. This

allowed me to learn more about whom she introduced her children to, what they did in El Salvador and where they went. The pictures illustrated a significant aspect of processes of cultural transmission, including the selective creation of memories for the next generation.



Figure 5. View from Airplane

Rosa was very emotional before and after the trip, especially when she saw El Salvador from the air for the first time (pictured above). For her, it had been over fifteen years

since she had set foot on Salvadoran soil. For her daughters, it was the first time they had ever seen the country. Rosa had left when the country was still in the middle of a civil war, leaving all she knew behind in order to escape the violence. She returned on an airplane, surrounded by her family. This was the first of many tearful experiences on this trip for her.



Figure 6. Road to Hometown

Jorge is from the same area as Juan Carlos, so the first place the extended family went after landing in San Salvador was to Jorge's home town. This was Rosa's first trip to this part of the country. Maricela and Juana saw where their *Papi* was born and met his family. The little girls were very excited to see where their father grew up. Juan Carlos owns a home in El Salvador, and his sister takes care of it for him. Also, Juan Carlos's parents still live in the same village. His father had lived in the U.S. for a few years, and worked as roofer. However, he did not like the climate and returned to El Salvador before Rosa arrived in Prince William County. Therefore, he had never met his grandchildren or his daughter-in-law in person before. Rosa was happy that her girls got to visit with their grandfather, and see where their father grew up. However, she was also anxious to see her extended family, especially her aunts who helped raise her.



Figure 7. The River

The village that Juan Carlos grew up in sits on *Río Goascorán*, which forms the border between El Salvador and Honduras. As a young boy, he would often cross the river to visit his grandfather who lived on the other side. He grew up fishing and playing in the river with his brothers. Both the girls and Rosa had heard a lot about this river from Juan Carlos. The girls had a hard time picturing their dad playing in the river. Rosa was interested in seeing the river and the mountain on the other side where Juan Carlos's grandfather lived. She had heard how close it was, but could not really picture it. This was a learning experience for her and it allowed her to better understand where her

husband came from. From Juan Carlos's home village, the family travelled to Ana and Rosa's home town, on the eastern side of the country. This part of the trip confirmed something Rosa had heard, that the infrastructure was still very poor. The roads were pitted and rough. It was not the smooth roads they were accustomed to in the U.S.



Figure 8. Rosa's Hometown

As they approached Rosa and Ana's home, Rosa became very emotional. She had last been on the road leading up to her home when she left the country. This trip was filled

with firsts for her and her children, but it was on that road, just outside her home town, that many of her emotions came flooding back. She remembered playing on this road as a child and hiding in the bushes as a child. She also remembered seeing soldiers on this road as they entered her village during the war. This was the same road that she took to leave her home behind. For her, the road represented many things, but as she approached the home she grew up in, all she could think about was seeing her family for the first time since she left. She was not sure if they would recognize her, or how they would treat her children.



Figure 9. Reunited

When they arrived, one of the first people Rosa saw was one of her aunts that raised her as a child. Ana worked in San Salvador in a garment factory when Rosa was little, so during the week, her Ana's aunts would take of Rosa. Rosa was very close to them, but had not been able to see them in a long time. This was the most emotional reunion during the whole trip. When they embraced for the first time, Rosa broke down in tears.



Figure 10. Extended Family

This was also the first time that the aunts and the larger extended family had met Maricela and Juana. For the girls, everyone and everything they did was new and exciting. Ana and María both said it was good to see people they had not seen in a year. They also said they understood the importance of the occasion for Rosa and her two girls. Maricela and Juana were the center of a lot of attention from their older relatives. They met a lot of people, and everyone wanted to hug and kiss them. They were a bit shy and overwhelmed at first. Maricela said it was hard because her mom had so many aunts and uncles and she could not remember all of their names. The children learned a lot about their multi-generational family living in different parts of El Salvador. The family in El Salvador also learned about their relatives in the U.S.



Figure 12. Cousins

The girls were very happy to play with all their cousins. They played outside a lot, more than they did back home. They loved playing hide and seek and cops and robbers. It was fun for them to be around a lot of other children their own age. In the U.S., only Sol is their age. Most of the other relatives are closer in age to María and Chico. The girls were used to playing inside in the U.S. and they were also used to a large, spacious house. The houses in El Salvador were a lot smaller and according to the girls, very “boring”. They said the houses did not have very much inside, but that it was ok because they had so much to do outside.



