

# **LEFT BEHIND: CHILDREN OF DOMINICAN DEPORTEES IN A BULIMIC SOCIETY**

By

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the  
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## **ABSTRACT**

### **LEFT BEHIND: CHILDREN OF DOMINICAN DEPORTEES IN A BULIMIC SOCIETY**

by

Fenix Nikaurys Arias

Adviser: Professor Nicholas Michelli

The United States has always taken great pride in its children's protection programs that have served as an example to developing countries. As a beacon of opportunity to poor and underdeveloped countries, the country is also known amongst third world nations, as the only hope to achieve social mobility because of its educational and labor market opportunities. Recently, in an apparent contradiction to its protection programs, social, and economic opportunities, the nation has instituted laws that undermine the welfare of children of immigrants and immigrant children by deporting people, regardless of their immigration status.

Qualitative data were utilized to examine the impact of deportation on Dominican children and families left behind in the United States. The study's aim was to articulate the impact of parent's regurgitation/ejection on the children's education, social integration, economic, and health and mental health status. The theories of social bulimic-exclusion and inclusion-, human waste, and toxic environment served as a

framework for understanding how the society has become bulimic by both massively importing and deporting human capital. Social exclusion forces low-income and marginalized children to multi-levels of stigmatization by reinforcing the poverty cycle. Fragmented assimilation, a form of social inclusion, further compounds the exclusion of minority and immigrants because it does not fully integrate individuals into the fabric of society.

The study found that U.S. born children left behind in a single parent household, ultimately face multi-levels of social exclusion. Hence, mandatory deportation negatively impacts children of deportees' social integration to mainstream society. Findings revealed that children of deportees experience tremendous sense of abandonment, insecurity, and isolation, which affect their educational attainment, socioeconomic status, social capital, and health mental status.

In conclusion, social bulimic cannot co-exist with democracy because everyone is not fully included into mainstream society. What exists therefore, is an oligopoly democratic system that influences an oligarchy society in which a group of people—usually those in power—have control over the policy-making process and implementation with no accountability or assessment on collateral damages or the further social bulimization of children of deportees left behind in the United States.

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There is a voice that cries in the silence  
There is a voice that nobody listens to  
There is a voice that is no longer a voice

But conscience

There is a voice that is:

Silence

Tenderness

Innocence

And this is the voice

that today

I Dare

To present

Before history

(From Memories of an Immigrant, Mary Gratreux 2007)

## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my diseased father, **Felix Antonio Arias**, and grandmother **Nicomede Altagracia Gomez**, who indoctrinated my awareness on social justice. You both grew up in a time of political upheaval in the Dominican Republic, and witnessed the injustices of politicians who often forget the reasons they wanted to serve the public, while getting intoxicated with money and corruption of power. You both taught me that it is as important to give a voice to the voiceless as to have a voice.

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## Preface

On November 2007, I received a frantic phone call from my friend Vanessa, who was trying to understand a letter she received from her daughter's Catholic school. The letter requested a meeting with both parents to discuss Annie's possible dismissal, which could endanger her academic progress and, consequently, leave her behind in the eleventh grade. Vanessa could not believe that there had been such a drastic change in her daughter's academic performance and behavior. Annie had always been an honor roll student, and her room was full of awards, certificates, and other academic recognitions. As I tried to calm Vanessa, she asked me to attend this meeting to discuss the situation, and hopefully, find an appropriate plan of intervention to prevent Annie's dismissal. I agreed to attend the meeting with her.

As we entered the conference room, we realized that the meeting was not only with Annie's principal, but also included, to our surprise, a guidance counselor, the school psychologist, the assistant principal, and Annie's homeroom teacher. The principal greeted us by stating that both parents were required to attend the meeting, and that if Mr. Castillo (Annie's father) was not able to attend the meeting, she preferred to reschedule it. Vanessa explained that her husband, Frank, was not in the country, and that I was attending the meeting for support, to translate for her, and to help her navigate the school system. Suspiciously, the principal reiterated the reasons for the meeting and stated that she would allow the meeting to take place, given the sensitivity of the issue, and the fact that Annie needed immediate intervention.

The principal started the meeting by informing us of the school's moral commitment to each one of their students in order to ensure their social and personal

development. After the short explanation about the school's commitment to its students, Annie's teacher began to describe her change of behavior. As she talked, I thought that they had made a mistake since she was describing a sweet and responsible girl as a disruptive one. The teacher explained, in lengthy detail, Annie's outburst in the middle of class, her reluctance to complete assignments, her withdrawal from school plays, as well as the relinquishment of her role in student council, and ultimately, her lack of respect towards her superiors. I looked at my friend who was in complete shock. Giving her a chance to compose herself, I asked Annie, who was sitting with her arms folded and staring at the floor, for reasons that explained her maladaptive behavior and lack of academic responsibility. Was it about a boy? I asked. Annie remained quiet.

At Annie's lack of participation, her teacher resumed the discussion explaining that she did not understand what had happened, but that certainly things had changed during the summer vacation because Annie came back to school with a completely different attitude. The school psychologist then turned to Vanessa and asked if there had been any changes at home that could have affected Annie, since they could not find any possible explanation at the school or with her friends. Vanessa simply said that there had not been any changes at home. After an hour of discussion, we came up with solutions that would allow Annie to continue her school year, under probationary status, of course.

As we left the meeting, I knew that something was very wrong. Vanessa had lied to school representatives who had gathered to explore how to best help her daughter and the family. She did not share with the school staff what had transpired over the

summer; namely, the deportation of the father to the Dominican Republic. I did not want to further upset her in front of Annie. Hence, I refrained from asking any further questions.

### **Annie's Reasons for Rebellion**

Vanessa and Frank Castillo were married in 1990. A year after their wedding, they moved to a beautiful four-bedroom colonial house in Yonkers, New York, where Annie and her two brothers were born. Unbeknown to Vanessa, in 1984, when Frank was 19 years old, he was charged with a misdemeanor for drug possession—two marijuana joints. Although he did not do prison time, he was sentenced to community service for a year because he had resisted being searched by the police officer. After confronting his angry parents and being scared by the arrest, Frank enrolled in a community college and completed an associate's degree in accounting. In 1989, he inherited his uncle's travel agency, where he had worked since 1985. At the agency, he prepared taxes and provided tourism, brokerage, and remittance services.

In 2005, Frank submitted his application to become a naturalized citizen, a right he thought he qualified for given his legal permanency status, the fact that he had lived legally in the United States for 30 years, and the time since his encounter with the law. The incident had been minor: he was issued a misdemeanor for marijuana possession for personal use, received a criminal warning, not a felony charge, which in New York did not involve a prison sentence. But, in his case, this was the second warning on marijuana possession, which made him ineligible for citizenship because a criminal

warning of this nature becomes a “moral turpitude” in the immigration court system (See Appendixes A and G for more information on immigration convictions).

Unfortunately, he was not aware of the ramifications of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRAIRA), which targeted immigrants with “aggravated felonies” or “moral turpitude” for deportation to the country of origin. Over six months passed since he submitted the application and Frank continued to wait for a response from United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS, formerly known as Immigration and Naturalization Services); the branch of Homeland Security that handles these types of petitions. Not concerned by the lack of response from the agency, Frank continued with his daily routine.

In June, 2007, Vanessa, Frank and Annie were preparing to visit some of the universities Annie was considering applying to upon her graduation from high school. Two weeks before the grand tour, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)—another branch of Homeland Security—abruptly came into their home, handcuffed Frank, and sent him to a detention center in downtown Manhattan. Three months later, in early August, 2007, after being moved from one state to another (New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Texas), and hiring a lawyer to represent him in court, Frank was deported to the Dominican Republic. This occurred a month before Annie returned to school and three months prior to the meeting I described earlier. For this reason, what was supposed to be one of the most exciting summers of a high school senior’s life, turned out to be a nightmare for her and the family. Resultantly, Annie’s dream of becoming a pediatrician was deferred.

Annie and her two brothers were distraught. Everything happened too fast, and, as Vanessa was trying to cope with the situation herself and manage the household finances, she was afraid of facing her children and learning how they felt about their father and about losing him. Vanessa was trying to find answers to the many questions she had: What were they going to do? Could she sell the house and move to the Dominican Republic to keep the family together? What was going through her children's minds? How were they coping with the fact that their father had been deported? Most importantly, what were they thinking about their father, whom they loved and respected, and who they had never seen disrespect the law?

Annie and her brothers were obviously embarrassed and ashamed; they withdrew from their usual social activities. They were also anxious about their financial standing; they might no longer be able to afford a private school or maintain the lifestyle they were used to because they had lost the family's main breadwinner. At the same time, they did not know what their father would do in the Dominican Republic since his entire family was in the United States, and they did not even have a home on the island. All they knew was that an uncertain future was ahead. Annie obviously did not know how to cope with the situation. To whom could she complain? Who was to be blamed for what was happening to her loving father? It was overwhelming for her, and she became depressed, disinterested in school and in social activities; thus, her maladaptive behavior at school.

### **What Now?**

The Castillo family was definitely breaking apart; their lives had been disrupted. I started asking questions of key people in the community in order to assist them psychologically, morally, and financially, at least until Vanessa could manage the situation on her own. I checked for any community-based organization that could offer counseling to children confronting the loss of a family member through deportation. Although there were many resources for children of prisoners, I could not find any services targeting children of deportees. Vanessa was not working at the time of the deportation, because she was enrolled full-time in an MBA program on a graduate assistant fellowship. Another dream she had to defer, at least until she stabilized the financial standing of the family.

As I explored the family's options, I learned that there were many children in the community in the same situation, but that there were no organizations addressing the needs of families with this type of parental loss, or advocating for the rights of children's of deportees. I began to examine, articulate, and document the phenomenon of the deportation of documented Dominican parents.

This dissertation explores the social and economic processes that helped explain the deportation of documented Dominican parents and the socioeconomic conditions of the children left behind in New York City, as well as the type of future that awaits them, as they attempt to integrate to mainstream society while coping with their disruptive family environment. In looking at the socioeconomic conditions faced by children of deportees and the possibility of future socio-economic mobility, this study also looked

at their home and social environment, academic performance, and the overall educational ethos of the family.

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## CHAPTER 1

*"The words that poison a child's heart, whether through malice or ignorance, remain branded in his memory, and sooner or later they burn his soul."*

*Carlos Ruiz Zafron.*

### 1.1—Introduction

The same dreams of freedom and the ideal of a better life that galvanized people to cross the ocean centuries ago (for those who came voluntarily) continue to draw people to America today. Immigration has enabled America's growth and prosperity, and has helped shape the society. In an age of globalization, immigration has provided the country with a stable reserve army of workers for its agricultural, industrialization, and technological development. It seems that today a reserve army of immigrants, documented or undocumented, is no longer needed to stabilize the economic situation in the United States or to provide cheap labor for downgraded sectors of different industries. Or, is it that the new reserve army is already being formed by children of immigrants or immigrant children who are already in the country?

Upon a review of the literature related to the subject of immigration, settlement, adjustment, and incorporation, I realized that the ejection or deportation of documented Dominican immigrants marks the beginning of a new era in United States' policy regarding the need to assimilate people into the fabric of society. It became obvious that the United States no longer wants to incorporate certain people; especially immigrants who have "failed" to positively assimilate to the United States cultural ethos, that is, without committing a crime or violating its moral code. Immigrants are not treated with the same considerations as in the 1800s when people were needed to

construct the country and its economy. Stemming from the policy campaign against immigrants and the literature review of minority groups as well as social changes are the questions: How is the United States dealing with diversity or deviance? Have poor and minority immigrants become totally disposable in the country?

Nevertheless, just as immigration has been a vital ingredient in America's economic and cultural success, it also has the potential to generate changes that can be unsettling and often divisive. The interesting contradiction, however, is that as deportation rates increase, the immigration of people in search of the American Dream continues, even if at lesser numbers. However, the dream of the families and children left behind, after a parental deportation, has received very limited attention in the literature. The objective of this investigation is to articulate the lived experiences of Dominican families and children of deportees left behind in the United States as they must face and deal with the apathetic views on immigrants while attempting to become part of its social arena. Particularly, I focus on how children have adjusted after the removal of a parent from the United States. Given the dissonance between children's home and school environments (Phelan, Davidson, & Yu, 1993), it is important to identify the social drivers that influence these children's adaptation and integration processes as they seek to adjust to the changes created by the deportation of a parent. This study aims to use education (parental level of education, children's educational praxis, and the family educational ethos) as one of the key social drivers that could positively or negatively impact the integration of children of deportees into mainstream society.

There is extensive literature on the educational experience of marginalized social groups, such as children of immigrants, blacks, and Latino children. Very little is known, however, about the fast-growing subpopulation of the children of deportees, who are not only marginalized/disenfranchised because of their ethnic backgrounds, race, social strata, or urban under-funded schools, but are also among the thousands of children who must either be raised without a mother or father because he or she has been unexpectedly exiled from the United States or must leave the nation to follow their parent to a third world country—interrupting children’s education and psychosocial development. In all these cases, children are forced to go to the same countries that the deported parent got away from in search of a better life. It is important to recognize at this point, that this study does not seek to argue in favor or against the parent deportation; it only aims to explore the consequences of deportation on the children as they are left behind in the United States.

Minimal, and in some case non-existent, data have left many open-ended questions regarding the reality encountered by children of deportees on a daily basis (Capps, R., Castaneda, R.M., Chaudry, A. & Santos, R., 2007). In the case of children of Dominican deported parents, there is no research available to examine their experiences. Currently, there are two main agencies working in tandem on Dominican deportation: The Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE (formerly known as Immigration and Naturalization Services, or INS) and the Office of Psychological Services for Deportees in the Dominican Republic. Although these organizations compile yearly summaries of data collected and attempt to track deportees’ biographical and personal information, there is no cohesive database that tracks

families (especially the children) left behind by deportees, nor is there any systematic attempt to address the social, economic, educational, and psychological implications for those left behind.

In addition, the lack of substantial and systemic studies coupled with the raw estimates of the number of children left behind have created a serious theoretical gap in the quest to adequately address the rights and social needs of these children. For example, meeting the educational requirements of children is difficult to do without knowledge about how to effectively help them adjust. There is no clear estimation of how many children are affected by being left behind by a deported parent, and their experiences.

These observations are worrisome when looking at the growing number of Latino children in the United States. New York City in particular has seen an increase in the number of U.S-born children of Dominican descent making them one of the fastest growing Latino immigrant groups in the city. Dominicans, according to local newspapers, also have the highest number of deportees. As a result, there are an increasing number of Dominican-American children left behind. One can only assume that these children face inequality because they not only lose a parent, but often the breadwinner is removed from the country due to immigration policies which undermine these children's welfare, forcing them into public assistance or into a home with a parent working multiple jobs to support the household, leaving the children with little or no supervision. These children are barred from the important right to grow up in a nuclear family and to get the financial assistance necessary to survive (ultimately forcing them into poverty); abridging children of deportees of their rights and of the

ability to obtain the necessary tools (educational and social capital) to become competitive in a global labor market.

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, under The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1386 (XIV) on December 10, 1959, but not yet ratified by the United States (United Nations Committee on Children's Rights, 2010, and as reported in a recent (03/14/11) conversation with Fred Kirungi from the Committee on Media Request, a country is held responsible for "setting out economic, social, cultural, civic and political rights as well as special protection measures for all persons under the age of 18 years." Since the United States has yet to ratify the Convention, in practice the country can institute policies without consideration for the best interest of children. Hence, the Rights of the Child cannot be considered a universal optional protocol until Somalia and the United States ratify the 1989 Convention. As a result, in these two countries, many children are left unprotected and without any formal governmental accountability.

When and if the United States ratifies the protocols, parental deportation would violate articles 2, 6, and 7 of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child for the following reasons listed on different articles of the document:

- Article 2 states, "the child shall enjoy special protection, and shall be given opportunities and facilities, by law and by other means, to enable him to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity. In the enactment of laws for

this purpose, the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration.”

Children of deportees are denied the opportunity to develop the aforementioned needs with dignity since they are stigmatized by their parental deportation.

- Article 6 declares, “The child, for the full and harmonious development of his personality, needs love and understanding. He shall, wherever possible, grow up in the care and under the responsibility of his parents, and, in any case, in an atmosphere of affection and of moral and material security; a child of tender years shall not, save in exceptional circumstances, be separated from his mother. Society and the public authorities shall have the duty to extend particular care to children without a family and to those without adequate means of support.”

Children of deportees are denied the right to live with both parents. These children are also stripped from the love and affection from one of the parents since the deported parent is exiled from the country. In addition these children are indirectly separated from the mother, as she might have to work multiple jobs to support the household. This also infers that the children could be struggling due to the lack of financial support; they undergo an emotional toll too heavy to manage, as their role as a child changed as they now must contribute to the new single-parent home environment. And, lastly,

- Article 7, partially declares, “The best interests of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for his education and guidance; that responsibility lies in the first place with his parents. The child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation, which should be directed to the same purposes as

education; society and the public authorities shall endeavor to promote the enjoyment of this right.”

Education and guidance are compromised for children of deportees as parents left behind struggle to provide financially; they can no longer take an active role at school or in their children’s lives as parental priorities have been shifted to the financial burden. In addition, children of deportees are expected to act beyond their age, as they assume an adults’ role in the household, such as taking care of younger siblings, cooking, cleaning, and supervising the house while left behind parents are at work.

As indicated on official United Nations’ documents, parental deportation violates the rights of children in the United States since it denied to its US-born children and immigrant children the rights granted by the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 and recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Then, when looking at the living conditions that deportation further imposes on the families left behind, it can be safely assumed that deportation is the ultimate mode of social exclusion in the United States with serious consequences on the families and children. When deportation is coupled with other modes of exclusion such as education, employment, income, ghettoized neighborhood, fear of crime, high crime rate, poor cultural capital and a lack of social network, children of deportees are at even higher risk of perpetuating a cycle of inequality, limiting their integration into society.

## **1.2. Research Questions**

The ordeal experienced by the Castillo family helped frame the counters of this investigation. This study is born out of the need to understand the experiences of

children and families who are left behind in the United States by a deported parent as they try to deal with the loss, pick up the pieces, and integrate into mainstream society. Many questions ran through my mind as I thought about the situation faced by Annie's family. I am also cognizant of the social inequalities children of immigrants face in their struggle to become members of mainstream society, and how immigrant families tend to address the need of housing, education and work-related issues or concerns. But, there is a need to know: How are children affected by deportation policies of documented immigrants? What are the institutions involved with these children (e.g. schools and community-based organizations) doing to help families of deportees adjust to the changes?

This study is conceptualized as an effort to begin to shape the social and educational experiences U.S.-born children undergo in the process of being left behind in the United States by a deported parent. At the core of this study are the following questions: What has been the social experience of children of deportees? What happens when they try to integrate into mainstream society? Have their educational outcomes been affected by their parent's deportation? However as this study seeks to explore the social and educational integration of children of deportees to mainstream society, it also looks at different questions in order to understand the impact of the deportation of parents on the children and the families left behind. Therefore, it is important to understand the deportation process of documented parents and how current policies impact on the sense of belongingness of immigrants in the United States. A pertinent question is therefore: What types of deportation procedures are used to exclude/deport people from the country?

As important as finding information about the families and children of deportees, however, is inquiring about current immigration policies changes in the United States. What has become obvious is that deportation from the United States is no longer limited to undocumented immigrants. Documented people (green card holders) are also being deported as well as people who have become citizens through naturalization often for committing crimes of “moral turpitude.” Exploring the exclusion of people through deportation, employment opportunities, education, housing, and economic policies seem to be a practical measure to assess the degree of “bulimization” of the United States, with the ultimate goal of finding ways to dispose “undesirable” or “unwanted” people, and what has been referred to as “dregs of society,” who according to Zygmunt Bauman (2003) are the “wasted lives.”

### **1.3. Aims and Objectives**

This investigation has three aims, each with its corresponding objectives that will facilitate the starting point from which social exclusion may be analyzed:

1. To examine the impact of deportation of parents on children.
  - Objective 1: Compare the present family situation of children of deportees with their situation prior to the removal of the parent.
  - Objective 2: Exhibit differences and/or similarities between children of deportees and other marginalized groups, such as their educational attainment, employment opportunities, and possible financial mobility.

2. To assess the impact of emotional trauma caused by the deportation of a parent on a child's school performance and educational aspirations.

Basically, there is a need to consider additional criteria beyond the ones customized on No Child Left Behind (NCLB), such as Standardized Testing, when assessing children's performance in school; is the child emotionally ready to learn?

- Objective 1: Discuss how the deportation of the parents affected the academic performance of children.
  - Objective 2: Discuss how the emotional outcome of deportation can affect school retention.
  - Objective 3: Discuss possible protocols and logistics for the school to address the needs of these students.
  - Objective 4: Argue that new policies are needed for psychologists and guidance counselors to address the fragile emotional state of children of deportees.
3. To explore the impact of immigration policy enforcement when studying the socio-economic development of children of deportees. Policies implications and issues will be addressed in the concluding chapter of the dissertation.
    - Objective 1: Argue that when children are neglected from policy construction, they may end up facing negative social consequence.
    - Objective 2: Argue that when policy makers do not consider the totality of society when implementing a policy, the weakest

groups, children of deportees and immigrant families, suffer the most.

- Objective 3: Argue that on-going evaluation of policy implementation is necessary in establishing a more inclusive and democratic society.

#### **1.4. Hypotheses**

The main focus of this study is the consequences of deportation on children left behind in the United States. This study seeks to examine deportation as a tool of social exclusion that further alienates children of deportees from mainstream society. Several hypotheses guide this investigation:

- the deportation of a parent has negative consequences on the children and families left behind;
- children of deportees experience low educational performance placing them at higher risk of failure;
- there is a decrease in academic aspiration or motivation among children of deportees;
- families of deportees experience stigmatization in the community;
- different economic survival strategies are used by the family of deportees to meet financial needs; and
- children left behind blame parents (mothers and fathers) for the deportation.

However, generalization to the population of documented and undocumented deportees will not be possible given the sample size of this study, but explorations of pertinent issues and concerns will be conducted.

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The recent intensification of immigration enforcement activities by the federal government has increasingly put children of immigrants at higher risk of family separation, economic hardship, educational failure, and psychological trauma (Capps R, Castaneda R. M., Chaudry A., and Santos R., 2007). Capps, et al, explain that the number of children affected by the arrest of parents and deportation “is about half the number of adults arrested.” For instance, “over 900 adults were arrested in three worksite immigration raids, and the parents collectively had over 500 children” (2007, p. 2). Children of deportees are then a silent minority group of youth who must cope with abandonment while attempting to adapt to their community environment, further their education, and gain access to the labor market.

This preliminary study may be helpful to illuminate and justify the necessity for different policies and procedures to be instituted such as:

- government agencies to provide a more cohesive form of tracking deportees and their families left behind; and
- provide a foundation to subsequent approaches to a more comprehensive study of the institutional dimensions of deportation and its impact on the children of deportees not only to the Dominican Republic, but also to other countries.

## **1.6. Limitations of the Study**

This exploratory study focuses on the deportation of Dominicans who are legal permanent residents to the Dominican Republic from New York City, which may or may not help explain deportation of other immigrants to other parts of the world. The study examines the impact of deportation on the children and families of documented deportees, such findings may have limitations when applied to undocumented individuals, children, and families. Although the findings may not adequately explain the deportation of undocumented immigrants, the data will shed light on some of the characteristics of social bulimia, which leads to the ejection or deportation from the United States.

The study is based on six families who were obtained through a snowball sample referred through my social network. This is qualitative research in which nonrandom sampling procedures were used limiting the ability and possibilities to draw general conclusions regarding the population of deportees.

Other important limitations are related to the possibility of doing group comparisons (undocumented or other marginalized groups of children, parents, and deportees) due to the nature of the small size of the sample. Comparisons of this nature will be conducted using available literature and secondary data from other sources and studies.

The recruitment of parents left behind to participate in this type of investigation also poses serious limitations. An important reason for the low participation rate is associated with the fear of stigmatization that these families have experienced or feel that they will confront. While some families agreed to participate, many refused to take

part in the study citing problems with being identified in the community as families of deportees. Obtaining subjects to participate in the study seems to be symptomatic of the problem of deportation.

Among those who agreed to become part of the investigation, some later withdrew from the study for fear of being stereotyped in both societies. For example, out of 144 families who had undergone the process of the deportation of a parent, and who were referred by grassroots organizations and community based organizations that cater to immigrant families (providing orientation meetings for families of deportees, in Washington Heights, Manhattan), only eight agreed to participate.

Two families withdrew from the study after completing the first half of the interview. One of the families was afraid of psychological repercussions; especially the two teenaged children in the household, given that they would have to reminisce, as the mother stated, their “frustrating experience” of losing their father to deportation. The last family withdrew for medical reasons, as the son suffered a schizophrenic crisis when he mixed depression pills with alcohol, after learning about his father’s death in the Dominican Republic. As a result, the mother decided to withdraw from the study. Both cases validate the high level of stigma these family face in their community, and the psychological consequences of the cost of deportation on the families and children left behind.

Another important issue for consideration for this type of research project is the involvement of children as participants in the process. For example, when the parent left behind was contacted for the purpose of inclusion in the study, they often refused to participate because they did not want the children to relive or revive the experience of

the deportation of the parent. The cost had been too high for the psychological well-being of and the adjustment processes of the children.

Some families are difficult to locate because they keep moving from place to place in order to avoid being singled out or stigmatized by those who find out about the parents' deportation. These families have a tendency to pick up and live without notifying even the school the children attend. The deportation of the parent becomes a huge secret for the parent and the children left behind. They are then forced to carry the burden and the scar in order to prevent further social, psychological, and political consequences.

A limitation imposed by the nature of the study is the impossibility to include deported parents since they are no longer in the country, and traveling to the sending society (the Dominican Republic) was outside of the scope of this investigation. The experience of deported parents is reconstructed from the data provided by parents left behind. In this case, both the validity and reliability of the data cannot be adequately checked through the research methodology utilized.

## **CHAPTER 2- Bulimic Society: A Dual Process of Inclusion and Exclusion through Mechanisms of Globalization, Immigration, and Deportation.**

*“Gangs emerge when youths try to understand the conflict of daily life.”*

*David Brotherton*

### **2.1 Introduction**

The study of U.S.-born children left behind by a deported Legal Permanent Resident parent is theoretically grounded in the theory of social bulimia characterized by the dual process of inclusion and exclusion (Young, 1999) which helps explain how and why certain groups become and remain marginalized from mainstream society, but at the same time, are included in some local governmental processes. A bulimic society is unable to tolerate certain groups who then are thrown out, ejected, or cast out. Levi-Straus metaphorically refers to this process as anthropophagic and anthropoemic (1992) by which he meant that some societies are “social cannibals and [other] vomit their deviants” (Young, 1999). It has been posited that modern industrial societies engulf its members by voraciously devouring them and then steadfastly ejecting them (Young, 1999, p. 81 and 82).

A bulimic society does both eat and vomit people, as internal and external controlling mechanisms. Young contends that bulimic societies consume and culturally assimilate masses of people through education, the media, and participation in the market place (p. 82). He also posits that social exclusion (vomiting up people), or the other side of engulfing people (eating them up) is a multi-dimensional process that can involve economic, political, and spatial exclusion, as well as lack of access to specific

resources, such as information, medical care, housing, policing, security, etc. Also, a bulimic society excludes individuals from the 'normal' areas of participation and full citizenship.

Social bulimia differs from conventional notions of social exclusion in that it stresses the twin processes of inclusion and exclusion and the intensity of these processes (Young, 1999). As the case of the United States demonstrates, immigrants have historically been pulled to its shores, but depending on the demographic characteristics of the newcomers, they either have experienced rapid or easy adjustment, integration and incorporation, or they have faced segmented and stratified assimilation. In general, Latinos<sup>1</sup> have been lured to the United States as other immigrants have. As a community, they have also experienced exclusion, truly affecting the future success of their children because the process has disadvantageously positioned them educationally, economically, politically and socially. In this sense, it can be understood that the United States has historically suffered from bulimia.

Bulimic societies, such as the United States, "are exceptionally seductive," their most pronounced manifestation is the attraction of the people through the so-called American Dream. However when American dreamers meet the harsh realities of class stratification and racial exclusion, they have nightmares (Young, 1999, p. 45). The practice of inclusion and exclusion weakens family structure, disrupts communal life, and effectively deprives people of their basic human rights. These mechanisms have been employed to protect the hegemony's legacy or the meritocratic social class, by

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<sup>1</sup> I will use the term Latino/a in lieu of Hispanic when referring to immigrants from Latin American or those coming from Spanish speaking countries, given its wider socio-political and cultural scope.

creating policies that exclude or impede specific groups of society from middle class privileges such as quality education, access to a competitive labor market, and political representation among others.

Exclusion by practices of this nature can involve economic, political, and spatial exclusion as well as lack of access to information, medical care, housing, policing, security, etc. (Young, 1999). Overall, exclusion is also manifested in 'normal' areas of participation and full citizenship. Flynn (2008) explains that the exclusive society is not simply eliminatory. He concurs with Jock Young that in "a society where both inclusion and exclusion occur concurrently—where massive cultural inclusion is accompanied by systemic structural exclusion—it will absorb and reject" (Young, 1999, p. 45).

Social exclusion should not be confused with the practice of "isolated dysfunctional individuals." It is a "collective phenomenon associated with a posited underclass," and with "global roots" (Young, 1999). Young contends that it is a "function of the impact of the rapid changes in the labor market, the decline of manufacturing industries, the rise in a more fragmented service sector, and the creation of structural unemployment in particular areas where industry has shut down" (1999). However, the term implies not only conflict but also class interests on the part of those wielding political and social capital - since social exclusion can exist without conscious intent or malice but not independently of human decision making, social, educational, and economic action. Flynn explains that "it is not an automatic process or a spontaneous outgrowth" of other mechanisms (2008).

Lastly, as Young explains, “the concept of social exclusion carries with it an imperative of inclusion,” which suggests that it is not sufficient for excluded individuals to be outside of the ranks of citizenship. The bulimic society seeks to generate some opportunities, whether by changing the motivation, capacity or available openings for the socially excluded to feel included, which then creates the illusion of everyone being able to reach the “dream” through their own bootstraps. Consequently the failure to achieve such “dream” becomes their fault. Policy makers design band-aid or quick fix solutions to make marginalized people believe that they are providing a sense of social inclusion.

Ironically, the so-called solution continues to confirm existing exclusionary practices because many people become socially excluded through the same policy proposed to address the social problem affecting the marginalized. An interesting example is the Public Assistance program, or ‘Welfare program,’ that is supposed to assist needy families with food stamps, rent and cash assistance, as well as Medicare. Many of the recipients become accustomed to these benefits, and even expect a perpetual assisting, forfeiting schooling or the acquisition of any skills to become employable; hence, these benefits appease their ‘indirect’ exclusion from the labor market. These families then conform to a culture of poverty. Katz (2001) posits that recipients usually do not pursue means to exit the programs.

Young (1999 and 2003) explains that there are different notions of social exclusion. The three most relevant to this investigation include:

1. Social exclusion is multi-dimensional, discussed above. Basically, society, or its ruling class, blames individuals for their own self-exclusion. Meritocratic class

(usually represented by policymakers) assumes the position that there are social programs to assist lower social classes. They contend that the government has created all necessary routes to provide jobs and ensure the welfare of its 'citizens.' Within this view, the underclass lacks motivation and skills to take advantage of social opportunities. The meritocratic class believed that they "engender a state of dependency where even if jobs are available out there, they do not want to take them." This assumption is known as the "blaming the victim" syndrome (Janoff-Bulman, Timko, and Carli, 1985). In other words, "excluded" are perceived as responsible for their own fate; hence, those in power are not responsible for their failure to succeed, while maintaining and reminding others of their own sense of invulnerability, safety and justice (Janoff-Bulman et al, 1985).

2. Social Exclusion is a social phenomenon, not an individual problem. There are juxtaposed views on marginality as a problem of isolated dysfunctional individuals. For example, it is the social stigmatization and labeling of the underclass as "criminogenic, drug ridden with images that are frequently racially charged and prejudiced," that generate rejection and social isolation of the underclass.

3. Exclusion "has global roots rather than being restricted to local problems." Young explains that, "it's a function of the impact of rapid changes in the labor market, the decline of manufacturing industries, the rise in a more fragmented service sector, and the creation of structural unemployment in particular areas where industry has shut down" (Young, 1999). The assumption is that society structures opportunities for people, consequently individuals do not take advantage of the available jobs and resources; they just don't know the how-to, in order to take the job. Young (1999)

explains that the lack of positive social model, not the motivation, “leads to social isolation.” There is no legacy of success for the underclass to model or adopt good practices like there is in the case of the meritocratic class (akin to Bourdieu’s theory on social capital).

This is the economic structure and social system immigrants find when they migrate to a developed nation such as the United States. Unfortunately, in developed nations, as Young describes, social exclusion is organically inherent in social policies. Hence, immigrants face limited resources and opportunities to make their dream of a better life a reality. Immigrants’ living conditions, as a marginalized group, turns their dream of a better life into a harrowing event, where they must deal with the intrinsic social exclusion present in the labor market, or the educational, or criminal justice system.

When considering the multi-dimensional process of social exclusion and the limited resources available to marginalized groups in poor communities, social exclusion is no longer merely a social phenomenon that targets and stigmatizes the underclass; rather it becomes a socio-economic, political and societal problem, rather than an individualized one. Marginalized people must deal with the consequences of living in a socially excluded environment. Twenge, et al, conclude that when individuals are socially rejected or excluded, they are “far more likely to strike out aggressively [...], making unhealthy choices, procrastinating and taking ill advised risks” (Flynn, 2008, p. 222).

Drawing from Twenge, et al’s study, Michael Flynn contends that social exclusion “is not just another type of misfortune because it can cause a deconstructed

psychological state; a state similar to that afflicting suicidal” populations (2008, p. 222). According to Flynn, “the individual is oriented to the past rather than the future and suffers from confused time perception, meaninglessness, chronic passivity and lethargy, emotional numbing, and avoidance of self-awareness” (2008, p. 222). Twenge, et al, conclude that: “socially rejected people don’t put much resistance to the statement that life is meaningless” (Twenge, et al, 2003, p.412). Addressing socially excluded individuals or groups is important because “when socially excluded groups are represented as afflicted with such extreme aggressiveness and psychological disorganization—as quasi-suicidal—they join the ranks of the dangerous” (Flynn, 2008, p. 222). These people surely experience “despair, rage, confusion, and periods of passivity and apathy, and even actively consider suicide, but their emotional and cognitive lives are far more complex and their resilience far greater” (Flynn, 2008, p. 223). There are various terms worth noting associated with social excluded people, including “delinquent youth,” “gang members,” “high school dropouts,” and “the chronically unemployed” as ‘alienated,’ rather than ‘excluded’ because of the need to belong and be accepted by others (Flynn, 2008, p. 221).

Manuel Castells (2003) and Michael Flynn (2008) view social exclusion from a more individualistic and personal perspective, whereas Jock Young (1999) describes social exclusion as a social, not an individual phenomenon, which is something key in social policymaking (1999). Young’s broad classification of social exclusion and Castells and Flynn’s assertion of the personal dimension offers the framework to understand the concept of toxic environment; where marginalized groups must co-exist, and where inequalities are perpetual.

Consider for example, the state of living conditions of the poor in America: The American dream of purchasing a home, paying for college tuition, saving for retirement, etc., has become elusive for many, especially the working poor, as they struggle each day to make ends meet and live from paycheck to paycheck. The rising rates of joblessness, foreclosures, and limited or poor educational opportunities reflect how toxic or negative the environment is in the United States for more and more people; a situation which is further compounded by the current dual processes of immigration and deportation.

## **2.2. A Toxic Environment**

The social environment becomes toxic and corrupt by the negative factors impacting the physical environment. A “toxic environment,” a term coined by Garbarino (1999), is manifested in economic stress, in a violence-ridden, demoralizing, alienating environment that results in further angering and disconnecting people, and polluting families and children. According to Garbarino, in a toxic environment, children grow up with absent caregivers; they must fend on their own emotionally because they lack adequate support. As will be discussed later, toxic environments exhibit many of the characteristics described in the social exclusion drivers of a bulimic society which affect the home, the school, the community, and society at large.

In general, there are more threats to children today than there were years ago. Currently, one of the most threatening events for a child’s life is the removal of a parent or guardian, especially a sudden, unexpected removal such as in the case of deportation, death, immigration, or divorce. All of the events have the potential to lead to dissolution

of the family unit and drastic behavioral changes among family members. Zhu (1997) has shown that immigrant children from intact (two-natural-parent) families or families associated with tightly knit social networks, consistently show better psychological conditions, higher levels of academic achievement, and stronger educational aspirations than those in single-parent (and step-families), or socially isolated families. There has been a drastic increase in the proportion of American children in one-parent families. The rise of single-parent families has aggravated the overall poverty trends for children (even more crucial for immigrant children or children of immigrants). If the presence of both parents at home and well-connected family ties are considered sources of social capital, the loss, or truncation, of the family system can reduce the access to social resources available to children (Fernandez-Kelly, 1995; Rumbaut, 1996).

According to the 2006 Families and Living Arrangements study, there were 12.9 million one-parent families in 2006 — 10.4 million single-mother families and 2.5 million single-father families (March, 27, 2007, US Census Bureau Press Release). Single parent family households have become a common occurrence in the United States, and the number of these types of households has been on the rise for the last several decades. Currently in the United States, according to single-parent family statistics, there are over 13 million single parents. The health, education, and behavior of children from single-parent families can be adversely impacted by the absence of a parent. This is not to say that all children from single-parents will suffer consequences such as these, but the possibilities are greater for children from single-parent families.

Most immigrant households in the United States are nuclear rather than extended family units exhibiting transformations that affect all family members. While immigration has a tendency to extend social and family ties across national borders that facilitate further flows (Landale, 1996), it also simultaneously disrupts the traditional family system both in the immigrant family itself, and in the social network to which the family is an integral part. In many cases, family disruption can cause serious problems for children's upbringing in the American context, when the family is separated by national borders and isolated from the ongoing networks of kinship relations in the homeland—the truncation of family networks, a situation where routine interactions among kin and former neighbors or friends are broken, and weakens traditional mechanisms of control and support (Landale, 1996, p.81).

The environment of children of deportees is further contaminated by belonging to single-parent homes because the toxic environment in which these children live, and are raised, is plagued with poverty. Besides the impact of having just one parent available, the child is affected by how the toxicity of the environment influences the remaining parent. Garbarino (1996) explains that parenting is often limited in toxic environments due to “poverty and other economic pressures, racism, addiction, educational failure, poor physical health, family violence, and adult emotional problems” (p.6). Since the relationship between children and adults can already be somewhat strained due to generational differences, these differences coupled with the other issues resulting from the toxic environment heighten the problems faced by both the parents and the children left behind in a toxic environment.

The gap between rich and poor, which progressively narrowed for most of the twentieth century, has been widening in recent years due to globalization, economic crises, and restructuring and is also related to the degree of toxicity in the environment encountered by immigrant children and families. In the United States, only a portion of the workforce has seen its economic advantages steadily increase as information technology and management become more critical to the economy; most have experienced worsening conditions. Blue collar jobs, the kinds of jobs generally available to immigrants, not only pay less than in previous years, but they have also been outsourced to the periphery, resulting in an expansion of the poor and rich classes, and a shrinkage of the middle class. In such an economic structure, even US-born Americans find their chances for economic mobility lessening. Today, the situation for many immigrants is bleaker than ever before in the history of the country, except for the unusually few, the highly educated, and highly skilled workers (Waldinger, 1996).

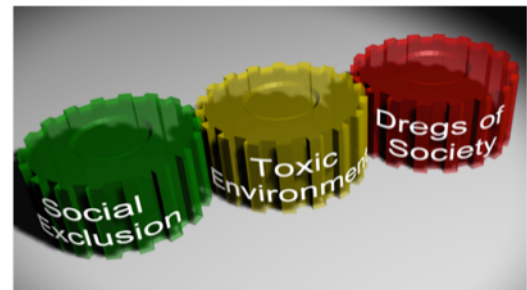
In the case of Dominican immigrants and their children, the focus of this study, Pessar (1985, p. 79) noted that many first-generation members of the group were able to improve their living standards by pooling resources in their households and they were mostly satisfied with what they had achieved, when comparing their living conditions in the United States to the one in the Dominican Republic. However, she casts doubt on whether the struggle of first-generation immigrants would steer the second generation to upholding their parents' aspirations and fulfilling their own expectations of socioeconomic mobility. She speculated that Dominican children were likely to be frustrated and disappointed if they found themselves trapped at the lower rungs of the occupational ladder, because of "blatant discrimination" and "lack of access

to prestigious social networks” (1987, pp. 124-125), and I would also add difficulties posed by the type of toxic environments in which they have constructed their ethnic enclaves in the United States. The problem is that in the process, many immigrants and poor people become human waste or dregs of society.

### 2.3. Dregs of Society: The Wasted Humans or Human Waste

As a result of social exclusion and toxicity, U.S-born children of immigrants and immigrant children have experienced assimilation into a ghettoized<sup>2</sup> subculture, at the cost of giving up their immigrant parents' pride of culture and hopes for mobility on the basis of ethnic solidarity (Waters, 1996). Minority children (including children of deportees) have suffered from unequal distribution of economic and educational resources that seriously curtail their chances in

life and trap them in isolated ghettos. A ghetto environment, in turn, produces a racially charged and a socio-economic excluded atmosphere that preserve class divisions, along racial lines, and also creates different levels of



**Figure 2.1 Mechanics of a Bulimic Society**

multi-marginalization leading to greater mentality of alienation of U.S-born children of immigrants (and foreign-born immigrant children) from American institutions which further diminishes their chances for upward mobility (Zhou, 1997, p. 77).

Subsequently, alienation pushes multi-marginalized children to become dregs of society—the least valuable members of society or excluded groups or individuals.

Zygmunt Bauman developed a social theory about the production and disposal of dregs of society in order to examine human inclusion and exclusion, the process Jock Young calls social bulimia (Young, 2008, p.35). Bauman argues that in the

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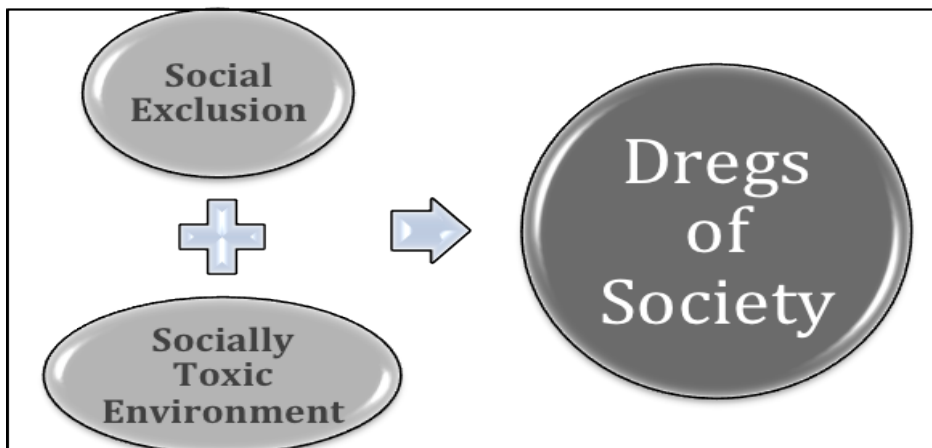
<sup>2</sup> In this study Ghetto refers to a part of a city occupied by a minority group or groups. Usually referred as the slums, ghetto communities are characterized by high crime rate, low educational attainment and people with low income.

contemporary globalized world, that while the elites live lavishly in a different world constructed willingly, the rest of the population finds itself cut off and forced to pay the heavy cultural, psychological, and political price of the exclusionary practices to which they have been subjugated (2000, p. 36). Bauman identifies socially excluded individuals as wasted lives, or human waste, as social redundancy; people who are no longer needed, of no use (2003, p.7), or something to be disposed of.

As people immigrate, the residents of the receiving country often expressed their fear of the newcomers by blaming them for causing social, economic, and security problems in the society. Immigrants are often blamed for job loss, higher crime rate, and terrorism; fears which have forced receiving countries such as the United States to create policies to protect citizens and limited resources against immigrants who are also considered threat as human wastes or redundancy. These 'wasted lives' or 'human waste' constitute one of the most significant threats facing working-class and lower middle-class youth as they assumed that these individuals could outnumber them, become educated and then compete with limited-available resources, ignoring that by default, marginalized youths are disenfranchised from many institutions that could provide social mobility or an equal integration to mainstream society.

These people, Bauman explains, no longer serve a purpose to society, instead they have "become a public charge," abusing public assistance, health care, and social welfare (p.11). Humans then become "redundant" (p.12) and no longer needed in society. Those casted in the meritocratic class strongly believe that if wasted lives (dregs of society) remain as part of the society they could eventually become a social problem, the tenets of social illness since "human waste is the by-product of

modernization and wasted lives are the collateral casualties of progress” (Bauman, 2003, p.15). In this sense, people who commit a crime of “moral turpitude,” a phenomenon discussed in this chapter, become not only disposable but also ejected from society. Children of deportees are collateral casualties of a toxic environment, generated by abandonment due to deportation, another social exclusionary method of “human disposal” available in the modern world. In Bauman’s words, social exclusion has created an industry of human disposal, as the mechanism of society continue to replicate cycle of poverty, and thus exclusion. He claims, that the “world is full;” therefore, there is an acute crisis of human waste disposal industry (p.4) spurred by unemployment rates and the inability for many to be self-sufficient.



**Figure 2-2** Reproduction of Human Waste/Dreg of Society

Using the metaphor of the collection of material waste, Bauman contends that modernization and consumption not only produce material waste, but also contribute to the perpetuation of the dregs of society. ‘Human waste’ or ‘wasted lives’ are the excess, the superfluous and redundant who no longer fit into society, or whom, for one reason or another, are not allowed to stay in the developed society, and are exiled back

to their country of origin. Bauman also argues that, “when a society focuses on capitalism and production, it tends to cast its members as source of labor/work.” Basically, people are worth what they produce and the level at which they produce. Therefore, U.S.-born children of parents who have been deported due to a crime of moral turpitude become children of criminals, deepening the level of social stigmatization, as well as personal stigma—being the by-product of their parents. There is the possibility that these children may be destined to become human waste, or dregs to society, as well.

According to Bauman social capital is key to the outcome of identifying and classifying human waste; there is no escape from the classification of human waste or its redundant of excluded people, since they are perceived as public charges and “the others do not need you, they can do as well, and better, without you” (2003, p.12). Bauman further posits that “immigrants embody visibly, tangibly in the flesh, the inarticulate yet hurtful and painful presentiment of their own disposability” (2003, p.56). Therefore, these perceived dregs to society have nothing positive or productive to offer, and become collateral casualties. This conceptualization has also been applied to children of deportees because they become stigmatized or labeled ‘human waste,’ or ‘wasted lives;’ ultimately, dregs of society.

Bauman discusses several ways to dispose human waste and collateral casualties. One way is by clustering them in a “dumping site,” within an underclass cluster in ethnic neighborhoods, or “sealed off in tightly closed containers” (p. 85) or new ghettos in society (p. 81). The new ethnic enclaves (or ghettos) have underrated educational programs, higher rates of incarceration, and increased surveillance, among

other social ills and controlling mechanisms. The problem is however, that this method of warehousing human wastes encourages dependence on public assistance and governmental funded programs, further perpetuating poverty, informal employment, worsening unemployment rates, and intensifying and sustaining the informal economy (drug dealing, shoplifting, stealing, pirating media, and stripping cars, among others). Humans clustered in this disadvantaged position become a “definitive disposal [...] which generates a shift from inclusion to criminal exclusion” limiting any chances of accomplishing the American dream of immigrants and their children (Bauman, 2003, p. 84).

A second disposal technique, especially used in a bulimic society, is incarceration or the warehousing of humans, which, for Young, is the ultimate form of exclusion. Young (1971) posits that the criminal justice system constrains the lives of many in ghettos because it impinges upon them daily. This phenomenon is manifested today more than ever before in poor neighborhoods even when people have not been incarcerated. A good case in point is Washington Heights in New York City where administrators in Community Based Organizations, report that police often arrest and detain youth for not leaving the school zone after dismissal as quickly as possible. In that community, the number of cases of people arrested for going under the turnstile, to enter the train system after having swiped their malfunctioning unlimited metro card, has also increased. In addition, ICE is spotted often in the neighborhood looking for people to deport. People are also arrested and placed under probation in Washington Heights for not carrying an identification card. All this surveillance and constant

harassment heightens the level of social exclusion, as the perception of the neighborhood worsens, and fear of crime increases.

Isolation and physical removal from society do not stop with incarceration. As I contend and argue in this study, the third disposal technique used by the United States to regurgitate/eject/vomit people from its belly has now become deportation. Over 400,000 people were deported from the United States in 2010, and the number continues to increase as more people are removed for crimes for which they have already paid their debts to society. Deportees become “stateless, placeless, and functionless” (Young, 2004, p. 76); it is the ultimate waste disposal, a final act of exclusion, not only from the country in which they have been living for most of their lives, but from their family and unfortunately from their children. Deportees leave behind their children in a further state of poverty, with a caregiver forced to work longer hours to support the household, and to send remittances to the deported parent. That deported parent is also not welcomed in the receiving third world country, and is unable to find employment to cover basic needs, much less to send money to help support the children left behind—financially or even morally—in the United States. The idea is to keep these people not temporarily, but permanently, away from the United States and from their families and children, in the original sending society (in this case in the Dominican Republic). For those reasons, and others that will be discussed in this study, I argue that deportation and not long-term incarceration, is the ultimate and most dangerous excluding phase of a bulimic society because it is a mode or social tool that prevent the inclusion of immigrants, which hinders million of children and families left behind in the United States. The social exclusion or ejection from the United States

does not only hamper the lives of children of deportees, but unintentionally also hurts the human capital of this country by further supplementing “human waste” to the cycle of poverty in socially excluded neighborhoods, which in the long term impact the entire country as many could end up in the criminal justice system or on public assistance—both systems supported by government.

Children caught in the middle of the waste dump, and in the complete ejection and rejection of their parents, become the new multi-marginalized scapegoats and “easy targets for unloading fears of social redundancy” (Bauman, 2003, p.63). Children of deportees, the collateral casualties of human waste and a human consequence of globalization, may be left behind to face economic stress, are emotional drainage and often have to assume adult roles at home. They may be left in state of confusion because of the process by which Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has separated and excluded their parent from their home and social environment (for further information on Immigration and Deportation process see sections 2.10 and 2.15.)

#### **2.4. Social Exclusion Domains**

The theory of bulimic society proposes that marginalization occurs through the pervasive, institutionalized lack of opportunities through processes that are mutually reinforcing, which ultimately results in inclusion and exclusion. Inclusion involves equality, human rights, and access to resources, but in the United States, it also involves immigration status, which could also define the assimilation level of the immigrant group. Exclusion, as discussed above, involves different ways through which people can be cast out of the society. As argued before, the ultimate form of exclusion is

deportation, but there are other indicators as mentioned earlier. The study of social domains provides another framework from which to articulate the problem of social exclusion.

Some European nations, such as France and England, are known for their advancement, commitment, and development in the area of social inclusion, leaving the United States far behind. For example, the European Union, which is currently comprised of 36 nations, has established commissions, social protection committees, and councils to monitor the progress made in the areas of poverty, health, housing, education, labor force, politics, and inclusion of the different sectors of the population (European Commission: Employment, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities). Indicators that measure the risk of poverty, material deprivation, quality of life, and civic participation or the lack thereof are used in the development of policies or what they have called national plan/agenda with the objective of coordinating programs to address social exclusion, and protection of individuals and families in need (European Commission: Employment, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities, 2006). The European Union radically opposes social exclusion and works to assure that planned progress is done as a social contract between the citizen and the society.

Interestingly, *The Social Exclusion Unit*<sup>3</sup>, in England, developed social drivers, or what I refer to as 'domains,' to study and measure the levels of exclusion of its citizens from socio-polity and civic life. These social domains include income and poverty, employment, education and skills, health, housing, transport, crime and fear of crime,

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<sup>3</sup> The Social Exclusion Unit was set up shortly after the 1997 general election in the UK and uses the term of social exclusion by Labour Politicians. It is charged with assessing and coordinating the government's drive against social exclusion. In 2006 the Social Exclusion Task Force replaced it.

social support/ social capital, and the impact of the neighborhood (2004). These domains can be driven downward or upward by three contextual factors: labor market, demographic, and social policy (2004, p. 9). The Social Exclusion Unit also added to the list other important domains such as financial services, social services, leisure services, or civic participation which were left out (The Social Exclusion Unit, 2004, p. 5). In addition, I would also add to the existing list of domains, immigration and deportation. They point out that evidence of these domains can also be examined by looking at the impact of social exclusion on special populations such as women, children, single-parents, people with disability, young people, ethnic minorities groups (The Social Exclusion Unit, 2004, p. 6), and I would also add, immigrants and their children.

Below, I discuss nine domains of social exclusion which include: employment, income and poverty, education, health, housing, neighborhood, transportation, crime or fear of crime, and social support/social capital (Social Exclusion Unit Report, 2001 and 2004), which can be used to determine and analyze the levels of exclusion in a bulimic society. These interconnected series of domains are indicative of social status and the means by which the marginalized become excluded. These domains measure the risk of poverty, material deprivation, quality of life, and civic participation or the lack thereof. Minorities and immigrants with low income, limited education, unemployable skills, and who qualify for public assistance could be considered socially excluded, even if they are participants in social institutions such as school, work, and health services that provide some form of inclusion to a social mobility. But their lack of social network and cultural capital make them vulnerable to marginalization. In some cases, people who have achieved higher levels of education can also be considered excluded from

society, because they do not have the required social capital to compete in the labor market that could lead to the enhancement of their livelihood. The domains of social exclusion are linked to and mutually reinforced by each other. Hence, “In tackling the elements of social exclusion as domains, there is a danger that these links will be lost (2004, p. 6).

For purposes of this research, although there are nine social exclusion domains, I consider those children and family characteristics, education, and the neighborhood to be the important drivers or domains of social exclusion, as they provide the main setting for the development of exclusion. It is also important to highlight that, not surprisingly, ‘education’ was found to be a key [domain] of social exclusion because “individuals who experience social exclusion were faced with underachievement in education;” consequently, these individuals experienced “limitations to labour market, low income, poor access to services, stress, and ill-health.” The impact on children is crucial when globalization on a wider scale is considered. As the Social Exclusion Unit states, they become the ‘human cost.’ This process leaves many individuals behind, as they deal with “reduced social cohesion, higher crime and fear of crime, and higher levels of stress and reduced mobility” (Social Exclusion Unit Report, 2001 and 2004). This hindrance is likely to result in the derailment of indicators of the aforementioned domains, which, in turn, also has the potential of also becoming a “social cost.”

Educational attainment at the “compulsory schooling [level] has been identified as the most frequent and effective childhood predictor of adult outcomes” of social exclusion because “individuals who leave schools with low levels of formal educational attainment and poor basic skills, are at a higher risk of experiencing social exclusion as

adults, with those who lack basic literacy and numeracy skills being at particular [higher] risk” (The Social Exclusion Unit, 2004, p. 35).

The neighborhood (social capital and the community) also impacts on social inclusion or exclusion. The Social Exclusion Unit states that there are spatial concentrations of poverty and people who experience disadvantage in society. They claim that it is worse to be poor in a deprived neighborhood than it is to be poor elsewhere, because living in a deprived area can influence whether or not someone is likely to suffer from the adverse outcomes typically associated with social exclusion (The Social Exclusion Unit, 2004). The neighborhood is an “important location that profoundly affects such outcomes as education, employment and health” (2004, p. 86). However, the methodological challenges of measuring the community’s impact on exclusion and “the processes that generate them are difficult to evaluate due to the inter-related and circuitous nature of the relationship” (2004, pp. 86-87).

In addition to the social exclusion domains, Percy-Smith (2000, p. 9) identified several dimensions of social exclusion, along with its indicators, useful in understanding the process of exclusion of children and families of deportees left behind in a bulimic society. A review of the social exclusion domains and Percy-Smith’s dimension of social exclusion, indicates that there is a personal and societal bulimic cost since it perpetuates social mechanism and social cost that imbue social exclusion to already disadvantaged social groups, i.e., children of deportees. Resultantly, children of deportees growing up with such precarious social conditions run the risk of becoming a collateral damage of a bulimic society, taxing their future and social integration to the labor market and mainstream society.

However, due to the scope of the research not all of these indicators will be used in this study. Percy-Smith’s dimension of social exclusion and the indicators are presented in Table 2.1. From Table 2.1 “Percy-Smith’s Dimension and Indicators of Social Exclusion,” this study only used the economic and individual dimensions of social exclusion, with their adhered dimension indicators—a complete description of the domains used to analyze the lived experiences of children of deportees can be found in Chapter 4, the chapter on methodology.

**Table 2.1 Percy-Smith’s Dimension and Indicators of Social Exclusion**

<i>Dimensions of Social Exclusion</i>	<i>Dimension Indicators</i>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term unemployment</li> <li>• Casualization and job insecurity</li> <li>• Workless households</li> <li>• Income poverty</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breakdown of traditional households</li> <li>• Unwanted teenage pregnancies</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Crime</li> <li>• Disaffected youth</li> </ul>
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disempowerment</li> <li>• Lack of political rights</li> <li>• Low registration of voters</li> <li>• Low voter turnout</li> <li>• Low levels of community activity</li> <li>• Alienation/lack of confidence in political processes</li> <li>• Social disturbance / disorder</li> </ul>
Neighborhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental degradation</li> <li>• Decaying housing stock</li> <li>• Withdrawal of local services</li> <li>• Collapse of support networks</li> </ul>
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental and physical ill health</li> <li>• Educational underachievement / low skills</li> <li>• Loss of self-esteem / confidence</li> </ul>
Spatial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concentration / Marginalization of vulnerable groups i.e. elderly, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, etc.</li> </ul>

## 2.5. The United States as a Bulimic Society

Before focusing on an in-depth analysis of social exclusion of Dominican deportees, their families and children left behind, it is important to understand the context in which the United States became a bulimic society. Hence, the correlation between social exclusion and the bulimic society must be understood within the context of a critical analysis of the relationship between globalization and the uneven labor market and integration of those who may lack social and cultural capital or technical and academic skills, ultimately hindering their financial mobility.

Though globalization and social exclusion are two distinct processes not necessarily inextricably linked, in the context of lived experiences of the U.S. born children of deportees, globalization is central to the analysis of social exclusion and a bulimic society. Therefore, it is essential to understand the processes by which globalization affected the United States subsistence technology—the primary mode of society forms of subsistence—of the United States as it continues to influence immigration trends, which affect or worsen mainstream's perceptions on immigrants, and consequently challenge the implementation of social policies (i.e. immigration, education, and social services). Globalization influences the balance of the domains of social exclusion because it impinges on the process of citizenship and social belongingness, which in the United States have been traditionally defined by processes of assimilation. Those who do not assimilate to the dominant society are perceived as dregs of society who toxify the environment (Garbarino, 1999) and thus, must be ultimately removed (Bauman, 2000, 2003).

Inherent to the process of globalization is the movement of capital, resources and people on a global scale (Mishra, 1999). Globalization results in massive migrations around the world (Samuel and George, 2002; Aleinikoff and Klusmeyer, 2002; Castles, 2000; Miles and Thranhardt, 1995) forcing core countries to reevaluate the politics of belongingness. This reevaluation challenges the ethos of the American Dream, which is one of the primary pull factors for immigration to the United States. For many skilled and unskilled immigrants, the American Dream represents a path to a 'better life,' which often includes the image of the Statue of Liberty, representing a beacon of hope, liberty, justice, and the notion that opportunities abound for people to pull themselves up by their bootstraps and join the 'middle class' (Jillson, 2004). Dan Rather, CBS News Anchor, reported that all the participants in the book entitled *The American Dream: Stories from the Heart of Our Nation* claimed to have a "sense of the dream's presence, and importance, and feel that America has made their own dreams possible" (2001, p. xxi). Jillson (2004) agrees with Rather 's perception of the American Dream, concurring that the dream "...[is] a shimmering vision of a fruitful country open to all who come, learn, work, save, invest, and play by the rules" (p. 7).

However, Jillson (2004) also clarified that although the dream serves as a symbol of hope, "the reality, as we all know, has had darker dimensions, [because] ... only American's most fortunate sons, and few, if any, of her daughters, were allowed to compete for their accolades and prizes" (p.7). He concluded that "the American dream has always been more open to some than to others ... [even] when immigrants, minorities, and women achieved new rights, these usually are amounted to their right to compete against well-entrenched white men in a matrix of established law and policy

that they had developed to protect their current interests and future prospects” (p. 8). Jillson’s argument clearly describes the protection of the hegemony or dominant class against minority people, and how mechanisms are in place to socially exclude them from mainstream society, while framing a platform of inclusion with the ideal of public education and opportunities of better life through employment opportunities. Many believed the dream, but existing mechanisms have spawned a cycle of poverty and a culture of marginalized people who are denied access to key social capital and network hindering their dreams of achievement of a desired financial mobility, and even the ideal of a better life.

The process of ‘the inclusion’ of marginalized minority is further perpetuated in the narratives of American history, imbued with ideas of American exceptionalism, Manifest Destiny, Democracy and Capitalism as the true path to freedom and happiness continue to be propagated and imposed on immigrants and U.S.-born alike. For immigrants, these narratives continue to reinforce the ideal of inclusion embedded in the perception of the United States of American as a haven for the poor and working class immigrants in search of a better life and freedom.

However, in a bulimic society inclusion appears to have a democratic component, as described in section 2.4 on Social Exclusion Domains, but exclusion which also characterizes a bulimic society generates a contestable democracy or an oligopoly democratic process; where a society is dominated by a small number of people who are able to collectively exert control over policy making and the distribution of financial, educational and other resources. This means that in a bulimic society there is an oligopolic democracy, that is when in a society, such as the United

States, is dominated by a small number of people who are able to collectively exert control over policy making and distribution of financial, educational and political resources, and minority groups are systemically excluded as they attempt to contest for the same resources and socio- economic opportunities. While minorities cannot successfully compete in an oligopolic democracy, in a monopolistic democracy there is no room for social exclusion. In such societies, individuals have equal opportunity at excelling socially, politically and financially.

For U.S.-born children of immigrants and immigrant children, the narrative of the American Dream and democracy continue to be sold through (ironically) the educational system and the media as the golden truth. These narratives portray the inclusion of everyone in society. However, the dream is elusive, and its messages are contradictory, as “children are taught this history by the same teachers who tell them that they will never amount to anything” (Labson-Billings, 2009), pushing them aside, while school administrators expressed concerns on the number of children in the classroom, or their level of ill-preparedness to learn the new curriculum; all with the administrator’s oversight that some teachers might not even be trained to teach the new curriculum as reflected in the No Child Left Behind Act passed by President George W. Bush which places “emphasis on testing students annually and judging schools primarily on the basis of their test scores” (Michelli, 2011, p. 4).

According to Michelli, today, “under the Obama administration, education policy has been driven by efforts to apply value-added systems to teachers and schools to a larger extent than had been the case under Bush” (2011, p. 4). Michelli states that the “central policy is embodied in the Race to the Top program [which allows] states to

complete for a total of to \$4 billion with awards to states in the \$70-200 million range” (p. 4).

Hence, education for minority children is not a right but a privilege, and these students are caught in the middle of a vortex of socio-political policies. While the failures of the educational institution have mostly been placed on children and/or families, the reflection is again that of blaming the victim syndrome. But, proof of the malfunctioning of the United States educational system is manifested in the overwhelming percentages of school dropout and the number of school failings to properly prepare these children for further educational goals, or even on the number of students (Blacks and Latinos) who are suspended from school eventually adding to the systematic school truancy problem (<http://www.nyclu.org/content/impact-of-school-suspensions-and-demand-passage-of-student-safety-act>). Another proof is what Michelli refers to as the achievement gap among students from different races, ethnicities, and socio-economic classes (2011, p. 5). He also argues that school funding or what has been called financial gap is another proof (Michelli, 2011, p. 5). Michelli claims that “Presently, urban and rural schools tend to be much more poorly funded than suburban schools” (2011, p. 6). The uneven distribution of resources is another characteristic of a bulimic society, as well as an oligopoly democratic system.

In today’s world, education continues to be key factor in order to gain access to a global economy and ultimately achieve the desired financial mobility and better life. From a standpoint of a bulimic society, education then could be a social bulimic tool, as it seems a path to inclusion to mainstream society; however, the current educational system is much in need of an overhaul in its educational policy in order to increase

United States current graduation rates. The current system socially excludes many minority students who attend poorly funded and curriculum deficit schools, which contribute to the widening gap of high school completion between dominant and minority ethnic students. Unfortunately, many minority-marginalized students, who do complete their high school education, lack the necessary skills to continue with a higher education, forcing them to obtain a technical or professional degree at a community college, or if pursuing a higher degree, they take an average of seven years to obtain a bachelor's degree (CUNY, OIRA 2010 Report).

The purpose of education in the United States has also been questioned. As Michelli reviewed the perception of the purpose of education through the lenses of current policy versus what the purpose of education should be in a democratic society, he concludes that describing the reasons for educating is not simple due to the complex connection between education and democracy, and that because "Education is indeed an essentially contested concept" ... between and among policy makers, politicians, citizens, religious figures, and educators, to name a few groups" (2011, pp. 2 & 3). He contends that the purposes of education in a democratic society should be as follows: "preparing students for democratic participation, providing access to knowledge and critical thinking, enabling all students to take advantage of life's opportunities, and enabling students to lead rich and rewarding personal lives" (Michelli, 2011, pp. 4 and 5). He says that "Not all would agree that these are key purposes of education, but based on our exploration so far of the nature of democracy and its connection to social justice; we believe that all four purposes are important" (p. 5).

However, by default, minority children are caught in the midst of a whirlpool of social exclusion, the other face of social bulimia (characterized by the twin dual process of inclusion and exclusion), limiting their socio-economic mobility, and truncating their hope to equality and social justice in a truly democratic society.

The American Dream is based on 'The Declaration of Independence,' which states "All Men are created equal that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" (Jillson, 2004, p. 2-3). These ideals belong to a generation dominated by enlightenment values and highlighted by Protestant and individualistic ethics, which meant that hard work led to upward mobility, which fueled the myth of the American Dream, and the ideals of democracy. The American Declaration of Independence defined the country's socio-political principles, in which Anglo-Saxon ethos was indoctrinated. Anyone coming to the United States assumed a priory that 'everyone was created equal' and that searching for the American Dream required assimilating to the existing social fabric and political system of the society. Because of this ethnocentric approach, Sklar (1995) concluded that the "American Dream is slowing dying" since forced assimilation fosters "the snake oil of scapegoating" of minority groups. However, the ideologies embedded in the American Declaration of Independence and the American Dream are not feasible today because the country is no longer utilizing the moral contract (obligation) to change, or assimilate deviants into the society; where ethnicity, race, gender and cultural capital determine someone's place in this fragmented society.

Resultantly, the process of globalization, as it relates to the sense of belongingness to the fabric of the American society, excluded unskilled and some skilled

immigrants from the labor market. This has led to a disproportionate distribution of income, driving many into the informal economy, which could eventually lead to further social exclusion, such as deportation for many United States Legal Permanent Residents.

All these factors could eventually lead to the unsuccessful integration to white collar jobs and/or the global market of immigrants and their children. Furthermore, in connection to globalization, there are no jobs for the unskilled worker and no opportunities for the poor (Killick, 2002) to “pull themselves up by their bootstraps.” But the stage has already been set that everyone can achieve their American Dream, if they work hard enough. Individuals who do not make it are viewed, and view themselves, as failures and casted out; thus becoming socially excluded. As stated before, inclusion and exclusion are symptomatic and simultaneous processes in a bulimic society.

## **2.6. Globalization: United States Subsistence Technology—A Synopsis**

Building on Weber’s theory of class (or property), prestige and power, sociologist Gerhard Lenski analyzed social stratification in the context of societal evolution or the level of development of a society. Lenski (1984) defined subsistence technology as the “means by which a society satisfies basic needs.” Lenski explained that “An agrarian society relies on labor-intensive agriculture, whereas an industrial society relies on machines and inanimate fuel supplies” (Nolan and Lenski, 2004). Following Lenski’s definition of subsistence technology, four major historical eras have contributed to the evolvement of a United States global economy/society, characterized

by a different subsistence technology: First, the Age of Reason or Rationalism, with an agrarian subsistence technology; second, the industrialization era, which caused the modernization of means of production or a new economy of capitalism; third, the post-industrial era, where economic growth was fueled by developments in new technology, computer-related fields, information processing, and scientific research (Chirot, 1994). Chirot (1994) fairly speculated, “Economic success in the postindustrial era is closely related to specialized knowledge, familiarity with new technologies, and education in general” (p. 88).

The last and fourth era is globalization, which integrates local and national economies, as a response to the financial challenges posited by the industrialization era. Mishra (1999) defines globalization as “the openness of national economies with respect to trade and financial flows but seen very much in political ideological terms.” In the current era, information and education are key components of subsistence technology as the nation envisions a sustainable economy. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Thomas Hobbes, and John Locke also discussed issues of democracy by addressing the responsibilities of the state towards the citizens and that of citizens towards other citizens (Pettit, 1997). Democracy, a political system where the majority rule, also, in principle, includes equality, freedom, access to power, and liberties granted, guaranteed and protected by a constitution (Shapiro and Cheibub, 2003).

The concept of, and the cult to, progress has permeated the western world since the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Ogwyn, 2000). First, there was the Age of Reason or Rationalism, which encouraged and promoted reliance on science for the understanding of the external world. During this period, “Remarkable progress was made in understanding

the natural world (Ogwyn, 2000, p.33). The Age of Enlightenment or the questioning of traditions and belief was a consequential development or path from the previous period. The human perception of the world changed from the conception of one engineered by a Creator (Christianity) to one which evolved from natural selection (Darwinism). During this period, thinkers rejected the bible as the source of divine revelation and saw God as a master watchmaker who had abandoned his creation (Ogwyn, 2000). For them, there was no place in the world for supernatural intervention that suspended the law of nature (Ogwyn, 2000).

The next stage entailed the application of scientific methods to the sphere of economic production on a larger scale. This phase is referred to as the Industrial Revolution and changed everything including social relations. While Darwin spoke about 'survival of the fittest' and evolution, which eliminated the hands of God in the creation of the human race and suggested continual growth and improvement, Marx talked about the emergence of something new from the old. He felt that the old would inevitably give way to progress in the form of a more just and developed society (Ogwyn, 2000). Though predominant discourses of the era held that human beings have free will and that progress was inevitable, Marx pointed out that with the cementation of the division of labor and the development of capitalism, access to resources and power would be limited for workers and poor people. Yet, Marx recognized collective power and reinforced the belief that ultimately things would improve. This period was characterized by sentiments of optimism and idealism (Nash, 2000; Ogwyn, 2000).

The modernization of the means of production and the division of labor due to the changes brought about by industrialization transformed existing agrarian societies from mercantilism to Capitalism. Under the capitalist model of production, the masses experienced substantial improvement in their standards of living. It has been argued that “nothing remotely like this economic behavior [rise in living standards] has happened before” (Lucas, 2002, p.10). However, it also created different classes, one comprised of industrialists and businessmen, and another of workers, who became stratified, giving birth to social exclusion. Despite the exclusion of the working class, progress occurred at a high speed and at a larger scale than ever before. The world seemed to be moving towards bigger and better things. Globalization became “a defining term of the 1990s,” (O’Rourke and Williamson, 1999) as a phenomenon that stretches back several centuries, or even several millennia. According to Andre Gunder Frank, “there was a single global world economy with a worldwide division of labour and multilateral trade from 1500 onward” (Frank 1998, p. 52), while Jerry Bentley argues that even before 1500, “trade networks reached almost all regions of Eurasia and sub-Saharan Africa and large volumes of commerce encouraged specialization of agricultural and industrial production” (Bentley 1999, p. 7).

Mishra’s definition of globalization alludes to the stratification minority immigrants could undergo in the absence of education or specialized training (1999). In addition, the political ideologies on globalization further complicate the stereotyping of unskilled immigrants, as they seem to lag behind in their integration into a global economy. Therefore, subsistence technology in the United States—a core nation—is challenged to fulfill the needs of its citizens, as resources become scarce, given the

number of businesses exported to the peripheries and the number of unemployed workers in the country due to their lack of skills and limited employment opportunities (Mishra, 1999).

The new economic model of capitalism helped create a new utopia of the American dream, not only for immigrants but also for nationals who migrated from South to North, with huge production and profits. The new model also heightened class tensions; defining systems of power and oppression for this economic development required new workers and, hence the United States allowed immigrants to enter the country to work in the development of the nation. Sociologist Daniel Bell analyzed the economic changes and forecasted the new threatening trends emerging in the American economy as “economic growth slowed down and income inequality rose, and as the economy distinguished between winners and losers, the successful and the unsuccessful” (1976). Bell warned that “these dramatic changes in the growth and distribution of family income reflected equally dramatic changes in the growth and distribution of opportunity in the American economy, as the transformation of work from labor to thought and creativity might leave behind and divert the most creative from the traditional virtues of Protestant ethic to leisure, pleasure, and self-fulfillment” (1973, 1976). In other words, the changes in subsistence technology in the American economy would challenge the traditional incorporation, to a more segmented and pluralistic process of acculturation rather than assimilation to American ethos. America was about to change its social values as its “economy in the last few decades of the twentieth century from goods producing to a knowledge-driven service economy” (Jillson, 2004, p. 233).

Immigration as well as internal migration, under the guise of expansion, were encouraged - both to develop economically and agriculturally and to realize imperialistic projects of manifest destiny (Ngai, 2004). The United States welcomed people and offered them the basic rights and freedoms under the constitution; these immigrants were also offered the hopes of financial mobility or the ideal of the *American dream* (Schwarz, 1997). Immigrants helped build the country and the republic: they built bridges, roads, monuments, industries, buildings; the list is endless. During this stage of development or need, there was a belief that society had the mechanism to integrate or to assimilate newcomers into its social, economic and political fabric. However, integration and assimilation mechanisms were and continue to be structured by the conflicting relationship between the newcomers and those in power (Noel, 1968. p. 163).

The protection of individual rights/human rights by the government was an important part of the social contract of democracy. This form of government represented a phenomenal change from monarchy, aristocracy/oligarchy, and timocracy. But, then humanity faced the calamities and atrocities of the two World Wars, economic depression, and more wars. The inability of industrialized societies to continue to amass wealth, exercise control, coupled with the collapse of established moral consensus, led the world into more crises. The project and efforts to maintain the same level of progress by individual and isolated countries failed. Globalization, or the need to integrate local and national economies into a worldwide network, became a viable solution to the capitalist economic crisis (Sassen, 1984). The idea was to use

capital and labor flows, technology, culture, and trade as vehicles to integrate the world into a new system (Sassen, 1991 and 2006).

### **2.7. The Dual Process of Globalization: Expansion-Inclusion & Peripherization-Exclusion**

Under globalization, democracy took the form of world federalism or what is called global democracy or cosmopolitan democracy. After World War I and World War II, there was a need to prevent global wars (Keane, 2003). Democratic ideals and values took center stage in establishing the United States as the Superpower of the Twentieth Century, defining inclusion through expansion and exclusion through peripherization (Nash, 2000; Sassen, 2006). Central to the new economic system that was born of these changes is the relatively fluid transference of labor and capital. Nations would become borderless, but some would become the core, comprised of industrialized societies, and others would be the periphery, comprised of the developing, or less developed areas which would be incorporated in the new economic order, as dependent nations and to which core countries would farm or outsource different economic functions, and would search for cheap labor (Sassen, 1988). At the same time, the economic shift changed immigration trends, altering the demand for unskilled immigrants needed for agriculture and the labor/industrial market. The change of immigration trends required more professional and skilled migrants to be integrated into the globalized labor market.

The periphery (the third world countries) would provide raw materials and human capital for core nations (developed countries) to continue to make huge profits.

Some poor or developing nations would provide the labor at the core, and later at the periphery, to sustain the economic growth of the industrialized world (Nash, 2000; Sassen, 2006). This new model however did not economically benefit many of the underdeveloped countries, given that factories established in the free trade zones in the periphery did not help to raise the standard of living (Sassen, 2006). Instead, migration from the periphery to the core increased. Many workers migrated to the United States in search of a better life. In becoming financially dependent upon foreign sources, workers realized that they could potentially improve their livelihood and that of their families by coming to the source of the capital. In this manner, the establishment of factories in the periphery triggered more emigration.

Many of the Free Trade Zone factories also changed the status quo of some of these peripheric countries. For example, young women of child bearing age who worked in the manufacturing industry in the free trade zones, or what some have called a model of economic development through invitation, were expected not to have children so that the fruit of their labor could be further extracted (Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueño, 1979). People were paid less than the minimum wage, and unionization was prohibited (Grosfoguel, 2003). A well-known case is the pharmaceutical companies that relocated to the periphery, which polluted the environment, and refused to clean it or pay for the cleaning (Bonilla and Campos, 1982). In Puerto Rico, many women were sterilized to test surgical procedures and products to be marketed for core countries such as the United States (Perez, 2002; Campos and Bonilla, 1982).

The core also suffered the consequences of the crises of the capitalist system of production. The transference of manufacturing and later, an entire portion of the automobile industry and technology, to the periphery, left millions of people unemployed and underemployed in the United States (Sklar, 1995). The dominance of the United States in the world economy disintegrated at the same time that some firms rose to the level of international corporations to fill the existing gap (Sassen, 1991). The international economy experienced fragmentation as well as spatial dispersion and global integration of economic activities (Sassen, 1991, p. 3). The outsourcing of functions can be conceived as a redeployment of growth poles, which created a new strategic role for major cities (1991, p. 3, 29). In the United States, the manufacturing industry was drastically transformed, leaving very little work at the core because labor-intensive functions were farmed out of the country. The fragmentation of the manufacturing industry left thousands of workers disconnected from the labor market, and at the same time, a persistent need for highly skilled workers and immigrants.

The middle class was directly affected by the development of the new economic system. Young contends that: "middle classes ...found their world rendered precarious and transient [and that] the downsizing of the economy involve[d] 'lean production' in the manufacturing industry with the de-skilling of labor and the stress on the flexibility of the work force" (1999, p. 8). He further points out that the "chronic relative deprivation amongst the poor...gives rise to crime and a precarious anxiety amongst those better off which breeds intolerance and punitiveness towards the law-breaker" (p. 8). The myth of the American Dream with its concept of progress and inclusion of all has been challenged with massive structured unemployment, and deprivation

especially for post-1965 immigrants with low skills. Large groups of people in both the industrialized as well as in the “developing” world suffered from alienation and exclusion.

As many scholars would contend, globalization did not immediately curtail, stop, or diminish immigration to the United States; in fact, it spurred it (Sassen, 1991). People continued to arrive in large numbers looking for work and seeking the dream of a better life. Many found work in the downgraded sectors of the economy (Sassen, 1991, 1988) and some would create their own work opportunities in the informal sector (Sassen, 1988; 2003b). Integration or assimilation into the society has become difficult for some newcomers. In fact, some groups have experienced fragmented or segmented assimilation because they have not followed the patterns of assimilation and integration previously established by earlier European immigrant groups. “Old” immigrants grew to adulthood without continuing contact with their relatives or the native country. Some were not able to return or go back due to the precarious nature of existing (or perhaps none existing) transportation system. Today, the current speed and ease of modern transportation and communication help new immigrants maintain cultural and linguistic diversity. A continuous high rate of immigration tends to slow down the assimilation process because the contact with other newcomers makes assimilation practically unnecessary.

When paired with social advancement, socially exclusive policies that define levels of marginalization and stigmatization have resulted in slow processes of change in cultural values, English skill acquisition, and adaptation of Anglo customs for new

comers and their offspring (Citrin, J., Lerman, A., Mirakami, M., & Pearson, K., 2007; Wright R., Ellis M., & Parks V., 2005). This slow process of assimilation is problematic for a global economy that has exported manufacturing and service jobs that immigrants traditionally hold, thus pushing them into the informal economy because they do not have the skills to thrive in the formal economy. Lack of assimilation reinforces cycles of poverty as well as negative perceptions of immigrants further excluding them from the fabric of society.

### **2.8. Inclusion through Immigration: Immigration Waves**

There have been four major waves of immigration, the first of which occurred in 1820. A mixture of religious, political, and economic factors motivated the English, Scots, and Irish, Germans and other Europeans to migrate to the United States (Lebergott, 1986), making these the first wave. The second wave of immigration occurred between 1820 and 1860 when more than 750,000 German, British, and Irish immigrants arrived in the United States to escape poverty and famine (Briggs, 1992). Over four million (4.3) Europeans from the cited countries came during the next 20 years. The third wave of immigrants “started in 1880, after the Civil War, when almost 460,000 European immigrants came to the United States” (Briggs, 1992, p. 35). By the end of the third wave of immigration, more than 20 million southern and eastern European migrants had arrived. Most of them moved to cities in the eastern and mid-western states; and more than one half of workers in New York, Chicago, and Detroit were immigrants in the 1910s (Briggs, 1992).

Martin and Midgley (2006) state that the economic depression of the 1930s discouraged immigration and the United States introduced “visa quotas” placing a ceiling on the number of immigrant visas available. During the 1940s and 1950s, immigration from Mexico and other Western Hemisphere nations became increasingly important to the US economy when 60,000 Mexicans entered the country illegally, inciting the “operation wetback” in 1954—one of the first enforcements on deportation to exile the first wave of undocumented Mexican workers.

The fourth and last wave of immigrants began after 1965 when the United States changed its preference system. Instead of giving priority to immigrants from Western Europe, the new system favored those whose US relatives would sponsor them, or those who were skilled employees sponsored by companies. These two programs (family sponsorship and skilled employers) shifted the European immigration to Latin American and Asian countries (1992).

Martin and Midgley (2006) stated that whether “immigrants are viewed as an asset or threat,” the United States acknowledged its history as a nation of immigrants. United States’ Presidents frequently remind Americans that, except for Native Americans, they or their forebears left another country to begin anew in the “land of opportunity,” suggesting that immigration allows individuals to lead better lives, and at the same time, strengthens the country (p. 6). At first, it was under this idea of a ‘land of opportunity’ that many immigrants came to the United States in search of a better life, whereas, they now come in search of the ‘American Dream.’

The Population Bureau reports, that “between 1990 and 2005, 14.5 million immigrants were admitted as permanent legal United States residents, an average of

almost a million a year. In general, the annual number has increased since the 1950s, and the regions sending migrants have also shifted.” It is important to note that 65 percent of legal permanent immigrants are family-sponsored, which means that family members in the United States petitioned the government to admit their relatives (Martin and Midgley, 2006). Indeed, Hernandez (2000) explains that some illegal immigrants enter the US encouraged by their relatives, who may be citizens or legal permanent residents (LPR), waiting for them in the United States.

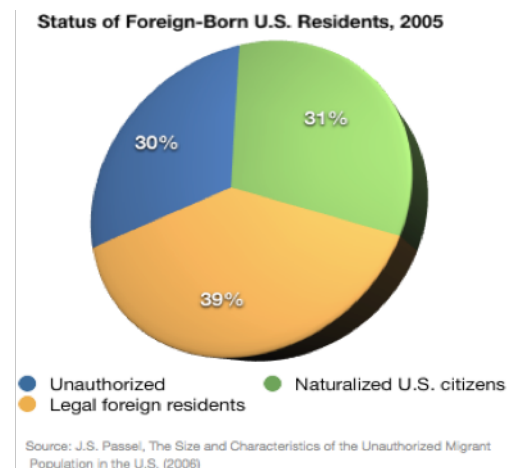
There are four major groups of immigrants in the present immigration flow: Family-sponsored immigrants are the first and largest group of front-door immigrants. In 2005, for example, although there was a cap on the number of immigrant visas, known as Legal Permanent Residents (LPR), 437,000 visas were granted to spouses, parents, and children of U.S. citizens (Martin and Midgley, 2006). Surprisingly, the second-largest groups of immigrants are foreigners and their family members who were given visas at the request of United States employers. There were 247,000 people who gained residency under the employment-based category. The third-group consists of refugees and asylum-seekers. Although, these two groups share the same legal immigration status, they differ in reasons for migrating to the United States. Asylees, for instance, are people who have escaped their home country to avoid persecution and have requested permission to settle in the United States. Refugees request permission to remain in the United States once they have entered the country; they must prove that they could be persecuted if they were to return to their home country (ILRC, 2008). An average of 86,000 refugees and asylees entered the United States between 2003 and 2005 (Martin and Midgley, 2006) from different countries. The fourth front-door group

is the diversity immigrants. Martin and Midgley (2006: 11) explain that this category was “created in 1990 to ensure immigration from countries that send relatively few migrants”. Up to ten million people from Bulgaria, Ethiopia, Iran, and Saudi Arabia have gotten visas through the annual diversity lottery.

## 2.9. Inclusion of Immigrants: Integration and Assimilation

Immigration is the oldest and newest tale of American society. The same reasons that drove thousands of people in the 1800s to leave their home countries in search of the “American dream”—persecution at home, the dream of a better life, and access to socioeconomic and educational opportunities—continue to entice others to come to the United States. The basic questions of immigration policy have always centered on who belongs and who does not, and who is welcome and who is not.

Americans have always worried about the economic, political, and cultural changes caused by immigration (Martin and Midgley, 2006)—a view that has existed from the beginning of history of United States immigration law, as explained by Archibold in the 2006 Guide for Immigration Advocates. Archibold (2006) recognizes that “immigration has always been a highly politicized issue in the United States.” In fact, she argues that in good times, “immigrants are welcomed,” while in difficult times “immigrants have often been made into scapegoats,” being blamed for society’s faltering economy and escalating crime rates. This view contradicts the



**Figure 2.3—Percentages of Foreign-born by Immigration Status**

American Creed that immigrants built the nation and is an example of how society has always been bulimic. Low-skilled immigrants were enticed to come to work in the United States, sold the American Dream, yet have been excluded and scapegoated while attempting to make that dream a reality. Children of immigrants experience this simultaneous process of inclusion and exclusion with acuteness, as they face a broken educational system, a global labor market that requires high skills, criminalization and poverty.

Sustained high levels of immigration have also led to a rapid increase in the number of children with immigrant parents (Reardon-Anderson, Capps, and Fix 2002).<sup>i</sup> By 2000, immigrants represented one in nine of all United States residents, but their children represented one in five of all children under age 18. Children of immigrants represented an even higher share—one in four—of all school-age children who were low-income, defined by eligibility for the National School Lunch Program.<sup>ii</sup> The relatively large proportion of children with immigrant parents is due, in part, to higher fertility among immigrant women, and to the fact that more immigrant women than US-born women are of childbearing age (see Ford, 1990; Kao and Tienda, 1995). Since immigrants on average have lower incomes than US natives, a higher share of children of immigrants are in the lower-income strata than children of natives (Reardon-Anderson, Capps, and Fix 2002).

Immigrants are coming to the United States even more than ever before. Zhou (1997) states that “immigrant children and children of immigrants have become the fastest growing and the most extraordinary diverse segment of America’s child

population” and this phenomenal increase has given rise to a record number of children who, regardless of place of birth, are raised in immigrant families.

Differing from their immigrant parents, immigrant children and children of immigrants lack meaningful connections to their “old” world. They are thus unlikely to consider a foreign country as a place to return to or as a point of reference. As a result, these children are negatively affected because, as Gans (1995) claims, children of immigrants are prone to evaluate themselves or to be evaluated by others by the standards of their new country. Thus, these children in American society tend to define themselves based on American standards rather than from whence they came.

Unfortunately this manner of self-definition is not beneficial to children of immigrants who not only lag behind their counterparts educationally but also financially; children with poorly educated and unskilled parents often find themselves growing up in underprivileged neighborhoods subject to poverty, poor schools, violence and drugs, and a generally disruptive social environment.

Since colonial times, political repression, economic deprivation, and the search for better social, economic, psychological and educational opportunities have been major catalysts for the different waves of immigrant groups to the United States. In the twentieth century, immigrants accounted for a large percentage of the United States population. The Latino population of the United States reached 50.4 million people, representing 16.3 percent of the total population in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011<sup>4</sup>). Forty percent of the Latino population of the United States is foreign born, as compared

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<sup>4</sup> The 2010 census data are being disputed, particularly in New York City, by elected officials due to allegations of a huge undercount of the population.

to 12.5% of the total population. In fact, it has been well documented that immigrants are the fastest growing group in the United States, and by 2050 the U.S. Census Bureau (2006) has projected that Latinos will increase to 103 million people and will account for twenty-five percent of the national total population, significantly exceeding the proportions of other ethnic or racial minorities (Rumbaut, 2006).

There were 37 million foreign-born individuals residing in the United States in 2005, out of which thirty-one percent were naturalized U.S. citizens, 39 percent were legal immigrants and legal temporary migrants such as foreign students and legal temporary workers, and 30 percent were unauthorized residents (see Figure 2.3). These foreign-born residents make up about 12 percent of the United States population, and the share is growing. Because they tend to be concentrated in specific cities and states—and in specific industries—immigrants are a visible part of the American landscape (Martin and Midgley 2006). Research confirms that the presence of immigrants has transformed the culture, educational experience, and politics of several ports of entry to U.S, such as New York, Florida, Texas, California, Illinois, and Massachusetts. Current immigration reforms and policies in the United States, however, reflect exclusionary practices.