Figure 13. El Mar

Seeing the Pacific Ocean for the first time in years brought back strong memories of her childhood for Rosa. For the girls, it was the first time they had seen the Pacific. They were intrigued since they had seen the Atlantic before. They did not really understand that it was an entirely different ocean. They liked to play in the water, so the trip to the beach as a lot of fun for them.

Rosa (Family 2) had heard from Ana (Family 1) and others that El Salvador was very dangerous. She was worried that her girls' accented Spanish and willingness to

Speak English would mark them as potential targets for thieves. When they went to San Salvador, she witnessed some of the violence first hand. She was out shopping with Jorge (Family 1), Ana (Family 1), María (Family 1), Maricela (Family 2), and Juana (Family 2). Rosa was carrying the shopping bags and she was trying to keep a close watch on her two girls at the same time. A man approached Jorge and asked for some money. Jorge ignored him and kept moving through the crowd, with Rosa and the two girls close behind. The man kept pestering Jorge until Ana accosted the man and told him to go bother other people or find a job like a real man. Later that evening, they were staying at the home that Ana maintains in El Salvador. They heard gunshots, and found out from neighbors that an attempted robbery had taken place. The victim had a gun and fired the shots to scare the assailant off. Rosa had not wanted to move back to El Salvador before she travelled there because of the violence she had heard about. After witnessing it firsthand, she was even more convinced that safety was paramount and that there was too much violence to ever think about moving back.

Regresar

Rosa was very happy to be able to show her children her native country. She was able to see people she had not seen in over fifteen years. Her family was happy to have her home, and very excited to see the children. However, upon her return Rosa was convinced that she could never live in El Salvador. To her, it was a great trip, and one she wants to make more often. But the crime, the infrastructure and lack of economic activity underscored her belief that she was glad to live in the U.S. However, if her children wished to move back, she would support them. But, she does not think they will want too,

not once they are old enough to understand the complex issues involved in moving to El Salvador. Her half-brother Chico certainly has no desire to live in El Salvador. He has visiting the country numerous times and much prefers life in the U.S. He has not been back for several years, despite his mother, father and younger sister going with his step-sister and nieces. Carmen (Family 3) and Pedro (Family 3) return to El Salvador every other year, but they say it is an expensive trip. They have to save for over a year and half in order to afford the trip. Marcelo (Family 3) does not plan on going with on the next trip. He said it was not that interesting to him.

The trip to El Salvador served many purposes. It was the first time the girls met their extended family in El Salvador. For their family in El Salvador, it was the first chance they met their American relatives. This interchange solidified their ties. The girls also saw their mother's homeland for the first time. They saw how their family lived. They had seen their father grill outside, but their Salvadoran relatives cooked everything outside. They saw many similar contrasts, including the roads and vehicles. In the U.S. the roads were smooth and paved; in El Salvador the roads were rarely smooth and often unpaved. At first the girls' enjoyed the bumpy roads, but as they moved around the country, the jarring the bumps become less enjoyable. Their relative's houses were small, often with exposed cement walls; their own in the U.S. was very large, with nice new appliances, painted walls and plenty of room to run around and play. Their cousins played outside, often making up games to entertain themselves. The girls were used to spending a lot of time inside, watching movies and playing with their new toys. Besides the contrasts, the girls' also had a chance to see where their father grew up, so the next

time he tells them the story of swimming across the river to visit his grandfather, they will know what the river looked like. They saw the house their mother grew up in, so when she talks about sleeping with bananas under her bed, they will be able to remember the room, the bed she is talking about and the smell of ripening bananas. The photos will be a physical reminder of their first trip back. The trip allowed the girls to see their parents' land, and at the same time it allowed them to draw their own conclusions about what it means to be Salvadoran. In short, the trip transmitted a lot of cultural information to the girls.

Remittances

Remittances form a large part of the economy in El Salvador. The money crossing the border allows many people to live comfortably in El Salvador. The wages in El Salvador are very low, and jobs are very hard to find. According to the first generation, you have to know someone in order to have a good job that pays a living wage. If you do not have any connections, you may only earn thirty dollars a month. This is not enough to survive on or raise a family. Pedro and Juan Carlos, along with their two other siblings who live in the United States send 600 dollars or so every month to their parents. Their parents do not need to work, unless they want to, because of this money they receive. Juan Carlos (Family 2) says that most of the people he knows send similar amounts home. Rosa's mother Ana lives in the U.S. and therefore Rosa does not send regular amounts back. Sometimes, she sends smaller amounts to her aunts still living in El Salvador, but it is not frequent. They helped to raise Rosa, so Rosa likes to send money for special occasions, like birthdays. No one in the first generation expects their children to send funds

to El Salvador. After all, the first generation is supporting their parents and immediate relatives still in El Salvador. No one in the first generation intends to move back to El Salvador. Therefore, the second generation's parents would live in U.S., and therefore would not need remittances from their children. The pattern of remittances being sent back may slowly diminish over time, as second generation comes of age, and has no need to support direct family in El Salvador. However, new immigrants continue to arrive in U.S., so the flow of remittances may never cease.

Border lives are complex. The first generation is tied to both the U.S. and El Salvador. These ties are strengthened through trips to El Salvador and remittances. However, the first generation is anchored in the U.S. and they have no desire to return permanently to El Salvador. They view themselves as both Salvadorans and Americans. Although they move between the two cultures every day, they do not consider themselves to be living on a border. While the first generation considers itself to be Salvadoran and American, Chico (Family 1) and Marcelo (Family 3) consider themselves to be just American. They also move between the cultures daily, but they also have no desire to move back and view El Salvador as place where their parents came from, but other than that they have no real connection to that Country.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study have far-reaching implications. The practical findings address child rearing practices, private and public immigration lives, and cultural integration. They touch on language, the immigration process in the U.S., population studies, and economics. This chapter synthesizes the empirical and theoretical contributions of the thesis. It addresses the four areas that affect the transfer of culture. It also examines the nuanced interactions that contribute to the nature of the transference. The study of the three families provides insight into how, exactly, the first generation passes on their Salvadoran culture to their U.S. born children.

Culture is complex. It is not easy to deconstruct. What a child absorbs is even harder to examine and understand. The transference of culture is a slow process. Observing daily family interactions help to illustrate the process. The first generation makes thousands of choices during the course of the day; many may seem to be unrelated to the transfer of culture at first glance. However, every decision communicates something to the second generation, whether or not the first generation is aware of it. The four areas of family, language, legality/citizenship and border lives provide a useful way to examine these interactions. The first generation's own story directly reflects how and

what they say about their lives before coming to the U.S. Each member of the study has their own perspective that influences the intra-family interactions.

The families all live in Prince William County, Virginia. But before they arrived, the first generation first lived in El Salvador. Like all Salvadorans of their age set they, experienced the civil war first hand. Juan Carlos and Rosa, have only a few vivid memories of the war, such as soldiers entering their villages or bullet holes in the walls. Other Salvadorans experienced the war in all of its brutality. Ana was in the capital when the FLMN made its push to take the city. She is much older and remembers things more vividly. She saw, heard, and smelled the fighting first hand. Santiago, a good friend of the family, was conscripted to fight as a rebel. He spoke of a truly brutal conflict, blowing up bridges to cut off supplies and beheading government soldiers to send a message to the surrounding villages. The war is considered a push factor in immigration studies. It pushed the first generation to leave the country. While this is most certainly true, the war was also a result of economic inequality, and it could be argued that even without the war, many Salvadorans still would have eventually left the country in search of better wages and a better life. Either way, the civil war did push the families out of El Salvador. The U.S. drew them in, providing safety, stability, and employment for them. It also provided the families with a chance to integrate into a new society, and allowed the first generation to raise their children in peace.

The history of El Salvador and the personal experiences of the war shaped the individuals with whom I worked. It also directly affected how cultural transference occurred. Likewise, language family life, citizenship/legality and border lives interact to

structure patterns in cultural transference. Language is overarching; it touches so many aspects of daily life. Pedro (Family 3), Carmen (Family 3), Jorge (Family 1), Ana (Family 1), Rosa (Family 2), and Juan Carlos (Family 2) all choose when to speak in English or Spanish to their children and to each other. But, they also have to speak one or both languages outside of the house in their daily interactions with their host country. Media consumption patterns are also a reflection of language. Chico and Marcelo both learned English through watching TV, not from their parents. They in turn taught their younger siblings. The movies that were playing at the houses may seem like background noise, especially when the children are not sitting down and watching the movies. But, each movie had a Spanish and English option for the language the movie played in. Yet, the children never switched the movie to Spanish and nor did Rosa. Rosa said that the accent of the voice actors in Spanish bothered her, yet her children do not know that. Instead, they know all the songs, in English, for movies like the Lion King, Rio, and the Lorax. Furthermore, the dolls and other toys that Maricela and Juana played with all spoke English. Each of these little facts sends signals to the children. Maricela and Juana do not know what their mother thinks about the Spanish language version of their movies. All they know is that their mother plays the movie in English for them.