## 2.10. Immigration Reform: Policies of Exclusion

Martin and Midgley (2006) claim that there have been three major immigration reforms since the post-1965 Immigration Act (depicted in figure 2.4) which include:

- The Refugee Act of 1980;
- Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) and Immigration Act of 1990 (IMMACT Act); and
- Illegal Immigration Reform and Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRARA).

The Refugee Act of 1980<sup>iii</sup> addressed the definition of immigrants with a refugee status. Prior to 1980, the United States considered a refugee any person escaping from a communist regime; however, in 1980 it adopted the definition of the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention, which defined a refugee as a person outside his or her country of citizenship and unwilling to return because of a well-founded fear of persecution because of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership in particular social group, or political opinion.

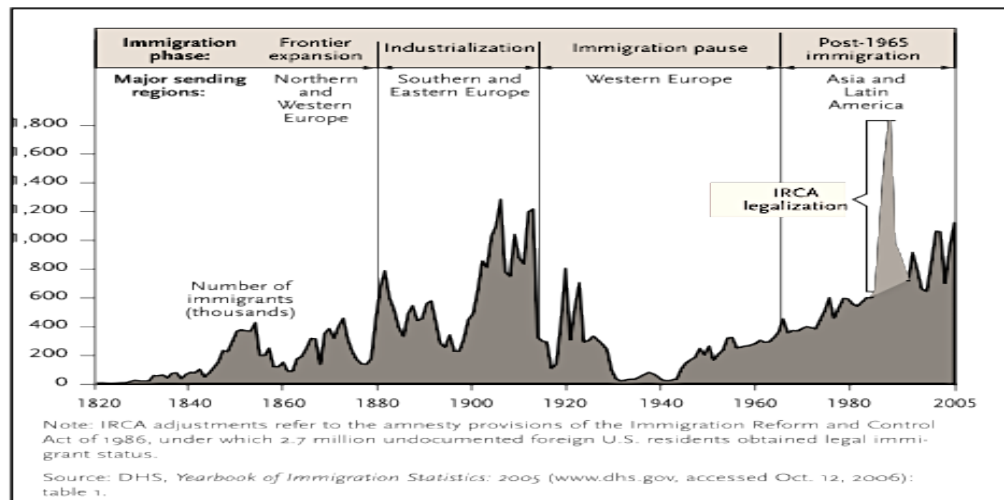


Figure 2.4 -U.S. Immigration from 1820-2005

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), “aimed to reduce illegal immigration by imposing penalties or ‘employer sanctions’ on United States employers who knowingly hired illegal migrants” (Martin and Midgley, 2008, p. 46). They explain that IRCA also implemented “two legalization or amnesty programs: one for foreigners who were living in the United States by 1982 and another for farm workers who were employed illegally between 1985 and 1986” (p. 46). The IRCA reform “legalized 2.7 million persons of the estimated 3 million to 5 million unauthorized foreigners in the U.S” (p. 47). In the same decade, the United States reported an economic boom and reports of shortages of skilled and professional workers making Congress enact the Immigration Act of 1990 (IMMACT) (Martin and Midgley, 2006). The IMMACT Act was in response to some employers’ and academics’ arguments that without easy access to foreigners with skills, the American economy would suffer. This act doubled the number of immigrant visas available for foreigners requested by United States employers (p. 46).

Although the IMMACT was conceived as ending the problem of undocumented immigration, it did not. The Handbook of Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC, 2008) assures that “the program, instead, created new employment discrimination against workers who were foreign born or who appeared to be foreign” (Section 21, p. 14). In the same section, the Handbook also details how Governor Pete Wilson, in California, started a campaign against immigrants, in which he attributed the budget crisis to immigrants, both legal and undocumented. Gov. Wilson claimed that the “cost of schooling, imprisoning, and public benefits to immigrants was bankrupting the state” (Section 21: 14). Four years later, Proposition 187 was enacted. This proposition

sought to bar undocumented children from the public schools and deny them public health services like immunizations and TB care (p. 14). The proposition passed in 1990, but it was not enforced, as it was later appealed and abolished.

The Handbook of Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) reports that in those years (1995 and 1996) “immigration enforcement increased, the United States erected fences and set up intensive staffing at certain high level of border crossing points” (p. 15). This is the year when Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS), today’s Department of Homeland Security (DHS), stepped up its deportations and pushed for stronger laws to punish those who enter illegally and who are criminals (Section 21, p. 15). On September 30, 1996, Congress passed, and President Clinton signed, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA).

Between 1996 and 2006, concerns about immigration, terrorism, and welfare contributed to more immigration reforms: 1) The Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (ATEDPA); 2) the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA); and 3) the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA). I will review only the Illegal Immigration Reform and Responsibility Act, since it is the policy that has most to do with the focus of this research on the deportation of documented Dominican immigrants. This Act comprises all the moral turpitudes and inadmissible laws that make legal permanent residents eligible for deportation—see Appendixes A and G, for more details on the Inadmissible and Moral Turpitude Law.

Martin and Midgley (2006, p. 48) state that IIRIRA “included measures to reduce illegal migration by adding border patrol agents and introducing a pilot system by

which employers could check newly hired employees immigration status.” IIRIRA also impacted the United States family-sponsored petition program by implementing an income base of at least 125 percent of the poverty line. In addition, ILRC (2008, section 21) states that this law was also designed “to make deportation an easier and quicker process for the government, because the Act concentrates on immigrants with criminal convictions, making people with old convictions for minor offenses subject to deportation with no relief.” That means that these immigrants with criminal convictions have no right to an immigration hearing. The Act was not only for undocumented immigrants, but also targeted legal permanent residents.

The September 11, 2001, terrorism attack resulted in the revision of IIRIRA immigration laws, and led to the enactment of the Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act, commonly known as the PATRIOT Act of 2001. The Act consists of a list of safeguards to protect the nation against terrorism. This Act enforced deportation laws, as well as targeted youths of Arab or Muslim descent. In fact one, of the most serious outcomes was the “special registration,” requiring nonimmigrant males 16 years or older from dozens of ‘Muslim’ countries to report to immigration officials (ILRC, 2008; Section 21).

September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks reinforced existing views and perceptions Americans had on immigration or the fear that immigrants would exhaust financial, educational and social recourses. But, now the myth that foreigners would harm a large number of Americans was raised and added to the perception about immigrants. Since then, immigration and integration has become a highly debated issue in the United States congress. The United States is grappling with implementing the right policies

when dealing with foreign-born immigrants, while maintaining their status as a leading nation who once praised its diversity, assimilistic strength, tradition of melting the unmeltable ethnics, and the power to rehabilitate criminals (Martin and Midgley, 2006, p. 5).

### **2.11. Inclusionary Practices: Assimilation; Stratification; and Segmentation**

As already established, the dream that built this country continues to be the driving force for current immigration trends. Although the reasons for migrating have not changed, today the variety of ethnic groups coming to America has changed, as have the socioeconomic conditions welcoming these newcomers, especially since 1965. When looking at the history of immigration, it becomes clear that the current debates are rooted in the competing perspectives of assimilation, “the process in which formerly distinct and separate groups come to share a common Anglo-Saxon culture to merge together socially,” and pluralism, a process that exists when “immigrant groups consciously opt to maintain their individual identities, by remaining separate from the dominant culture as their cultural and social differences persist over time” (Healey, 2010, p. 50). The social dynamics of the “traditional” model of assimilation (Park & Burgess, 1924, p. 735) set the standards that dominant groups have historically used, and continue to use, in assessing the level of “belongingness” of a particular ethnic group. As a result, ethnic stratification often generates the labeling and stigmatizing of immigrants who do not assimilate into Anglo-conformity or Americanization in the same timeframe as that of Northern and Western European immigrants who arrived between the 1820s and 1920s.

This perspective of assimilation describes how the first wave of Northern and Western Europeans who crossed the ocean back in the 1820s shared the same Protestant values and cultural practices that Americans did at the time. They mirrored Americans' views on their language, cultural practices and religious practices, making the process of assimilating into the dominant social group in the United States easier and faster (Healey 2010, p. 54). This group of immigrants even shared the notion of "human capital," which asserts that the harder the individual works, the faster he or she can become a member of the country's social networks through schooling and employment opportunities—gaining status, prestige and, ultimately, power (Healey, 2010). In contrast, immigrant groups arriving after the 1920s, such as Eastern and Southern Europeans and some indentured Latinos (those contracted as temporary workers), differed in their religious practices and cultural views of human capital, preferring to focus on their family-centered values. They became the unmeltable ethnics, defaulting into "minority group status," as they came into contact with the first wave of immigrants. Because of their ethnic backgrounds, they were classified into the lowest strata of society, resulting in the disenfranchisement of these groups from mainstream society.

The change in the demographic composition of immigrant groups arriving in the United States after the 1920s challenged the perspective of traditional assimilation set by Northern and Western European immigrants between 1820s and 1920s. The proximity of these new immigrants' countries of origin, coupled with transportation advancements fueling globalization, enables new immigrant groups to continue a close relationship with their home countries. This makes their process of integration and

acculturation even harder and less likely, since they can survive in their new homeland without surrendering their “home” cultural values. This slow transition into the American value system is one of the many issues sparking the fierce debate about immigrants, given that some members of the dominant group do not consider this unassimilated group of immigrants to be a part of mainstream American society.

Others would argue that the newcomers have challenged the notions of “Americanization and citizenship,” redefining the line between those who “belong” and the “others.” However, newcomers, made clear that when the dominant group defines immigrants as the “others,” or “outsiders” it can be detrimental for children of immigrants, born in the United States, and can bring up discordant social measures when redefining political spaces and clustering them into the lower socioeconomic-spectrum of society.

In fact, Horace Kallen (1915) found “Anglo conformity” to be inconsistent with democracy and other core American values (p.191). In his article, *Democracy Versus the Melting-Pot*, (1915) he notes:

...[S]ome social scientists, politicians, and ordinary citizens often failed to recognize the time and effort it takes for [an immigrant] group to become completely Americanized. For some European groups the process took generations: for example, the first generation slightly acculturated and integrated; the second generation became very acculturated and highly integrated in secondary sectors; while the third generation enjoyed high levels of integration at both secondary [employment and schooling] and the primary [group of friends and networks] levels [of society] (p.192).

Due to the continuing growth of Latino groups basically through immigration, and the realities of their social, economic, and political conditions, assimilation into United States society is fragmented or segmented. As explained by Kallen, some contemporary immigrants will follow the pattern of European immigrants, assimilating into the mainstream in rapidly and enjoying some financial freedom and social opportunities, while others will become part of the urban poor. Porter (2007) concurs with Kallen, adding that those immigrants who do not fully assimilate as expected undergo a process of “segmented assimilation.”

### **2.12. Segmented Inclusion: Assimilation of Latinos**

Latinos face a segmented assimilation that can be seen as discriminatory, and exclusory; thus, they are at risk of becoming possible members of an impoverished, powerless, and economically marginalized urban underclass (Portes, 2001). They are highly variable in the extent of their acculturation; however, due to the continuous and high rate of immigration, the assimilation process seems to be very slow in changing their cultural values, learning English, and adopting Anglo customs (Citrin, J., Lerman, A., Mirakami, M., & Pearson, K., 2007; Wright R., Ellis M., & Parks V., 2005).

Douglas Massey (1987) argues that new waves of immigrants differ in the assimilation process from the earlier immigrants in three ways: first, immigration was restricted after the 1920's so earlier immigrants grew to adulthood without continuing contact with old country in the form of newer immigrants; second, the current speed and ease of modern transportation and communication help new immigrants maintain cultural and linguistic diversity; and last, a large percentage of immigrants' offspring

face permanent membership in a growing underclass population. These three factors further contribute to a segmented assimilation rather than a full assimilation into Anglo-Saxon mainstream society.

Contrary to this perception, other research (Kallen, 1915; Espinosa & Massey, 1997; Goldstein & Suro, 2000) posit that within time, Latinos seem to follow many of the same patterns of assimilation as European groups, concluding that rates of acculturation increase with length of residence in the United States, and that such patterns are even higher for the children. According to Massey (1993), contemporary immigrant groups are narrowing the income gap over time; however, low levels of human capital, lack of social network and cultural capital do handicap some newcomers from full participation.

Portes (2007) asserts, however, that children of immigrants, growing up in the United States, deal with a series of challenges to their successful adaptation that will define their long-term position in American society due to “segmented assimilation.” He explains that many migrant workers are “faced with a network of low-wage employment and family responsibilities” that undermine the future of the migrants’ offspring, which is “one of the most important and least noticed [or at least publically noted] link between migrants and the fate of the second and third generations” (p. 88).

In explaining segmented assimilation, Porte argues that children of immigrants suffer a “downward assimilation” process instead of complete assimilation into the United States culture. Downward assimilation “is the trajectory followed by a number of children of immigrants trapped in the process of acculturating or integrating” (2007, p. 87). This means that adapting to the norms and values of the host society is not a

ticket to material success and advancement, but exactly the opposite. For example, he asserts that “dropping out of school, teen pregnancies, incidents of arrest and incarceration, injuries or death in gang fights, increasing conflict and estrangement from parents,” are indicators of downward assimilation. Consequently, emphasizing the issue of “belongingness” as a first generation phenomenon could be problematic, as many policymakers as well as politicians could overlook the series of unexpected consequences on subsequent generations that can “spawn a second generation that grows up under conditions of unique disadvantages” (Portes, 2007 p. 87).

Raising children under the difficult conditions that immigrants must endure in American society has serious consequences not only for their offspring, but also for the nation. Blandin (1990) explains that “because of immigration and differential fertility rates, Latinos are becoming an ever-larger part of the American population, representing 13 percent of the U.S. population” (p. 22). This is problematic because “the [white] population as a whole is aging, the growth of the workforce is slowing down, and the twin burdens of greater productivity and supporting an aging population will fall mostly on younger workers” (p. 22). He observes that about one-third of these new workers will be members of minority groups, traditionally the least well prepared for productive participation in the nation’s economic life (p. 23).

In discussing the realities that many minority youths must overcome, Blandin (1990) highlights the fact that discussions on youths’ academic and social performance rarely reflect the complicated reality of minority life in the United States. He states, “Most of that discussion, in both academic and popular journals, appears predicated on the assumption that all minorities are poor, and much of it concentrates on the severe

problems faced by a substantial segment of African-Americans and Latinos—problems so acute that they threaten not only the welfare of those families but the functioning of the American economy and society” (p. 24). Recent studies concur with Blandin’s views in that facing barriers of widespread racism, a bifurcated labor market, the ready presence of countercultural models in street gangs, and the drug culture, immigrants’ success depends on whatever economic and social resources they, their families, and their communities can muster. This further complicates the assimilation process of these youths, and creates a segmented integration to mainstream society (Portes and Zhou, 1993; Rumbaut, 1994).

Looking at the future of the United States as a nation, it is important to consider the rapid growth of the Latino population—which seems to continue increasing according to the 2010 U.S. Census—and the mechanisms in place to enhance their educational advancement and integration to labor market. Despite substantial progress by a significant number of minority group members who have succeeded in the American society, economy, and culture, “there is an overwhelmingly large group of working minorities who are on the margins of making it in America” (Blandin, 1990, p. 23). Poorly educated immigrants experience greater difficulties supporting their families, especially when they end up filling menial positions at the bottom of the labor market or engage in some form of informal economy, and when they also lack legal status or are in danger of being deported even when they have documented status (Portes, 2007).

Conversely, Portes (2007) also found an “upward assimilation” process in children of professional immigrants, who differ from poor labor immigrants because

they tend to adapt faster to mainstream society (p. 90). For the most part, Portes explains, these children tend to move upward, achieving high-status positions on the basis of advanced education. He further clarifies that “not all children of labor immigrants undergo downward assimilation in the United States” (p.91). However, a substantial number of minorities are at risk of doing so if proper educational and immigration policies, along with economic mechanisms, are not put in place. This lack of operational immigration policy trickles down to the family structure, eventually impacting educational outcome for children of immigrants and excluding them from mainstream society.

### **2.13. Social Consequences of Ethnic Stratification**

The dominant-minority relationship has affected minority groups’ social integration in different ways at different times, often dependent on social circumstances. Donald Noel (1972) states, “the contact situation – the conditions under which groups first come together – is the single most significant factor in the creation of minority group status” (p. 104). Noel (1972) believes that “a dominant-minority group structure will be created if a contact situation characterized by the three characteristics of ethnocentrism, competition, and power” (p. 106). Newcomers with different cultural values, language, and religious practices, would, by default, be a minority group, because to achieve equality and financial freedom they would need to learn Americans’ cultural values. He explains that ethnocentrism leads the dominant group to believe that cultures other than their own are not only different but actually inferior. Often, groups find themselves competing over resources; such competition disadvantages

minority groups given that they lack the educational skills and cultural values to become fully integrated. This new system of social classification emphasizes the power structure of the “dominant group” while defining the levels of social inequalities minorities group must endure, as well as the political and citizenship spaces they are limited while acculturating into mainstream society.

Examples of the dissonant political space are the draconian immigration practices that have been implemented to instill fear and slow down the immigrant influx from third world countries and Latin America. The problem with demonizing and “othering” migrants and clustering them into a minority status when implementing immigration policies is the damage that this may cause to U.S.-born children of immigrants, who eventually are the ones to pay the price of such unjust policies. As a result, an underclass is created giving those outside the dominant group the label of ‘minority group’ and further widening the gap between social classes and the social stratification system.

This underclass is mainly composed of Latinos, African Americans, and some Asians. Keeping hope alive for those immigrants in search of a better life, or the “American dream,” becomes even harder as the dreams for their children and aspirations for a better life slowly give way to hopelessness and disillusionment. This is due to public education policy and the labor market structure that exists as part of their social stratification. In spite of their best efforts, they have difficulties keeping pace with rising demands in the workplace because of limited educational opportunities, low levels of literacy, and the lack of marketable skills forcing many to fall behind.

### **2.14. The Segmented Inclusion of Children of Immigrants**

The United States prides itself on its child protection programs. In apparent contradiction to these protective programs of children's rights, it instituted immigration laws undermining the welfare of the children of immigrants and of immigrant children. For example, the 1996 immigration law on mandatory deportation has negatively impacted many families in this country, particularly U.S-born children, as seen in Annie's case. Deportation from the United States can be mandated for three main reasons: being undocumented, committing a crime of "moral turpitude," or being considered a terrorist or a threat to the nation. Whatever the reason, deported parents leave children behind. This causes irreparable and incalculable injury to these children, since they are robbed of their parents and deprived of the emotional and financial support necessary for their healthy development. Children of deportees are the children of immigrants who have been deported from the United States to their country of origin, who have been left behind with a parent or relatives, or in the care of Children Protective Services (in foster homes).

The minimal amount of research published to date provides us with very little information on the impact that immigration policies have on the children of immigrants as well as on children who are immigrants themselves, but who came to the United States at a very young age. Children of deportees can be described as a silent, multi-marginalized group of youths who must cope with abandonment, while attempting to adapt to their community environs, complete their education, and gain access to the labor market. They are multi-marginalized not only due to their ethnic background,

race, or social strata, or because they attend inner-city, under-budgeted schools, but also because they are among the thousands of children who, in addition to bearing the stigma of being minorities or labeled as 'the other,' must be raised without a mother or father who has been unexpectedly exiled from the United States.

### 2.15. Exclusion Through Deportation

Deportation, in the United States immigration law, can be traced back to 1798 when the newly established United States Congress passed the Alien Enemies Act and the Alien Friends Act, which empowered the president to expel any non-citizen deemed dangerous<sup>iv</sup>. Two centuries later, in 1988, an addendum was added to the existing deportation law, known as the Anti-Drug Abuse Act (ADA), allowing Congress to expand the types of crimes rendering foreign-born deportable. It also limited the procedures available to non-citizens who wished to challenge their deportation.

The new category of crimes, added by ADA, stated that non-citizens were subject to deportation under “aggravated felonies,” including murder as well as many of the crimes previously categorized as crimes of “moral turpitude”<sup>v</sup> (see Appendix A), such as drug and firearms offenses<sup>vi</sup>. Broadly speaking, from 1952 to 1996, non-citizens were subject to deportation for crimes of “moral turpitude” committed within five years after the date of entry and with a sentence of at least one year<sup>vii</sup>. Non-citizens were also “subject to deportation for violating a controlled substance law”<sup>viii</sup> or for “unlawful possession of an automatic weapon”<sup>ix</sup> (U.S.C. Section 1251(a)(1952)).

Deportation was then strengthened by the passing of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act in 1996 and the U.S.A Patriot Act after 9/11/2001, Under the Patriot Act; Congress adopted the rigorous policy of deporting all non-citizens with criminal convictions. That is, people with lawful permanent resident status (or green card holders), including those who have lived lawfully in the United States for decades, became subjected to deportation. Of course, undocumented non-

citizens continued to be also subject to deportation regardless of whether they had committed a crime<sup>x</sup> on grounds of admissibility.

In an attempt to control widespread disorder, rising crime, and go back to conformity and possibly acceptance, the United States utilizes deportation as a crime controlling apparatus because it has become a country of high risk and uncertainty (Young, 1999). Fundamentally, the era of inclusion, affluence, and conformity seems to be something of the past. The world of consensual with core values centered on work and the family and the inclusive world where the accent was on assimilation has been replaced (Young, 1999). The project of incorporating immigrants into full citizenship including bestowing legal, political, and social rights such as employment, income, education, health, and housing, has also been relegated (Young, 1999, p. 4).

To lower the American crime rate, free up prison space, and save taxpayers money, the United States established a deportation policy that relieves the country of non-citizens who are considered likely to commit new crimes after having served their sentence; the probability of recidivism has become a major reason for ejection. These cases, however, are not considered individually, but in general. All U.S. legal permanent residents who committed a crime, regardless of its severity, become subject to deportation. These immigrants are then exiled from the United States. Inflexibilities built into the law have trapped and marked for deportation a significant number of people with children who are U.S-born; deportees, then, are forced to leave their children behind in the United States with only the remaining parent, and to their own socioeconomic and psychosocial fate.

Two organizations that advocate for individuals facing deportation—the NYSDA Immigrant Defense Project and Families for Freedom (FFF)—have published a “Deportation 101”<sup>xi</sup> manual that details, in simple language, the rules and procedures for immigrants facing deportation. The manual is a practical guide for professionals interested in representing deportable candidates, as well as a tool to educate the community about the protocol followed by officers from Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE). The manual emphasizes that “any person who is not a citizen can be deported from the United States although certain immigrants are particularly at risk for deportation” (Deportation 101 Manual, 2008: 19). For instance immigrants, Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) and undocumented foreigners, with past convictions may be deportable, barred from adjusting their status, or prohibited from reentering the country after a trip abroad. This includes:

- Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs, or green card holders);
- Asylees and refugees;
- People who have been granted withholding of removal or temporary protected status;
- People who are in the process of adjusting status; and
- People on student, business, and other visas who overstayed their allotted time by Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) at the time they entered the country.

The types of convictions leading to deportation are very broad, and even include some violations and offenses that the state or criminal court judge consider minor enough to warrant no time in jail—see Appendixes A, F, G and H for more details. Although deportation is seen as an immigration process many advocates (i.e. Northern

Manhattan Coalition, FFF, Detention Watch Network, among others) see deportation as an additional punishment—a double jeopardy—that happens after a person finishes serving their criminal sentence, and can happen years after the conviction; because there is no statutory term limits.

The Deportation 101 manual also states that undocumented “immigrants are deportable whether or not they have a conviction.” However, any arrest or conviction will make them more likely to be discovered by the Department of Homeland Security, and may also affect whether they can adjust their status. Undocumented immigrants are:

- People who “entered without inspection” (i.e. jumped the border);
- “Absconders or people with old deportation orders. Some people may have such orders, even if they don’t know it – for example, if an asylum seeker was previously denied and the person was not informed of an immigration hearing.
- People who entered the country as a visitor, student, or businessman and overstayed their visas.

Lastly, the manual clarifies that “U.S. Citizens cannot be deported.” However, it further explicates that Homeland Security, the Division of U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS), can attempt to suspend the naturalization of an immigrant, if proven that it was gained through fraud. Also revoking a citizenship, obtained through naturalization, can happen if “a person fails to disclose an arrest or conviction on the naturalization application” (Deportation 101, 2008:19). This

omission could be considered a federal felony, whereupon “a person whose citizenship is stripped may be vulnerable to deportation” (p. 19).

Rodriguez and Hernandez (2004:71) further confirm that: “prior to 1996, the deportation laws relating to long-term legal permanent residents convicted of crimes had operated as a two-step process. The first step was to determine whether a person was deportable. The second step was to determine whether the person should be deported, which was based on all the facts and particular circumstances of the case.” Now, however, the situation is different since deportation is not considered a criminal case, but a civil one. Therefore, those facing deportation are not granted legal representation, and do not have the right to due process. They could be deported without seeing a judge, or if they do, without proper legal representation-unless they could afford an immigration lawyer (Refer to appendixes F and H for a snapshot of the process).

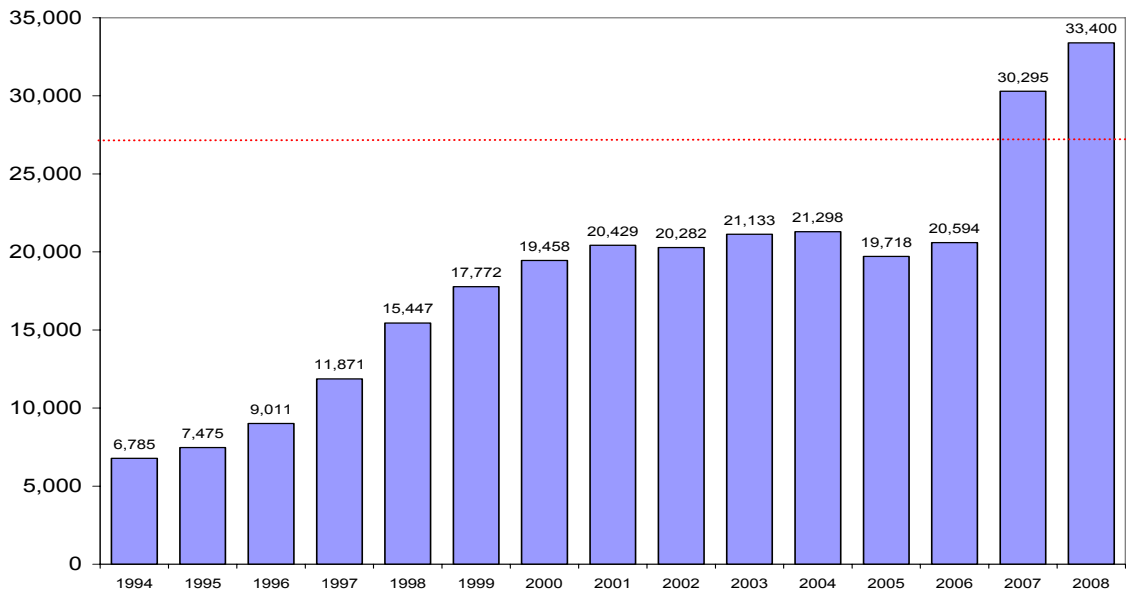
Griffith (2000) uses the notion of “geonarcotic,” to explain the link between drugs, geography, power and politics in order to analyze the phenomenon of deportation. For Griffith, deportation is propelled by current changes in some social and political domains, such as:

“get-tough anti-drug efforts by federal and state governments, new legislative oversight on immigration, increased resource allocation to the Department of Homeland Security, especially the subdivision that oversees narcotics, restrictions on discretionary relief from deportations for foreign nationals, congressional initiatives on “administrative removal” procedures, and early

release programs which grant parole to some inmates in exchange for immediate deportation (see also Brotherton & Barrios, 2009:31).”

Immediate deportation in lieu of parole aims to alleviate part of the financial burden that Federal and State facilities must assume for each inmate. This assumption, however, has yet to be proven given the amount of money invested in immigration facilities. For example, it is estimated that an average of \$141.00 is spent on each person per day in prison. Reports show that the number of deported immigrants has forced the Department of Homeland Security, the branch of Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE), to expand its detention system six-fold, which means that the number of immigrants in ICE’s custody increased “from 6,785 beds *per night* to 33,400;” this reflects an increase from \$956,685 (per bed) in 1994, to \$4,709,400 in 2008. Again the increase is only calculated per bed per day; the increase does not reflect the expenses by the length of incarceration per inmate, which could range from one day up to a year, as reported in the Congressional Research Service (CRS), Immigration-Related Detention report (2004).

Figure 2.5, Number of INS/ICE Detainees per Day, 1994-2008, illustrates how IIRIRA has increased the crimes for which “noncitizens could be removed and expanded the categories of persons subject to mandatory detention,” increasing the incarceration of thousands of immigrants on a daily basis. Figure \_\_ represents the number of immigrants incarcerated daily (MPI Report, September, 2009, p. 7). The same report also highlights an increase by 78 percent on the bed space due to the accelerated growth of the immigrant detention system.

**Figure 2.5—Number of INS/ICE Detainees per Day, 1994-2008.**

Sources: 1994 to 2003: Congressional Research Service (CRS), *Immigration-Related Detention: Current Legislative Issues* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2004), <http://www.fas.org/irp/crs/RL32369.pdf>; 2004 to 2007: CRS, *Health Care for Noncitizens in Immigration Detention* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2008), [http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL34556\\_20080627.pdf](http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL34556_20080627.pdf); 2008: Doris Meissner and Donald Kerwin, *DHS and Immigration: Taking Stock and Correcting Course* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2009), 51, [http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/DHS\\_Feb09.pdf](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/DHS_Feb09.pdf).

Daniel Kanstroom (2007, p. 195) defines deportation as “a major law enforcement system that looms over the tens of millions of non-citizens who live, study, and work in this country.” Since drastic changes to the system were implemented in 1996, millions of non-citizens have been ordered to leave. Under mandatory deportation, the judge’s hands are tied. Sometimes, immigrants lack the knowledge to make an informed decision about their legal pleading in court, and subsequently to their sentencing, which leads to deportation. The Migration Policy Institute Report (September, 2009) assents Kanstroom’s conclusions on deportation as a powerful tool of discretionary social control, and also shows how the process of deportation has generated thousands of Law enforcement jobs, as well as a hefty expenditure budget to cover the expenses of each immigrant to be deported.

The United States Department of Homeland Security indicated in its Annual Report in July, 2009, that “ICE detained a record total of 378,582 aliens during 2008, representing a 22 percent increase from 2007. Although more than 61 percent of all detainees in 2008 were people from Mexico (up from 49 percent in 2007), they accounted for only 32 percent of detention (bed days). The other leading countries were El Salvador (11 percent), Honduras (10 percent), Guatemala (10 percent), the Dominican Republic (3 percent), Jamaica, China, Haiti and Brazil (2 percent each). A glance at Tables 2.2 and Table 2.3 provide information on the number of people removed per year from those countries and the criminal charges.

**Table 2.2—Immigration Removal from FY 2001 to 2009**

<b>Trends in Total and Expedited Removals: Fiscal Years 2001 to 2009</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Total removals</b>	<b>Expedited removals</b>
2009.....	393,289	106,613
2008.....	358,886	113,462
2007.....	319,382	106,196
2006.....	280,974	110,663
2005.....	246,431	87,888
2004.....	240,665	51,014
2003.....	211,098	43,920
2002.....	165,168	34,624
2001.....	189,026	69,923

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Enforce Alien Removal Module (EARM), reported as of February 2010, Enforcement Case Tracking System (ENFORCE), reported as of December 2009.

Table 2.3 depicts the number of immigrant (LPRs) deported from different countries.

<b>Leading Countries of Nationality of Aliens Removed: 2009</b>		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Number removed</b>	<b>Number of criminals</b>
Total.....	393,289	128,345
Mexico.....	282,666	96,965
Guatemala.....	29,182	6,432
Honduras.....	26,849	6,890
El Salvador.....	20,406	6,220
Dominican Republic.....	3,464	2,133
Brazil.....	3,407	367
Colombia.....	2,443	1,085
Ecuador.....	2,303	589
All other Countries.....	22,569	7,664

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Enforce Alien Removal Module (EARM), reported as of February 2010, Enforcement Case Tracking System (ENFORCE), reported as of December 2009.

Families for Freedom (FFF), a New York-based multi-ethnic organization facing and fighting deportation, reports that “every year, nearly 200,000 non-citizens—many with U.S. citizens children—are deported and torn away from their families” even when a judge thinks they deserve to stay in the United States.<sup>xii</sup> to help raise and support their families. These families must choose between splitting up and/or forcing their U.S. citizen children into deportation with their parents. Kanstrooms adds that “the size of deportation is impressive” given that “from 2001 through 2004, the total of number of people formally removed from the United States was over 720,000;” this figure does not include those who left pursuant to a grant of “voluntary departure”, which according to the 2004 Yearbook of Homeland Security, exceeded four million people (2007: 196).

Kanstrooms also reports that “around 70 percent of immigrants were deported in 2006, with a median length of residence in the United States of 14 years.” In addition, “156,713 of those deported were charged with a “moral turpitude” or “aggravated felonies” (2007, p. 197). When considering these figures, Kanstrooms concludes that the effects of a deportation regime on the targeted population “appears to be a powerful tool of discretionary social control, a signal feature of the nascent national security state, and a prominent part of the recurrent episodes of xenophobia that have bedeviled [the] nation of immigrants.” This social control tool functions as a “mechanism of scapegoating, ostracism, family and community separation, and banishment, in odd equipoise with our powerful protections for certain rights of non-citizens, our grant of birthright citizenship to virtually all born on United States soil and (relatively) easy naturalization” (p. 201).

Brotherton and Barrios view on deportation as a cleaning tool to ameliorate social ills concurs with the February, 2010, Homeland Security’s report on the leading crimes causing deportation from the United States, as shown on table 2.4.

**Table 2.4—Leading Crime Categories of Criminal immigrants Removed**

<b>Leading Crime Categories of Criminal Aliens Removed: Fiscal Year 2009</b>		
<b>Crime category</b>	<b>Number removed</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Total . . . . .	128,345	100.0
Dangerous Drugs* . . . . .	37,993	29.6
Traffic Offenses . . . . .	20,367	15.9
Immigration** . . . . .	19,807	15.4
Assault . . . . .	9,436	7.4
Larceny . . . . .	4,228	3.3
Burglary . . . . .	3,795	3.0
Robbery . . . . .	3,252	2.5
Fraudulent Activities . . . . .	2,903	2.3
Sexual Assault . . . . .	2,792	2.2
Family Offenses . . . . .	2,611	2.0
Other . . . . .	21,161	16.5

\* Examples include the manufacturing, distribution, sale and possession of illegal drugs.  
 \*\* Includes entry and reentry, false claims to citizenship, and alien smuggling.  
 Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Enforce Alien Removal Module (EARM), reported as of February 2010.

Brotherton and Barrios (2009, p. 32) also posit that deportation is a tool to preserve the hegemony of the country, and to protect the hegemony of its offspring. These assertions support the notion of the United States being a bulimic society, and how deportation has become the ultimate form of social exclusion for minority and marginalized groups.

The literature on the deported population indicates that,

“[S]ubstantive, mostly empirical literature on deportees offer the following findings: (i) cultural estrangement and stigmatization are rampant among deportees; (ii) deportees experience high levels of direct and indirect violence prior to their expulsion; (iii) the transnational social and (sub)cultural strategies and practices of some deportees include gangs, that might find their

origins in the United States, drug users, criminal enterprises, and self-help groups; (iv) U.S. immigration/ deportation policy has been heavily influenced by the war on drugs and now the war on terrorism; (v) deportation policies wreak enormous collateral damage on both United States families and communities as well as the communities of the receiving nations.”

### **CHAPTER 3- Dominicans in a Social Bulimic Society: Immigration, Community Formation, and Deportation.**

*“To understand or predict intergroup relations, we should not assume that ‘social man has lost his reason, but find out how he understands the intergroup situation.’ Henri Tajfel*

This chapter presents the case of Dominican immigrants in the United States; the focus of this dissertation. It discusses the development of the ethnic community in New York City and more specifically in Washington Heights, and the exclusion of documented Dominicans from the United States through the process of deportation.

The heavy influx of Dominicans to the United States dates back to the 1960s, though there were Dominicans in the country in fewer numbers as early as the 1800's. The current immigration from the Dominican Republic coincided with the big, and perhaps, the last, wave of immigration to the United States resulting, in part, from changes in the 1965 Immigration Law, and the American intervention which incorporated the Dominican Republic into the new economic world order as a peripheric component providing workers for downgraded-sectors of the United States manufacturing industry.

Several studies have shown international migration during the 1960s and 1970s from the Dominican Republic to be the result of the U. S. capitalist penetration (globalization) and the modernization of the Dominican state (restructuring in the periphery). Bray (1987, p. 219) argues, that the “capitalistic development neglected the improvement of a nascent middle class in the Dominican Republic, a class that eventually found the opportunity to achieve a better life through international migration.” From another perspective, migration from the Dominican Republic to the

United States has occurred because of the linkages with the United States that were formed during the United States invasion of 1965 and the permanent presence of the United States in the Dominican Republic (Torres-Saillant and Hernandez, 1998). Despite a major transformation in the United States economy that created fewer opportunities in industrial employment, immigration to the United States [from the Dominican Republic] has continued to grow (Hernandez, 2002).

Like Puerto Ricans<sup>5</sup> and other people from the Caribbean, Dominicans are perceived and counted as part of the new immigration wave. As “newcomers,” Dominicans responded to the needs of the economic orbit established through the processes of nationalization and transnationalization. Bernardo Vega (2000, p. 10) explains that between the 1960s and 1990, the legal Caribbean migration towards the United States dramatically increased. He reports that “470,000 immigrants of Caribbean descent entered the United States, compared to only 123,000 in the previous decades; and in the sixties the migration growth was 282%, compared to the previous decade.” The 1997 INS Report stated that between 1984 and 1994, 1.17 million immigrants arrived legally in the United States —representing 11% of the total migrant population. In fact, the 1996 census reported that the population born in the United States of Caribbean descent added up to 2.75 million: 913,000 Cubans, 632,000 Dominicans, 506,000 Jamaicans, 440,000 Haitians, and 266,000 from the rest of the Caribbean.<sup>xiii</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> In the case of the Puerto Rican community, who are citizens of the United States and cannot be deported, it should be noted that their heavy immigration influx date back to the 1940s and 1950s, prior to that of the Dominican community.

Massive emigration to the United States from the Dominican Republic began with the death of Dictator Trujillo in 1961 (Hernandez, 2002) which at the time was a pushing factor. Prior to Trujillo’s regime, international migration was severely restricted, and only about 1,150 Dominicans migrated to the United States in the 1930s. In fact, only a total of 16,674 Dominicans fled to the United States during Trujillo’s 30 year regime. The majority of those who migrated were either political adversaries, middle/upper class Dominicans, or diplomats (Betances and Spalding, 1996).

It was not until Trujillo’s death that Dominicans began to migrate en masse to the United States, as can be noted on data reported in 1997 by INS that appears in figure 3. Although Table 3.1 only tracks Dominican migration until 1996, the Dominican migration in the United States continues to increase. In fact, Dominicans are one of the faster growing immigrant groups in the United States, with the youngest median age (Pessar, 1995).

**Table 3.1—1930-1996 Dominican Migration Trends**

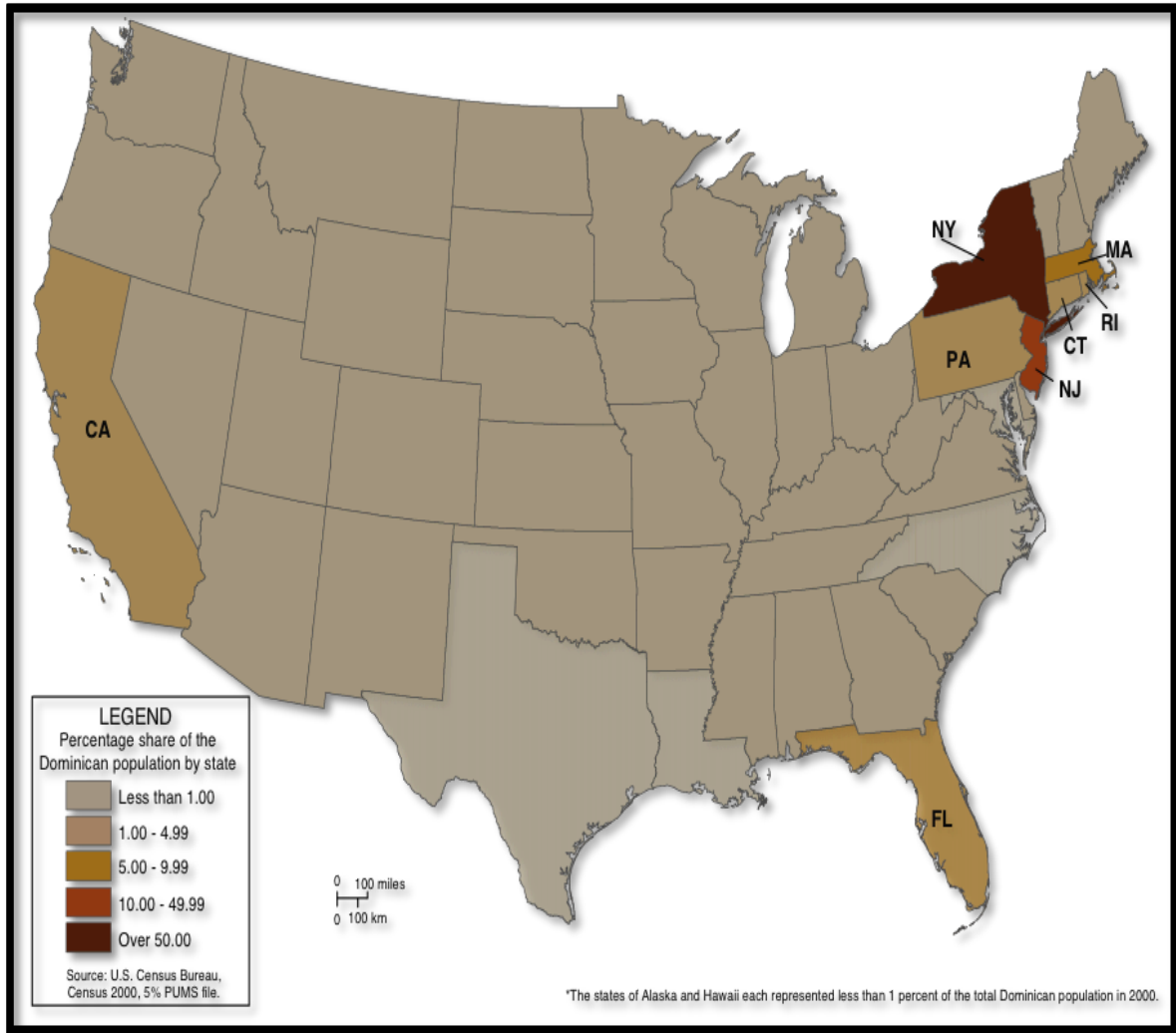
Period	Governmental Regime	Number of Migrants to the U.S.	Emigration Proportionate % per Decade	Emigration % Diff. per Decade
1931-1940	Trujillo	1,150	0.15	3.89
1941-1950	Trujillo	5,627	0.74	0.75
1951-1960	Trujillo	9,897	1.29	8.43
1961-1970	Bosh (3 months) /Balaguer	93,292	12.20	0.59
1971-1980	Balaguer	148,135	19.36	0.70
1981-1990	Guzman/ Blanco/ Balaguer	252,035	32.95	0.11
1991-1996	Balaguer	254,832	33.31	?

Hernandez, R. 2002. The Mobility of Workers under Advanced Capitalism: Dominican Migration to the United States.

Ramona Hernandez (2002, p. 121) reports that the growth of the Dominican population in the United States rose “from 520,121 in 1990 to 1,041,910 in 2000,” making it “the fourth-largest Latino group in the United States, after Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans” (Kanellos, 1994, p. 155). At that time, it was estimated that, if there were no change in the growth rates, the Dominican population would be greater than the Cuban population by the year 2010, making it the third largest Latino population in the country (Rodriguez and Hernandez, 2004, p. 27)—unfortunately at this time the 2010 Census data is not available in such details to confirm this prediction. Hernandez further explains that “the 2000 U.S. Census data showed that there were 394,914 Dominicans born in the United States residing in the country in 2000.” This constitutes one out of every three Dominicans. In effect, the Dominican birth rate was outpaced the number of Dominican-born who migrated to the United States (specifically to New York City) between 1990 and 2000, close to 300,000 Dominicans migrated to the United States on a net basis (Rodriguez and Hernandez, 2004, p. 27).

Different reports (Buffington, 2011; Census Bureau, 2000) indicate that by the 1990, most Dominicans had settled in the Northeast (86.3 percent), but the greatest number reside in New York and New Jersey (nearly 390,000), and that there are significant Dominican communities in Massachusetts (29,000) and Florida (36,000). By the late 1990s, in New York City, Dominicans were the second largest Hispanic group, after Puerto Ricans. They were also considered the biggest and fastest growing immigrant population in the city. The following map shows the distribution of Dominican immigrants throughout the United States in 2004. As indicated, Dominicans were mostly concentrated in New York City and New Jersey in 2004 (See Figure 3.1).

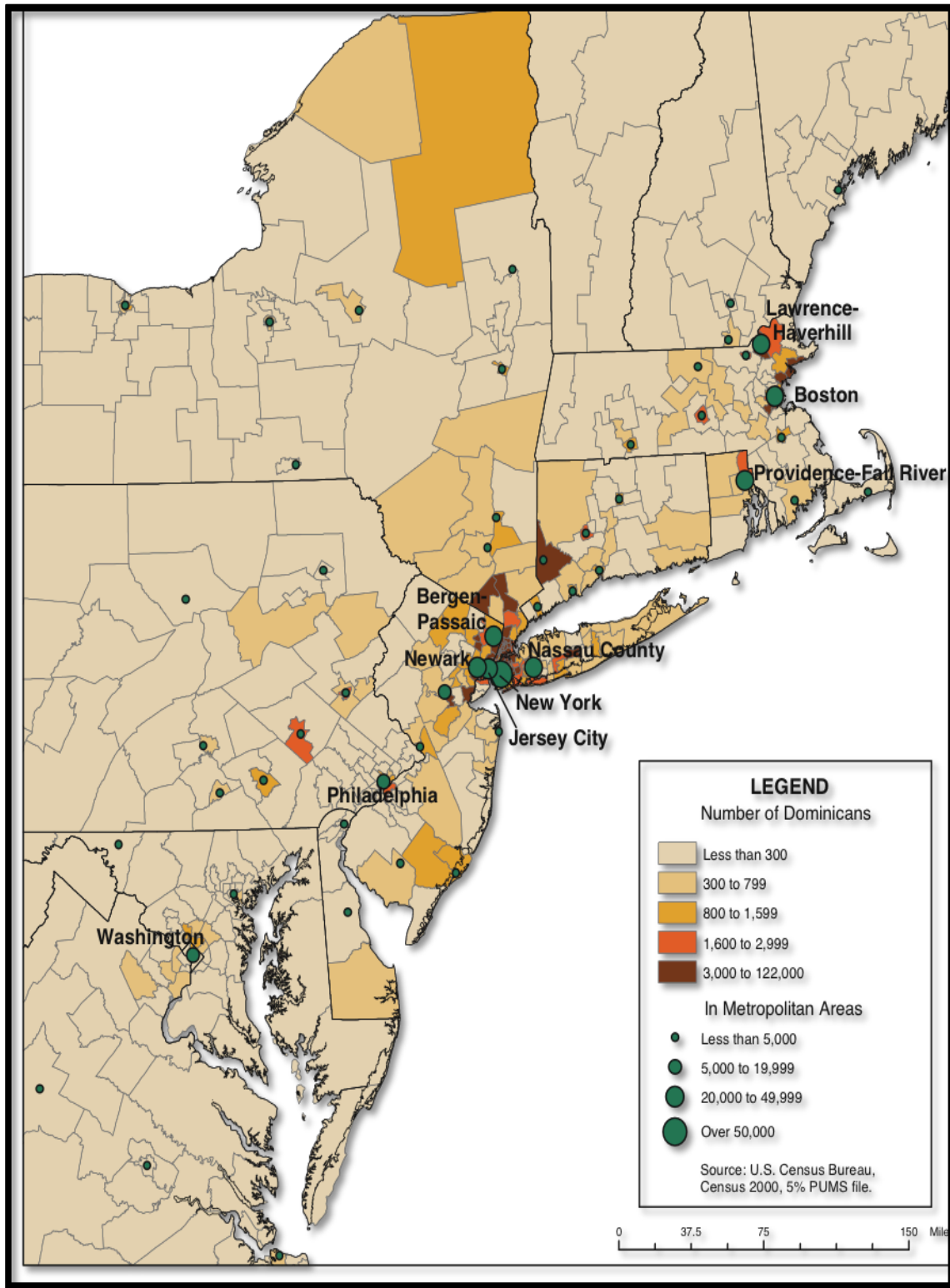
**Figure 3-1- Map of the Dominican Population in the U.S.**



**Source: The Migration Policy Institute, 2004**

Studies indicate that Dominican immigrants relocate in the Northeast in metropolitan areas. But the data show that they have been spreading to different parts of the region (see Figure 3.2).

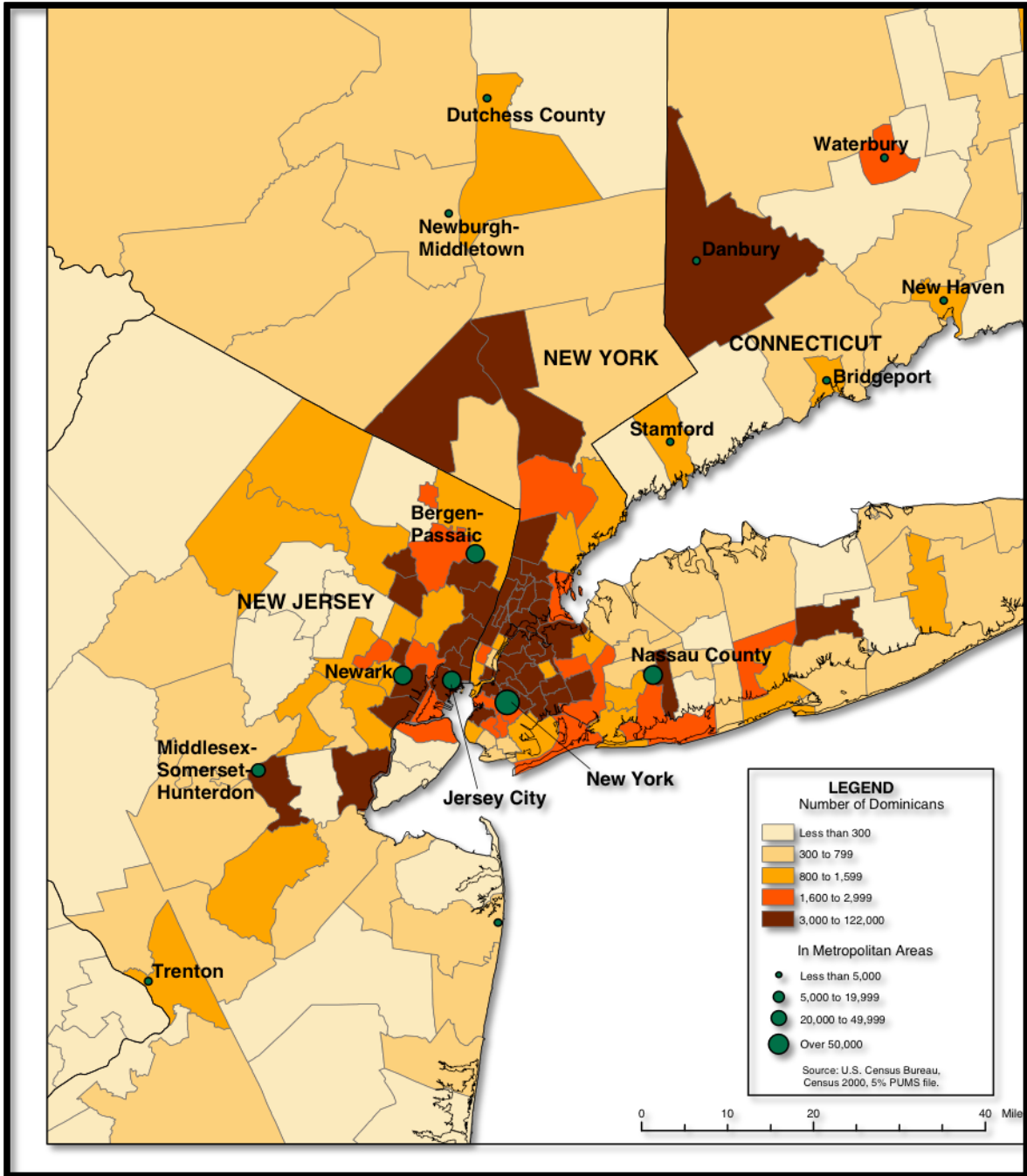
Figure 3-2 Map of 2004 Dominican Population in the Northeastern United States



Source: The Migration Policy Institute, 2004

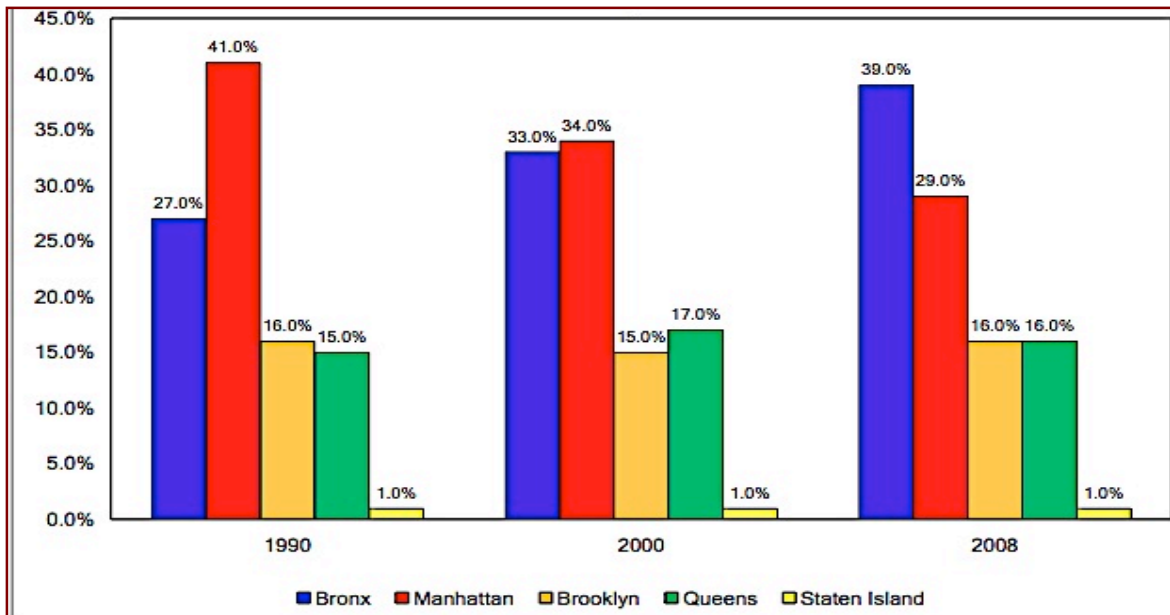
Within the region, Dominicans have relocated to different localities due to the constant and accelerated gentrification process in Washington Heights. The following map shows the dispersion of the population in 2004 (See Figure 3.3).

Figure 3-3-Map of Dominican Population in the New York Metropolitan Area



Within New York City, Dominicans lived in the five boroughs in 2000 (Hernández and Rivera-Batiz, 2003). But, as Figure 3.4 indicates, Dominicans were over-concentrated in Manhattan in the 1990s, but the population began to spread in 2000 and 2008 to the Bronx. In 2008, more Dominicans resided in the Bronx than in Manhattan (See figure 3.4, Total Dominican Population Distribution by Borough in NYC, 1990-2008).

**Figure 3.4 -Total Dominican Population Distribution by Borough in NYC, 1990-2008**



Source: The Center for Latin American, Caribbean, & Latino Studies at CUNY-Graduate Center: Dominicans in New York City, 1990-2008.

However, Washington Heights is historically known as the enclave community for Dominican immigrants. According to the 2000 Census, the area’s population was 208,414, and was composed of 74.1% Hispanics, 13.6% non-Hispanic whites, 8.4% non-Hispanic blacks, and 2.1% Asians.

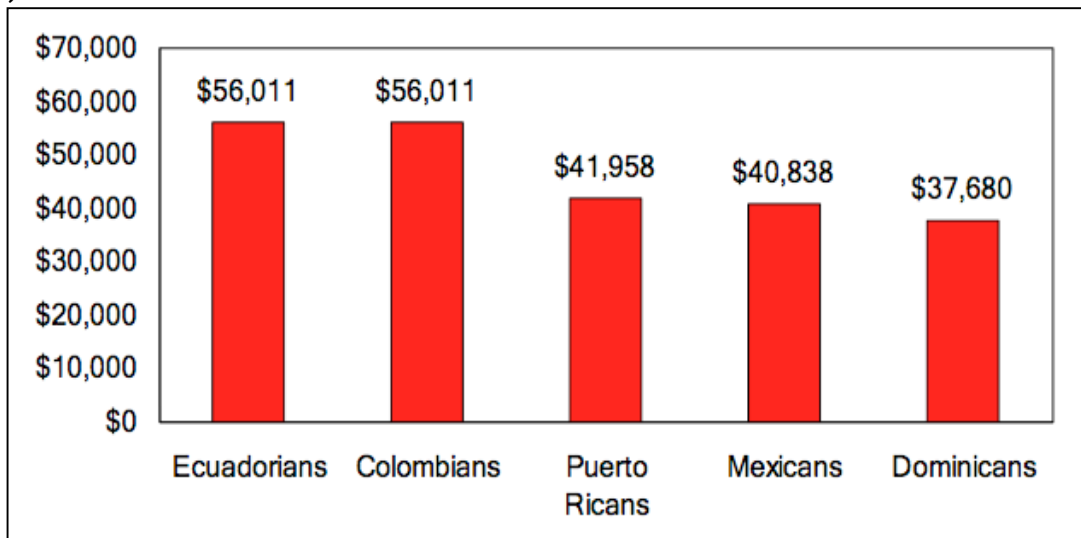
Facts about the Dominican population published by Anne Canty for Columbia University conducted in 1997 presents a profile of Dominicans in New York City.

According to these data the Dominican community in New York City was comprised as follows:

- “Forty-five percent of New York City's Dominican population lived in households that were under the poverty line in 1990 (or 96), close to double the rate in the City overall.
- Between 1990 and 1997, the Dominican population in New York rose from 332,000 to 495,000.
- Sixty percent of all Dominicans in the United States (832,000) lived in New York City.
- As many as 104,000 Dominican children were enrolled in New York City public schools.
- In 1990, more than 25 percent of the Dominican labor force was employed in manufacturing. The comparable figures were 10.6 percent for non-Hispanic Whites and 8.2 percent for non-Hispanic Blacks.
- The unemployment rate of Dominican men and women in New York City was approximately 19 percent in 1997, close to twice the overall rate.
- In 1996, the average annual earning of Dominican male workers was \$15,495, less than half the City's overall rate of \$37,352. For Dominican women, the average annual salary was \$13,250, compared with \$26,294 for the overall New York City female workforce.
- As much as 54.7 percent of all Dominican New Yorkers 25 years of age or older had not completed high school in 1996” (Columbia University, 1997).

Data provided by previous studies on the median household income of Dominicans and other Hispanics or Latinos in New York City in 2008 reveal that Dominicans have a lower reported family income than Ecuadoreans, Columbians, Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans. This information, however, does not take in consideration the remittance or the amount of money sent back home by people in the Dominican community (See Figure 3.5).

**Figure 3.5—Median Household Income for Five Largest Latino Nationalities in NYC, 2008**

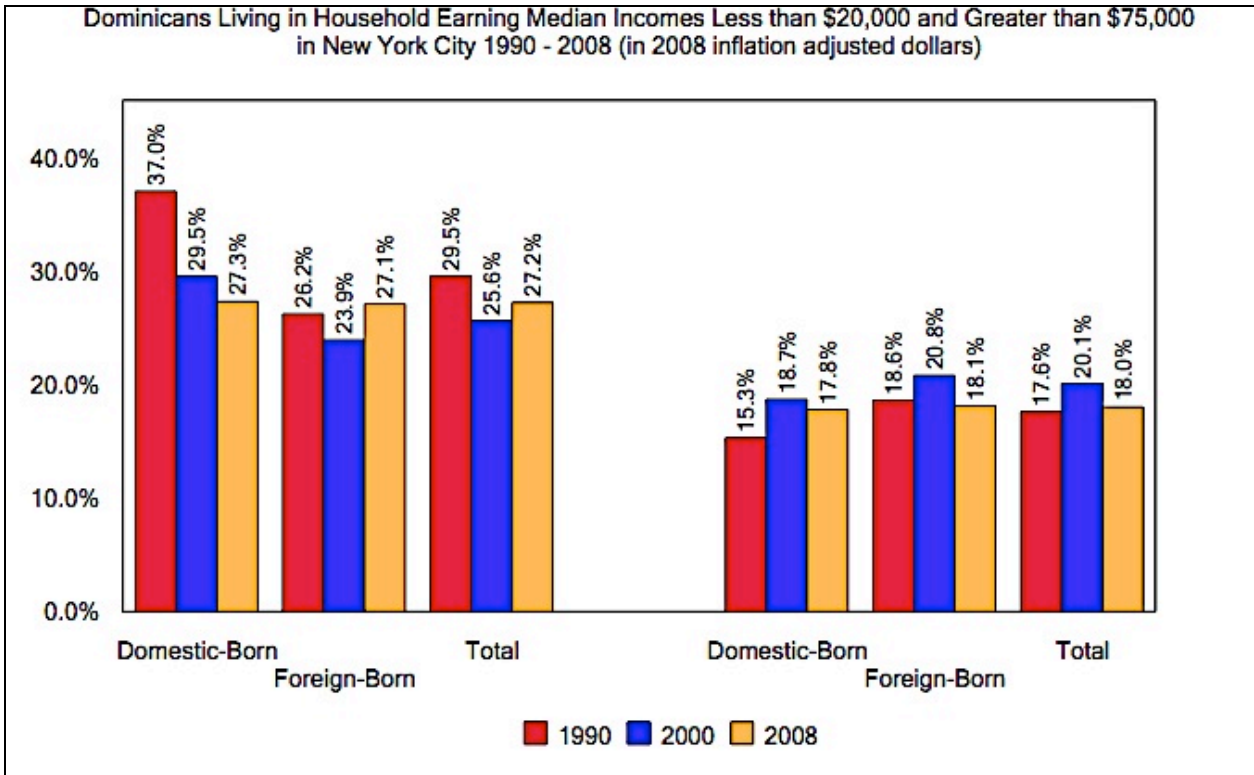


Source: Latino Data Report, Graduate Center, October 2010

Figure 3.6—Domestic and Foreign-born Earning, 1990-2008 provides information on Dominicans born in the United States and Dominican immigrants from 1990 to 2008 in terms of Dominicans living in households earning median incomes less than \$20,000 and greater than \$75,000 in New York City. As the data show, Dominican immigrants seemed to have a slight advantage over those born in the United States which means that immigrants were less likely (28 percent) to be under the poverty line than those born in this country (31 percent). The immigrants were doing better than

their children (See figure 3.6), but as time progresses there seems to be an equalizing factor.

**Figure 3.6—Domestic and Foreign-born Earning, 1990-2008.**



Source: the U.S. Census Bureau, Public Use Microdata Samples for censuses of 1990, 2000 and the American Community Survey 2008 as organized and made available by Steven Ruggles, Matthew Sobek, Trent Alexander, Catherine A. Fitch, Ronald Goeken, Patricia Kelly Hall, Miriam King, and Chad Ronnander. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 4.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota Population Center [producer and distributor], 2009, found at the internet site <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/>

The 2000 Census indicated that Dominicans were the immigrant group with the greatest population increase in New York City during the previous decade. Data from the 2000 Census indicated that 80 percent of the 98,427 Hispanic residents were first generation Dominicans (US Census, 2000). A study indicates that in 2000 (See Table below; information provided by the Migration Research Institute), the Dominican population was 1.1 million, which represents a growth of 89 percent between 1990 and

2000 (Migration Research Institute, 2004). The Dominican population was projected to be 1.3 million in 2004, 1.4 million in 2006, and 1.6 million in 2010. Approximately two-thirds of the Dominican population is foreign born, and immigration has been and continues to be the driving force of growth in the Dominican population in the United States (Table 3.2 from Migration Research Institute, 2004).

**Table 3.2—Size of the Dominican Population in 1990 and 2000, Showing Projected Population Size in 2004, 2007, and 2010.**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population Size</b>
<b>Census</b>	
<b>1990</b>	<b>586,700</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>1,111,142</b>
<b>Projected Population Size in:</b>	
<b>2004</b>	<b>1,289,945</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>1,380,683</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>1,565,575</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Census, PUMS Files; population projections by the Migration Policy

Some studies have also calculated the undocumented population from the Dominican Republic in the United States. According to some of these sources, undocumented Dominicans comprised over 1.3 percent in 1990, and it dropped to 1.2 percent in 2002 (See Table Table 3.3—Estimated Number of Unauthorized Immigrants from the Dominican Republic: 1990 and 2000). Dominicans do often arrive in the United States with tourist, work, or student visas and over stay in the country becoming undocumented.

**Table 3.3—Estimated Number of Unauthorized Immigrants from the Dominican Republic: 1990 and 2000**

<b>Origin</b>	<b>INS 1900</b>	<b>INS 2000</b>	<b>Urban Institute 2002</b>
<b>Total undocumented</b>	<b>3,500,000</b>	<b>7,000,000</b>	<b>8,500,000</b>
<b>Undocumented People from the Dominican Republic</b>	<b>46,000</b>	<b>91,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>
<b>Undocumented Dominicans as a Percentage of the Total Undocumented</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.2</b>

Source: Office of Policy and Planning, Department of Homeland Security (formerly the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service) (January 2003) *Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: 1990 and 2000*. Jeffrey Passel of the Urban Institute estimates approximately 15 percent of all Dominican foreign-born are undocumented. Also see the Migration Policy Institute, 2004, page 14.

Information provided by the Migration Policy Institute for 2004 shows the foreign born Dominican population in the United States. According to these data, over 60 percent of the Dominican immigrants arrived after 1985; 18 percent emigrated to the United States between 1995 and 2000; and the inflow peaked between 1990 and 1994 when close to one-fourth of all Dominicans arrived (Migration Policy Institute, 2004, p. 11; Table 3.4).

**Table 3.4 The Dominican Foreign Born, by Year of Arrival: 2000**

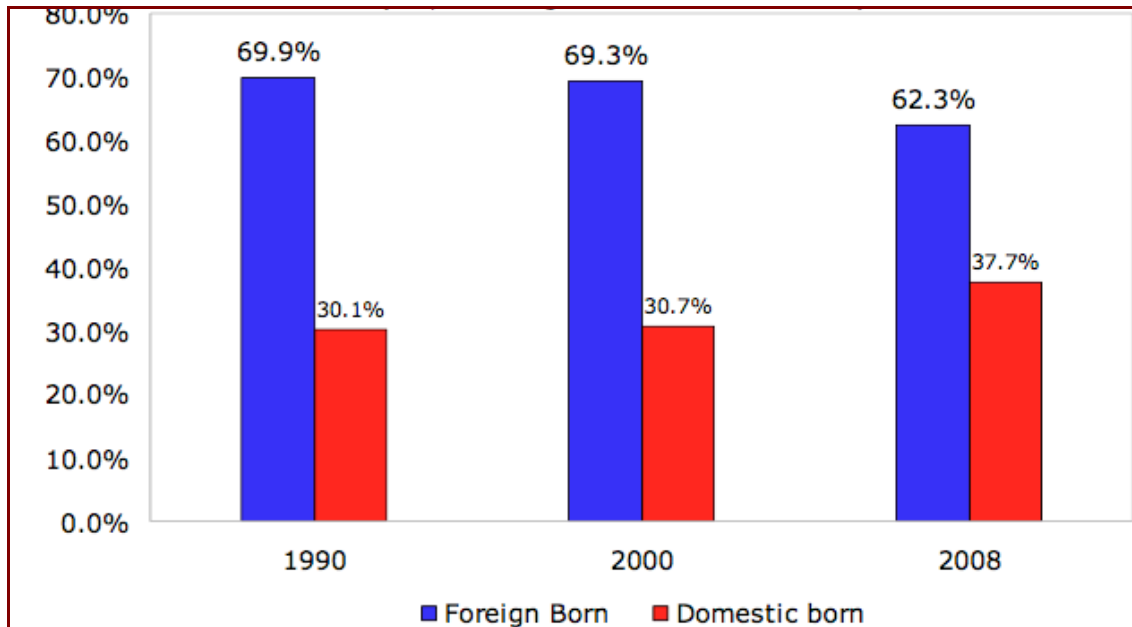
<b>Year of Arrival</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
TOTAL	710,921	100.0
1995-2000	130,375	18.3
1990-1994	173,181	24.4
1985-1989	134,756	19.0
1980-1984	94,043	13.2
1975-1979	55,959	7.9
1970-1974	48,324	6.8
Before 1970	74,283	10.4

Note: The Dominican foreign born includes those foreign born who were born in the Dominican Republic as well as those immigrants who were born in other countries and are of Dominican origin or ancestry. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, 5% PUMS File. Also see Migration Policy Institute, 2004, p. 1.

Studies indicate that the percentage of US born Dominicans has increased through the years making it an important factor in the increase of the Dominican

presence in the country. For example, in 2008, almost 38 percent of the Dominican population was comprised by people born in the United States, an increase of almost 8 percent since 1990 (See Figure 3.7).

**Figure 3.7—Population Distribution for Foreign-born and Domestic-born, 1990-2008**



**Source:** the U.S. Census Bureau, Public Use Microdata Samples for censuses of 1990, 2000 and the American Community Survey 2008 as organized and made available by Steven Ruggles, Matthew Sobek, Trent Alexander, Catherine A. Fitch, Ronald Goeken, Patricia Kelly Hall, Miriam King, and Chad Ronnander. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 4.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota Population Center [producer and distributor], 2009, found at the internet site <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/>

How does the immigrant Dominican population compare with Dominicans born in the United States in terms of relocation within New York City? As data provided by previous studies show, in 1990 the largest numbers of Dominicans resided in Manhattan despite their birthplace. But, in 2000, more Dominican immigrants resided in Manhattan than people of Dominican descent. However, in 2008 the numbers show that both were well-represented in the Bronx (See Table 3.5).

**Table 3.5-Dominican Population by Nativity and Borough in New York City, 1990-2008**

1990				
Borough	Domestic Born	Foreign Born	Total	% of all Dominicans
Bronx	25,819	63,027	88,846	27.1%
Manhattan	39,414	93,982	133,396	40.7%
Brooklyn	16,372	37,253	53,625	16.4%
Queens	16,343	33,982	50,325	15.4%
Staten Island	632	694	1,326	0.4%
Total	98,580	228,938	327,518	100.0%

2000				
Borough	Domestic Born	Foreign Born	Total	% of all Dominicans
Bronx	53,159	130,198	183,357	33.5%
Manhattan	57,378	129,344	186,722	34.1%
Brooklyn	25,702	58,219	83,921	15.3%
Queens	31,011	60,380	91,391	16.7%
Staten Island	862	1,126	1,988	0.4%
Total	168,112	379,267	547,379	100.0%

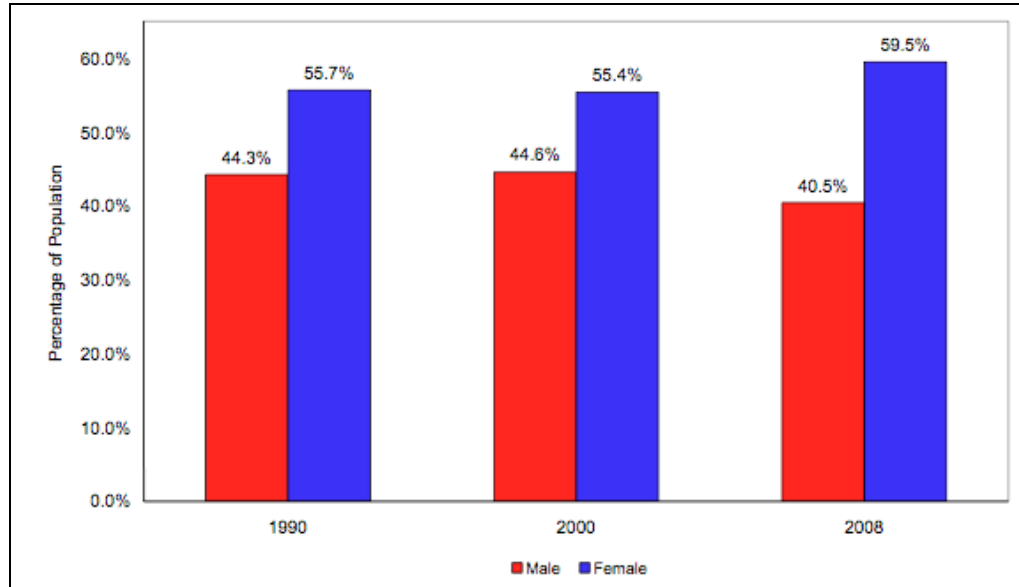
  

2008				
Borough	Domestic Born	Foreign Born	Total	% of all Dominicans
Bronx	88,076	142,072	230,148	39.3%
Manhattan	59,361	108,613	167,974	28.7%
Brooklyn	39,058	52,540	91,598	15.6%
Queens	32,292	60,255	92,547	15.8%
Staten Island	1,844	1,318	3,162	0.5%
Total	220,631	364,798	585,429	100.0%

Another report indicates that the demographic profile of the Dominican population in the United States is comprised as follows: “there are more women than men; the average age of the entire Dominican population in the United States in 2000 was 29 years, while the average age of the Dominican foreign born was 37 years; the majority (82 percent) of Dominicans under the age of 15 were born in the United States, while the majority (80 percent) of Dominicans age 15 to 64 were born abroad; the majority (68 percent) of all Dominicans were between 15 and 64 years of age” (The Migration Research Institute, 2004).

Data on the number of males and females among Dominicans in the United States reveal that women have outnumbered men since at least the 1990s, and that they have historically comprised more than 50 percent of the population (See Figure 3.8).

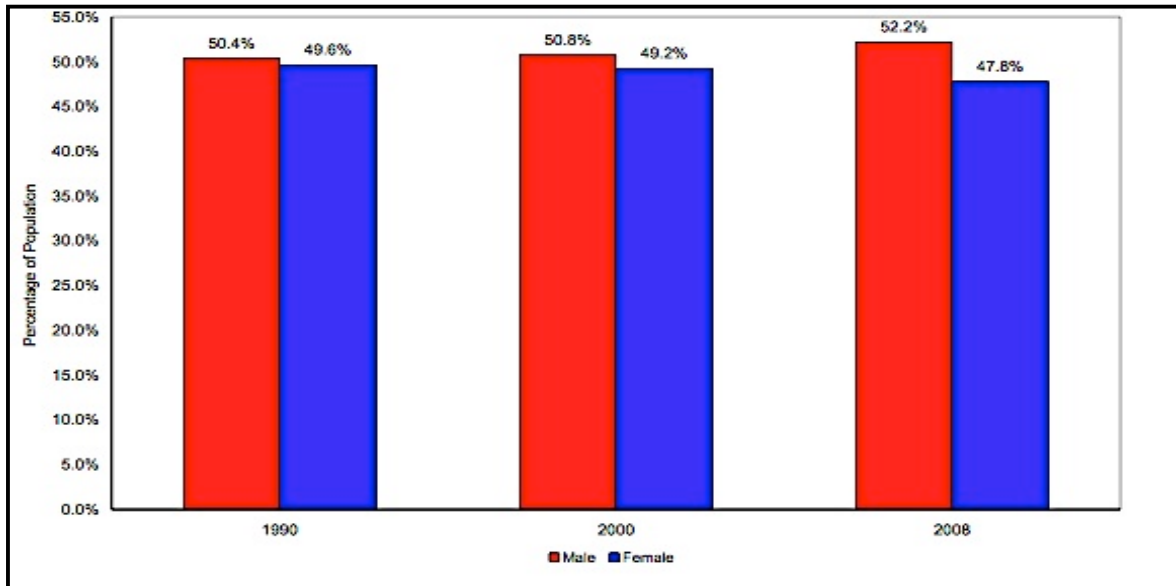
**Figure 3.8—Population Distribution by Gender among Foreign-born Dominicans, 1990-2008**



**Source:** the U.S. Census Bureau, Public Use Microdata Samples for censuses of 1990, 2000 and the American Community Survey 2008 as organized and made available by Steven Ruggles, Matthew Sobek, Trent Alexander, Catherine A. Fitch, Ronald Goeken, Patricia Kelly Hall, Miriam King, and Chad Ronnander. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 4.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota Population Center [producer and distributor], 2009, found at the internet site <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/>

Information on gender distribution among Dominicans born in the United States indicates that slightly more males than females comprise this group (See Figure 3.9). This may help to equalize the total Dominican population in terms of gender distribution in the United States.

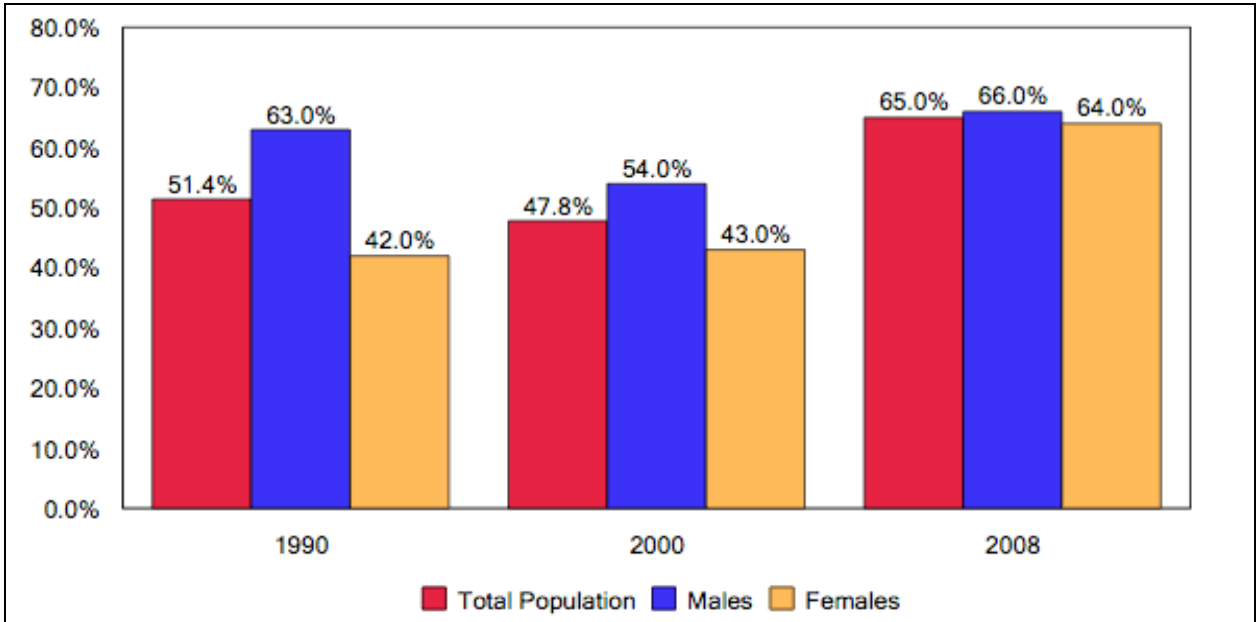
**Figure 3.9—Population Distribution by Gender among Domestic-born Dominicans in NYC, 1990-2008**



**Source:** the U.S. Census Bureau, Public Use Microdata Samples for censuses of 1990, 2000 and the American Community Survey 2008 as organized and made available by Steven Ruggles, Matthew Sobek, Trent Alexander, Catherine A. Fitch, Ronald Goeken, Patricia Kelly Hall, Miriam King, and Chad Ronnander. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 4.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota Population Center [producer and distributor], 2009, found at the internet site <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/>

An examination of employment patterns of Dominicans shows interesting findings: There has been a decline in labor force participation among Dominican men residing in New York City since 1980, while that of Dominican women has remained somewhat stable since 1980 (Hernández and Rivera-Batiz, 2003). The graph below indicates that both Dominican males and females have been active in the labor market from 1990 to 2008. But, from 1990 to 2000, the number of women working increased while the number of men decreased. In 2008, Dominican males showed a slight increase over Dominican females (See Figure-3.10).

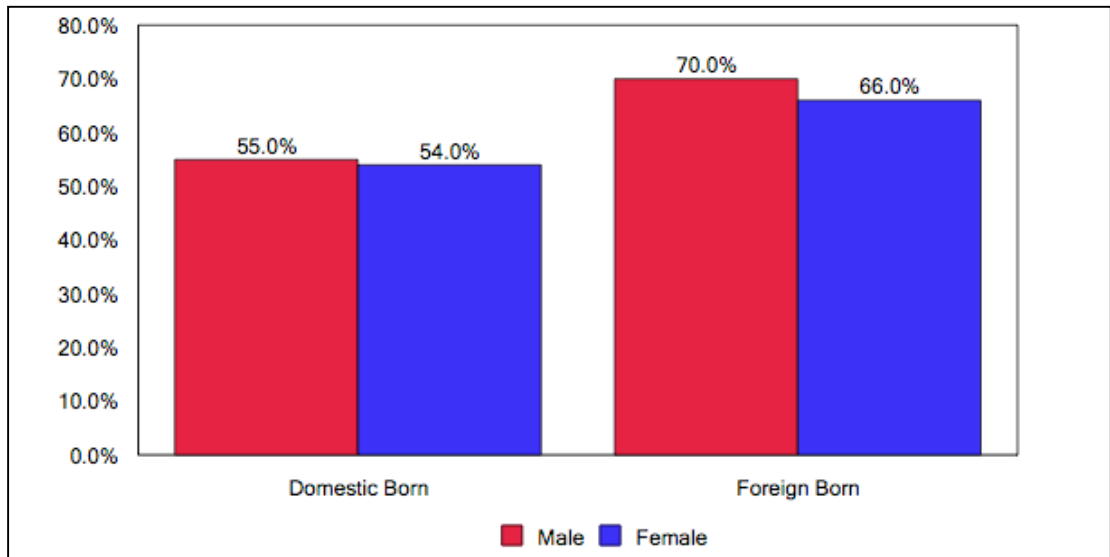
**Figure 3.10—Employment Rates Among Dominicans in NYC by Sex, 2008 (Population ages 16-60)**



Source: Center for Latin American Caribbean & Latino Studies at the CUNY-Graduate Center: Dominican in New York City, 1990-2008—October 2010

However, data for employment rates among Dominicans in New York City by nativity and gender indicate that men have had a slight advantage over Dominican females born in the country (See Figure 3.11).

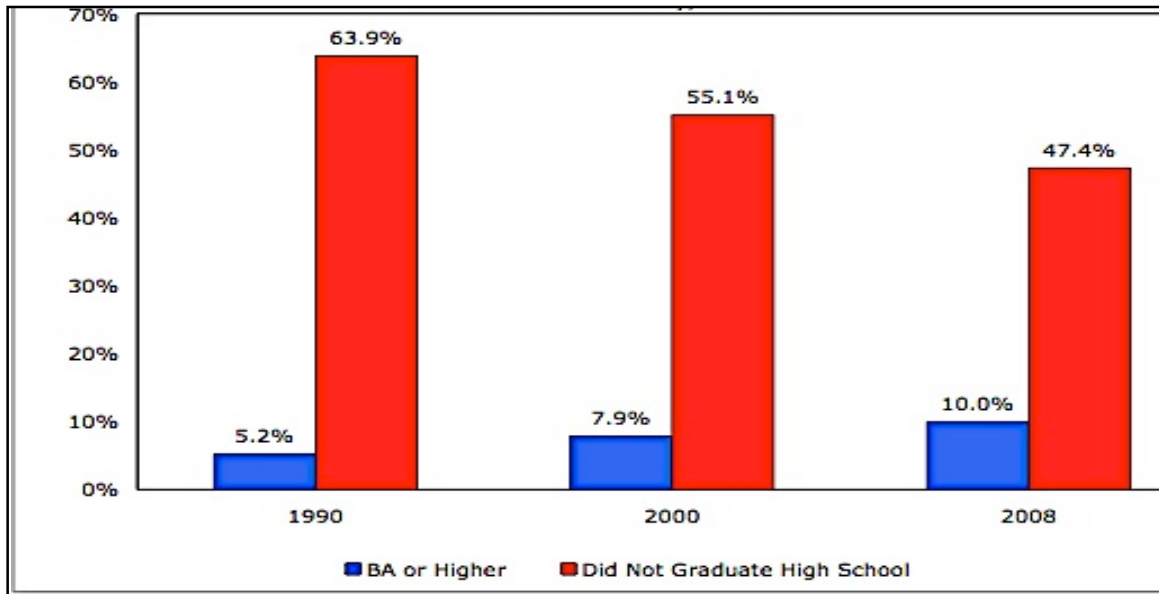
**Figure 3.11\_Employment Rates Among Dominicans in NYC, by Nativity & Sex, 2008.**



Source: The Center for Latin American, Caribbean & Latino Studies at CUNY-Graduate: Dominicans in New York City, 1990-2008—October 2010.

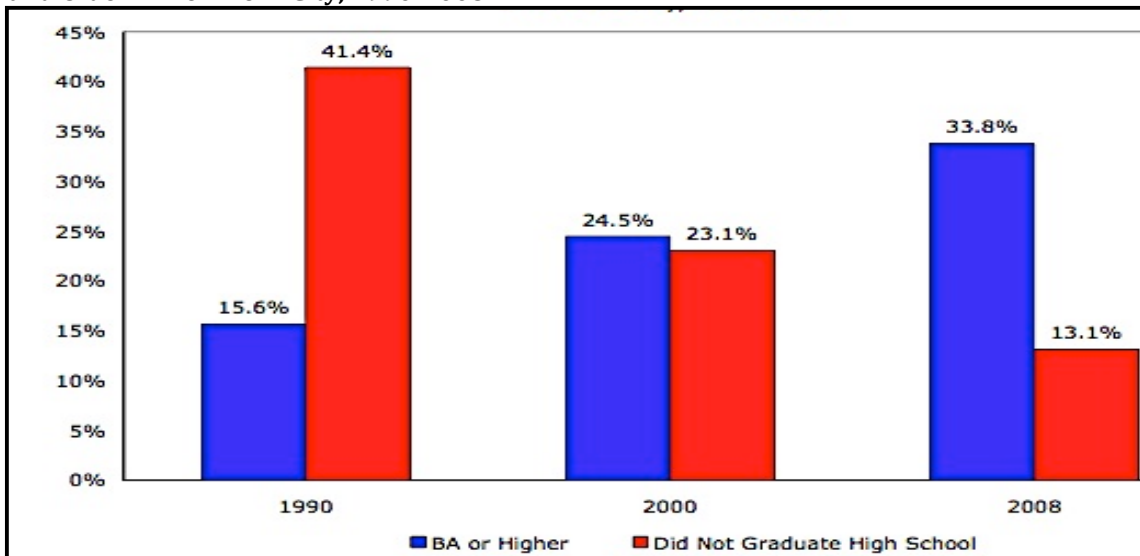
Data on educational attainment for Dominican immigrant women show that a large percentage of them did not graduate from high school, and that in 2000 only 10 percent of the women had a college degree or higher (See Figure 3.12). However, as the next graph, from the same source, shows, those born in the United States are doing better than immigrant Dominican women (See Figure 3.13).

**Figure 3.12—Educational Attainment for Foreign-Born Dominican Women 25 Years of Age or Older in New York City, 1990-2008**



Source: Center Latin American, Caribbean & Latino Studies at CUNY-Graduate Center: Dominicans in New York City 1990-2008-October, 2010.

**Figure 3.13 Educational Attainment for Foreign-born Dominican Women 25 Years of Age and Older in New York City, 1990-2008.**



Data provided by the Hernández and Rivera-Batiz (2003) study indicate that Dominicans in New York State had a per-capita income lower than the average for the United States in 2000. The proportion of female-headed households is substantially higher than the average. Dominicans also have lower income than other immigrants and a lower labor force participation rate than that of the overall U.S. population.

### **3.2. Dominicans in New York City**

Most immigrants believe that the United States is a place of magic where people can get rich and live a great life by reaching the American Dream. Dominicans are no different. They dream of New York City's monied-tree-lined-streets of gold, just to arrive and find minimum wage jobs, and pest-infested substandard housing. The motivation is to escape "an economically ravaged country where the median income is only \$40 a month" (New York Times, 1991). Dominican immigrants come to the United States "out of dire economic necessity escaping incompetent bureaucracy, political corruption, the daily blackouts, and the steep price of everything from plantains to sugar."<sup>xiv</sup>

Ricourt (2002, p. 31) says that "[A] common topic of conversation between Dominicans in New York City, even inspiring merengue lyrics, is the hard economy life in the city. New York is a city of both opulence and poverty" and most Dominicans are poor compared to United States standards. Unemployment, underemployment, welfare dependency, poor quality schools, expensive food prices, crime and high rents, among other factors, plague many New York City neighborhoods, especially the Dominican neighborhood of Washington Heights on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. All those

factors are characteristic of ghetto conditions, toxic environment, and represent some of the social exclusion domains.