It is not simply a matter of saying the first generation always speaks in Spanish and therefore the second generation is fluent. There is more to the exchange. The spoken language at home is not the only language the second generation hears. Language is everywhere, and children pick up on that. None of the first generation set out to teach their children English, yet all of the second generation speaks English and Spanish.

The families that I worked with are all in Prince William County due to one person, Camilo, the older brother of Juan Carlos and Pedro. He was, perhaps, the first Salvadoran in the county. If not for his job being moved, the families might have ended up in Texas instead of Virginia. He was the first link in the chain of migration as described by Mahler (1994:21). Camilo paved the way for his brothers to join him and then his Uncle Jorge. However, Camilo himself acted at the request of his mother, Karla. He wanted to keep his family safe, but he was not the reason Carmen and her father and sisters went to Virginia. Nor was he the reason that Rosa's maternal cousins arrived. They came due to Ana.

Chain migration is closely associated with remittances. People who receive remittances are often likely to come to the country where the money came from, in this case, the U.S. (Dimova and Wolf 2009:1-2). However, Rosa (Family 2) does not send remittances home regularly. Ana (Family 1) does send remittances to two of her sisters, one of whom helped raised Rosa well Ana was working in San Salvador. Juan Carlos (Family 2) and Pedro (Family 3) do because their parents still live there. Once their parents have passed, they will no longer send funds. Although Rosa does not send remittances to El Salvador, she has helped other family members to come over. When Juan Carlos and Pedro first arrived in the county, they did not speak the language and did not have the support of a vibrant community. Now, when new immigrants arrive, there are family and countrymen close by. The Salvadoran presence is so strong in the county that a Salvadoran Consulate has been established in Woodbridge, a mere 30 miles from the Embassy in Washington D.C. The consulate would not have been established within

such proximity to the embassy if there was not a large population. The consulate helps Salvadorans living in the area by providing visas, passports, family registration (marriage, birth and death certificates), and immigration services. A drive down Route One demonstrates the impact the Salvadoran community has had on the county. Numerous stores advertise Salvadoran food and clothing.

Legality/citizenship is central to how the generations interact. Each of the first generations came to the U.S. without papers. They made a long and dangerous trip. When they arrived, they still had to adjust to a new way of life. Now, all have obtained a legally recognized status. Juan Carlos, Pedro and Carmen are all citizens. However, it took over twenty years for this to take place. Ana and Jorge are both waiting to find out if they will become citizens as well. They studied for months and months in order to become citizens. In the mean time they are permanent residents and can leave the country for as much as six months at a time. But they have to renew their status every five years and pay a fee to do so. Rosa is in a more unique situation. Due to her age when she arrived, she did not qualify at the time to become a permanent resident when her mother did. Instead, she has a work permit and TPS. This means that she had to go through a lot of legal hoops in order to leave the country to see her family in El Salvador. The trip she took meant a lot to her, but it also cost a lot of time and money just to set it up. She is hopeful that she will become a permanent resident in the near future. Each first generation member believes that being a citizen is the ideal, the dream that many immigrants strive for. It means they are legally recognized and have the same rights as all other citizens. Their children, on the other hand, were all born in the U.S. They were granted something at

birth that their parents have worked very hard to obtain for themselves. The second generation has opportunities that non-citizens do not. They can return to their parent's homeland as often as they want, they do not have to fear deportation, and they can vote. They can also switch jobs at will, never having to worry if their legal status will become an issue.

Border lives is the fourth concept that was used to examine the cultural exchange that takes place. Both Pedro and Juan Carlos arrived in the U.S. separately. They joined their brother, Camilo, in Woodbridge, and worked for the same company as him. Juan Carlos also enrolled in high school. He encountered many borders in his everyday life. Not only was he working with mostly monolingual English speakers, he was also attending school with very few Spanish speakers. He was at disadvantage language wise and this became exacerbated in the school setting and this lead to misunderstandings and conflict as well as issues in fitting in and how his teachers perceived him as a student. Rosa had similar experiences in school; she often felt lost and did not know how to answer the teachers' questions. As they grew older, they continued to cross borders. At work, Pedro and Juan Carlos are the only two Spanish speakers on their construction crew. As such, they continue to cross language and cultural borders daily. Carmen and Ana both work in retail and interact with many cultures throughout the day. The second generation passes between Salvadoran and American cultures daily. They go to school, where English is the dominate language, but they also have Salvadorans friends and family at school and outside of school. The families also have all taken trips to El Salvador. In fact, Ana and Juan Carlos both own houses in El Salvador. Chico, Marcelo,

María and Sol have all made multiple trips to El Salvador. They have each seen various parts of the country, multiple times and formed their own opinions. None of them want to live in the country permanently, but they all have enjoyed their trips. Juana and Maricela are very young, but they both enjoyed their first trip. Their parents were happy that they made the trip as the two girls got to meet relatives they had never met before. Also, the girls both came back with a better comprehension of Spanish, which made their parents very happy.