One of the reasons for Dominicans living in such precarious conditions is due to the economic shifts of the late 1970s and early 1980s in both countries: the USA and the Dominican Republic. Manufacturing factories started to leave en masse the New York region in the 1960s, leaving thousands of Puerto Ricans and Dominicans unemployed; in addition there was a new wave of immigrants condemned to work in dead-end jobs in the service sector and in the leftovers of the manufacturing sector (Ricourt, 2003). The literature reviewed explains that people who have this type of experiences are likely to become excluded from the fabric of society because they lack social capital due to their inability to escape poverty through employment and/or education.

Unable to find work in factories, and lacking training and skills to work in other sectors of the economy, many have been forced to create their own economic niches in the underground economy, which expanded as a consequence of diminishing opportunities in the formal economy. Some in the community were forced to create avenues of employment in what is called the underground economy, which consists of low-wage jobs, usually under the shadow of taxes, such as taxi drivers, baby-sitters, bakers, and shoe repairers. Also, another sector of the underground economy includes illicit acts such as drug dealing, bolitas, (the numbers), and/or prostitution. Through an underground economy, a vast army of unemployed people has managed to survive in the unreported and underground cash economy (Sanjek 1998, p. 131).

Like some other minority groups, the entire Dominican community has been subjected to accusations of crime, violence, and sexual promiscuity among other allegations (Freidenberg, 1997) fostering exclusion and positing them for ejection from the society. In the 1980s, newspapers were dotted with stories about drug trafficking in Washington Heights. In fact, it was not rare to find, in the New York Times, articles related to the Dominicans' living conditions, especially about the Diaspora's underground economy and drug-dealings. Some reporters called the area the "Cocaine Capital," and due to the high crime rate and gang activities, some people were afraid to live, work, or visit the area.

A review of the literature revealed that in fact, from 1992 through 2008, there were 2,950 articles reporting Dominicans' position in the underground economy as well as repatriation and immigration treaties between both countries provide avenues for the United States to bring back those who fled to the Dominican Republic after committing crimes. Often, however, Dominican young males went back "blanquitos y empolvados" [white and powdered] in luxurious coffins to be buried in their hometowns. Some Dominican towns became famous for the funerals, burial practices, and fancy monuments of "jodedores and cadenuses" [names for drug traffickers related to the jewelry-bling bling- they carried and the work they did]; in some cemeteries, the tombs look like small replicas of a Disney world alluding to the capitalist system of the United States.

Drug dealings became a way to reach the American Dream that impelled some to come to the United States, and also changed the meaning of the dream in that it was no

longer to provide a better life for the family, but an enticement to get everything they saw portrayed in Hollywood films; “over the top” also became a way of life of some in the community. Songs about the ritzy life style of Dominican “jodedores” became the themes of many merengues, bachatas, and reggetton sang by some famous artists admired by children and youth in the community. Inevitably, these songs encourage the youth to also aspire to this life style; or the newly acquired American dream of inclusion, which ironically, leads to exclusion from mainstream society.

Actually, most of the literature reviewed on Dominicans portrays them as employed in low-paying jobs that do not require technical or formal educational training, and as active participants in the underground economy—this perception exists despite the growth of successful Dominican entrepreneurs. Besides some of the activities of the underground economy being illicit or criminal acts, they are also considered “moral turpitudes,” equivalent to a civil crime after the passage of IIRARA law in 1996. A civil crime, as explained before, is something for which people now become deportable no matter how long they have been in jail in the United States, no matter that they have paid their debt to society, no matter how long they have resided in the United States, and no matter that they have children born in the country.

While scandalous reporting were made of drug trafficking and the growth of the informal market in the Dominican community, seldom were references made in newspapers, studies, or research on the U.S.-born children, immigrant children, or families of Dominican deportees. After reviewing 2,950 reports, there were only three that made cursory mention of dealers having children or even families. However, none

of the articles discussed the lives of the children of Dominican deportees left behind in the United States, or the impact their parents' decisions have on the children's future prospects.

Targeting this immigrant community as toxic or human waste or wasted people was not difficult for policymakers and others, given this type of media portrayal. Social exclusion labels were used to position the entire Dominican community as dregs of society in both countries, and to refer to the ethnic neighborhood where they had settled as a ghetto or an excluded slum of society. People from Dominican upper classes in the homeland did not want to be associated with the immigrant community. While, some Dominicans in the United States did acknowledge the problem of the high crime rate related to the drug trafficking in the community, they make it clear that not all Dominicans were drug-dealers or "jodedores." Some would explain that most Dominicans worked hard to have a house and a farm back home. Others would state that their families had land before immigrating to the United States. Either way, many decided to distance themselves from the unscrupulous sector of the community both here and there.

### **3.3. Washington Heights' Socioeconomic Reality**

In a 2005 Washington Heights Study's,<sup>xv</sup> figures from the 2000 Census put the population of Northern Manhattan above 155th Street at approximately 225,000 individuals – primarily Latino, poorer and less educated than New Yorkers in general. Researchers found that 30 percent of individuals residing in Washington Heights are between the ages of 18 and 35, with 44.6 percent at age 35 and over, compared to 28.5

and 47.5 percent respectively for all New York City. The report indicated that 53.4 percent of the studied population had less than high school diploma versus 41.0 percent for all New York City; 15 percent have a high school diploma versus 20.1 percent; 11.8 percent have some college against 13.8 percent; 3 percent hold an associate degree versus 4.1; 7.4 percent reported having a bachelor's degree versus 12.5 percent; and only 5.8 percent of the population held a Masters and above educational level versus 8.4 percent for all New York City.<sup>xvi</sup> When asked about their comfort with their English proficiency, 28.9 percent of the population reported experiencing difficulties compared with only 12.2 percent for all New York City (Washington Heights Study, 2005).

By these economic and educational standards, Washington Heights, where most of the Dominicans settled in the early period of the immigration process, was a poor struggling community where its residents became marginalized. As indicated by previous studies, 81.4 percent of Washington Heights' residents reported an annual income under \$30,000, against 68.8 percent for all New York City; 12.5 percent between \$30,000 to \$49,999 versus a 15.9 percent; and only 10.7 percent reported an annual income of \$50,000 and over while the figure for all New York City is 15.3 percent (Washington Heights Study, 2005).

As far as other population characteristics, the report indicates that of the approximately 225,000 residents in the area, about 30 percent (68,000) are between 18 and 35 years old; of these about 44 percent (just under 30,000) have completed high school, but have not earned a college degree. A level of fluency in English is required for success in college studies, reducing the pool of candidates. Of the 68,000 residents

between ages 18 and 35, just over 24,000 have a high school diploma and speak English reasonably well. Within this subpopulation of potential undergraduates, the number attending college is relatively high, and the young adult subpopulation can be served by higher educational institutions – public and private (Washington Heights Study, 2005).

### **3.4. Washington Heights' as a Dominican Neighborhood**

The Dominican presence in Washington Heights was clearly felt in the neighborhood, where Dominican-owned businesses were burgeoning and the blend of Dominican and American elements were striking. The presence of these numerous and diverse Dominican-owned enterprises demonstrates the existence of a Dominican ethnic economy enclave in Washington Heights. One study of the community estimated that there were more than 20,000 Dominican owned enterprises (Guarnizo, 1992, p. 112). In addition to the neighborhood grocery stores (bodegas) and restaurants specializing in Dominican cuisine, other local businesses include travel agencies, money transfer agencies, beauty salons, clothing stores, laundromats, pharmacies, and non-medallion “gypsy” cab operations. Evidently, Dominicans have worked their way to establish a community that promotes the pursuit of economic advancement; despite the negative media positing Dominicans as wasted humans or dregs of society.

Dominicans are currently the second largest Latino population in New York, constituting 8 percent of the entire city’s population (Canty, 1997). Today, the greatest concentration of Dominicans in the city is in the Bronx (according to the 2010 census data), but Manhattan continues to be the cradle of the Dominican immigrant community in the United States (Rodriguez and Hernandez, 2004, p. 100). The mean annual per-

capita household income of the Dominican population in the United States is \$11,065 according to the 2011 census data which is about half the per-capita income of the average household in the country. It was also significantly lower than the per-capita income of the Black-African American population and slightly lower than the income of the average Latino household (Rodriguez and Hernandez, 2004:100).

According to a 2003 report on the socio-economic conditions of Dominicans in Washington Heights, in 2000, close to 60 percent of all Dominicans born in the United States who were 25 years of age or older had received some college education, with 21.9 percent completing a college education; by contrast, among U.S.-born Mexicans, only 13.3 percent had completed college, and 12.1 percent of U.S.-born Puerto Ricans had finished college (Pessar, 1995, p. 12). For U.S.-born Dominicans in New York, the proportion of those who attained some college education rose from 31.7 percent in 1980 to 42.8 percent in 1990 and to 55.1 percent in 2000. There were 111,553 Dominican children enrolled in the New York City public school system, which constituted 10.4 percent of the New York City school student body in 2000 (Hernandez and Rivera-Batiz, 2003).

Canty (1997) claimed that education is a top priority for foreign-born Dominican immigrants in the United States. The community views education as a channel through which one can progress and move upward in the United States. Many have come to the United States with the goal of being able to provide education for their children. While attaining an education is important for the Dominican community, it does not appear to significantly influence or enhance their socioeconomic status as reflected on family

income. Low family income can perhaps be due to the amount of money sent annually to relatives in the homeland, and/or lack of social capital.

However, Dominican U.S-born children (first-generation) do not share such educational sentiment; they learn very young that becoming entrepreneurs, like many members of their community, would best increase their chances of achieving their desired financial goals, and the illusive idea of the American dream. As a result, many U.S. born Dominican children fail to embrace the idea of education, and resultantly do not fully commit and integrate themselves into the American school milieu.

Unchallenged, Dominican youths eventually drop out or stop attending school to pursue immediate employment opportunities, perpetuating inequality and poverty within their community. Although I have yet to find accurate information on the number of Dominican youths who are disconnected from school because the system only provides general information on dropout rates for New York City due to legal limitations placed on the release of data by ethnic groups or backgrounds.

It has been documented that the schools “Dominican children attend are the most over-crowded in the city, and many of the children leave school without knowing how to read” or write (Reynoso, 2003). The coalition, formed by Dominican parents and community leaders, “realized that no one would help Dominican children if their parents did not struggle to take control” of the community board (Reynoso, 2003). In conversations with community activists Dr. Goris and Dr. Gratereaux, in the 1980s, the community struggled to reform and transformed the George Washington High School, then the only high school in the area the Dominican high school students attended.

They also reported, however, that because of the dropout rate, which led to incarceration of some of the students who left the school, and the low educational outcomes, the Department of Education was challenged by the community leaders to either close down or reform it. The Department of Education opted to reform the school by creating different schools within the school, which ironically further stratified children's educational outcome.

### **3.5. Exclusion of Dominicans: Deportation of Documented Dominican Immigrants**

El Diario La Prensa (May, 2009), a local Spanish newspaper, reported that Dominicans in Washington Heights or Northern Manhattan, New York, have recently become ground zero for the deportation of thousands of people from the United States.<sup>xvii</sup> The increase in the deportation of Dominicans is considered a recent phenomenon given that only 178 were deported in 1990 (Vega and Despradel, 2005, p. 38). However, they explain that even in the late 1990s Dominicans had the higher deportation rate, when compared to other Caribbean countries. For example, they found that 33 percent of deportees were from Jamaica and 9 percent from Haiti, while 45 percent were Dominicans—this law does not currently affect Cubans (communist country) and Puerto Ricans (free associated state of the United States). The remaining 13 percent was amongst the 12 smaller islands in the Caribbean. These statistics reflect that the main reason of Dominicans' deportation is because of a "moral turpitude," as they were not deported for undocumented immigration status.

Today, Dominicans continue to be the highest deported group from the Caribbean, especially due to crimes of "moral turpitude." In fact, a report released by Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights (NMCIR), "Deportado, Dominicano, y Humano" (Deported, Dominican, and Human—DDH), discussed the extent to which deportations have impacted Dominicans causing "a severe crisis in the Dominican community in the United States." The report confirms that "of the top seven immigrant groups deported from the United States in 2007, Dominicans had the highest proportion of those deported for criminal convictions" (DDH, 2008: 6). Thousands of

Dominicans have been deported since the enactment of the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act (IIRAIRA). The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) reported that thousands of Dominicans were deported in 2007. The surge was expected to continue, given that 600 Dominicans were deported in the first five weeks of 2009<sup>xviii</sup>.

It is believed that when compared to Salvadorian and Guatemalan deportees, “deported Dominicans have lived in the United States for a long period of time and have the highest proportion of legal permanent residents of such immigration groups suffering deportation en masse” (Deportado, Dominicano, y Humano Report, 2008, p. 6). For example, a recently compiled dataset of 475 deportees in the Dominican Republic found that an “overwhelming majority of Dominican deportees are being removed for drug offenses”<sup>xix</sup> (Venator-Santiago, unpublished). Given that many Dominicans in the United States face targeted enforcement and are incarcerated for low-level offenses that would make the average deportee substantially likely to have a nonviolent drug offense on their record as the sole grounds of deportation,<sup>xx</sup> removal on such grounds seems extraordinarily punitive, especially “considering that many of these individuals may have been eligible for U.S. citizenship before their convictions,”<sup>xxi</sup> but did not become citizens due to the high processing fee for the Naturalization application.

Venator-Santiago also explains that when judges sentence lawful permanent residents, or “green card holders,” for committing minor offenses, the options may range from serving jail time to completing rehabilitative programs or community service—but most judges would not likely sentence that person to permanent exile

from his/her family and friends. Yet this is one of the results of the 1996 change in law which, combined with collaboration between local law enforcement and ICE, has led to an assembly-line deportation machine that fails to consider the interests of children, families, and immigrant communities.

The fact that most deported Dominicans are legal permanent residents (LPRs) holds great importance in how this particular community faces immigration enforcement, since Dominicans are seldom deported on grounds of unlawful immigration status (i.e. undocumented status) alone. Thus, many Dominicans had little reason to fear deportation until changes to immigration laws became retroactive, expanding the category of “moral turpitude,” or criminal offenses, which constitute grounds for removal (DHS Yearbook, 2006). The *Deportado, Dominicano, y Humano* Report (2009) views deportation as a silent epidemic that fractures families, destroys livelihoods, and uproots communities on both shores (in the United States and the Dominican Republic). The persons being deported are parents, spouses, co-workers, and neighbors—many who made mistakes years ago, during their younger years, and today, they are paying once again for the consequences of such mistakes. In sum, in the United States today, there is no second chance or opportunity to redeem past mistakes, despite serving a sentence.

Many of these offenses include drug crimes as well as other misdemeanors, for which minority communities suffer targeted enforcement. The DDH Report further describes that drug laws, have impacted “New York State through the punitive Rockefeller drug laws which disproportionately affected Black and Latino communities.” For instance, from 1987 to 2006, marijuana arrests in New York City

increased by over 1000 percent<sup>xxii</sup>. As part of an aggressive policing campaign, the “marijuana arrest crusade” affected immigrant communities, with Latinos being three times more likely to be arrested than Whites<sup>xxiii</sup> for the same criminal offences.

Over the years, the foreign-born inmate population in New York State has also dramatically increased. For example, between 1985 and 2007, it increased by 148 percent which was almost twice the rate of growth of the native-born inmate population during the same period<sup>xxiv</sup>. New York’s punitive drug law and mandatory incarceration, even for first time low-level offenders, has helped to incarcerate a steady flow of Dominicans over the years<sup>xxv</sup>.

Deportation does more than just disrupt the immediate lives of Dominican deportees and their families; it also leaves children behind and destroys family. According to Human Rights Watch, deportation policies in this country have separated and left behind an estimated 1.6 million families<sup>xxvi</sup>. A recent report issued by the Department of Homeland Security estimated that the government deported well over 100,000 parents of U.S. citizens in the decade ending in 2007<sup>xxvii</sup>. Of course, in many instances where the citizens were children, these deportations forced them to immigrate with their parents to foreign countries. In such an instance, the United States government deports, de facto, its own citizens<sup>xxviii</sup>.

Note that these parents are legally considered criminals in both this country and their country of origin, irrespective of the reasons for having been deported. It is also important to note that many Dominican parents are not deported because of immigration raids, as is the case with many undocumented people from Mexico and some Latin American countries. As suggested by David Brotherton’s and Luis Barrios’

forthcoming research on Dominican deportees, a large number of them are deported because of an instance of “moral turpitude,” often connected with the underground economy (i.e. drug dealing).

One can only imagine the level of stress and fear that children of deportees experience. On one hand, they may be exiled with their parent to start over in a country they know little about, with a new language, fewer resources and an uncertain future. On the other hand, they may be abruptly separated from their father or mother and forced to grow in a broken home without daily contact with a mother or father figure, and with the stigma of being the child of a deportee. All this is in addition to the financial obstacles presented by the absence of a parent. Under existing policy, America’s immigration laws are forcing some American citizen children to lose either their parent or their country thereby violating existing and established children’s rights.

The children left behind are the ones picking up the tab of a branded and highly stigmatized legacy of expatriation; contaminating or polluting their lives even further. From 1990 to 2008, the Department of Homeland Security reported that out of 2,383,213 immigrants deported to 168 countries, 851,000 immigrants were deported because of criminal records or for an instance of “moral turpitude.” Table 3.6 shows the top seven countries of deportees because of criminal records and for undocumented immigration status:

<b>Documented Immigrants</b>		<b>Undocumented Immigrants</b>	
<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of Deportees</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of Deportees</b>
Mexico	653,570	Mexico	1,064,181
El Salvador	28,810	Honduras	107,349
Honduras	28,527	Guatemala	103,015
Dominican Republic	22,562	El Salvador	60,341
Guatemala	21,399	Brazil	31,891
Jamaica	14,006	Dominican Republic	11,594
Colombia	13,877	Colombia	10,925

-DHS Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, 2008: Table # 37.

Mexico has the highest number of both criminal and undocumented deportees and Mexicans are one of the fastest growing immigrant groups in the United States. The overall number of deportees is alarming in its implications for the future of the U.S.-born children, since the number of children affected by deportation surpasses 500,000 during this period (Capps R, Castaneda R.M., Chaudry A., and Santos R., 2007).

Despite ranking sixth in the list of country of deportation due to undocumented status, the Dominican Republic ranks fourth (and first among Caribbean countries) in the number of deportations for committing instances of “moral turpitude,” or having criminal records. This figure is especially significant in New York given that Dominicans are one of the fastest growing groups in the state. Given the stigma attached to deportation due to a criminal act, the children of deportees who are left behind have a higher risk of being ostracized by government agencies, their own community, and society at large or becoming human waste and dregs of society. This translates into a limited amount of access to the community and governmental resources and becoming “scapegoats” by association.

Looking at Table 3.7 on Dominican Deportees, we can clearly observe that the number of Dominican deportees with criminal records have dramatically increased in the last fifteen years. The cited report indicates that from 1,029 cases in 1993 to 2,301 in 2005 (See Table 3.7).

	Criminal	Non Criminal
1993	1,029	620
1994	970	574
1995	1,182	438
1996	1,487	469
1997	1,971	723
1998	1,705	813
1999	2,341	867
2000	2,244	1,152
2001	2,135	1,800
2002	1,990	1,483
2003	2,139	1,145
2004	2,514	942
2005	2,301	628

(Source: Venetor-Santiago C., Unpublished Monograph)

The question that can be asked from the above table is: Has criminality among Dominicans increased, or has the expansion of the concept of criminality (due to the passing of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996), affected an increasing number of people, and as a result, more Dominicans are charged with a “moral turpitude” crime after doing time?

The answer to this question can be discerned from available data (see Table 3.8) from the Dominican Republic Department of Justice. They have documented that the majority of deportees (73.79%) have been repatriated for drug offenses, after completing their sentences in the United States; after doing time for the crime under the

expansion of the current immigration law. Inter country comparison are not yet possible due to incomparable databases. The Dominican National Police does collect information on deportees, and the United States also gathers statistics on incarceration rates and deportation, but there is no standard system tracking of deportees between the two countries (Venetor-Santiago, Unpublished monograph).

**Table 3.8--Registered Deportees in the Dominican Republic by Offense, 1995-2003**

Offense	Number	Percentage
Drugs	14,321	73.79%
Illegal Residence	1,041	5.76%
Burglary	836	4.19%
Firearms	746	3.91%
Domestic Violence	555	2.92%
Homicide	478	2.50%
Assault & Battery	324	1.38%
Auto Theft	177	0.98%
Stowaways	165	0.91%
Forgery	145	0.78%
Traffic Violations	93	0.51%
Fights	69	0.35%
Arson	58	0.32%
Street Violence (Gangs)	56	0.29%
Trafficking in Humans	52	0.29%
Kidnapping	45	0.22%
Weapons	29	0.16%
Money Laundering	35	0.17%
Crimes of Passion	20	0.11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,406</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The second highest category (which has a much lower percentage) is illegal residence at 5.76 percent, followed by burglary at 4.19 percent, and domestic violence (3%). Some of the offenses are really more minor infractions than criminal acts, e.g., traffic violations (Veneto-Santiago, Unpublished monograph, 2008).

An important question remains, however: How is the ejection of people from a society related to issues/concerns of law and order? Young traces the origins of the dynamics of social exclusion in the Mertonian concept of anomie, in which crime and deviance are seen to be the result of the assimilation of cultural goals, yet where there are structural obstacles to their achievement. In particular, crime is seen as a result of the assimilation of the American Dream and the frustrations arising out of a lack of opportunities (p. 19, 25).

According to Rumbaut and Ewing (2007), wasted humans may suffer the burden of the law and order just by being in toxic environments. For example, they found that conservative theories of crime and incarceration predict higher rates of imprisonment for younger and less educated adult males from minority groups. Unfortunately, they also report that the incarceration rate of U.S.-born men between the ages of 19 to 39, who were in federal prisons, state prisons or local jails, was five times higher than the incarceration rate of foreign born young males. They observed that among incarcerated populations for all ethnic groups, “the risk of imprisonment was higher for men who were high-school dropouts (6.9 %) when compared to those who were high-school graduates (2.0%)” (p. 8). Astonishingly, they also found “immigrants’ incarceration rates [to be] lower than natives’ among high-school dropouts.” For example, in the year 2000, 9.8 percent of all U.S. born male high school dropouts were in prison.

The incarceration trends, coupled with the social and educational programs created to address this population’s “special needs,” (e.g., NCLB standardized testing, ELL programs, and diagnostics on learning disabilities), have been marginally effective,

at best, in impacting educational outcomes for children of deportees. In addition, Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco (2001) confirm that when children are left in a predominantly minority neighborhood “the networks that are available to access desirable jobs and the quality of schools they attend” affect them, especially when these neighborhoods have fewer educational and employment resources due to the concentrated poverty and the de facto segregation of these children. Therefore, the lack of opportunity in a toxic and hopeless environment creates greater risk for wasted children for they are more likely to engage in illegal activities, which could lead them down a criminal path or result in them becoming teenage parents or school drop outs. All these limitations eventually lead to lower educational levels, thus hindering their social mobility and converting them into wasted humans or dregs of society (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2001. pp 130-131).

## **CHAPTER 4—Methodology: Sample Selection, Instruments Used, Data Collection Procedure and Analytical Strategy.**

*“Give ten different researchers the task of investigating one, and the same nontrivial research question, and you will get ten different results” (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p.2).*

### **4.1 Data Gathering**

The data gathering process for this investigation was conducted in 2010 in New York City. Chapter 4 articulates some methodological concerns regarding the use of qualitative methods in the data gathering process, describes the procedure through which the data for the study were generated, the methodology used, and conceptualizes the different social drivers used in the data analysis.

Data for this research were collected from six case studies of Dominican families who experienced deportation of a legal documented parent. However, one of the cases of the family profile was constructed based on the information provided by the adult-child interviewed because she did not want the mother to re-experience the trauma of the deportation of the father.

Although the research focused on the impact of the deportation of documented parents on the children left behind, information was obtained on the general well being of these families. Six case vignettes will be presented in the data analysis section; five were data gathered from parents, or mothers, and one from an adult child whose mother did not participate in the investigation for reasons explained above. The information gathered through these six case studies will be articulated using social drivers developed in Europe to measure the degree to which the United States is also

involved in the exclusion of certain individuals from some social processes, including but not limited to, the deportation of documented immigrants.

In examining the usefulness of available methodologies on grounded theory and hermeneutic phenomenology, I find that a phenomenological approach is the most appropriate research technique to unveil the meaningful experiences that children of Dominican deportees have undergone, and to address the concerns about the social cost these children endure while trying to be full participants in United States mainstream society. Because the intent of this study is to portray the connection between the politically charged immigration reform, deportation, and the toll imposed on U.S-born children of immigrants as they integrate into mainstream society, this study seeks to make claims primarily on the multiple meanings of these children's social and educational experiences (Creswell, 2000, p. 18).

This study uses qualitative research methods and I use a phenomenological approach to describe the lived experiences of U.S.-born adolescent children of Dominican deportees left behind in the United States. Denzin and Lincoln (2007) explain that qualitative research is "a situated activity that locates the observer into the world" (4). They further describe the process as a set of interpretative, material practices that makes the world visible and that transforms the world. Researchers basically turn the world into "a series of representation, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self" (p. 5), and further creating a mosaic of interpretation, which embraces two social tensions; on the one hand, "it is drawn to critical sensibility;" on the other hand, "it is more narrowly

defined humanistic and naturalistic conception of human experience and its analysis. These tensions can be combined in the same project, bringing both humanistic and critical perspectives to bear” on the analysis (Denzin and Lincoln, 2007 p. 11).

Qualitative research studies phenomena in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, them in terms of the meaning people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2007, p. 5). This qualitative process creates and brings psychological and emotional unity to an interpretative experience (p. 7) leading the investigation to a phenomenological approach. Phenomenological research consists of “the examination of human experiences through detailed descriptions of the people being studied;” it identifies the “essence” of human experiences concerning a phenomenon of which the significance and impact can only be described by the participants (Creswell, 2002, p. 15).

The review of the literature demonstrated an increase in phenomenologically-oriented research when delving into the American educational system; although the contributions made by some theoretical reviews are substantial, there is an absence in the systematic inquiry into the lived experiences of children of a deportees who may have been left behind in a marginalized neighborhood, breathing a toxically social environment and with slim chances at “making it.”

A quote from Sartre in van Manen (1990, p. 25) illustrates the research fit of phenomenology “I see myself because somebody [the researcher] sees me. I experience myself as object for another.” From van Manen’s viewpoint, phenomenology’s micro analytical interpretivist and subjectivist epistemology examine the essence of

experience as it is lived. In other words, children of deportees will examine the core of their experiences based on the knowledge of the world they live or grew up in. By using the phenomenological approach, this study seeks to disclose the general psychosocial structure of the phenomenon of deportation and the impact it has had on the target group of children of deportees. This approach synthesizes aspects from the phenomenological theory developed by Giorgi (1985) and von Eckartsberg (1986).

#### **4.2 Data Collection Procedure**

Lacey and Luff, (2001) suggested that qualitative methods such as narrative and observation allow researchers to 'reach the parts other methods cannot reach' (p.1). Given the limited amount of research on deportees coupled with the heightened level of stigmatization, secrecy and the sensitivity of the topic, this research will utilize case studies as the most applicable approach for data collection. Case study allows the researcher to delve into the daily lives of children of deportees, using semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions that allow the flexibility to explore feelings and issues that may arise during the interviews, a goal that a structured survey could undermine. The case study technique also facilitates the examination of questions regarding agency and resistance at the same time capturing the depth and complexity in children of deportees' experiences while living in a socially political context.

Frequently, case studies methods have been widely used in the field of law and business; however this technique is not commonly used when researching within the fields of educational and other social sciences. Due to the level of secrecy and stigmatization, individual settings for each participants are necessary to help flush out

the aims and objectives of this research. Katherine Eisenhardt describes case study as “a research strategy that focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings,” (p. 584). Eisenhardt also explains that case study research “is appropriate in new topic areas” in order to understand the level of complexity of the topic and have a flexible interviewing technique “allowing [the researcher] to take advantage and to probe emergent themes.” Therefore, case study seems to be the most applicable methodology since the goal is to understand each case individually and with as much depth as possible (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 539).

### **4.3 Sample Selection**

In relation to the sample selection, Eisenhardt urges researchers “to plan a number of cases in advance in order to prevent the data and theoretical saturation” (1989, p. 545). She also claims that there is “no ideal number of cases, a number between 4 and 10 cases works well” because more than 10 cases could be difficult to cope with the complexity and volume of the data, but less than 4 cases would not provide empirical grounding (p. 545). The goal is to build six case studies, given the level of secrecy and stigmatization deportation enforces onto the families left behind, there may be no willingness to participate as many children may not even be aware of their parent’s exile.

Six families of Dominican deportees were recruited through a snowballing technique—through word-of-mouth in Washington Heights and through community board organizations that cater to immigrant families. The six families consisted of male or female children of deportees, between the ages of 14 and 24, residing in Washington

Heights. It was required that participants knew about the deportation of the parents and the reasons for the deportation. The researcher also interviewed the legal guardian or the parent left behind with the children—see Appendix E, for a sample of the questionnaire. The six families included one family reconstructed from data provided by the adult child of a deported parent.

As outlined by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), each parent participant was required to sign a “Consent to Participate in Research” form (see Appendix B) which provided the researcher’s contact information should the interviewee have additional questions or wish to withdraw from the project.

#### 4.4 Interview Process

The researcher interviewed each participant. The interviews were audio taped, with the consent of the participants; confidentiality was assured by keeping all recorded materials in a secured location, at the researcher's private office. Any identifying information was altered in the transcripts to ensure confidentiality. In addition, each participant chose a pseudonym that was used throughout the interview process.

There were two instruments: one questionnaire for the parent or guardian left behind (see Appendix D), and a three-step questionnaire for the children of deportees (see Appendix E). For the parent, the questionnaire focused on demographics and the experiences of having his/ her significant other and possible breadwinner deported; and for the children, the questionnaire focused on their memories of the deportation, their lives without their parent, as well as their adaptation process in a broken or step home.

Von Eckartsberg (1986) contended that, unlike a reporter, the researcher is not satisfied with the story providing the answer to the question, "what happened?" (p. 202). The researcher wants "to know more, to read deeper into the meaning of the story ... we want to reveal the 'true story,' the story behind or within the given story: the meta-story or subtext" (p. 202). Using a phenomenological approach on the open-ended questions allowed the researcher to achieve Von Eckartsberg's goal in revealing the "true story," in addition to a description of the consequent behaviors related to process of his/her parent's deportation.

Table 4.1 describes the data collection process in which the parental interview provided a narrative to build a case study for the family. Part 1 describes the home environment of the parent left behind, and in which the child lived; it was designed to provide a detailed description of the possible obstacles the child left behind must overcome on a daily basis, e.g. financial struggles, if any, parenting techniques and challenges, employment pattern, etc.

Upon the completion of the non-directive interview, the researcher asked a series of open-ended questions designed to elicit life history material and exposure to social and educational outcomes—see Table 4.1 for a description on each section of the interview. This open-ended set of questions followed a set protocol since the goal was to encourage the participants to provide a rich and full description of their life histories, and to obtain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon as lived in action and experienced.

**Table 4.1—Parental Questionnaire (PQ)**

Data Collection	Method of analysis
A 5-part-semi-structured interview with the parent or legal guardian left behind. See Appendix D for a sample of the interview questions.	<b>Part I</b> seeks to get a description of the home environment before, during, and after the process of deportation. This part of the interview aims to layout the home environment in which the child has been left behind.
	<b>Part II</b> provides a detailed account on the financial experiences before, during, and after deportation. This section depicts the social opportunities accessible to the child of deportee.
	<b>Part III</b> describes the process of deportation for the individual cases. In this section the legal guardian or parent explain the process of deportation to which the child witnessed. This session intends to unveil the feelings or thoughts surrounding the process of deportation from the parent’s viewpoint. This section also includes a description of the relationship between the deported parent and the child left behind, and how the parent left behind explained the situation to the child.
	<b>Part IV</b> provides information about the level of parental involvement on the child’s educational outcome.
	<b>Part V</b> asks about the future and their process of moving forward, what do they expect will happen to the family? What are their hopes and dreams?

After confirming the demographic information provided by the interviewed parent or legal guardian and assuring that the interview met the set aims and objectives of the research, the researcher began to interview the children of deportees. Children were asked to recall any thoughts, feelings, and intentions occurring prior to, during, or subsequent to the process of deportation. Throughout the process the researcher asked non-directive questions to clarify and develop each participant's account. Although these questions were "grounded in the explicit descriptive material of the interviewee's narratives and characterizations," the researcher was attentive "to any new information which the participants spontaneously offered" (Giorgi, 1985, p. 139).

Table 4.2 describes the data collection process in which the child of a deportee provided a narrative to build a case study for the family. Part 1 describes the home environment of the parent left behind, and in which the child lived; it was designed to provide a detailed description of the possible obstacles the child left behind must overcome on a daily basis, e.g. financial struggles, if any, parenting techniques and challenges, employment pattern, etc.

<b>Table 4.2 – Children Questionnaire (CQ)</b>	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Method of analysis</b>
<p>A 6-section-semi-structured interview with the child left behind. See Appendix E for a sample of the interview questions.</p>	<p><b>Section I</b> seeks to get a description of the home environment before, during, and after the process of deportation. This part of the interview aims to layout the home environment in which the child has been left behind.</p>
	<p><b>Section II</b> asks for a detailed account of their schooling experience. This part addresses the question on whether or not his/her parent’s deportation have impacted or changed his/her attitudes toward education.</p>
	<p><b>Section III</b> addresses the household financial standing from the child’s perspective. This section aims to examine if the child feels urgency for working over school; does the child feel responsible for contributing to his or her home finance? How is this feeling impacting their integration to mainstream society? How is the child negotiating his/her social development when their agency as a child has been taken away?</p>
	<p><b>Section IV</b> describes the process of deportation for the individual families. This section also includes a description of the relationship between the deported parent and the child left behind, and how the parent left behind explained the situation to the child. This session provides with the opportunity to look at the child’s life before, during, and after deportation process.</p>
	<p><b>Section V</b> looks at the personal impact deportation may have had on the child’s life. This section addresses the level of internalization the child has undergone, and how the child is coping or had coped with his/her lived experience. Has the child changed his/her worldview towards institutions of authority (i.e. school, criminal justice system, homeland security)?</p>
	<p><b>Section VI</b> is about looking back and moving forward. What is the child’s future plans? This section summarizes the lived experience of being a child of a deportee by looking at his/her experiences when integrating into mainstream society.</p>

Interviews were also available in Spanish (See Appendix C). Each participant decided his or her language preference. The protocol consisted of the following questions:

- Please tell me about your background: Where were you born? Do you remember who lived with you as you were growing up? Where did you live? Who were your primarily caretakers?
- How would you describe your childhood?
- Tell me about yourself: How would you describe yourself to others?  
What kind of kid were you when you were growing up?
- How would you describe the emotional atmosphere in our home? Where you closed to your mother? Father? Siblings?

- How did you do in grade school? High school?
- Do you remember when your father/mother was asked to leave the United States? Why was he/she deported? How old were you? What do you remember about the incident? Can you please walk me through the process?
- Do you remember what went through your mind? If not, did you know right away what was going on? When did you find you? How did you feel about it?
- Do you think often about the incident?
- Can you describe how things changed at home?

This interview protocol was used for two reasons. First, the review of the literature has demonstrated that human capital and the social development of children are often affected by the family's emotional climate, exposure to violence, victimization, drug and alcohol usage, and school performance. There are all factors connected to the individual's potential to excel in society and to become a productive member of society. These questions helped to elucidate the lived experiences of these factors; they provided access into the daily interactions these individuals have with their families, community, and society at large.

Second, because young men in this age range are notoriously reticent to provide biographical information to a stranger, especially one who is asking very delicate and emotionally charged questions, the questions were used to elicit important information that the participants might, consciously or unconsciously, seek to omit from their self-representations. Although the approach was designed to encourage free associations

and discussions of life history, and to give the interviewee as much control as possible over the development of the content. The researcher remained focused on the experience of being a child of a deportee, which serves as the centerpiece of the conversation.

Drawing from the work of Mishler (1986), Erikson (1993), and Campion, Campion & Hudson (1983), it can be concluded that research interviewees are much more likely to give thoughtful and self-revelatory responses in situations where they can sense the interviewer's personal interest in their stories and that the researcher will maintain a presence of collaborative openness. Elliot Mishler contended that the suppression of discourse in traditional survey interview research results in a "pervasive disregard for the respondent's social and personal contexts of meaning" (p. 5). Consequently, such research fails to provide a comprehensive descriptive understanding of how individuals organize and construct "their understanding of themselves, their experiences and their worlds" (p. 53). It is only through dialogue, a process that produces a "joint construction of meaning," that the researcher can arrive at any descriptive understanding of the way individuals internalize and make sense of their experiences" (p. 56). He also argued that research participants, given the space (a safe space) to "speak in their voices and are allowed to control the introduction and flow of topics, and encouraged to extend their responses," will naturally respond openly to the questions, with stories and narratives (p. 69).

The second part of the interview was about the family, the school, and the social environment. The third part of the interview was to confirm the accuracy of provided information as it had been transcribed. To avoid a negative impact on the participant

and to maintain objectivity, the construction of parts two and three of the surveys were developed in conjunction with a psychologist to ensure that the questions would not conflict with the expected level of openness, and to protect the psychological state of the participants.

The children's interviews were conducted in three scheduled interviews, with a span of two hours per meeting. The first interview was conducted at the participant's home, while the second interview was done at a place of the participant's choice that represents his/her social environs. The final interview was conducted at their home. This change of scenery and location provided more detailed information as to their lived experience because it often helped to establish a different type of rapport with the children.

#### 4.5. Operationalization of Concepts

The main variables or concepts used in this investigation were defined using some of the categories developed by The Social Exclusion Unit in 2004. The following conceptualization informs the analysis of the data:

**SOCIAL EXCLUSION:** According to The Social Exclusion Unit, it refers to both people and places because “it is a phenomenon that can affect not just the individuals but also the neighborhoods in which they live (2004, p. 86). The European Union (Association of Societies for Persons with Intellectual Disability and their Families) posits that social exclusion means that people who are poor or have other problems do not take part in the life of society; poor people tend to be concentrated in particular areas; do not have equal chances to participate in decisions that affect their lives, and are unable to claim their rights (The European Union, Inclusion Europe Report).

**SOCIAL INCLUSION:** is the participation in the fabric of society through the different institutions and mechanism. Regardless of social class and/or ethnicity or racial background, individuals are included in policy-making and are able to participate in the political apparatus of society and hold employment that could facilitate social advancement that could truly improve their livelihood.

**CHILD AND FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS:** Refer to the child’s personal characteristics and experience; socio-economic factors; parents’ educational attainment; family structure; ethnic/language; and other parental interest/involvement/practice and locally based factors (The Social Exclusion Unit, 2004).

The European Union states that single mothers with children, families with many children, children who are excluded, people who cannot follow the new technologies, people who do not have jobs, older people who live alone, young people without good vocational training, individuals who depend on long term care, homeless, people with disabilities, and people from other countries (or immigrants) have special risk of becoming excluded.

**EDUCATION AND SKILLS:** Alludes to school climate, quality of education, standards achieved, and management and efficiency. The Social Unit also states that low parental involvement is one of the most strongly related factors to educational attainment and adult outcomes (2004, p. 45). Other risk factors related to children's educational attainment are: having parents or siblings with drug use; family disruption and poor attachment to, or communication with, parents; child abuse; disorderly conduct; low grades; truancy and exclusion from school; early age onset of drug use; poor mental health, especially depression and suicidal behavior; crime; and social deprivation (2004, p. 52).

**NEIGHBORHOOD:** Its affect on social exclusion has been defined by The Exclusion Unit as the "net change in the contribution to life-changes made by living in one area rather than another" (2004, p. 87). The socio-economic and demographic composition of the neighborhood affects the incidence of poverty and other indicators of social exclusion (The Exclusion Unit, 2004, p. 87).

**CRIME:** In terms of immigrants in today's United States, it seems that any crime, past or present, can put foreigners at risk of exclusion. In this case, aggravated felonies, considered "moral turpitudes," represent risks for total exclusion or deportation.

INCOME, POVERTY AND EMPLOYMENT: Income was measured in terms of dollars and cents the family has. Employment was recorded in terms of having or not having a job. Poverty was measured by the governmental standards of particular family units.

IMMIGRATION POLICY: It is the underlying claim of this investigation that immigration policies, their development and implementation processes, are a form of social exclusion if the enforcement of such policies generate prejudice and institutionalized discrimination, leading to deportation.

The lived experiences of children (of Dominican documented deportees who resided in New York) was measured using the following social drivers: family income including poverty and employment; education and skills of parent left behind; crime exposure; fear of crime; children's educational achievement; and characteristics of the neighborhood; immigration policy; and deportation (which is the other side of a demographic factor referred to as immigration) on the social exclusion or risk of exclusion.

DEPORTATION: The removal or ejection of people from the society which includes documented or undocumented immigrants. There is a need to also add to the list naturalized citizens since they are also subject to deportation under the new immigration regulations or policies.

#### **4.6. Dependent and Independent Variables**

For this investigation, the independent variable is the deportation, removal or ejection of parents from the United States. The dependent variables include education

(aspiration, motivation, and low or high performance), family income, labor force participation of the parent left behind, health related issues or concerns of both children and parents left behind, involvement in crime (or fear of) by children left behind, and psychological stress. The neighborhood can both affect or be affected by individuals, in which case it can be both an independent and dependent variable.

#### **4.7 Analytical Strategy:**

This exploratory research looked at the impact of different dimensions of social exclusion on a special population (Dominicans), children (sons and daughters of documented Dominican deportees), and an immigrant group (Legal Permanent Resident Dominican immigrants in New York). It measured the implications of immigration policies, using deportation of Dominicans documented as a case study of social exclusion, and how the implementation of such policies—i.e. deporting Legal Permanent Residents—generate ‘social drivers’ that contribute to the impingement of children of deportees as they attempt to integrate into the fabric of society. Children of deportees could be pushed into poverty, where the chances of obtaining the required skills and social network to become full participants of a global economy can be limited, or nonexistence.

This study was also conceptualized as an effort to begin to shape the social and educational experiences U.S.-born children of deportee have undergone, in the process of being left behind in the United States, by a Dominican deported parent, after committing an “aggravated felony” or “moral turpitude” under immigration law. At the core of this study were the questions: What has been the social experience of children of deportees when integrating into mainstream society? How has their educational outcome been affected by their parent’s deportation? These two core questions have prompted five additional sub-questions (discussed later in this chapter) that enlighten the perception and shed light on the environment in which these children’s

psychosocial development is taking place, as well as their worldview towards authority.

#### **4.7.1. Case Study Vignettes**

The data on the families left behind by a deported parent were presented in vignette form in order to document the lived experiences of these families. The case study vignettes present the full account on of the impact of deportation of Dominican parents on children and the parents who stayed in the United States. The parents left behind also provide information on the deported parents as well as the children who have to cope with the separation and stigmatization of being blamed for the further toxicity and contamination of the environment in which they were foreseeably abandoned by the parent that was ejected from the United States. Chapter 5 contains the vignettes of the five families and a reconstructed family story based on information provided by an adult child of a deported parent.

#### **4.7.2. Social Exclusion Domains and Bulimia's Social Cost**

The data gathered about the parent left behind in the United States were analyzed in chapter 6 using social exclusion domains. The chapter was devoted to the discussion of what happened to families when a parent is deported to the Dominican Republic. A social domain model was designed for this part of the analysis. The literature has outlined different domains of social exclusion (Social Exclusion Unit, 2004 and Percy-Smith, 2000) that explicate some of the hindrances marginalized families and children might encounter when attempting to integrate into mainstream society,

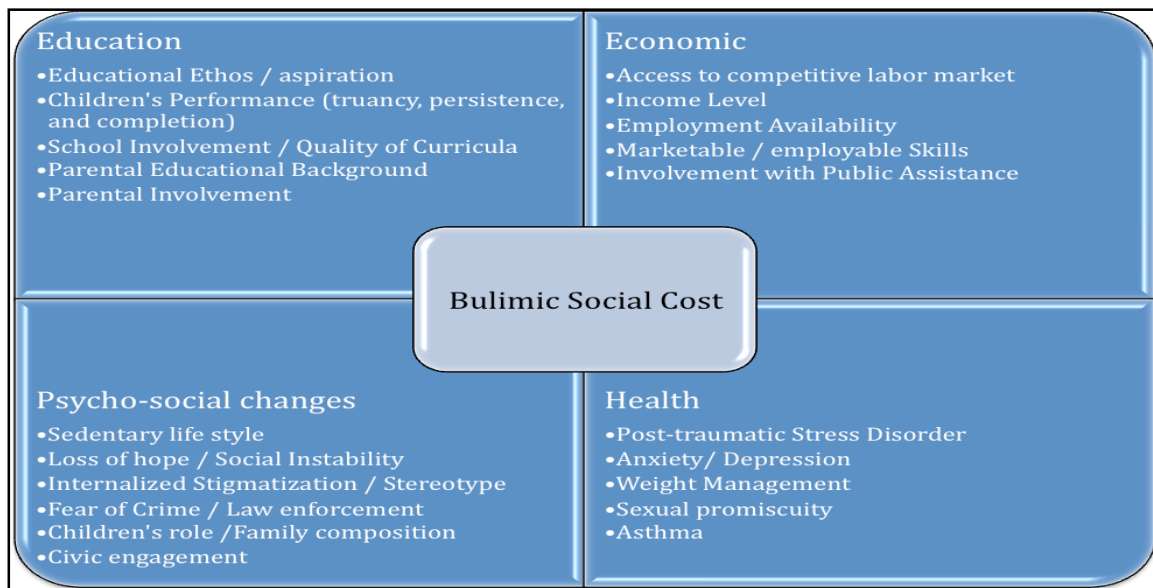
hampering their educational and employment opportunities, which could eventually affect their social mobility. Social exclusion domains have been identified to analyze the fundamental questions this research seeks to study:

- What has been the social experience of children of deportees?
- Has the experience of being a child of a deportee affected their educational outcome?
- How have they negotiated their social development in context with their neighborhood, school and home environment? What is the perception of what happened to their parent? How do they describe their surrounding environment?
- How are children of deportees dealing with the obstacles, set in place by immigration laws, coping with society at large?
- How have these adolescents interjected or internalized what happened to their parent? In other words, how has facing deportation or of already experiencing deportation of a parent impacted their worldview towards institutions of authority or a person of authority?
- What collateral damages can society expect from this fast-growing subpopulation of multi-marginalized children? Has the experience of being a child of a deportee influenced their views towards the United States?
- Has the experience of being a child of a deportee affected their integration into mainstream society?

A ‘bulimic society’ perpetuates an array of social mechanisms and social cost that imbue social exclusion to already disadvantaged social groups—i.e. children of immigrants, more specifically children of deportees. Resultantly, children of deportees growing up in such precarious social conditions run the risk of becoming the collateral damage of a bulimic society, taxing their future and social integration to United States competitive labor market and mainstream society. The structure and environment (i.e. the socio-economic pulse) of undeserved neighborhoods is pivotal when defining social exclusion, as well as the emotional and social cost of children living in such surroundings endure.

The following graph includes the different drives that are used to examine, articulate and analyze the cost of social exclusion and exclusion in a bulimic society. This model was designed by the researcher for this investigation on children of deportees, who are left behind in the United States (Refer to Figure 4.1).

**Figure 4.1—Social Bulimic Cost General Model**



Some of these categories were used to discuss the data gathered on the consequences and the costs of exclusion on the children left behind. Chapter 6 is devoted to the analysis of the impact of social bulimia on the children. Information was not gathered to complete an in depth inquiry with regards to internalized stigmatization, but the data do provide some ideas about the form of stigmatization which they feel, the type of education or skills they aspire to obtain, the type of social network and capital they have been able to develop thus far, as well as their health concerns and perceptions towards crime in their neighborhood. The data, however, are limited in terms of civic engagement, some health-related concerns, and access to the labor market given the age of the participants.

## **CHAPTER 5—Presentation Findings: Case Study Vignettes of Families of Dominican Deportees**

*“In our judgments of other people, in forming stereotypes, in learning a second language, in our work relations, in our concern with justice, we do not act as isolated individuals but as social beings who derive an important part of our identity from the human groups and social categories we belong to; and we act in accordance with this awareness” (Tajfel, et al. 1984, p. 5).*

This qualitative research privileged the case study of the six families that participated in the investigation because it is a way to articulate and shed light on current human rights, immigration, political, and policies concerns, which have received very little attention in the literature and media. The experiences of these families constitute different, yet often, similar accounts of what happens to children and families when a parent is deported from the United States. Based on these case studies, we were able to begin to decipher and understand the consequences of deportation on the children left behind; the main topic of this investigation.

This dissertation examined the lived experiences among children and families of Dominican documented deportees in New York City. The purpose is to understand how the deportation of parents affected the chances for success of the children and the families left behind. The literature (Capps R, Castaneda R. M., Chaudry A., and Santos R., 2007) on the effect of deportation on children and families reveals that the federal government’s massive and intensified immigration enforcement strategies places more families and their children at risk of economic, educational, psychological trauma, and exclusion.

As mentioned in chapter 1, children and families of deportees are at greater risk of social exclusion because of the numerous obstacles they face, such as a strong sense

of abandonment, the loss of income if the deported parent had been the sole source of financial support, resulting in the necessity for the family to go on public assistance. In addition to losing a parent to deportation, children must deal with the transition from a two-parent household to a household headed by a single mother, or to a blend/step family, if the mother remarried. Children must also cope with the community environment, strive to complete their education, and continue to be active participants in society. A mother or older children who are enhancing their educational opportunities may have to leave school to work in order to financially help support the household. Children can start having problems attending school or performing at grade level.

In a sense, the entire family was the unit of analysis for this investigation for four important reasons: first, children cannot articulate the experience of deportation, as they may also be protected from finding out about the event by the parent that stayed behind; second, a great deal depends on the age of the children and how much they remember about the deportation of the parent; third, the development of children's identity is inextricably linked to the family context; and fourth, information on the entire family was necessary in order to access the consequences of a parent's deportation on all the family members left behind.

I was fortunate to conduct interviews with the families and children of the deportees left behind, which helped to understand the pain, frustration, and suffering of these children; the anger they felt about not having their fathers in the households; the destruction of the family from the viewpoint of the children who are left behind; and the impact of deportation on the education, work, and social aspirations of the children

of deportees. Information on the family provided a different perspective on the consequences of deportation on the children left behind.

Without doubt, if all children are the future of society (in any nation), the future of children of deportees is extremely uncertain because their families are broken and their education has been deferred. The parents that were left behind (in this case, mothers) provided information about themselves, the deportees, and the children; as well as the education, labor market, social conditions, the community, and the different social systems of the receiving society, the United States, as well as the sending nation, the Dominican Republic.

### **5.1. Presentation of Case Studies**

The analyses of the six case studies is a second level of ethnographic analysis which sheds further light on the investigation of the nature of the workings of a bulimic society which involves both inclusion and exclusion from social processes in the United States. For this purpose, the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The data collected were treated as a narrative and analyzed holistically. Special attention was paid to the individual's "self story" and experience (Denzin, p. 43). After the transcription of the interviews, participants read their own transcriptions to ensure accuracy and to confirm that the transcriptions reflect what they intended to say. Data were collected from the guiding and sub-questions detailed in the semi-structured and open-ended interviews designed to document participants' lived experiences.

Codifying responses and narratives by common themes within the social exclusion domains that are characteristic of a bulimic society facilitate a constant

comparison providing detailed hermeneutic and phenomenological analyses, in which the voices of children of deportees resonate, highlights the social exclusion human cost as an outcome of their lived experience, as they attempt to integrate to mainstream society. This outcome could be positive or negative; a positive outcome would be the child's successful integration to mainstream society, which means that the child graduated from high school and is attending college, or already attended college and is now a full participant in the United States labor market. The outcome is considered negative if the child of the deportee did not complete a secondary education, or does not intend to pursue higher education, or if the child has been involved in deviant behavior that may impact his/her integration into mainstream society.

#### **5.1.A. Breaking the Silence—Joseline's case study**

*Summer 1997. The Bronx, New York. The waiting area was stuffy and crowded, with flickering florescent lights and an incessant buzzing sound. She couldn't tell whether the buzzing was a product of the lights or the air conditioner because her body felt sticky, sweaty and hot all over. Or maybe the stress was starting to get to her head... Her back and shoulders were sore. As she removed her heavy backpack, full of books from the long day of college classes she had just come from, her pale yellow t-shirt stuck to her back. Her unmade-up face was framed by loose frizzy hair that had come loose from her bun.*

*The room was lined with plastic folding chairs, the kind that sticks to sweaty skin. As she removed her backpack, a man, about her age, stood up and offered her his seat, as if she were his elder. "He is a decent lawyer, got me out early... but he has so many clients, you never know how long you are going to have to wait," the man said, as he looked her up*

and down. *“What are you doing here, anyway?” Frenziedly, she explained, “Well, see, my husband, he was in the wrong place at the wrong time and was arrested, and they want to throw him in jail for selling drugs, something he didn’t do! I swear he is an honest man; there is no way he committed any crime!”*

*He furrowed his eyebrows and raised one side of his lip, as he continued to look her up and down. “You... a hustla’s wife? Impossible! There is no way that your husband is a drug dealer, look at you!” he said, animatedly, “the women that hustlas marry are...you know...dressed and done...” as he simulated sexy curves in the air, thus insinuating that she did not look good enough for her husband to be a drug dealer. She was not a “muñeca de la mafia” (a dealer’s baby doll).*

*It was at this moment, without even noticing the sting of the man’s insult, that Joseline realized that, as Dominicans, there was going to be no justice for her husband and family. That despite his innocence and the absence of incriminating evidence against him, he had been pigeonholed as a stereotypical Dominican drug dealer and that there was no way out.*

*“In thinking about the study of U.S.-born children of deportees, and how to better explain our experiences with deportation, I must admit that I am convinced that my family is a victim of the stereotypes embedded in the Washington Heights community, specifically about Dominicans. See, this community is stigmatized by the number of immigrants who arrived here, maybe with an education or not, but who would most likely engage in the informal economy, such as driving a gypsy taxi, baking cakes, babysitting, selling traditional Dominican desserts or food on the street, and of course, drug dealing or worse, sex work.*

*We don't know anything when we arrive in the United States. Those already here [in the United States] guide us through what they know about the country. Some would engage in illicit work, thinking that their stay in the United States is temporary; they will return some day to their beloved country. Others, maybe not be as brave or, out of pride, would choose a job on the books, maybe out of the desire to raise a family properly, with moral values, so they adapt to a minimum wage job. The problem is that this country is about luck. Yes, luck, because even when you decide to follow a righteous path, some will inherit the stereotype already assigned to a community, making you a victim of your own fate, since your nationality defines your future in this country.*

*"I said a victim because while working a second job, as a cashier at a local grocery store, my husband was incarcerated with conspiracy charges due to what was going on in the neighborhood. The police raided the store, apprehended everyone around, and assumed that my husband knew about the drug dealing in the store. Because he supposedly failed to notify the police, he was sentenced to two years in prison. It was as if people from the community just walk into police stations to report drug dealers. We all know who they are, our children pass them on their way to school and we pass them on our way to work as they stand at the corner of a store, on their way to school, they stand at a corner every day; if knowing who is dealing, and not reporting them is a crime, then half of Washington Heights should be arrested for conspiracy."*

As Joseline told her story, it was obvious that she was in dire need of expressing her feelings and experiences that she and her children had kept bottled up for eleven years, since no one dared discuss it at home. At that moment, as she sat down with her

cup of coffee, she reflected upon all of the sacrifices that the family had made as they were left behind in the United States by their deported husband and father.

Throughout all of the years, she had done everything she could to keep the family together—visiting him in prison, even quitting her stable job as an accountant and cashing out her retirement plan to move to the Dominican Republic, but the stereotypes of deportees in the Dominican Republic made it impossible for the family to survive in the home country. Upon returning to the United States and feeling defeated at the various attempts to have her children with their father, she realized that her family needed to continue their lives without their father, and without a husband. This was the second separation and it reinforced the powerlessness of the family, especially on her son, Dominic, whom she claimed to be the most affected one. Joseline was eager to participate in this study in order to break the silence and to share the experiences of the families of deportees.

### **American Dream's Faux Pas**

Joseline arrived in the United States when she was 13 years old. She came along with her parents, who owned a business in Washington Heights. She went to junior high, learned English and then graduated from high school. After graduating from high school, she decided to assist her parents at their ethnic store, since they did not speak English. Her involvement with the business inspired her to pursue a career as an accountant. However, given her parents' lack of social network and capital in United States mainstream society, no one could guide her through the process of enrolling at a local university.

Two years after working with her parents, she met her husband, Juan Carlos. They moved in together, decided to have a family and work towards the American Dream together—they wanted all, she reports, the white picket fence, two children, annual family vacations, and of course, given her educational ethos and religious background, they wanted to send her children to Catholic school. They knew there was a high price to pay, if they decided to do it the formal way, which they did. Hence, they made a pact—since Joseline already knew the language, she was going to enroll at an university to pursue an accounting degree, while Juan Carlos, was going to work to be the sole financial provider.

In 1992, while going through her process of admissions at a private institution, Joseline became pregnant with their first child, Dominic. Although they were very happy about the news, the pregnancy slowed down their plans. Joseline had to become a welfare recipient; Juan Carlos' salary as a gypsy taxi-driver was not enough to support his wife and newborn. His annual salary was \$6,000 at the time. Joseline could not work because paying childcare would cost more than she earned. A year later, their daughter, Lanise, was born. While taking care of their two children, Juan Carlos had to take on a second job as a cashier at a local grocery store while Joseline continued to receive welfare services. When welfare policies changed in 1995, she was offered childcare services as long as she went back to school to pursue an education. She felt this was her opportunity, and decided to apply to a local community college around her neighborhood, instead of the university she had previously applied to.

Luck had struck! She was able to get a part-time job, making \$7.25 per hour, at the community college while pursuing her education. Before embarking on his gypsy-

taxi adventure, Juan Carlos would drop off his wife at the community college, and Dominic and Lanise at a babysitter. Joseline recounts that Juan Carlos *“was very happy at the way life was finally smiling at them.”* Two years later, Joseline graduated from the local community college with honors. She then transferred to a senior college to complete her bachelor’s degree. Welfare services extended the entitlements until she completed her degree.

A year into the pursuit of her bachelor’s degree, and at the beginning of Dominic’s first grade and educational experience, Juan Carlos got arrested at his second job during a police raid. The police believed that he was involved in drug trafficking. Apparently, the owner of the grocery store was charged with dealing drugs and possession of firearms. Joseline rushed to the Police precinct, holding their 7-year-old son Dominic with one hand, and carrying on her side their 6-year-old daughter, Lanise. The police did not allow her to see Juan Carlos. She recalls, *“I was terrified. Juan Carlos didn’t speak English and I could only imagine how scared he was. He was 37 years old, a father of two children and my husband.”* She went back home, feeling desperate and lost.

After a few days spent vainly trying to see her husband, she was able to meet with his public defender. Joseline had to call her mother, who had retired to the Dominican Republic after her father’s death, and, after explaining her ordeal, and pleaded with her to come back to the United States.

Joseline needed help with her children. Juan Carlos had been charged with possession of a controlled substance, and intent to sell. His charges could amount to 10 years in prison. The police arrested five people at the raid, and tried to negotiate

everyone's freedom by asking them to bring the owner of the grocery store into the precinct; otherwise everyone arrested was going to be arraigned. After her mother's arrival, and with more time on her hands to assess her husband's situation, but mostly after her encounter with a former dealer at her husband's public defendant office, Joseline decided to borrow money and change lawyers, thinking that her husband was a victim of the stereotype assigned to Dominicans during the 1980s, when drug-dealing was at its peak. The owner of the grocery store never appeared; he had fled to Puerto Rico.

The new lawyer succeeded at lessening her husband's charges to conspiracy. None of the proof presented by the district Attorney's office linked her husband to the drug dealers. Joseline remembers, "*The District Attorney office asked for our finances, even records from the Dominican Republic, which was non-existent. We didn't have anything in the Dominican Republic or New York City;*" raising her voice in frustration, she claims, "*we were on public assistance, for God's sake!* The lawyer advised him to plea guilty to conspiracy, given that everyone is responsible for knowing where they worked, and the environment surrounding him or her. Thus, he pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to two years in prison.

After a year and a half in prison, and after religiously visiting him in prison, he was deported to the Dominican Republic. Joseline said with teary eyes and trembling voice, "I will never forget that phone call. He was crying hysterically. I couldn't believe a man was at the end of the receiver. He blurred that our lawyer had lied, and that only six months away from returning home, he was served with deportation papers.

Joseline went everywhere for assistance. She didn't understand what was happening! Then, she learned that in 1996 Bill Clinton had signed a new law called IRAIRA (Immigration Reform and Responsibility Act), which specified that any permanent resident who had committed a "moral turpitude" must be deported to their country of origin. Juan Carlos was eligible to be deported on inadmissibility grounds, under the new immigration law on "moral turpitude" (See Appendix G). At the time, there was no court to which to appeal immigration cases; thus, nothing could be done for Juan Carlos. He was deported in 1999.

### **Picking up the Broken Pieces**

For Joseline, picking up the broken pieces of her husband's deportation has been about the struggles of maintaining and strengthening her family ties, between her children and her deported husband; therefore, despite her educational and income level, the journey has been both financially and emotionally draining for her children and herself. She thinks about the number of lies she had to manage around her children, since she did not tell them about their father's deportation; she did not want to crush Dominic's dreams of having the whole family together.

Financially, after Juan Carlos' incarceration, Joseline lost the main breadwinner of the household, so she had to totally rely on welfare services to subsidize her rent, food and income. A year after his incarceration, in 1998, she was able to graduate with a bachelor's degree in accounting, allowing her to find a full-time job earning an income in the mid-30s. Her welfare services were discontinued. Although she was happy about her degree and new full time job, she felt sad and depressed because she could not

celebrate her accomplishments with her husband. He could not see how she was finally on the path that they have both dreamt about when they married. They had also dreamt about having a house, about children, and living happily ever after.

Six months after her accomplishments, Juan Carlos was deported. She described, *“Without a doubt, this has been one of the most difficult and painful experiences of my life. I felt like someone ripped out my soul. It is the worst feeling someone could ever experience; knowing that we are poor, and just trying to work to bring money to the house...you know? If he was involved in something illegal, then I could rationalize what happened, or we might have saved some money and could happily move back to our country of origin, but he was not living an illicit life...we don't have any money to go back to the Dominican Republic. He was an honest man (sobs), which makes it more difficult to explain the situation to our children and our family. I was very confused and did not know why this was happening.”*

At this time, Joseline started to cry, unable to control her tears and emotions. It was a very difficult moment. She asked me to give her a few minutes to calm down, expressing how much she needed to let it all out. After half an hour of attempting her answer and trying to control her tears and holding her fists tightly against her lap, her youngest daughter, Lily, climbed to her lap and tried to make her smile. I suggested stopping the interview, and proposed to come back during the weekend, but she refused. She said, *“I need to be strong for my children; sometimes I wonder about if I was not weak, and had gone to different politicians or organizations, maybe I could have helped him. But I learned not to trust anyone in this community. No one will help you*

*unless you are voting for him or her, or doing something for him or her. No one would have done anything.*

*Deportation was not a popular practice back then; I never even heard about deportation. I was going to go to one of the organizations in the community, but a neighbor told me that politicians in the community did not want to get involved, because they did not want to taint their reputation with such cases. She informed me that most of these organizations are financially supported by local politicians, so not too many people from the community trusted the people who work there. I was also afraid because most of the people, who work in these organizations, are mainly Dominican, and I did not want people in the community to know about my situation. I felt that they could find out through the organizations. I felt that my hands were tied, and couldn't do much since I had no one to go to."*

She then started saving as much as she could to take her children to the Dominican Republic to see their father, and to continue developing their father-children emotional bond. The trips and phone calls became expensive, and difficult for her to support financially. The children were in school and required more expenses; hence being the sole provider, she had to be cautious about her finances. Juan Carlos could not find employment in the Dominican Republic; she had to send remittances to her husband, as well. They were forced to reduce their trips to the Dominican Republic, given that each ticket was an average of \$650.00 during peak seasons—summer or Christmas vacation—and Juan Carlos was not in any financial standing to contribute to their expenses.

Two years later, in 2002, they went to see Juan Carlos and decided that they should move to the Dominican Republic, since Joseline had not been able to find any avenue to appeal his deportation, and the possibility of Juan Carlos returning to the United States was gloomy, at best. Moving to the Dominican Republic meant that her children could grow up by their father's side, with the guidance, love and support children need from a father. However, this move also meant a drastic change for her children's educational advancement, since they did not speak Spanish fluently and didn't know how to read or write in Spanish. The socio-economic well-being of the children was also challenged, because they were moving to a rural area in the Dominican Republic, where they were not going to have access to constant electricity, running water, and other basic needs. In addition, Joseline was required to leave her current job, now paying in the upper forties. Joseline sold everything she owned, cashed her retirement plan, and moved to the Dominican Republic in 2005.

Nothing mattered to the family, but being together with the father. Dominic was about to begin high school, and Lanise was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Once in the Dominican Republic, they realized that paying for an education for Dominic and Lanise was going to exhaust most of her savings. Eager to begin a new life, as a family, she was able to obtain a job as an accountant at a local hospital. Unfortunately, her salary was not as she had expected. It was not enough to cover most of their expenses, which meant that, in case of a medical emergency, she would have to rely on her savings.

Six months later, she came to the heart-rending conclusion that her efforts had been fruitless; she had to return to the United States. Dominic had gotten sick, which required hospitalization which used up a large amount of her savings; her salary could

not cover basic and primary needs such as yogurts, meat, and other supplies. Clothing was already small on the children, and there was not enough money to purchase replacement. Ultimately, she realized that she was sacrificing her children's quality of life in exchange for having the entire family together. Sadly she had to break the family apart for the second time. She explains that,

*“Unfortunately, by the sixth month living in the DR, I was not able to meet our financial responsibilities. Juan Carlos could not find a job, and to make matters more complicated, in the town we were living, people just saw him as a deportee, a criminal, so no one trusted him enough to offer him a job. My children and I were not treated with respect or dignity; I even got a job at the neighboring town; all the money I was making was then spent in gasoline, traveling back and forth—in DR gasoline is more expensive than in NY.*

*I felt the children could no longer eat properly their basic meals; even a yogurt was considered a luxury, something they were used to eating here [in New York City], and products such as cornflakes, pancakes, apples and other fruits, were very expensive to purchase with my salary. The quality of the meat and other produce were not the same. To make matters worse, there was hardly electricity; thus milk and other products didn't last long. Dominic got sick, from the water, and as a side affect of the medication, he had an Asthma attack, causing a hospitalization. Consequently, I ended up spending the rest of the little savings I took with m, at a private clinic. Ay no! I got desperate. The country is only for rich people, politicians and true drug dealers.*

*By December of 2005, I had to call my former supervisor and begged for my job back. I could not stay in DR and put my children through more depravation and suffering. We were forced to break the family apart yet again, and come back.*

*Dominic was very upset when we came back to the United States; he felt responsible for leaving his father behind, and breaking his family apart yet once again. He thought it was his fault. He changed his behavior, stopped talking to us, didn't feel like going to school, didn't sleep, he only wanted to eat and play video games."*

Luckily she was able to get her old job back, and eventually was able to find an apartment and start their lives all over again in New York City. Joseline felt lost when the family returned to New York in January, 2006. She reported a sense of insecurity, as if they didn't belong in the country anymore; they felt like foreigners in the country where they had lived before and where the children were born. She also came back with many credit card debts, and without an apartment, but most of all with a broken heart, because her children were distraught once again. Covering her face with her hands, she claimed, *"I felt like a failure, you know, I am supposed to protect my children and provide for them. And I could not leave my children behind with him, until I got all these basic things together."* They lived with her mother, at her one-bedroom apartment, until she could find a place and recover financially. While living out of her mother's living room, she could no longer afford Dominic and Lanise's catholic school; hence, she registered them in the public school district in the neighborhood.

For Lanise, picking up the broken pieces of her father's deportation was about managing her silence as she had bottled up her emotions after the traumatic event of deportation. Contrary to Dominic who was described as sensitive and vulnerable, Joseline described Lanise as someone who is very strong and independent. Lanise does not like to be helped or cuddled. Her interview was one of the most difficult ones to coordinate as she kept postponing scheduled meetings. By the 8<sup>th</sup> time, she finally admitted, *"It was not easy for me to articulate what happened to our family. I know everyone is always about my dad, and I have an issue with that."* To encourage her to continue the discussion, I clarified that the interview was not about her father's experience, but about hers. Interestingly, she proceeded to ask, *"oh yeah, but what about my mom? We became who we are because of my mother; she is the one who had sacrificed everything for us"* in an angry tone added *"if I were to go to college and become somebody is because she went to college and had motivated us to become our best. She is an excellent mom, and I think no one recognizes the way she had renounced to her life, to dedicate it to us. This is the reason I didn't want to participate because it is always about dad, but not about her. But if it is about us, then ask away,"* she concluded, with a big smile on her face. Her nervousness was palpable.

It was clear that Lanise wanted to honor her mother and her efforts. Lanise showed contempt about her brother's sensitivity about the 'family situation.' They never discussed the 'situation' with her (as she kept referring to her father's deportation); thus, she learned to cope with 'the situation' by denying it. She remembers asking her mother about her father's incarceration and deportation when she was growing up, but she claims that no one ever explained to her the situation,

which confused her as she had to be moving around to be with her family. She declared, *"I grew up with my mother. Maybe I was too young to remember what happened or even be affected by it, but since no one ever told us what happened, we didn't dare to ask my mother because she was always sad, and we didn't want to contribute to her sadness. Thus, I learned to live without him [her father]. In fact, looking at the way my mother and brother's long for my father, made me feel guilty sometimes. It's like they have this special bond, you know ... and I am not a part of it. So, seeing them crying and suffering only makes me want to escape. I spend a lot of time out of the house, with my friends."*

When asked about her move to the Dominican Republic, she claimed to be obedient, and understood that she didn't have a say in the matter. She also articulated how she doesn't like to dwell on problems or difficult situations, and how 'people' just need to learn to live with their present and make the best of it. Lanise claimed to be her own person, recognizing, *"Dominic is more sensitive and helps more around the house; my mom suffers a lot, and without being selfish, that is her life and her situation. I want to have my own situation. This is the reason I want to go away to college this year."*

Lanise was certainly strong. When asked about growing up without a father, she responded: *"many of my friends in high school don't live with their fathers, because their parents are either divorced or they never married. I know I was born into a happy family. My parents cared for us as long as they could; I know if it were up to him, he would be here. I find comfort in that, at least, he is not like many of my friends' fathers who live in the United States, but they don't make an effort to see them. I know my father cannot be with us for reasons beyond our control. I need to accept that."*

*I do remember one time letting my feelings about my dad run loose; it was during my friend's sweet-sixteen celebration." She suddenly stopped talking and became emotional about the topic. As if on autopilot, she got up from her chair and walked around holding her phone. She then started texting her friends, and then, when she felt in control of her feelings, sat back down and continued explaining. "Usually during those types of celebration, the father parades the daughter in front of the guests; well, this particular father prepared a presentation of his 'little girl,' describing to the guests the most important and meaningful moments in his daughter's life. Then, he took his daughter and began to dance the father-daughter dance; at this moment, I lost control of my emotions and ran out of the party. Some of my friends followed me to the parking lot, and I found myself desperately crying, like a little girl. I felt embarrassed, lost and confused. My friends called my mom and asked her to come and pick me up.*

*I noticed how scared my mom looked as she walked towards me; she probably thought that something terrible had happened. She saw my friend's father was holding me in his arms, while my friend comforted me. Then, as I saw my mother approaching us, I threw myself into her arms, crying my father's name. The gate was opened. I could not stop crying. My mother brought me home. Once I calmed down, I confessed to my mom and Dominic about all the things I missed because I didn't have a father and how I thought they were weak for letting his absence control their lives. My mom then softly corrected me by saying, 'you do have a father' ... I didn't let her finish her thoughts, and retracted my words and said I did not grow up with a father."*

She continued her account, describing the way they all embraced each other and cried for a long time. Since then, Lanise has been more sympathetic to Dominic and vice

versa. Their relationship has changed since this outbreak; they seldom communicated or spent any time together. Now Lanise feels she is a part of the bond Dominic and her mother once shared, making her feel included.

In regards to relationships, Lanise claimed no interest in relationships, owning up to having enough drama in her life to give that power to boys. She felt that a boyfriend could just bring her heartache; she didn't want to rely on her emotions and become involved with anyone. She stated: *"I am not ready to give up that power of having someone else controlling my emotions and actions."*

Lanise will be going to college soon. She enrolled in a private liberal college in upstate New York to pursue her college aspiration. She proudly informed me about her full scholarship and how her mother will only pay \$1,400 for the full academic year. The scholarship includes housing and a book stipend. In moving forward, she believes in education, and is thankful that her mother obtained a degree ... wondering about her life if her mother did not have an education. In thinking about her mother, she wants her father to come to the United States and be with her new sister, Lily, and her mother. However, she is concerned about her relationship with her father given that they didn't really develop one, despite her mother's efforts.

Sadly for Dominic, he did not experience a smooth transition; he felt guilty about breaking up the family again. For Dominic, picking up the broken pieces of his father deportation resulted in the lost of his educational drive and a health battle (obesity, asthma, and depression). Dominic was fourteen years old when he came back from the Dominican Republic. At the beginning of the transition, he seemed to be coping with the situation of separating from his father for a second time. Unlike Lanise, who didn't like

much talking on the phone with her father, Dominic was in constant communication with him. Lanise found the phone calls to be a waste of time and money, since there was nothing that could be done to keep the family together. She became resilient and distant about the second break up with her father. She preferred to concentrate on her life in New York, rather than living a double life, not here or there.

Dominic, on the other hand, found comfort in food; resultantly, he began to have weight problems, which worsened his asthma and led to high blood pressure. He also started to exhibit signs of depression. Joseline accounted, and Dominic concurred, that he started sleeping more and more, to a point that he did not want to get up in the mornings to go to school; in addition, he did not want to meet with his friends, straying away from them.

He expressed his abhorrence about his American school, as he compared it to the one he briefly attended in the Dominican Republic. He didn't feel challenged, and his motivation plummeted. Joseline changed his school district three times, but nothing worked; he stopped attending school in 2007. The principal expressed his concerns about Dominic excessive absences from school, and Joseline tried to explain the situation, without mentioning his father's deportation. Joseline was able to get medical documentation explaining his weight issues as well as his depression.

Dominic was diagnosed with depression, and started a regime of psychotropic medications. He couldn't stop thinking about leaving his father behind in the poverty they had just experienced while living in the Dominican Republic. He withdrew from the world. Between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, Dominic reported, *"I didn't come out of my room much, and didn't participate in many school activities. I was still a good*

*student though, and got very good grades despite my many absences, but I did not socialize much. When I advanced to the tenth grade, without much effort and even not attending many of my classes, I thought that high school was not for me. I preferred to stay at home, in my room, playing video games. I could escape to the different worlds of the video games. So, my mom used to leave breakfast ready on the table and then leave to work very early in the morning; but I stayed in my room. She thought I was going to school like Lanise. It was not until the school called her that she found out the truth.”*

Dominic began to manipulate his mother about his health; he requested to be sent to the Dominican Republic to study and to manage his weight issues. Joseline had to frequently remind Dominic that she could not afford to send him to his father, as she would have to send remittances to both of them. Her salary was not enough to support both households. Dominic then decided to drop out of school. Joseline revealed, *“The school even sent Children Protective Services to my house, suspecting abuse. I tried to explain to the teachers and the school principal about Dominic’s depression and even admitted the reasons for it. The doctor gave me some documents for the school where he explained the situation, but no one helped me.”* With tears falling down her wrinkled face she continued to admit: *“they ignored me. I even asked for a referral to a psychiatrist, but my insurance policy did not cover such services. When Children Protective Services came to my apartment, I also told them about the problem, and asked them to evaluate Dominic, because it was not normal for a fifteen-year-old to be so isolated, only eating, and playing games.”*

She further explains: *“Children Protective Services visited the apartment a couple of times, and then sent a letter stating that everything was within norms and informed us*

*that they were dismissing the case because they did not find our environment to be destructive or negative or unfit. According to them, I was a fit mother. But they did not help me 'con el muchacho' [with the boy]. I tried to find cheap or free counseling because I cannot afford an expensive therapist, but I gave up. They said that I did not qualify for any community program because of my current salary. It was not until he started talking about killing himself that the system took him seriousl, and offered a psychologist, who helped him cope with the loneliness and sadness he has been carrying around. The psychologist helped him with his addiction to food and video games.*

Dominic didn't graduate from high school. Joseline eventually gave in to his manipulations and told him that if he completed a GED certificate, she was going to send him to the Dominican Republic for three months. He completed the G.E.D program, with excellent scores, and Joseline honored her words. While in the Dominican Republic, Dominic heard on the radio about a possible immigration waiver for U.S. deportees. He called his mother and told her about the waiver, as well as the possibility of his father qualifying for it. In the event that the waiver is granted, his deportation could be pardoned, allowing him to re-enter the country after going through the family petition process.

Excited about this new possibility, Dominic enrolled at a local community college where he is currently part of an honor's program, and has had the opportunity to travel to Europe and other countries as part of the program. He has a Grade Point Average of 3.96. He has expressed interest of applying to Columbia University or Cornell to study either medicine or something related to science after graduating from the community college. He has certainly regained his motivation! He wants to be

successful and to help his parents. Joseline admits that she is concerned about Dominic's motivation for thriving in his schoolwork, because he might be doing it all, thinking that his father may have an opportunity to come back to the United States.

When asked about the possibility of his father returning to the United States, he looked thrilled, recognizing with a hopeful tone, *"if my father returns to the United States, I hope to learn about being a father; I know it sounds weird, but I feel that growing up with my mother I've learned about being a mom, so if someday I have children I will be a good mom, but I would not know how to be a father, since I didn't grow up with one."*

Joseline concluded the interview rectifying how difficult life has been without her husband, and the father of her children. After eleven years, she still wonders about the quality of their lives as a family if Juan Carlos would not have been deported. She expressed the following: *"I know there are many criminals and people who deserve to be deported. People who do not take advantage of the opportunities this country offers, especially when compared to our country of origin; but why penalize those who are not criminals, and are in prison as victims of the system? I don't think the system is fair. My outlook about life has changed. We can dream in life, but the reality is far different from those dreams...and what makes me sad is that I did not accomplish many of my dreams, not because I didn't work hard, or because I was lazy, or didn't know how to go about finding opportunities, but because the country snatched my husband from my side... taking with him my sense of family, the pillar I needed for strength, and the possibility of the little house we dreamt of, with a white-picket fence."*

### **5.1.B Picking up the Broken Pieces of her Husband's Deportation: Maria Jose's Case Study**

*"I want to participate in the study because I want to pick up the broken pieces of my husband's deportation. Talking about his deportation is not easy; just the thought of it, brings tears to my eyes."* She asked if she could borrow \$2.00 from me, holding her stomach as if in pain. I hesitated because of research protocol, but ultimately decided to give it to her because of the small amount. She then went into the kitchen, called her 14-year old daughter Yesimel, and instructed her to buy *"a fifty-cent bottle of ginger-ale, a twenty-five cent can of tomato paste, a 99-cent bag of spaghetti, and with the remaining twenty-five cents to bring a cube of chicken bouillon"*. I was perplexed by her list, but did not react and, instead asked about her stomachache. With embarrassment she admitted that she had not eaten since the night before, and suspected that her last meal had been rotten which contributed to her stomachache. She was also hungry. When Yesimel arrived with the purchased list, Maria Jose drank half of the Ginger Ale, and gave the rest to her four-year old son, Jose, who also had a stomachache. She then asked me to come into the kitchen while she cooked the spaghetti. The kitchen was in terrible condition. While she cooked, she avoided the subject of her husband's deportation and explained that she needed the \$2.00 because her food stamps had run out for the month. When the food was ready, the children came running and scarfed it down. Her four-year-old son, Jose, even licked the plate clean.

It was shocking to see such a scene in the United States, *the land of opportunity and abundance*. As they ate, I wondered if she ever imagined living under these

conditions in the United States. Maria Jose never attended school and is completely illiterate; she is afraid to travel more than a few blocks away from her home alone. Despite having lived in New York City for over twenty years, she does not have the skills to navigate the systems of this society.

### **The American Dream's Faux Pas**

Maria Jose is from an extremely poor, rural area of the Dominican Republic. She never attended school, and by the time she was eight years old, she cooked and took care of her five siblings. She remembers standing on chairs cooking rice and beans while waiting for her mother to come home from washing clothes for wealthy families for a small fee. When she was ten years old, her mother decided that she was old enough to start working as a domestic servant too.

When Maria Jose was sixteen years old, she met a Dominican<sup>6</sup> who was twice her age, at one of the homes where she worked. The owner of the house called her mother and suggested a new economic opportunity: that her daughter would go to the United States and raise the standard of living of the entire family. This appealed to Maria Jose's mother, so she arranged the marriage of her daughter to the Dominican. When he realized that she was illiterate, he taught her how to sign her name so that the marriage could be legalized. A year later, she came to the United States. When she arrived, she enrolled in a G.E.D. program but because she was completely illiterate, the material was too difficult and she was too embarrassed to admit that she could not read or write, so she dropped out. Her husband then told her:

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<sup>6</sup> Dominican is a term coined by the people in the Dominican Republic to refer to Dominicans who reside in the United States. This term has a derogative connotation because it implies that some people were not able to make it in the Dominican Republic, and hence had to leave the country to find other means of survival. The term also questions the identity sense of "Dominicanness."

“you don’t know how to read or write, you will never learn anything, stop wasting your time. You came here to have my kids, clean and cook for me.” She also cleaned his store every night, which he required in order to justify sending money to her family back in the Dominican Republic.

She was not permitted to work or to have friends; she was in the household to cater and to care for her husband. In exchange, her husband sent money to her mother back to the Dominican Republic. Maria Jose felt as if she had been sold and that the four walls were closing in on her. After the birth of their child, Elaine, when she was twenty, her physique changed and he abandoned them. Never having experienced bureaucratic processes, she did not know that it was required to pay rent to keep the apartment. When she received an eviction notice and asked a neighbor to explain it, she learned for the first time, that they did not own the property or the land, like in the Dominican Republic. This neighbor suggested that since she had an infant, she could access welfare services for support. Maria Jose felt completely powerless and impotent in the *land of opportunity*. She did not have the tools or skills to till this land and to reap fruit for herself and her newborn, an American daughter.

After months of feeling lost in the system and not knowing English, she was able to find a Puerto Rican Social Worker—a guardian angel, as Maria Jose described her. This guardian angel explained the ropes of the system, and assisted her in finding an apartment, which Section 8 funded. This is the same apartment in which Maria Jose still resides today. The Social Worker also explained to her that public assistance was temporary; hence, she needed to find employment. A neighbor at her new apartment helped her find a job at a factory, where reading and writing was not required, only

manual labor. She reported her new job to the social worker, which then terminated the cash assistance program. Section 8 continued subsidizing her rent, though.

After having worked at the factory for two years, Maria Jose met Jose, a recently arrived legal immigrant, who happened to be from the same town in the Dominican Republic. She warned him that life here is not like the fantasy of the United States held in their hometown; money does not grow on trees and the streets are not paved with gold. Within a year, however, they were married. In 1995, their first daughter, Karina, was born and a year later, Yesimel came to the world. With three children in the house, Elaine (from the previous marriage), Karina and Yesimel, and despite all financial obstacles, Maria Jose had faced, she was hopeful about her future by her husband's side.

Maria Jose realized that she was finally on the path to her American dream—she felt happy. She attempted to go back to school, to become literate and to learn English. She was happy because she felt that her daughters would not suffer as she had. After Karina was born, they realized that it did not make sense to pay for childcare, and decided that Maria Jose would stay home with the children. Jose assumed all of the financial responsibilities for the family of five. His wages from the factory were meager and he was under a lot of pressure to support both his family in the United States and his family in the Dominican Republic, including his three children.

He confided in his hometown friend, who recruited him into the informal economy. Maria Jose noticed the change in cash flow, but, given that he was the man of the house, she never asked any questions. Within a year, he was arrested. Their daughter, Karina, was a year old and Yesimel, only three months. Jose was sentenced to eight years in prison and sent to Sing-Sing in Ossining, New York.

Maria Jose's American Dream was put on hold. Lacking her husband's income and unable to go back to work or to continue school because of having small children, she was forced to return to public assistance. Throughout this time, it was essential to her to build and maintain strong relationships between her daughters and their father. So, she religiously took her children to visit their father in prison, every Saturday, sharing family meals, constructing family memories, so that her daughters would know, unequivocally, that they had a father who loved and wanted them. After five years of this routine, with the family counting down the remaining year and a half until his parole and reunification with them, Jose was served with a deportation order. He initially he refused to sign the order. He asked Maria Jose to seek information and support for his case from community organizations. But again, she felt useless and powerless, because everywhere she went, she was given pamphlets and other written materials that she could not understand.

The next time she visited Jose in prison, she brought along all of the resources that she had accessed and he realized that she was completely powerless to advocate for him. Not even his own lawyer, a public advocate, could help him because this was an immigration proceeding, not a criminal matter. So he accepted early release and repatriation and, within three weeks, was taken by the U.S. Marshalls to the Dominican Republic. Maria Jose and her three daughters were left behind in the United States. The dream that had been put on hold now became a nightmare.

**Picking Up the Broken Pieces—dealing with the situation.**

Given Maria Jose's lack of skills and cultural capital to navigate the system, Elaine, Karina and Yesimel became the administrators of their household. Furthermore,

Maria Jose became severely depressed and the children became her caretakers, thus effectively parenting their parent. For most of their lives, they had been reliant on public assistance and it became the children's role to fill out the paperwork and follow up with appointments. As a result, services such as electricity and food stamps were often cut off when they made errors, or were unable to keep an appointment. By the age of fourteen, when she was about to start 9<sup>th</sup> grade, Elaine became pregnant and moved out of the apartment. Karina, who was nine at the time, took over all of the household responsibilities.

Despite Maria Jose's desire for her daughters to go to school and excel, their schooling experience has been compromised by the fact that they have adult responsibilities, they lack social capital and financial support. For example, Karina and Yesimel described many times that they were unable to attend school due to not having shoes, clothes or menstrual supplies, which they would have been able to afford if there had been a breadwinner in the family. But the \$200.00 in cash assistance that the family received from public assistance was insufficient to meet their needs. Unfortunately, their mother's chronic depression added to all of their problems.

In connection with her experiences of stigmatization and judgment growing up in the community of Washington Heights, where everyone knows her family and their story, Karina chose to go to a high school downtown, and removed herself from community social life. Even though Karina is enrolled in a good school and says she will be the first in her family to earn a high school diploma and go to college, she is not doing well academically; her average is 55.

Despite Maria Jose's aspirations for her children and her desire for them to *succeed*, none of them know what *success* really looks like, in a tangible way. There are no role models in their lives who could serve as a frame of reference, and Maria Jose is unable to support her children in any academic, social or financial way. The only vision of success and self-worth that is present and is reinforced by the community is one of consumerism. In addition to struggling academically, Karina has started to come home with expensive consumer goods that she believes she needs, like iPods, sneakers, coats, and even small amounts of cash. When asked where she gets these items that her family cannot afford, she tells her mother that they are gifts from her older sister; yet, she admitted during her interview that she manipulates men for food, gifts and cash. When asked if she was engaging in sexual acts with these men in exchange for these gifts, she laughed, refused to answer the question, and, appearing to be concerned about eavesdroppers, ended this line of conversation. For Karina, picking up the pieces of her father's deportation and her mother's inability to support her is the lesson: "if I don't have it at home, I am going to have to work for it or get it from somewhere."

Yesimel is the complete opposite of Karina. She does not seem to have any drive, and is extremely shy. She spends most of her time at home, with her mother. Picking up the pieces of her father's deportation for Yesimel is more about taking care of her mother, and ensuring that her mother is emotionally stable. She does recognize that her mother should be the one taking care of her children's emotional well-being, but at the same time, she admits that her mother has given up taking care of them emotionally, but tries to do her best to support the family financially. She claims, "*It's too much for my mom to handle. She has to worry about supporting us and giving us what we need, so*

*someone has to take care of her.” Yesimel then detailed the way she takes care of her mother, by helping her babysitting her little brother Jose, when she has a doctor’s appointment, translating for her when she has a welfare appointment and reading all the mail because “my mom doesn’t know how to write or read.” I also help my mom with her homework from adult school, because she is learning how to write and read; so I also try to teach her how to write and read.”*

It is obvious that Karina has handed down the parental-locus control to Yesimel. She feels responsible for her mother’s health and happiness. She claims that “my mother cares too much for us, and can’t leave us alone to go to work, so we have to live under these conditions for now. I am happy to have such a hard working mother; I am proud of her, for worrying so much about us, and for wanting us to do our best.” Yesimel admitted worrying about their financial situation, and being unable to sleep at night because she is thinking about food and clothing. She is mostly concerned about how much her mother suffers when she doesn’t have money left to feed them. She confessed secretly crying because she knows how much her mother wants to provide for them, but can’t.