Border lives also means maintaining connections back home in other ways. For most Salvadorans, this equates to remittances. Juan Carlos and Pedro's parents are still alive and living in El Salvador. The two brothers make sure to send as at least 500 dollars (combined) back to their parents. This money essentially supports their parents, allowing them luxuries that would otherwise not be affordable. Rosa's mother and step-father are living in the U.S., and Rosa sporadically sends funds to the aunts that raised her. None of the first generation expects the second generation to send money back to El Salvador when they become adults. In part this is because none of the first generation wants to move back to the El Salvador. To them, even the things many American take for granted, like paved roads and police who respond when called, are not present in El Salvador. They all feel that El Salvador will always be their country of birth, but they have no wish to move back.

Future Considerations

There are several future research questions that emerge from this thesis. This research was limited in scope. It would be interesting to examine other families in Prince

William County to see if they are or are not linked via chain migration to Camilo and his brothers. Also, as the children who were the subject of this research grow up, it would be interesting to document changes in how cultural transmission takes place and its consequences. Chico does not absorb the same information as his young nieces. Further work could also entail interviewing the second generation at intervals to see how their perceptions of Salvadoran culture changes. The second generation synthesizes all the information they receive from their parents and they are shaped by it. How they take this information in changes over time. Maricela, Juana and Sol are young and are absorbing everything around them. They do not question or examine what is happening. María, Marcelo and Chico are all older and exercise their independence. They question what is going on around them. These changes could be examined in more detail in later studies.

Putting it Together

In general, exploring cultural transmission is a complicated undertaking. Cultural transmission itself takes place in a gradual fashion and is comprised of many variables and layers. This study looked at three families. This is a small sample size and makes it difficult to reach broad generalizations that could be applied to all Salvadorans. However, despite the small sample size, the families are representative of the greater Salvadoran narrative that other authors have laid out (Coutin 2000:90, Hagan 1994:19-23, Hamilton and Stoltz Chinchilla 2001:170-180). They fit the pattern of chain migration. They work in construction, retail and office jobs. Their socio-economic status is varied as is their level of fluency and acculturation, a finding Hagan and Coutin have both made.

This thesis has demonstrated that parents are the gatekeeper of cultural transmission. Rosa decided to take a trip back to El Salvador, not only because she wanted to go herself, but also because she wanted to show her children where she grew up. Carmen could choose to serve her children grilled cheese or hot dogs, but instead she cooked Salvadoran staples like papusas, despite the time it took to prepare these more complicated meals. Children were not passive in the transference of culture either. Maricela and Juana went with their family to El Salvador and as a result, their Spanish greatly improved. María has been back several times. She has enjoyed each trip she has taken and has understood more about what is going on in the country.

In general, each parent made choices as subtle as turning the switch that let a toy speak in Spanish, or as overt as returning to El Salvador with their children. There were also day to day decisions, such as what to make for dinner, which communicated a great deal to the second generation. The second generation is always listening, observing and learning from their parents. This is true of children in general, but with immigrants it has a special significance. Children link the new home to the home their parent's left (Chavez 1997:177). The children see their parents' values, but they are also exposed U.S. culture and values. They absorb pieces of both cultures (Chavez 1997:179-180). Each member of the second generation is influenced by their parents and relatives, but they are also influenced by interactions at school, by their friends, and by popular U.S. culture. They are also exposed to the home culture through trips back home (Thompson 2007:140). These trip serve reinforce the cultural transmission that takes place in the U.S. In short, the interchange between first -and second -generation Salvadorans is complex and

nuanced, with many actors and factors influencing the intergenerational transmission of culture. This thesis, based on participant-observation and interviews with members of three multigenerational households, as well as analysis of photo journals, has shown how four variables—language, family, legality/citizenship, and border lives—offer an important window onto how this transmission takes place.

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