Yesimel contemplates that her father’s deportation has been harder on her mother than on her sisters and herself. She recognizes that it might have been easier on their lives, and her mother’s, if they had ‘a man in the house’ supporting them financially, so her mother didn’t have to worry so much about money, and, maybe Elaine would have not gotten pregnant so young, because he could have established some discipline and authority in the house. But at the same time, she admits not missing him since she didn’t grow up with him; in fact, she thinks that if he were to

return to the United States he would disrupt their dynamics as there are only females in the household—except for baby Jose who is four years old. She explains that the hardest thing was not growing up without her father, but of seeing all her mother's efforts of creating memories as a family while developing a bond with her father, fall apart just like that. "My mom was devastated; she has not been the same since then. "

Then, she ponders, "I remember my mom saving every penny to go to visit my father in the Dominican Republic, to only have her desire of having the family together fall apart yet again." She doesn't believe that her father valued her mother's sacrifices, and the fact that she is raising his daughters in poverty. When asked what gave her this impression, Yesimel reported that her father has another woman in the Dominican Republic, which makes our lives unworthy because he is not worried about his family living in poverty, picking out furniture from the garbage. She was very upset about her father's behaviors. She then reflects, "I want to help my mom, and be able to provide for her when I grow up. I don't want my mom living like this, and to continue picking up stuff from people's garbage. It's embarrassing."

With a convincing voice, Yesimel claims that she wants to graduate from high school and become either a counselor or a social worker "to help people with their emotions, to talk about their problems [so they don't keep them inside] because that is very bad." Then, she explains, "sometimes people keep their problems inside and they become numb ... like they don't care about life ... they don't feel anything." Or I want to become a lawyer, "I want to help people in court, those who have housing problems or [experience] domestic violence. I want to tell people how to get things done in court. There is not much help with that." When asked if she was sad or numb, like the people

she wants to help, she quickly replied, "I'm not sad. I do get a little depressed sometimes, but only a little sometimes, when I think about my mom. She is always sad; she doesn't go out much or smile much. She is constantly worrying about us." Yesimel then confessed that she doesn't ask for any material goods, even if she needs it; she also acknowledges that she doesn't go out or have friends because she doesn't want to worry her mother; she tries her best to behave well, because it is enough for her mother to worry about Elaine and Karina.

Although Yesimel dreams about earning an education as her one-way ticket out of the poverty she faces, one can speculate that she might be awakened by the cruel reality of her lack of academic skills and inability to pursue a higher education. After failing fourth grade twice, Yesimel finally is in the seventh grade. When asked about failing the fourth grade, shrugging her shoulders she answered, "I was first placed in a monolingual class, but I did not know how to write and read in English because we only spoke Spanish at home, so I failed the first time. Then, the second time, they [the school] placed me in a bilingual class, so I got confused with the language, and couldn't keep up and failed." Given her mother's inability to navigate the educational system, no one could advocate for Yesimel. Maria Jose accepted the two failures, encouraging her daughter to do better next time.

Because of Yesimel's lack of concentration during classes and uncompleted assignments, her grades now are Cs and some Bs. Her academic weakness is apparent in her speech. When asked about her teachers and their interactions with her, she said, in an apologetic tone, that teachers are too busy with too many students in the classroom; claiming that they focus more on the disruptive students, and given that she

is well-behaved and has good manners, she is never a problem for the teachers. “They don’t say anything to me, she states: “there is a guidance counselor in my school, but she only sees students who have bad behaviors, the ones who fight at school and have problems in the classroom. They don’t call me, only to talk about my class schedule, my absences, and sometimes lateness.”

Yesimel excuses her lateness and absences with her mother’s depression, and how sometimes she doesn’t wake up on time to go to school. She prefers to lie to her teachers, rather than telling them the truth about not having the appropriate shoes or clothes for the weather or the weakness from not having eaten the night before; oftentimes she forces herself to go because she will be able to eat breakfast at school.

She never mentions her father at school; she says, “It is like he is dead.” Actually, she admits that she only talks about her father with her best friend. She does recall her teacher asking her if her father was in prison, and she just answered yes, because she did not want to explain about his deportation. When asked about her teacher’s inquiry, she said: “they assume all of our parents are single-parents, because the father or mother is in prison. Even my friend who lives with both parents, they treat her as if she only has one parent. I guess they figure that based on who comes to the teacher-parent conference from the family.”

Yesimel knows that her father was deported from prison; she believes her father went to prison because he was standing at a corner of a grocery store and the police raided it and apprehended everyone. She thinks he was just part of the group. She doesn’t discuss her father with her sisters, let alone with her mother. While recognizing that he is her father, she has mixed feelings about the possibility of his

return to the United States. She reminisces: “growing up without my father, without his protection, I felt insecure, like if I ever needed someone to defend me on the streets or at school, I didn’t have anybody to go to for that... there was no one to defend us, like a man in the house. I also remember being sad at school when we had to do art or a play, and only my mom came, but she doesn’t really understand certain things; so it was hard to explain it to her. I guess a father could have explained it to her.” Then, thinking about Father’s Day, she says how she stopped bringing arts and craft work home, from school, since there was no one to give it to. Thus, not needing her father anymore, according to her response, has liberated her because there is no expectation from anyone.

In addition to her mother’s well being, Yesimel believes that picking up the broken pieces of her father’s deportation is more about financial security than emotional support. She blames her father for the number of absences in her school year. She claims, “I also have to miss school when the electricity is suspended because we miss a welfare appointment, or my shoes don’t fit but my mom cannot afford new ones, or when I have to wait for my mom to get or borrow money to buy me clothes because the old ones no longer fit me, or when I cannot sleep because I went to bed crying thinking about our financial situation. I am supposed to love my father, but my living conditions are not helpful for me to love him or want him around. If I have an opportunity to help my father, I don’t think I would; I would help my mother because she is the one facing our poverty.”

Despite her disclaimer about loving her father and not being depressed about him but about her mother’s health she clutches her fists and abruptly ends the

interview saying, “to be honest with you, it’s not fair to have a father alive and not be able to lean on him, count on him. I see my friends at school, how happy they are with their fathers, I could probably have a better life, because my mom would not be so much focus on us, but also on her life, she would be able to relax and enjoy life, but instead she has to be worried all the time, dealing with Elaine’s issues, and Karina’s thirst for material things. I am sad to know he went to prison, trying to provide us with a better life, but I can’t stop being angry with him for abandoning us in the United States.” With tears in her eyes, trembling with anger, Yesimel got up from her chair and stormed out of the room. We ended the interview.

### 5.1.C. Catch-22, and Dealing with Abandonment: Franchesca's Case Study

Franchesca explains, *"I want to begin my interview by sharing with you a letter my fifteen-year-old son, Frankie, e-mailed me after spending three weeks with his departed father in the Dominican Republic. The next paragraph is a letter written by Franchesca's son, Frankie:*

*"Hey, mamma I know I ain't never told you this but is really hurting me knowing that im running you crazy. Mon I'm goon [gone] to the streets but to you im still a baby. You raised a street kid by yourself, you [are] a hell of a lady. Sh..t [what] I'm doing now ain't got nuttin to do with how you rised me. You did the best you could with me and I love you for that, wanted me to do good in school but that aint where my heart was at. I got exposed to the streets and fell in love with stacks and all the times I hurt you I wish I could take it back. When daddy left us you stepped up and took up his slack. I know I 'm selfish and feelings is something I know I lack. The sh..t im doing now I know you raised me better than that. You taught me how to be a man and showed me how to act. But sometimes I wonder how you still proud in your son after all the stuff I took you through and all the sh..t. I've done. But like you told me, God want me and how I can't run. Before he takes me I want you to know how much I love you mamma."*

*Frankie, your son*

*"Although Frankie is 16-years old, he had not seen his father since he was 10-years old, but I had to send Frankie to his father because I could no longer control his outbursts. I had run out of options to deal with his aggressive and irrational behavior. Before making the difficult decision to send him to the Dominican Republic, Frankie had repeated 9<sup>th</sup> grade twice, and was suspended from school because of his behavior. To cool him off, I decided to send him to the Dominican Republic along with his younger brother, Robin. I thought that maybe some quality time with his father would do him some good. Perhaps, he was missing his father. To come back to New York he had to show me that his behavior*

*was modified, or at least tamed. In response to the condition I placed, he sent me this letter. A week later, I had no choice but to bring him back to New York City.*

*With teary eyes, Franchesca stated, "Taking a father away from a child is merciless. You can explain divorce, separation, and even prison to a child, with the expectation or even promised that he or she will see his/her father again. Although death is harder to explain to a child, it's still easier to explain it than deportation, by using even heaven as a reference or resourcing to the predominant religious belief at the home. Deportation of a permanent resident, on the other hand, is harder to explain to a child, because how do you get into the whole law of immigration and the confusing realm of criminalization with a child? How do you tell a child that the country where he/she was born, no longer considers his/her father welcomed"*

These are the questions Franchesca grappled with when facing her children at the time of their father's deportation. She states, "in addition to these questions, I also want to participate in the study because it is important that people understand what mothers must endure when raising two U.S.-born children while trying to juggle so many balls at once, and without a father around to provide the emotional and financial support a family needs in order to prosper."

Jokingly and in agreement, Franchesca remembers Frank Sinatra's song "New York, New York" that says "if you can make it here, you can make it anywhere ... it's up to you..." With a smile on her face she says: "he is right! Navigating the system in New York City is not as easy as the media portrays it." Franchesca concludes that without an education or specific skill in a city where gentrification displaces families from their rent-controlled apartments, and a minimum wage job is not enough to cover rent,

groceries, and basic needs, it's almost impossible to make it in New York City. Even if you get some sort of assistance from welfare programs, without an additional income, you cannot support the household." Franchesca continues to explain that a single mother would not be able to obtain an education and find a job to meet the financial demands of a household, without sacrificing quality time with her children. This is something she finds ironic, because the systems in the United States, such as schools, Child Services, and even public assistance, will be the first ones to accuse the parents of negligence when children start acting up.

Even if one remarries, the stability and emotional support a father can provide is irreplaceable; a stepfamily cannot provide this type of emotional stability to a child it can perhaps provide the financial stability, but at the risk of compromising the child's identity or sense of belongingness to the family. One has to become a magician, because between raising two children and obtaining an education to leave public assistance benefits, it's a miracle if the children survive undamaged and unharmed. It's pretty much a Catch-22, because if you don't study, you can't find a job, then you can't afford rent and support the family; but at the same time, the time if you do study and work, you are away from your children, trusting that the educational system is providing the skills they need to excel. However, if you are not on top of your children's schooling, their homework, friends, neighborhood environment, you run the risk of losing your child to the street. So, it's a Catch-22 because either way you are doomed.

### **American Dream's Faux Pas**

Franchesca, her 3-year-old twin, and her 10-year-old sister, came to the United States in 1990, from Santiago, the second largest city in the Dominican Republic. The

three of them came to the United States to be reunited with their mother. They were very excited to come to the United States, the land of Madonna and Michael Jackson; they couldn't wait to see the houses and streets shown in "*The Cosby Show*," where the *Huxtable* children grew up to be responsible adults in their middle class neighborhood in Brooklyn; they were even more excited to go through their high school experiences as depicted in TV shows, "*Growing Pains*" and "*Saved by the Bell*." Yes, their expectations were based on MTV and American sitcoms.

To Franchesca's surprise, the neighborhood where she arrived did not look like the ones she had seen on TV. She arrived in Washington Heights, a neighborhood where almost half the population lived in poverty, worked at factories or minimum wage jobs, and/or received public assistance or some form of subsidized government benefit. Her classmates and those living around her shared a similar ethnicity and country of origin, the Dominican Republic. Hence, the integration process was not as frustrating as she thought it might be. She describes her adaptation process to the country to be a fast one. She learned English during her middle and junior school years. Two years later, Franchesca became very fashionable, which made her very famous at her high school. Her popularity, however, scared her mother who grew afraid of her daughters falling in the patterns of many young girls in Washington Heights, who were involved in drug use and sexual activities at a young age, which led to an increase in teen pregnancy in the community.

Her mother worked long hours, from eight o'clock in the morning until 8:00pm, which forced her to leave Franchesca and her sisters alone for long periods of time. She remembers her mother reminding each one of them, every morning before going to

work, of the many sacrifices she had made to bring them to the United States to offer them a better life, with opportunities to enrich their livelihood, which they could only achieve with an education. She would end her speech by asking each one of her daughters to promise her that they were going to behave and study hard, so they didn't have to work at the factory for a minimum wage. Each girl would answer positively to her mother's request. However, none of them kept their promise. Each one of them had children before their twenty-first birthdays.

At fifteen, after living in the United States for two years, Franchesca got pregnant. The father of her baby was Manuel, a 17-year old classmate who had recently arrived from the Dominican Republic, with his legal permanent card. Manuel was in the process of learning English as a second language. After her mother learned the devastating news, she forbade her daughter from getting an abortion and demanded that the father of her baby move in with them, so neighbors would not condemn her behavior. If he did not move in with them to assume his responsibility, her mother threatened her to press charges of statutory rape. Manuel moved in with Franchesca and her family. Faced with financial responsibilities, he dropped out of high school, and got a job at a local supermarket. He soon realized that a minimum wage job was not enough to save money for their own apartment; he became a drug dealer.

Franchesca claimed that it was not difficult for Manuel to get into the drug-dealing business, given that his uncle was already a veteran in the field. She was not even surprised at his new employment. Her mother disapproved, and forced them to move out of her two-bedroom apartment. Manuel was arrested, and condemned to two years in prison for possession of a controlled substance.

Despite her pregnancy and young age, Franchesca continued pursuing her high school education during the evening and was able to become a welfare recipient. Frankie was born during the summer of 1992—Franchesca was 16-years old. She intended to take her newborn to meet his father, but her mother intervened, preventing her from taking her newborn to prison. It was in 1995, after Franchesca had graduated from high school and when Frankie was almost three years old, that Manuel came out of prison and met his son for the first time.

Franchesca had moved back in with her mother by the time Manuel came out of prison. He went back to the already crowded two-bedroom mother's apartment. Manuel got a job at a local restaurant, and was able to move his baby and partner into their own apartment. Franchesca remembers Manuel taking Frankie around the neighborhood, to his family, and everywhere he went. He seemed very happy.

Franchesca then considered enrolling into a local community college. Public assistance was offering childcare as a condition for her to maintain her eligibility. She was already 19-years old. However, she became pregnant again. Robin was born and they were happier than ever. Franchesca then noticed the change of money flow and name brand baby clothes. Shortly after confronting him, Manuel was apprehended by the police again. He spent six months in and out of prison.

Tired of being scared for her children and her life, she asked him to move out of the house if he was not going to stop dealing drugs. Eventually, they separated. He continued to come around to see the children; he was present in their lives. That year, when Frankie was six-years old, and going to first grade, the father would come and

drop him off to school, and pick him up when necessary. Robin was two years old, and Franchesca could not yet go back to school.

A year later, in 1999, after listening to her mother's plea, she decided to enroll at a community college. She was determined to break the cycle of public assistance and minimum wage jobs. Her welfare program paid for Robin's childcare, who was two-years old, and allowed for after school programs for Frankie, who was now seven. She was on her path to becoming a paralegal.

While Franchesca decided to change her life, Manuel remained on the same path. Consequently, in 2000, he was arrested for drug dealing and, given his history, he had to serve between 10 to 15 years in prison. Immigration served him with a deportation notice in 2002; he was deported two weeks later. Franchesca said, *Frank Sinatra is right, "it's up to you" to make it in the big apple, I guess the path we take matters, and can impact our children.* Manuel left behind his two sons, 10-year old Frankie, and 4-year old Robin.

### **Picking Up the Broken Pieces**

Franchesca felt that after Manuel's deportation she was juggling too many things: raising her two sons, trying to live a 'normal life' for a 25-year old, keeping up with her welfare appointments, trying to finish her associates degree; all without her mother's or anyone's support. Her mother was no longer available to assist her with the children, since her sisters also had children, and were still living with her.

Even though Manuel was not a positive role model for the children, Franchesca felt that he was still their father, and the children looked forward to their playtime and games, even if it was in prison. The children were very much affected by the

deportation. She states, "*Frankie was devastated when he learned that he was not able to go and visit his father in prison because he had been exiled from the country. He didn't understand what was happening. I tried to explain it to the best of my abilities, but I think I made things harder.*" Frankie was hoping that his father was going to come back to the neighborhood, and it would be like old times. Despite several explanations, Frankie kept waiting for him. It was very sad.

Franchesca then thought of playing the "man of the house" card; she began telling Frankie "*given that your father is no longer in the country, you are now the man of the house, and you need to help me with Robin.*" He took his job very seriously, and became overprotective of his little brother. "He dressed Robin, fed him while I prepared to go to school, or went to a welfare appointment. If left at the babysitter, Frankie would watch Robin very closely and then reported any unusual behavior." As time passed, Frankie assumed more responsibilities with Robin to the point that Franchesca would go out at night and leave Robin with Frankie.

As Frankie grew up, he started resenting Franchesca. She kept going out with her friends, and leaving her sons with her sisters or with different sitters. Once she earned her associate's degree, she obtained a job as a paralegal. However, both boys may have had learning disabilities and frequently misbehaved at school, so she was often called in for meetings and had to miss work frequently. She was on the verge of being fired from her place of employment. Though she was ultimately successful academically, completing her bachelor's degree, and at maintaining job stability, she fears that she put too much responsibility on her sons. When she started working, she explained to them that their behavior affected her job and that if they misbehaved there would be no

money for food and toys. Furthermore, she continued to tell Frankie that it was his responsibility to take care of Robin.

In retrospect, Franscesca believes that this contributed to Frankie's aggressive attitude; because Frankie had so much responsibility and believed that he was *the man of the house*, he has no respect for authority—neither at school or at home. Though he was always responsible as his brother's caretaker, Frankie no longer respected Franscesca's authority. He would climb out of the window, down the fire escape and go into the streets; no matter what she said, he would retort that he was a man and could do what he wanted.

At school, he soon stopped making an effort academically. He felt disrespected by his teachers and came to believe that school was not a place that he could learn anything relevant to his life. *"I just think it's boring...the teachers don't make it exciting. All the stuff they try to teach you, for nothing; it's not like I'm going to use any of that stuff to have a business in the street... The teachers were not teaching me, and they always got angry when I failed. When I asked questions, they wouldn't explain patiently. They didn't like me; they thought I was a waste. I'm not interested in school. Teachers don't make it exciting...it's like a game...respect the teacher, agree with what they say, memorize the stuff for a stupid test, and that's it. You're done. I was frustrated because you would try to do the right thing, the work, but the teacher never takes the time to explain stuff to you. Then they criticize you, like they have the power. So, I stopped attending...I prefer to be in a place I can learn about life."*

For Franscesca, picking up the broken pieces has meant a balancing act between chasing her American Dream by pursuing an education, finding a full-time job in order

to get off welfare support, are raising her two children during her adolescent years. Although Franchesca excelled at following Frank Sinatra's advice about New York, and how it is up to the individual to succeed in this competitive city, her success came at a high price: she sacrificed the emotional well being of her son, Frankie. Although she recognizes her wrongdoings, time cannot be turned back; he had already grown up without nurturing and guidance. She accepted her loss.

For Frankie, on the other hand, picking up the broken pieces was about dealing with the absences and emptiness he suffered. He lost his father to deportation, which crushed his dreams of having a father figure around to play sports, participate in his education, and even have a male role model to address his gender issues. In fact, Franchesca strongly believed that deep down Frankie is still that 10-year old boy waiting for his father to come out of prison to fulfill all the broken promises he was left with. Frankie also had to deal with his mother's absence while she was chasing her American Dream. He then tried to become Robin's caretaker, so he didn't have to grow up with the emptiness he experienced. The making of a man at such an early age also affected his identity development deeply.

In addition to parental absences, Frankie also dealt with the absences of school support. He felt ostracized by his teachers and stigmatized by school administrators. He decided to take matters into his own hands, dropping out of school, abandoning his home, and starting a new life; he didn't have to deal with more ghosts. He wanted to glue his life together, make his own mistakes, and move forward. He has enrolled in

JobCorp.<sup>7</sup> Hopefully, it will provide the guidance Frankie so desperately needs ...and with a little bit of luck, he might not end up on the path of informal economy, breaking the cycle of the neighborhood he was born into.

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<sup>7</sup> JobCorp is a free education and training program that helps young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or GED, and find and keep a good job. [www.jobcorp.gov](http://www.jobcorp.gov)

### 5.1.D Recovering from the Humiliating of Deportation: Monica's Case Study

*"Deportation is the most humiliating experience a human being could undergo. You are persona non-grata in the United States, but also in your country of origin, where you become a criminal overnight. Everyone looks at you suspiciously and treats you with trepidation. I witnessed my husband's deportation trial, and the process was dehumanizing. I never felt as insignificant as I did on that day. As he walked into the courtroom restrained in shackles, from his feet to his hands, my mind drifted to our first visit to the Dominican Republic after having our children ... I thought about how powerful the United States made us feel, as if everything was possible, you could have anything you wanted, once you crossed the Caribbean sea into the Big Apple. Yes, my mind wondered to the wonderful feelings we had experienced when people in the Dominican Republic, who had never been to New York, looked at you. They seemed in awe, while assessing all the beautiful material things Dominicanyorks, bring to the country. They wanted to hear everything about the country; while others wanted to be around you hoping for some money or for you to hand down the clothes, shoes or accessories of your personal use. I felt admired. Maybe that feeling is the same as Hollywood people probably experienced when meeting their fans.*

*The noise of the judge banging his gavel brought me back to reality. It was startling to see him like that. He looked at me so embarrassed. He had always been a very proud man; his eyes were filled with tears, as he lowered down his head as he saw me. I couldn't resist seeing him like this... like a serial killer. Uncontrollably, my tears began to*

*run down my face. I cried inconsolable. The judge ordered me to calm down or to leave his courtroom. I had to leave the room until I put myself together.*

*Once outside I couldn't help to continue thinking about that exhilarating feeling when you visit the Dominican Republic, I kept thinking about the way my husband was going to be treated when he returned to his home country as a deportee. There was such a high prejudice against deportees; it was like stepping down from being a king to a vassal. Then, I thought about my children, and how would my parents react to my husband's deportation—they were against my decision to move to New York and marry Ramon. I thought about my children growing up without a father, not because we were separated because of irreconcilable differences, but because the United States decided to further punish him after paying the price of his wrongdoings."*

*"Once I was able to compose myself, I went back into the courtroom and found the judge yelling at him; I couldn't understand everything, but I'm pretty sure he was calling Ramon awful things, because the guards looked at me with a sad expression. My husband signed some documents and just like that, twenty-two years of his life went down the drain, along with his grocery store, and, most importantly leaving my children and myself behind in the United States."*

### **American Dream's Faux Pas**

Monica described her life in the Dominican Republic as a privileged one. She comes from a middle class family, where her parents are successful business owners. She attended one of the best private schools in the country. Shortly after she graduated high school, she went to college, where she met Ramon. The only problem was that he lived in the United States. Monica often visited him on holidays or when she had

vacation from school. Ramon frequently paid for her plane tickets. After a year of their frequent visitations, Ramon asked Monica to marry him. Six months later, in 1993, Monica decided to drop out of college in the Dominican Republic and move to the United States with her fiancé, Ramon. Monica's parents were against her decisions, as they suspected that Ramon's source of money was not legitimate. Ramon had been living in the United States since 1988, when Monica decided to join him permanently in 1993.

Once in New York City, Ramon was the sole breadwinner. He owned a grocery store, but also was suspected of dealing drugs. Monica recalls that he had never involved her in his illicit business, but after the incarceration, Ramon's friends confessed to her that he allowed his business associates to keep the merchandise at his store for a monthly fee. The grocery store was believed to be a way to hide the source of this money. In a way, he was money laundering.

Monica has yet to become a permanent resident; hence she stayed at home without a permit to work in the United States. Two years into the country, she married Ramon's cousin, who, unlike Ramon was a U.S. citizen, in order to obtain her legal status in the country. Shortly after their marriage, she obtained a work permit and a Social Security number for work authorization only.

In 1994, Ramon and Monica had their first daughter, Renata<sup>8</sup>. Two years later, they welcomed their daughter, Ashley, and in 2000, their son, Alex. Renata is now

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<sup>8</sup> Renata did not participate in the study of children of deportees because she is currently living in the Dominican Republic with her deported father. She no longer wanted to live in the United States. However, given the financial situation between her parents, Monica could not move with her three children back to the Dominican Republic. Renata's behavior became troublesome; therefore, to avoid teenage pregnancy, a sexually transmitted disease, or any problems with the law, as Renata kept

sixteen years old, Ashley is fourteen, and Alex is ten. Monica was committed to her home. She was the caretaker of her children, and was proud of her role as a wife. As a family, they had lunch together every day after Renata and Ashley came home from school. As parents, they wanted to instill their family values onto their children. Monica remembers how committed Ramon was to his family, to the children and to her. She described, *“He used to bring every electronic game, toys, and candies to the children; anything they wanted, you name it, they had it. The children were certainly spoiled. The children adored him. In our apartment, I had everything I needed. He was a wonderful provider.”*

Monica didn't continue with her education in the United States, as Ramon wanted her to be the sole caretaker of their children; he didn't want a stranger caring for his children. He wanted fresh home-cooked meals for them and someone to guide them. Ramon believed that if he was providing her with everything, then she had no need to leave the home and work in a minimum-wage job. She agreed with him. Thus, she was a stay-at-home mom. She occupied her time by attending her children's school meetings and participating in all school activities. Renata and Ashley grew up very much attached to both of their parents, and of course, accustomed to their home environment.

Monica claimed to be very happy with her life as a housewife, mother of three healthy and beautiful children. However, in 2004 everything changed, as she characterized it as the worst year of her life; *“this is when this nightmare began. The*

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engaging with members from the Dominican Trinitarian gang who attended her school at the time, Monica decided to send her to her father.

*police raided the grocery store and found drugs. Everyone was incarcerated. My husband was not at the store at the time, but someone called to explain what happened. Supposedly he had to go to the police department to bail a few people out, and explain the drugs, if he wanted the workers to be out of prison. Given that he didn't have anything to hide; he went to the police precinct. Boy, was he wrong!" [She sighs].*

Monica stated that Ramon spent two weeks in prison. She felt lost and did not know what to do. Recognizing her big mistake of not learning English since her arrival to the United States, she felt useless because she could not help her husband. He apparently had a good lawyer. The children were very sad; *"We all felt sort of lost, in despair. The children didn't want to go to school, eat, or even play. They were so sad."* Monica explained.

After two weeks, he was released on parole. Monica accounted, *"He [Ramon] explained to the judge that sometimes he had to allow los tigueros [slang word for Dominican hustler] to hide some of their merchandise in the bodega [grocery store]; if you don't allow it, they can burn down the store, or even worse, they could think you are an informant to the police and kill you and your family—it has happened to people we know." The lawyer said that because they [the court] didn't have solid proof of him owning the drugs, and as long as he agreed to have surveillance at the store for the Police Department usage, he was placed on parole for two years. He was about to do 15 years in prison, but he agreed to the negotiations with the District Attorney, and received a lesser penalty for conspiracy or attempt to commit conspiracy, something like that. Thus, we paid a \$15,000 bail, and he did not do prison time. I remember paying \$7,500 in cash, and*

*the rest of the money with our credit cards. The condition was that he was to report to his parole officer every two weeks.*

Monica covered her face and started to cry. Then, she explained that for a period of 15 months he met with his parole officer religiously. But, at one of his visits, his parole officer, without any notification, handed him to Immigration Services (Immigration and Custom Enforcement-ICE). Once he was in the custody of ICE, they removed his cell phone and everything he was wearing; he could not contact anyone. After three days of not knowing where he was, Monica was going crazy with desperation. She thought that something horrible had happened to him. She even thought that one of the hustlers had found out about the police surveillance and had killed him.

She called his lawyer, and told him about her husband's disappearance, because Ramon was nowhere to be found. The lawyer followed up with the police, who also grew concerned with his disappearance. Three days later, she learned that Immigration Custom Enforcement (ICE) had captured him. He was held at an immigration facility. Monica was very confused because he was a legal permanent resident; she thought that ICE had mistaken him for an undocumented immigrant.

Ramon could not remember her telephone number. Thus, he called his mother in the Dominican Republic, the only number he could remember, and asked his sister to notify Monica of his whereabouts. Once she was notified, she called his lawyer, but he told her that immigration was not his area of expertise; as a result, he referred her to an immigration lawyer. She hired the lawyer, who was able to schedule a hearing prior to Ramon's deportation.

Ramon was deported three weeks after seeing the immigration judge, in 2006. Then, Monica learned that he was deported for violating a moral code as a permanent resident. She pointed out, *“Although he only spent two weeks in prison, his conspiracy charges coupled with the two years of parole made him eligible for deportation under a new law signed by Bill Clinton in 1996, but the law is heavily enforced after 9/11. The United States immigration gave us, immigrant families, the possibility of dreaming of a happy family, but now they had not cared for the United States children and the consequences they would face growing up with an exiled father, just for a mistake or a minor crime. I was in distraught. I didn’t know what to do. I felt hopeless ... as I saw the father of my children dehumanized by the whole process of his deportation.”*

### **Picking Up the Broken Pieces**

For Monica, picking up the broken pieces of her husband’s deportation is about survival skills. In the beginning she did not tell anything to the children about Ramon’s incarceration and eventual deportation. She was afraid of their reaction. Monica reflected, *“I never imagined that my husband could be deported from the United States; I felt like a child, learning to walk, talk, and get around on my own. I wasn’t ready for any of this. I used to cry so much. I gained so much weight and started to drink everyday. My children kept asking about their dad, and I did not know what to say, how do you tell your children that their father is deported from their country? Also, how was I to explain the reasons? I had to put myself together and move on. So, I sold the grocery store, and sent him most of the money, and with the rest I paid some debts he had left behind. He wanted us to leave the United States with him, but I knew we were not financially ready to pick up and leave the country. Life is hard in D.R. I never worked over there, I did not even finish*

*college. What was I to do there? He thought about putting a business, a restaurant or a store, to have a financial support. But that was an adventure! Paying for private school for three children, shopping for groceries, and managing the everyday life were not easy tasks... without financial stability."*

She decided to stay in New York City with her children, to provide them with medical and schooling opportunities. Unfortunately, Monica did not learn many of the processes of the United States, such as getting a job, assimilating or integrating into mainstream society by learning English and familiarizing herself with household transactions like paying rent, utilities, and meeting her children's basic needs. Her social network consisted of friends of her husband, who scattered after his deportation. Some of her friends from her childhood, who were living in her neighborhood, helped her with getting a job as a babysitter or nanny on Park Avenue.

At the time of Ramon's deportation, Renata was twelve years old, Ashley was ten, and Alex six. The three children continued to ask for their father and Monica would lie to them, claiming that he was on a business trip in the Dominican Republic. One night before going to sleep, Alex with teary eyes questioned her explanation saying "my papi could not leave on a trip without saying goodbye to me." Monica could not hold her tears and held him as she cried. Renata then knew that something was wrong. Monica decided to tell the truth to Renata and Ashley, as they were the oldest. They became very upset. They couldn't understand what was happening and called their mother a liar; they thought that their mother had left their father, and was making up this horrible lie.

Forced by her children's reaction, she reported, *"I called Ramon and demanded that he tell them the truth. Renata and Ashley became very angry. To make matters worse, I was no longer a stay-at-home mom; I had to work to support them. My absence did not make things easier, but instead complicated them even further. As time passed, Renata started to act up and engaged in dangerous situations with gang-related members. She didn't respect me and resented me for not being able to provide at the same level as her father did. The school called almost every day with a new complaint; they couldn't manage her. I went to the school and explained the reasons for Renata's change of behavior and new attitude. One of my friends advised me to send her to the Dominican Republic, since I didn't have time to be after her and could lose my job."*

Monica sent Renata temporarily to the Dominican Republic to live with her father. Ashley and Alex felt yet again left behind by their sister. A family that once shared a strong bond, and praised on their togetherness, was broken and without hopes of being glued back together. Monica has yet to obtain her permanent legal residency, and could not even travel to the Dominican Republic with her children. Ashley continued to disrespect her mother, as Monica kept relying on her to take care of Alex after school, until she came home from work. Ashley was upset about their new living arrangement and the fact that her mother could not give her any expensive gifts, games, or candies. Ashley even complained about the groceries her mother was able to afford.

Having had enough, Monica described her ordeal in a frustrating tone, *"I was also dealing with selling the grocery store, which I knew nothing about. I had to close it or sell it. Ramon was telling me what to do from the Dominican Republic. It was not easy!! I managed to sell the business and paid the immigration lawyer—almost \$10,000 down the*

*drain, because no one could have saved him, from what I understand now. After selling the grocery store, I kept some money to support the household because I noticed that my salary as a babysitter wasn't enough to save some money. I was desperately looking for a job, which sort of changed the dynamics in the house, because the children were used to my cooking and to me to be always in the house, waiting for them after school; now I had to look for a babysitter to get them from school, and take care of them until I got home. However, all my weekly money was going to the babysitter; it was pointless to work for so little money. What saved me was that when Ashley turned fourteen, I was able to leave Alex with her. She learned how to heat up food and babysat him. This was certainly a big change for them, but at least I was able to save some money to pay the rent and buy them whatever they needed at the time. New York is not a cheap place to live! You have to buy them coats, sweaters, shoes for winter, and then when the season changes, they had already outgrown all the clothes, so you must buy new ones. It's expensive!"*

The babysitting job was not enough to pay rent and utilities, in addition to affording groceries and other expenses necessary for her to provide for her children. Given her immigration status in the country, she was afraid to go to public assistance for her children. She tried to get food stamps, but her income disqualified her; she was earning \$27,000 as a babysitter. Desperately, she accepted one of her friends' propositions to become an escort. Given her beautiful body, facial expression, and hair, she qualified to serve a high-end clientele. She started earning an average of \$2,000 weekly. She then was able to leave the company, keeping three of her clients. She is currently making an average of \$3,000 weekly, which amounts to \$156,000 yearly.

Monica continued to report, *“Ashley started out cutting school; she just didn’t want to go anymore. She didn’t want to eat. She was very sad, and then little by little she became very angry. I think she was worried about the future; she started asking questions about money, who was going to buy her stuff, and take care of the needs of the house. I was not expecting her questions to be so grown up. She would yell at me, sometimes at the supermarket, ‘this is not the brand we buy. This is not what daddy gave us.’ People would just stare. To have Ashley asking all these questions about our financial future was just more stressful than selling the business.”*

In the midst of Ashley’s complaints and the nightmare of selling the business, she realized that through it all, she had not mourned the loss of her husband to deportation. She seemed overwhelmed by her newly inherited responsibilities as a mother and sole financial provider of her broken household. In addition, she felt at fault, as she no longer had time to prepare fresh meals, to attend school functions, and to spend quality time with them as she did before. When asked about her level of school involvement as a parent, she admitted, *“I am not going to lie to you. I don’t, well I can’t. I want to, but I can’t. I work the entire day, so I cannot volunteer for the PTA meetings as I used to. Sometimes the meeting begins at 6:00pm and I am still at work, or I had to escort someone. I do try to go if I have a day off. The school sends me letters at home sometimes. But I must admit that school took a back seat in our lives; it used to be a priority but when Ramon was deported, Ashley didn’t want to go to school and missed too many days. I didn’t feel like pushing her or explaining myself to the school either; we were all depressed, and cried the entire day; it was as if he had died. So, the school sent Children Protective Services to investigate her absences. I tried to explain the reasons for Ashley’s absences,*

*but they said they needed to confirm that I was not abusing the children. They did come a couple of times; I told them about their father, and asked them for help; but they never contacted me again. A month later they sent me a letter, dismissing the case, because my home was not a threat to their well-being."*

Monica continued to explain, *"Ashley understood that she needed to go to school. The children were both afraid, thinking that they could be taken away from me. At this time, Ashley questioned me about her father; I didn't know what to tell her; so, I lied. I told her that her father had sold the grocery store and moved to the Dominican Republic. She became very angry and began to cry hysterically. She called me a liar, because her father would never leave them without any explanation. Then I had no option but to tell her what happened. She was distraught. My heart was broken. It was one of the hardest things I had ever done, to yell to my daughter that her father was unwanted in the United States, and he had no choice but to leave with nothing, including his children and wife after living in the United States for 20 years as a Legal Permanent Resident. It was hard because I also had to confess to her the reasons for him being deported. For her, it was not only about losing a father, but also unmasking the image and opinion she had about him. She got up to light a cigarette; it was obvious she was growing increasingly uncomfortable. Then she poured a glass of wine.*

Monica explains that Ashley was 10 years old when her father was deported, *"She is now fourteen years old, it has been four years and you can still feel the emptiness in the apartment. I packed all his clothes and his stuff, put them in boxes and shipped them to the D.R. I don't want Ashley and Alex to think that he is coming back. He has no belonging here. It's like he died."*

For Ashley, picking up the broken pieces of her father's deportation meant taking actions as she tried to find herself and make sense of her newly dysfunctional home environment. Children Protective Services informed Ashley's school about her father's deportation and the reasons for her absences and behavior. The school referred them to the school psychologists, in order to help Monica manage Ashley's maladaptive behaviors, but also to save her school year, as she was at risk of repeating her academic year.

Ashley didn't repeat the school year, but her interest in education decreased. She was no longer interested in attending school. Her new objective was to go to the Dominican Republic to see her father. Ashley, in sarcastic tone, said, *"my mom told me that I couldn't go to see my dad because we were in a delicate financial situation and we could not travel at this time, but the truth is that she can't travel, she was still legalizing her immigration status. She thinks I don't know, like I am stupid or something, but I know what's happening."*

But Ashley's desire to see her father was so strong that she decided to take matters into her hands, as she explained, *"So when I was 13 years old, I overheard one of my mom's friends telling her about their trips to the Dominican Republic, and how she sent her children using flight attendant services; she told my mom about the cost and the requirements. I memorized the process, and decided I am going to see Daddy. So, I came home one afternoon, while my mom was at work, sold my video game console, forged a letter, bought a ticket to the D.R., and escaped to see my daddy."*

Monica and Ramon could not believe what their daughter had just done. Once in the Dominican Republic, she asked the flight attendant to call her father, passing the

number to her. The flight attendant services called Ramon and notified him that he was late in picking up his daughter from the airport. Ramon was in shock! He could not believe what the flight attendant was telling him. He went to the airport to retrieve her. On his way, Ramon called Monica and asked about Ashley's whereabouts, to which Monica replied, "At school." Monica was astonished by the news. She couldn't believe it. She felt as if she were losing her family members one by one. She also felt rejected by her two daughters, perhaps her inability to provide a stable and safe home environment. Monica felt like a failure to herself and her children. Thus, she was even more burdened by the fact that she has to support not only her household in New York City, but also her two daughters (Renata and Ashley) in the Dominican Republic.

Monica could not go and claim Ashley, as she could not travel because of lack of documentation. Monica responded, *"What truly killed me is that I couldn't go and get her because I didn't have traveling documents."* As per Ashley, she remembers, *"I didn't want to come back to NY; I wanted to be with my dad. Yes, he tried to explain the situation, but nothing worked. A year later, my mom got permission from immigration to travel. She brought my brother, Alex. Alex was estatic! He still didn't know much about the situation, since he was only eight years old, and my mom thought that he was too young to understand. We felt like a family again. We were all together. We were happy."*

Once in the Dominican Republic, Renata (the oldest) did not want to return to the United States, she wanted to complete her high school education in the Dominican Republic. Back in New York, Monica, Ashley and Alex tried to continue functioning as a family. Monica and Ashley explained the situation to Alex since he kept asking about his dad and wondering how he had the heart to move to the Dominican Republic

without his children and his family. He kept telling Monica and Ashley at night, before he went to bed, *"I can't believe that Daddy left us like that."* Crushed by his comment, Ashley suggested to Monica that he should know the truth, claiming: *"it was worse to leave him wondering about Dad's intentions of leaving him behind. Like we felt, Renata and I, when she didn't tell us about his deportation, we just felt abandoned."*

As Ashley continued to take care of her little brother while Monica was at work, she decided to tell Alex about their father's deportation, *"The United States decided that daddy was not longer allowed to live with us in this country and Mom doesn't want to live in D.R. because she loves her job in the United States."* Alex cried a lot, but did not tell his mother about Ashley's confession until he started wetting the bed. So, now before going to bed, he just prays that his family could be together some day. To him, family is very important, and he says, which crushes Monica's heart, that *"a family should always be together,"* since that is what he learned and lived from the moment he was born.

Since learning about the deportation, Alex experienced some behavioral problems. Monica reported: *"he is sad all the time. When I take him to the park and he sees a boy playing with his dad, he cries, even in public. He told his teachers that he didn't feel like playing or doing anything, this is when Children's Protective Services was involved. He was constantly afraid that he was going to be taken away from me. He started wetting his bed, imagine that, and I sleep with him! When Children's Protective Services came, I told them why Ashley and Alex were so depressed. They didn't do anything. They just gave me a letter stating that the case was closed and that the apartment was suitable for these children's welfare. So I guess that having food in the*

*refrigerator counts for them to decide that we are a suitable home. They didn't look at the pain my son was going through or my daughter and didn't offer any follow up or help."*

Monica ended the conversation with a sad and disappointing tone, *"I don't even know what to expect from Ashley. She is fourteen and thinks she is an adult. So our fights are now about boys, and the fact that she doesn't listen to me; sometimes she even leaves the house without my permission. I have to go downstairs and track her down. She is becoming a handful."*

### 5.1.E. Growing up in a Fake world—Amber's Family Case Study

Amber's family case study was reconstructed from data she provided about the family situation and how they have coped with the deportation of their father to the Dominican Republic. She did not want her mother to relive the ordeal of her father's business that led to his incarceration and eventual deportation. She began the interview by stating that: *"I'm the daughter of a deported drug-dealer. I know the consequences of living under the façade of having it all and thinking that everything is possible; I grew up thinking that all law was breakable ... there was always a way out! I think it is time for me to talk about my experience and the fantasy the money from drug dealing provided; you could truly feel like Paris Hilton or any Hollywood star you fantasized about ... indeed money is power, but it's all material ... nothing is real. I want to talk about my experience, as it could help other daughters and sons undergoing the deportation experience, as they pick up the pieces of a broken home.*

*I've been thinking about the youths of Washington Heights, as I deal with them on a daily basis with my full-time job. It's as if they were living in a ghetto community, and their goal is to just become as ghetto as the 'role model' surrounding them. I think it is time to talk about my childhood as the daughter of a drug dealer. The myth behind a life with money and access to expensive cars, glamorous clothes, and latest technology, is simply sad, because you don't feel safe. People can't buy the memories of growing up in healthy environment, with loving parents, and a safe household. It's messed up, you know? As children, we need guidance, we expect love, toys and laughter; children do not demand money, they are taught to demand and want expensive stuff.*

*I remember the way people used to look at us when we visited the Dominican Republic; they treated us like celebrities, but it was all a lie... they were only interested in my father's money. So I grew up in fake world, full of violence, expensive clothes, and angry siblings.*" According to the information provided by Amber, her "father was deported in 2006; yes only four years ago." Five children (including Amber who is the middle child, and 24 years of age at the time of the interview) comprise the family. Her siblings' ages are as follows: "Juan Carlos (31 years old), Ariel (30 years old), Juan Jose (23 years old), and Jose Joaquin (21 years old). About the living conditions of the family, Amber explained that: "We were seven people crunched in a two-bedroom apartment. Imagine the craziness!"

Regarding the immigration status of the family, she stated that: "We were all born in the United States. My parents came to the United States shortly after they got married, which was around their 20s. They migrated to the United States in 1976, according to them, in search of a better life. According to Amber, the parents always told the children that: "we came here to provide our family with a better life." She further pointed out that: "When they came to New York, [they] started working at a fabric factory, cutting fabric. It was a unionized factory." The father "worked at the factory for almost fifteen years. The mother also worked [in the garment industry] for one year. They didn't speak English, so they needed to do whatever was available at the time. Factory work, my parents used to tell us, was the only type of job available.

"At the time, they were living on 82<sup>nd</sup> and Columbus Avenue, and the factory was on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, around Fashion Avenue," [in Mid-Manhattan, New York City]. "Speaking Spanish was not as common as it is today. They remember it being difficult to learn the

*language; but they also understood they needed to learn the language if they were to succeed in this country, so they attended English classes, for free, during the evening, at a local school. My father was able to pick up the language, but my mother could not continue studying it.*

*“In 1977, they moved to 138<sup>th</sup> and Hamilton Place, where many Dominicans began to settle down. After they moved there, my mom had her first son, Juan Carlos, and a year after she had Ariel. It became difficult for her to continue working at the factory with two children, so she stopped working there and started baking Dominican cake, and selling them to our neighbors. We were surrounded by Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, and African-Americans. She became in high demand for birthday parties, weddings, anniversaries, or any special occasion. Then, when I was born six years later, she already had a name in the baking industry, but only amongst Dominicans.*

*“In the early 1990s, my mother noticed a difference on the amount of cash my dad was bringing home. She then learned that my father had become a drug dealer. He started mingling with other Dominicans, just like him, around his age, but the only difference is that they were making more money, or handling more money; they had not been in the country as long as my father had, and were already driving better cars, and sending larger amounts of money back to the Dominican Republic. Apparently, my father started questioning his new friends, given that working at the factory was not enough to cover our household expenses and still have money left to save some. My dad was frustrated and wanted a part of all that.”*

Later, her mother began to suspect that, in addition to selling drugs, the father was also using it due to drastic changes in behavior. He was violent, came home late, got

drunk, blasted the music in the house, and gave the children money. Then the father became distant from the mother and the children. In fact, Amber reports that he also *“became aggressive and hostile towards my mother. He hit her many times. My brother, Juan Carlos, one time called the police and when they came home, the police arrested my dad. My mother was able to get an order of protection, and with this order of protection, she became eligible for Public Assistance—welfare.”*

Amber remembers that the financial situation in the household changed. Money was not flowing as it used to. Once on welfare, her mother could no longer afford expensive toys and clothing, as her father used to give them. Even the quality of the meals changed. Amber recalls that her mother said to them: *“that she preferred to eat “platano vacios” (empty green plantain, a common Dominican expression) than eating with drug money, because it was dirty money. She didn’t want my father in the house. She didn’t consider him a good influence anymore. My mother thought, that if he came back home, he and my oldest brother could get into an ugly situation.”*

Then the father *“became addictive to cocaine. It was really bad. He would come to the house and bang on the door; sometimes the neighbors even called the police. One time, it was like one o’clock in the morning and he was yelling my name from the street; I was sixteen years old, then; he was calling me “mi negrita” [my little black one] come let’s dance salsa. I went downstairs. It was summer, and I remember dancing salsa with my dad while the music played from one of the cars parked in the neighborhood. He taught me how to dance.”*

Amber’s mother divorced her father. In the divorce, she also obtained an order of protection from family court. Her father could only see her siblings and her by

appointment and with someone from Children Protective Services. Juan Carlos was never present at their father's visitations. He always stayed with his mother. Amber's father was in and out of prison, for domestic violence, drug possession, and disorderly conduct, but he never completed a sentence or did hard time in prison.

In 2003, when Amber was seventeen and about to graduate from high school, her father was incarcerated with serious criminal charges. The police had proof of his dealings, and of his role in a drug trafficking organization; apparently, he was the translator between the Dominican dealers as they negotiated with African-Americans and Black Caribbeans. He was sentenced to fifteen years in prison.

In 2006, he was served with notice to be removed or deported from the United States; he was no longer wanted in the United States. The children, except for Juan Carlos, tried to appeal his deportation, and even submitted a package as an attempt to reverse the deportation order, but it backfired and instead, the judge publicly reprimanded the father. Amber recounted, *"But the package and our petition were worthless; on the day of the deportation hearing, the immigration judge asked us "why do you want this man in the United States? Then, I answered: "he is our dad. It's what society has taught us, that you look after your father no matter what. We ought to respect and care for him." At this time, I lost it. I started sobbing and crying for my father like a little girl. The judge then turned to my father and said, in a very harsh tone, "Aren't you ashamed? Your file on domestic violence goes back to the 1980s, yet you fathered five children who are productive members of society.*

*But only your two daughters came to the hearing, what do you have to say for yourself?"* Amber's mother and none of the boys came to the hearing. They did not

want to advocate for him to stay in the United States. Her mother was going to feel safe, once the father was deported. *My father didn't reply; he just lowered his head in shame. Then, the judge ordered: 'get this man out of my courtroom.'*

*"That's it. That was the end of it. He was then deported to the Dominican Republic within a month or so. My sister and I kept thinking about the judge's question, but we couldn't answer it. That day we got drunk. We didn't want to think about the hearing, nor about the question the judge ask us."*

### **Picking Up the Broken Pieces**

Before the family dealt with picking up the pieces after the deportation of the parent, they had to address the problem of domestic violence perpetrated by the father, and his drug usage. About domestic abuse Amber, recalls that: *"my older siblings had to cut school to protect my mother from my father's abusive behavior. They were afraid for my mother's life. My oldest brother, Juan Carlos, finished high school but had to do summer school and remediation. Then, my mother legally divorced my father, and she finally convinced my older brother to join the Marine Corp, so he could do something with his life; but I always believed it was just to get him out of the neighborhood. My mom was terrified that he would follow my father's footsteps in the drug-dealing business."*

When talking about her parents' domestic violence, she admitted, *"After I turned seventeen, I coped with my parent's domestic violence by escaping through my window to go to my friends' houses where I was introduced to alcohol and other soft drugs, like marijuana. But when I was in junior high school, sometimes, I begged my teachers to take me with them to their houses. One of my teachers would come over and asked my mother if I could sleep over her place. My mom, with a broken heart, had no choice but to let me*

*go. She knew that we were unhappy and disturbed. My dad learned about my escapades to my teacher's house and opted to hate all of us. He withdrew from our lives."*

Learning to deal with the consequences of illicit behavior, and law enforcement, Amber reported, *"I would hardly see my dad when I was about to graduate high school. He was sort of out of the picture. Poverty was very palpable at home; especially when you live in a neighborhood where name brands defined your 'belongingness' to your high school clique. My classmates had Gucci, Louis Vuitton, and Prada's bags; they also wore expensive clothes. I was able to compete before, but now with my father out of the picture, I was left only with the reputation of being a good dresser. I was afraid that my friends would not accept me anymore. So, some of my friends, the ones whose parents could not afford the clothes either, and I had to become very creative."*

Amber relates the following story about shopping: *"I remember one time that my mother gave me \$125.00 to go and get all my school supplies, including the clothing for the semester. I went to the Gap store and spent all the money on a few items of clothing. When I got home, my mother made me go back to return everything, explaining to me that we could not afford it, because she has five children, and she needed to be fair to all children equally. She reprimanded me saying that I was not the only one in the house; I was one-out-of-five-children and my siblings also have needs, just as I did. Then, she reminded me the entire way back to the store that my father's drug money was no longer available. Then, she took me to Caldor (the store doesn't exist anymore) to get my entire wardrobe for the school semester. There was nothing I could do, since I was afraid of my dad and could not ask for money. Well, my mother would have killed me too."*

About the parent left behind, Amber expressed the following: *"I admired my mother. I think she is a very strong woman for enduring what she went through and still raised five children. Through their educational journey I did learn that a parent is a child's best advocate. My mom was not really educated to really understand the level of services the system had to offer when dealing with a child with special needs; no one ever informed her about Social Security Services, or Students with Disability Services. I now know about these services and understand it, but when my siblings were growing up, she didn't have the knowledge. Two of my siblings have disabilities. My sister had meningitis when she was very young. Although she was able to recover, she had a learning disability that went undiagnosed. I saw her struggle at school, trying to spell words, complete her work; it took longer for her to complete any task. I remember her trying to spell the word "enough." It was such a struggle for her. She lost patience and dropped out. The school never flagged my sister's disability. Back then there was a stigma with "special education," so my mother didn't want to label her. Another one of my brothers, Juan Jose, also exhibited signs of learning disabilities. He was diagnosed, though. But he also dropped out of school. He could never finish high school because he repeated many grades, and finally, he got fed up and dropped out.*

*Out of the five children, three children graduated from high school (Juan Carlos, Jose Joaquin and I); but only two of us attended college, Jose Joaquin and I. Jose Joaquin, like me, found support in school administrators and teachers. He had been able to move on with his life without many scars from my father's path; luckily, he was too young to remember. Juan Carlos, after graduating high school and ensuring my mother was protected from my father's domestic abuse, went to the Marines, and is still active".*

After her father's deportation, Amber felt guilty and sad about her past, and the way her siblings' lives, as well as hers, had turned out. She confessed, "*Deportation is not only the act of being exiled by the judge, but I am looking at the reasons, a judge is saying that you must be sent away; you are a persona non grata. The community is conducive to this behavior (drug-dealing), which was fairly accepted in the 1980s and 1990s. I met hundreds of men who were in the drug-dealing business, pouring money like it was nothing, spending money on material things, such as bags, clothing, shoes, and even sun glasses, providing the community a sense of wealth and richness that was false. I grew up around that mess...to be accepted you had to flash all brand names and have money to spend. A child doesn't ever think that the parent is a bandit. We don't understand the scope of the situation when we are just left behind angry, confused, growing up and going through life without really pondering on the issue.*"

Amber stated that once her father was deported to the Dominican Republic, he had a stroke. She explains, "*We got together, again as a family, and we agreed to pay for his care, i.e. medicine, food, etc. He became paralyzed, but also he cannot recognize any of his children. Although, I think he is aware of us. My oldest brother, Juan Carlos, to this date does not speak with my father. My father has not even met his three grandchildren. And when Jose Joaquin, my youngest brother, is told that he looks like his father, he gets offended; you must be ready to fight with him. We don't have a relationship with him. We visit our mother frequently, and are aware of her needs. But we don't talk about my father.*"

**American Dream Faux Pas**

When describing her coping mechanism, Amber identified school as a safe place to nest. *“School became my escape, my safety net. I remember my mother couldn’t take the terror and fear anymore. My oldest siblings didn’t go to school sometimes, as they stayed at home to protect my mother. I was never asked to stay with my mother. I went to school everyday, even when I was sick. It was my only escape from the craziness of our life. I was the only one in my house who was enrolled in a bilingual program. Every one thought at the time that it was a big mistake because people were not sure about the program at the time; but it was the best thing my mother could have done for me. Today, I am the only one fluent in both languages, English and Spanish. My siblings only speak English, and some broken Spanish with my mom.”*

As she recalls her schooldays, she realized, *“I felt lucky to be in the program, because the teachers were caring. They gave me a lot of love—the one my father didn’t allow to run through at home. My teachers became very close to me. The most influential teacher was my seventh grade teacher. She would take me home sometimes; she knew my home situation, she tried to engage me in school activities. I don’t remember ever crying for whatever was going on at home, because school and dancing would replace any sad feeling—or maybe these two passions just covered up my screwed up childhood.”*

Pursuing an education was part of Amber’s goals. She proudly stated: *“I graduated from Norman Thomas High School, which was considered a good school at the time. Because of my grades and academic excellence, my teachers helped me to apply to college and I got a scholarship to go to a university in Rhode Island. The scholarship even*

*included housing. It was in one of the most beautiful and most wanted dorms. It was beautiful, and I was out of New York and out of the craziness! However, I didn't graduate from my private, fancy school. I lost my housing privilege. As embarrassing as this is for me to admit, I will tell you the reasons, as long as this is confidential and no one would know my real identity. I would die if my network finds out about this. Given the lack of supervision during my last semester in high school, I cut school, went to hooky parties, became very rebellious and without any supervision, my mom was too busy with my other siblings and making a living by baking cake, I just came and went. My friends looked for me all the time as I had money to spend! My dad used to give me money every time he saw me, so I was pretty famous amongst my peers. I had this awesome personality and a killer wardrobe, so everyone wanted to hang out with me. I was pretty popular.*

*So, some of the friends I made at these parties developed sort of a special skill of cloning credit cards. So, when my mom could no longer afford my expensive habits, I got a part-time job at a chain store, which no longer exists, thanks God. I worked 20 hours per week, making \$3.25 at the time. It was not enough money though to maintain the image I had already created amongst my peers. Thus, some of my friends approached me to see if I could start giving them the credit cards receipts, or I would tell the customer that the machine was broken, and used the old fashioned machine that produces a carbon copy; remember those? [I nodded]. I was in business with them, committing credit card fraud.*

*"So, when I went away to college, I tried to do the same thing and took some of my classmates' credit cards, thinking that they were rich and all and they wouldn't notice...WRONG!!! I was so wrong. I got caught. My scholarship and housing privileges were suspended. Consequently, I was not able to come back after the first semester. I*

*didn't want my classmates to inquire why I was no longer part of the most wanted dorm. Also everyone knew me; I was the queen of parties, and again my dress style caught people's attention. I was the fashionable girl from New York City. I was mortified. I didn't know if anyone had found out about my criminal act. I was lucky they didn't press charges; the school let me go with a warning, but by taking away all my privileges I could no longer afford to attend the institution. I had to come back to New York.*

*"I became very ashamed of what I did. I felt as if I had lost my entire future because by jeopardizing my scholarship I also put at risk my education. I also started pondering about my audacity and lack of fear when committing fraud. I never thought about the people I was hurting. I felt I had become my father, an outlaw... a bandit. You know? This feeling triggered my interest in learning more about people's behaviors, and why they do certain things to defy the law. So, I enrolled at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. It was a public institution, and I qualified for financial aid. I got my education back on track. No one knew why I left my prestigious private institution. I just told people that I was homesick. I graduated with a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice, and am currently pursuing my master's degree in Public Administration, at John Jay College as well.*

*"I never told my mom the truth; I blamed the incident on my roommates. My mom was always involved in our school activities. She always went to our school to follow up on our performance, but it was always rushed. I don't blame her, though; she didn't know any better and with all the emotional battles she underwent, she did the best she could to raise us. I admired my mother. I think she is a very strong woman for enduring what she went through and still raised five children.*

Amber acknowledges, *“Drug dealing destroyed my family. The business gave me a sense of identity that was false, just trying to fit in. So I think it is important for you to know and understand how a family lives prior to deportation, while they are still in the business, before they get caught. I grew up around that mess...to be accepted you had to flash all brand names and have money to spend. Is that what we are teaching our children in our community? Look at me, I gave up a wonderful opportunity at a private institution because I also felt I was above the law. After meeting you I started to think about all the children who will be in my situation, sitting in an immigration courtroom, begging for their mothers or fathers to be left in the country, because most of them were in the business. A child doesn’t ever think that the parent is a bandit. We don’t understand the scope of the situation, we are just left behind angry, confused, growing up and going through life without really pondering on the issue.”*

She continued to explain: *“I could have easily fallen into my father’s footsteps. The opportunity was there...it took that experience in Rhode Island to understand that the end does not justify the means. We grow up thinking that we could get anything, just to give a false illusion to people about who we really are...we want to make the world believe that we have it all...and we ain’t got shit.”* At this point her voice turned angry. She started to cry, while admitting, *“As painful as it is for me to admit this, I do think that my father should have been deported. I have a degree in Criminal Justice, and although I always challenge and question the law and how it is enforced, I do believe in the system. He did us wrong. He did the country wrong. He had a full time job, which provided for the household. We could have been poor, and successful. We would have not been exposed to that type of life, where immediate gratification is a must. When I am at a club, I still see*

*that type of life; people with the idea that it is okay to do what they do, as long as they make money without thinking of the consequences for their offspring. The saddest thing is that I still feel I need to keep up with society, maintaining a façade with clothing, shoes and this whole fake image; I don't know how to deal with this obsession. Sometimes, I just get fed up with society and begin to drink."*

After calming down she admitted, *"I think it's my father's fault that we are all alcoholics. We have gotten help, though. But we are still dependent on alcohol. I also think that I am attractive to abusive men. Before going to the university in Rhode Island, I had a boyfriend, who was very abusive to me. I replicated what I had seen at home. I ended the abusive relationship and went away to college. When I transferred to John Jay, I met my current boyfriend...well, we are no longer together, though. That's my daughter's father. Oh yeah, I got pregnant when I entered John Jay College. I was 18 years old. Amy's dad was incarcerated for possession of a controlled substance, just like my father; ironic, right? He was sentenced to four years to life in prison."* Amber claims that when she met her boyfriend he failed to mention his incarceration and probation status.

When describing her relationship with her partner, her daughter's father, she recounts with a sad tone, *"At the time, he was the manager at a sneaker store, a big one. We moved in together when I got pregnant. Then, when the baby was born, he got greedy, and started stealing sneakers, to sell it around the neighborhood. He got arrested and was charged with burglary. Luckily, the judge found him guilty of petty larceny. He still went to prison for violating his parole. So, in a way, I have become my mother. He came out of prison, and I took him back. Amy is six years old. My mom helps me with her, so I am able to go to school and work full time. My mom is my rock."*

Pondering her past and the kind of decisions she has made in her life, she states, *“I would like to encourage people engaged in illicit businesses to learn from their father’s example. They can find positive role models in the community. I know it is easy to go with the bad, it’s just easier and at the time it might even be rewarding with all the goodies that you get, but in the long run, trust me, it isn’t. I think deportation is a rude awaking call as to how as a community we need to embrace positive ethos, and be role models to younger generations. I know it sounds like a cliché but without schooling you ain’t going anywhere...but seriously, where are you going to go if you don’t have any employable skills. That’s was my dad’s excuse, ‘I wanted to provide, but the factory paid little money,’ well, guess what, without any skills you will always struggle in life. Consequently, you will have to go underground, to the illegal business. Get your life on track! The fact that it happened to your father or your mother, it means that you will have a harder life, because you will be the first generation to attend college. If your act is not together, your life is not going to be successful.”*

### 5.1.F. Fostering Maladaptive Behaviors: Nicole's Case Study

Nicole's mother, Grace, emigrated from the Dominican Republic to the United States in late 1960s, where she subsequently had four children. Grace is the second oldest; she was born in 1972. Grace grew up in Washington Heights, surrounded by many children with Dominican ancestry, but she was a victim of an unusual child rearing practice in the Dominican immigrant community. Basically, children are sent back and fourth to the Dominican Republic whenever work responsibilities intervene with child rearing, or when children misbehave and parents have difficulties disciplining them. Unfortunately, not only does this practice break the family apart, but it also interrupts the children's educational development.

In the early 1980s, after many factory jobs, Grace's mother decided to go to a trade school for a beautician certificate, which enabled her to open a beauty parlor. Though the business sounded like a wonderful financial source, it required Grace's parents to work longer hours, which forced them to send their four children to the Dominican Republic to continue their education until the business was stable.

Grace came back to New York City when she was ready to begin high school. However, her lack of English mastery made her educational experience a difficult one. She did not feel academically successful and, coupled with her lack of educational ethos and her home environment, she did not aspire to pursue formal education. In addition, she learned from her mother that a beautiful woman did not have to work hard, because she would always have a man to take care of her. As a result, she grew up taking care of her body, and instead of enriching herself from the high school journey or

even considering the pursuit of an education beyond high school. Eventually, she graduated from high school with a local diploma since she only tested for the Spanish regent's exam. At eighteen years of age and during her last year of high school, she became pregnant with Nicole. Hence, she did not see the need for taking any other regent's exams. She felt that she had found the man who was going to take care of her, as per her mother's wisdom.

She moved in with Nicole's father, who was twenty-three years old, and already had a job at a local bank. Without a professional skill or an advanced degree, she found a job as a receptionist at a local hospital. They seemed to be doing well at the time. Sadly three years later her partner, Nicole's father, was charged with fraud and grand larceny, as he was suspected to have been part of a robbery at the local bank where he worked. He was sentenced to fifteen years in a federal prison. Once in prison, Grace had to become a public assistance recipient in order to supplement her salary. Nicole was three years old at the time. Unfortunately, thirteen years later, on the day Nicole's father was being released from prison on parole, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) apprehended him in front of the Federal prison and, within three days, he was deported to the Dominican Republic without further notice.

### **Picking Up the Broken Pieces**

For Grace, picking up the broken pieces of her partner's incarceration meant finding another man to support her and Nicole. A year following her partner's incarceration, Grace married Jonathan. Nicole was four years old at the time. Her stepfather came at a cost for Nicole, as she was no longer able to visit her father in

prison; in fact, Jonathan was not even aware of Nicole's father's imprisonment. After living two years with her stepfather, Nicole's paternal aunt went to her school to hand her a letter from her biological father. Nicole was confused. She considered Jonathan to be her father. Grace explained that after this encounter with the aunt, Nicole began to wet her bed, as she felt guilty for loving her stepfather and forgetting about her own father. Nicole became rebellious and demanded to see her father. Jonathan eventually found out about Nicole's father's imprisonment, which threatened to affect Grace's marriage. Grace began to blame Nicole for her marital conflicts given that Jonathan supported Nicole's decision to see her father and demanded that Grace assist Nicole in her request.

Angry, Grace contacted Nicole's paternal aunt, and asked her to take Nicole to visit her father. However, Nicole's father did not want her to see him in prison, which made Nicole feel rejected by her father. Now Nicole felt that the mother was blaming her for the situation and that she was angry because she was looking for her father. Nicole felt unwanted by her family. However, Nicole's father began to write to her every month, and she was able to reestablish a relationship with her estranged father.

Grace explained how Nicole has kept every single letter her father sent to her since she was eight years old. No one has been able to read the letters. She contemplates Nicole from afar as she re-reads all the letters from her father while trusting all the promises he had made her in order to rescue their father-daughter relationship. Grace claims that she never asked about the letters in order to avoid any confrontation with Jonathan, her current husband.

The parental battle between Grace and Nicole's paternal family, as well as with Jonathan, has disrupted Nicole's relationship with her mother and her stepfather. Grace became pregnant with her second child, which drew Nicole closer to her biological father. Grace admits to having a hard time understanding Nicole, and not being patient with her rebellious behavior. She did not know how to deal with Nicole anymore. She tried to concentrate on her husband and her newborn, which only complicated her relationship with Nicole, as she alienated her older daughter from her current nuclear family life.

### **American Dream Faux Pas**

Grace concentrated on her family turmoil, putting her education on hold. She did not have an educational role model while growing up, which made her educational aspiration impossible. Her perception of women's role and beauty was distorted, which clouded her educational ethos. She was more familiar with the pursuit of beauty than her education. Happiness would come through marriage. Thus, she concentrated on her husband since he was the main provider of the household, and who would also continue to support her personal sense of high maintenance.

Grace recognized that her impatient attitude with Nicole was associated with her not being Jonathan's daughter and the possibility that her maladaptive behavior could jeopardize her marital relationship. In Nicole's case, Grace had become wife first and mother second. She revealed, "*Jonathan can accept anything her two daughters (Naty & Lety who will be born in a few months) do; they are his children after all. But Nicole is not his child; he could just grow tired of her outbursts and rebellious behavior.*" She

recognized that her priority in protecting her marriage and the separation she made between Nicole and her sisters, further complicated Nicole's relationship with Jonathan. She also understands that Nicole may be misconstruing her attitude by feeling unwelcomed and unwanted and that it may trigger Nicole's behavior.

Grace does not encourage school activities or the pursuit of an education in the household. On the contrary, she has taught Nicole the same lessons her mother taught her about beauty. In fact, Grace used to take Nicole to modeling contests and has signed her up to perform in commercials. However, given her two new daughters, Grace can no longer dedicate time to take Nicole to any auditions or modeling agencies.

During the second interview, Grace grew impatient at Nicole's outbursts and aggressive behavior. She sighed while flaying her arms up in the air, "This might be the answer we've been looking for. It's just made sense!" Apparently, Nicole has had a dramatic change in her behavior during the last year, to the point that her mother had ran out of choices as to how to deal with her emotional outbursts and sexual behavior. Grace had just realized that Nicole's father's deportation could be the reason for her change of attitude. As Grace described Nicole's change of behavior, she made clear that she wants her daughter Nicole to participate so that she would have the opportunity to vent and channel her anger.

At first, Grace had some reservations regarding her level of participation in the study, since she had left Nicole's father (the deportee) when Nicole was two years old. She has remarried and has an eight-year-old daughter and was expecting a second daughter from her current marriage at the time of this interview. In the process of

trying to protect her current family unit, she claimed, *"It's not that I don't want to participate in the study, it's just that, for the sake of my marriage, I don't think it is necessary to relive the pain I went through when living with Nicole's father. I do not care to explain the reasons he went to prison since I don't know the details. I was sheltered from a lot of information. In fact, we were separated when he went to prison, and I remarried someone else. I also think, given that study is about children of deportees, it would be good for Nicole to get it all out, to have someone to talk to about this. We don't talk much about it. She did ask me to go to the Dominican Republic to visit her father, but his living conditions are not suitable for her to visit. We have briefly discussed the role of her father in our lives. He often wrote to Nicole when he was in prison, which in my opinion worsened Nicole's behavior because he only fed false hopes to her, and part of her sadness is that her dad has been such a huge disappointment. She has bottled up everything inside, which has worsened her behavior."* Grace felt that Nicole *"is an angry young girl, and maybe your study would make her realize how she has to change her behavior because she could rip our family apart. Although Jonathan, my new husband, treats her like her own daughter, her behavior and attitude prompt us to argue and often to choose sides. He has even developed an ulcer! He is a wonderful, hard working, and respectful man, I could not have given her a better stepfather. She needs help,"* Grace exclaimed, raising her voice in frustration. *"I need help with her. Maybe your questions can help her think about her anger and deal with the situation her father has put her into. She doesn't listen to us."*

In a frustrating tone, she admitted, *"I have tried looking for counseling treatment for Nicole's behavior, but we stopped meeting with the counselor, because she changed*

*offices or something. I did notice that Nicole started to open up with her, but the sessions were interrupted. This is the reason I want her to participate in the study; I want her to know there are other people experiencing deportation of a loved one, she is not the only one. She needs to learn that."*

When referring to the study, Grace acknowledged, *"When I learned about the study I thought it was perfect for her to let it all out, and after reading your questions, I think this is an opportunity for her to think about her future, without thinking about the past. She needs to move on. So far, nothing has worked. We, Nicole's stepfather and I, even sent her to my mother in the Dominican Republic, to see if she would behave better. Maybe a change of environment; I was about to lose my job because I had to be running back and forth from her school to my job. I couldn't bear the instability of her behavior, so I had to send her to my mother. Once at my mother's house in the Dominican Republic, we enrolled her in one of the best schools of the area, all to see if we could help her change or at least modify her behavior. We sacrificed our living conditions, paying RD\$20,000 Dominican pesos, which amounts to almost \$550.00 US dollars monthly; this was a large amount of money for her education, but I thought it would be beneficial for her and for all of us. Little did I know that she was going to get even worse! She drove my mother crazy with her promiscuous behavior, causing a lot of trouble in the neighborhood."*

Grace stated that: *"At 14 years old, Nicole started dating a man almost twice her age, and she became sexually active. She used to escape my mother's home to go to motels. It was so embarrassing. When we found out we tried to go to the police, but the man's family helped him leave the country for a while. My mother then requested that I*

*send for Nicole. She couldn't handle Nicole's promiscuity, drinking and swearing. The school also called and suspended her for aggressive behavior, which was such an embarrassment for my mother. Since then, Nicole has engaged in a destructive path, from getting tattoos on her private "lady" part, to cutting classes at school, to bringing boys to the apartment when left alone after school. I have a 9-5pm job, and, after listening to her so many times as to how she was going to change her behavior, I started leaving her alone, to establish a trustful relationship, you see; but my husband came home from work unexpectedly to find her having sex with a boy in her bedroom, while Naty, our seven year old at the time, she is eight now, was watching cartoons in the living room, right in front of Nicole's bedroom. Now, can you imagine the fights, the yelling and screaming, when my husband kicked the boy out? He called me at work completely distraught. I didn't even know what to do! These are some of the things I can tell you from the top of my head; she needs help...we all do."*

With a despairing voice she continued to explain, *"Now I have to leave her, a sixteen year old, with a babysitter because she can't be left alone. I, well we, don't trust her. She is very angry and continues to engage in self-destructive behavior. Last year, during her 10th grade academic year, she was suspended from school for fighting with two other girls. She was suspended for a week because of her aggressive behavior. I went crazy trying to find a sitter for her, she is sixteen, too old for a sitter; no one wanted the responsibility. So I had to take that week off from work to make arrangements and see what I could do with her after school. She just doesn't think of consequences. I can't quit my job to babysit her, we need the money; I really don't know what to do, she doesn't talk to me or my husband when she is at home; she sometimes goes to my mother-in-law, who*

*treats her like a granddaughter, and opens up to her. It is like being blind and trying to cross the woods, you know? My husband has tried to reason with her, but it has not been successful. I am pregnant with our second child, and she just doesn't care about all the stress I am undergoing because of her nonsense and childish behavior. We are trying to have a beautiful family, but she doesn't value any of that."*

Grace<sup>9</sup> introduced me to Nicole, and told her that I was going to be picking her up from a summer program she was attending at her school. She wanted to go to a restaurant for lunch. We went to a quiet restaurant in the neighborhood. Knowing how delicate the topic was, I decided to talk about her interests which are modeling, wanting to work during the summer, before classes started, going to college, etc. The first interview was to establish a relationship. She seems eager to have a mentor and asked many questions about life and schooling, but most of all about finding a job. I didn't ask any questions about her motives for finding a job. I only listened. I did not want to trigger any negative reactions; I was building a relationship with her.

Grace informed me that she was not going to be at home, if I was interested in staying with Nicole while she and Jonathan were out with Naty. I agreed. Once at her apartment, we prepared some lunch, watched a movie, and even played a video game. Then, we started talking about people's behavior and their need to control their environment—she was referring to her mother and the fact that Nicole was grounded for lying to her about having a cell phone, which a boy gave to her—during this conversation she brought up her “real father” as she called him. This was the moment

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<sup>9</sup> After the first interview, Grace was not available for a follow up interview. She just wanted Nicole to participate in the study and take this exercise as a form of therapy.

during the conversation when I felt the timing was right to begin the interview. As I began, I noticed that her reactions and body language changed. She stared into the space, and clenching her fists asked: “are you going to ask me about my father?” to which I responded yes.

Nicole became very emotional. She started to sob, clenching her eyes very tight, and she began to cry uncontrollably. She didn’t want to talk about her father’s deportation and how she was not interested in discussing “that” with anyone. I sat next to her, and explained the significance of the study, while giving her some facts about deportation. I also explained the reasons her participation was so important to this particular study. She remained quiet for a long time, crying and drying her tears. It was obvious that she was in pain. After using an entire box of tissues, I noticed she was no longer crying so I decided to reinitiate the conversation talking about her interests, which we had previously discussed, and some demographic questions. She knew I could not leave her alone. We had to wait for her mother to arrive home. Nicole looked very cautious; she was waiting for me to bring up her father’s deportation again, and was answering the questions very slowly and cautiously. Her voice was still a little broken from her crying.

When asked to describe herself, Nicole did not know what to say about herself, she only said, *“I know am tall and beautiful, many boys tell me that, I could be a model. I want to be a model. I know that...but I know am smart, and if I were to apply myself I could do well in school, but I don’t know how to concentrate and apply myself.”* Tears began to shed, as she described herself.

At this point she started crying, tightening her eyes, with her hands covering her face; her sadness was palpable. She became very agitated. While consoling her, and assuring her that she matters and that I cared...I hesitated on whether or not I should continue with the interview; but in the midst of my debate I understood that Nicole is the reason I should continue with the interview, and the study of children of deportees who were left behind in the United States. Grace was right, she needed to talk things out, but I wasn't sure I was the right person; she needed professional help. Although she had the list of community organizations, which I provided at the beginning of the interview, she didn't trust any since she has always experienced "being judged."

Through tears, Nicole began to tell her story, *"I'm thinking about my father"*. The tone of her voice changed, she was angry. *"I was wondering if he cares about me, and what I am going through. He went to prison five years ago. It shouldn't matter if he went to prison, it's not like I grew up with him. He didn't even give money to my mother to help with my expenses. Since I was three years old, Jonathan has been responsible for me. So, I am confused. If Jonathan is so good with me, why am I so sad about my dad? I think it is because he lied to me. He promised me when he was in prison that he was going to take care of me; he was going to be there for me. He lied, like always. I bet if my mother took him to Child Support Services, he would have to pay like \$20,000 or more. He never helped us. Jonathan has, though. For years, my father mailed me letters, promising that he was going to be a new man. I read and reread those letters, only to find all his lies. He is not here, he is cannot protect me; he just left to Santo Domingo, abandoning me. He is selfish. He was supposed to come out of prison when he signed a form agreeing to be deported. So I guess it was his fault."*

*"I feel like I don't have parents. My mother is only available to Naty. She doesn't care about me; otherwise she would not have sent me to my grandmother's in Santo Domingo. She only fights with me and give me rules. It's like I don't exist. I know if you ask her this question she might say that she loves me and blah blah blah, but the reality is different. None of my parents love me. I just don't belong here. Jonathan is a decent guy though; I am the one who is bad. He worries about me. I know he and my mom fight all the time about me, and maybe my mom would not want me here so they could be the perfect family, you know, [she begins to sob again] I am sure they have thought of it. Now with the new baby, I am the only one who doesn't belong here!"* She begins to cry again. Then, she says, *"He treats my mom okay, and works and provides for all of us...he is nothing like my dad, who went to prison and mistreated my mom. My dad is the one who is no good here...he owes tons of money to my mom in child support; he has never given her a dime for me. Yet, Jonathan has cared for me. He also goes to my school and talks to my teachers. He fights for me, and tries to protect me. My teachers call him whenever there is a problem at school, instead of calling my mom. So, he does try to be there for me. I am upset, but it is not with him. I think it is with my dad; or my mom, for having had me with another guy. I don't really know. I am just caught in the middle, like trapped between my real dad and my stepdad. I don't know how to explain it. Yes, I want my real father to come back so he could carry out his promises to me."*

When asked about her education, she reflects, *"School is all right. I am now going to the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. I do okay; it depends on how I am feeling. I comply with my work, almost all the time. I sort of like school, mostly my friends, and some of the subjects. But sometimes I find it boring. Sometimes I don't care about school. I don't communicate with*

*my teachers. I only comply with my assignments, as they want. Well, that is when I do my homework. Sometimes I come home and don't feel like doing anything, I just go to sleep. So, my grades change depending on my mood and energy level. I don't care about school. Umm, I just want a job. None of the stuff they are teaching me now is good to get a job. I want a job to make some money. I want to move by myself. I don't want to live with my mom anymore. I want to be alone. I am always alone. I don't like to have people around me. I feel sad inside. I don't know why I don't do what I am supposed to do...nobody cares anyways? Who is going to help me? Not that I need any help... but nobody cares!"*

Although we met several times after the interview to discuss her schooling and educational choices, Nicole did not want to continue discussing her father's deportation claiming "*I have all the letters he sent me from prison and that's the father I want to remember. I don't think I want to think about your questions; they make me think too much about things without solutions. I just need to learn to live with my sadness and move on with my life. I'm pretty sure it will not be difficult once the new baby arrives. So, I don't want to think of the future or the past..."*

## 5.2. Data Analysis: Summary of Case Studies

Herewith you have read the lived experiences of the six families who fully participated in the study. Chapter five analyzed the socio-bulimic costs by looking at each family through the lens of social exclusion domains described in previous chapters. Before analyzing the relationship between deportation of documented deportees and the social bulimic cost to children and families in Chapter 6, a demographic profile of the participants is presented in Table 5.2.1.

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**TABLE 5.2.1**

**Demographic Profile of Deportees and the Family Left behind in the U.S.**

**Sample Size:** N=6 families were interviewed

**Sex of participants:** Females (Mothers)

**Mean Age of Mother at the time of Fathers' deportation:** X= 42

**Mean Length of Residency of Mother in USA at time of Spouses' Deportation:** Mean years in the USA= 25 years (One Mother born in the US)

**Fathers' Educational Levels:**

Elementary Education =	17% (1)
Some HS and HS Education=	50% (3)
Some College =	33% (2)
	100% (6)

**Fathers' Work at Deportation Time:**

Taxi Driver= 1	17% (1)
Grocery Owner= 1	17% (1)
Factory Worker=2	33% (2)
Drug Related Work= 3	50% (3) (in addition to "formal employment")
Bank Teller=1	17% (1)
	101%

**Mother's Work at the time of Husband's Deportation:**

Public Assistance =	50% (3)
Working =	33% (2)
Not Working=	17% (1)
	100% (6)

**Year of deportation of Fathers:**

In the 1990's =	17% (1)
In 2000's =	83% (5)

---

As Table 5.2.1 indicates, all the parents left behind are mothers whose mean age at the time of the father's deportation was 42 years of age, and who have resided in the

United States for an average of 25 years, with the exception of one of the mothers who was born in the United States. The data show that, at the time of the spouse deportation, half of the mothers were receiving public assistance, while 33% were working and 17% did not have a job, which means that they could not be part of a competitive labor market that would allow them to support the household as a sole provider.

The father's educational levels at the time of deportation also indicates that they could only participate in blue-collar sectors or in meager jobs, given their level of education: 17% had elementary education; 50% had some high school or high school education; and 33% had some college education, but from their country of origin, not valid in the United States. According to the data, 50% of the fathers were working in drug-related activities; one was a bodega owner, two worked in factories, but dealt drugs to supplement their income; and one was a bank teller.

Table 5.2.2 presents information on the children at the time of the fathers' deportations to the Dominican Republic. As the table indicates, there were 22 children in the studied households at the time of the father's deportations. The mean age of the children was 17.3, with one mother expecting another baby. Over 80% of the children have had some contact with their fathers after deportation.

**Table 5.2.2**  
**Number of Children in Household at time of Deportation of Father:**

Number of children per family and their ages  
 3 (ages: 18, 17, and 3)  
 4 (ages: 23, 15, 14, and 3)  
 2 (ages: 18 and 14)  
 6 (ages: 16, 7, and 0; and 3 from father' side)  
 2 (ages: 14 and 10)  
 5 (ages: 21, 23, 24, 30, and 41)

---

22 children

**Mean Age of Children at the time of Father's Deportation:** X= 17.3  
 (One of the Mothers was expecting a baby at the time of the interviews)

**Contact with Fathers After Deportation:**

Yes =	83% (5)
No=	<u>17% (1)</u>
	100%

---

Table 5.2.3 contains information on the time the fathers spent in prison in the United States before they were deported to the Dominican Republic. As the table shows, they were sentenced from 2 years to between eight and ten years. But they actually only served from 1 ½ to 7 years in prison. The charges included conspiracy, possession of a weapon, selling a controlled substance, attempted criminal possession of a controlled substance, possession of a large amount of controlled substance (found in a grocery store), bank robbery, fraud, domestic violence, and racketeering (translating for drug dealers).

TABLE 5.2.3 Time Fathers Spent in Prison in the USA			
Family Case	Charge(s)	Sentencing Length	Time Served
Joseline's Family	* Conspiracy / * Possession of a weapon.	2 years	1 ½ years
Maria Jose's Family	* Selling controlled substance/ * Attempted criminal possession of a controlled substance.	8 years	7 years
Franchesca's Family	* Selling controlled substance / * Attempted criminal possession of controlled substance.	8-10 years	2 years –ICE deported him before he completed his sentence.
Monica's Family	Conspiracy / Possession of a large amount of controlled substance found in his grocery store.	Faced 15 years in prison, but due to lack of evidence was sentenced to two years of probation and a \$15,000 bond.	Completed 1½ years of his parole. ICE incarcerated him at a parole visitation.
Nicole's family	* Bank robbery / * Fraud	10-14 years	13 years
Amber's family	* Domestic Violence / * Selling controlled substance / * Racketeering	15 years	7 years

The next table presents information about the mothers' educational and occupational levels prior to the deportation of the husbands. Table 5.2.4 indicates that four of the mothers or over 50%, had a high school-GED education, one had some college education, which she acquired in the Dominican Republic, and another mother did not have any formal education. Table 5.2.4 also shows that two of the mothers received public assistance before the fathers were deported, two worked in factories, one was an office assistant, and another was unemployed.

<b>Table 5.2.4-Mothers' Educational and Occupational Levels Prior to fathers' Deportation</b>		
<b>Family Case</b>	<b>Educational Level Prior to Deportation</b>	<b>Occupation Prior to Deportation</b>
<b>Joseline Family</b>	H.S. Diploma / Associates Degree	Public Assistance Recipient
<b>Maria Jose's Family</b>	Illiterate	Factory Worker / Food Stamps Recipient
<b>Franchesca's Family</b>	H.S. Diploma	Public Assistance Recipient
<b>Monica's Family</b>	Some College in the Dominican Republic	None
<b>Nicole's family</b>	G.E.D.	Office Assistant
<b>Amber's family</b>	H.S. Diploma	Factory Worker

Table 5.2.5 shows data on the children's ages at the time of fathers' incarcerations and deportations. The children were as young as one year old and as old as fourteen years of age when the fathers were arrested. Some of these children may have been too young to fully understand and articulate what happened at the removal of the father, given that they were between five and twenty-one years old when the fathers were deported to the Dominican Republic from the United States.

**Table 5.2.5—Children's Age at the Time of Incarceration and Deportation**

<b>Family Case</b>	<b>Age at Incarceration</b>	<b>Age at Deportation</b>
Joseline Family	Dominic -5 years old Lanise - 3 years old	Dominick -7 years old Lanise - 5 years old
Maria Jose's Family	Karina -1 year old Yesimel - 3 months old	Karina -8 years old Yesimel -7 years old
Franchesca's Family	Frankie -1 <sup>st</sup> time: when born. 2 <sup>nd</sup> time - 8 years old	Frankie -10 years old
Monica's Family	Ashley -10 years old	Ashley -Almost 12 years old
Nicole's family	Nicole -3 years old	Nicole- 16 years old
Amber's family	Amber— 14 years old	Amber—21 years old

Information on the educational level of children (see Table 5.2.6) indicates that most were in elementary school at the time of the father's deportations—something that reflects the children's ages at the time of the fathers' deportations.

<b>Table 5.2.6—Children’s Educational Level Before Deportation</b>	
<b>Family Case</b>	<b>Educational Level Before Deportation</b>
<b>Joseline Family</b>	<i>Dominick</i> –Elementary School <i>Lanise</i> –Pre-K
<b>Maria Jose’s Family</b>	<i>Karina</i> –Not applicable <i>Yesimel</i> – Not applicable
<b>Franchesca’s Family</b>	<i>Frankie</i> –2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade
<b>Monica’s Family</b>	<i>Ashley</i> -6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
<b>Nicole’s family</b>	<i>Nicole</i> –Pre-K
<b>Amber’s family</b>	<i>Amber</i> —8 <sup>th</sup> Grade

The data shown above describe the families, children, mothers and fathers, before the process of the deportation of the parents (fathers). The demographic profile that emerges from the data is as follows:

1. The children were young when the fathers were arrested;
2. The fathers did not spend many years in prison in the United States despite the charges;
3. The fathers were charged with bank robbery, trafficking with controlled substance, possession of weapon, conspiracy, domestic violence, and racketeering;
4. Most of the mothers had limited formal education;
5. Fifty percent of the families were on public assistance, 33% were working, and 33% of the fathers worked in factories; and
6. Fifty percent of the fathers had at least some high school education.

As can be extrapolated from the data presented, these six families came from a poor background as indicated by the levels of education and the type of legal work that both parents did or do in the United States. The criminal charges against the fathers

show that some were involved in non-violent crimes, but others were accused of committing violent crimes. The ages of the children at the time of the fathers' deportations reveal that many could have not possibly have understood the severity of the crime which caused the ejection or removal of the parents from the country.

### **5.3. Consequences of Deportation on the Family and Children**

Unlike undocumented deportees, or the reports on Mexican and South American families, deported documented Dominican parents were not arrested in raids at worksites because of undocumented status, forced to wear ankle bracelets or an electronic monitoring devices (EMDs); however, in the cases of Joseline, Maria Jose, and Monica, their husbands were arrested at raids conducted by police, because of drug-related investigation, not immigration status. The fact is that these three families lost their family member because of a "moral turpitude," i.e. drug dealing, firearms, and fraud—regardless of claims of innocence. The mothers and children did face prolonged separation from the fathers prior to the deportation due to the time they spent in jail for the specific crimes charged with and convicted. All the deported fathers have remained in the Dominican Republic, and those deported because of drug convictions are not eligible to return to the United States under current immigration laws. Although there are waivers provided by Homeland Security based on the type of inadmissibility (see Appendixes A and G) available to non-drug related deportation, I was not able to find any reported case of a deportee who had regained access to enter the United States after having been deported from the United States.

The data about what happened to these families after the deportation of the

fathers indicate that all the mothers became the heads of the households. Over 50% of those who stayed behind (Maria Jose, Joseline, Franchesca, and Monica) suffered economic hardship such as steep declines in incomes because they lost the only working parent in the family. For example, Joseline was a public assistance recipient and was attending school at the time of her husband’s incarceration and deportation; Maria Jose was a stay-at-home-mother taking care of her three daughters while the husband supported the household; and Franchesca was also receiving public assistance. However, 33% of these mothers attended technical or college after their husbands’ removal from the country, improving their occupational, social capital/network, and income levels (See Table 5.3.1). The table indicates that 33% of the mothers were working at the time of father’s deportation (Nicole’s mother, Grace, and Amber’s mother, unknown name).

**Table 5.3.1—Mother’s Educational and Occupational Level After Husbands’ Deportation**

<b>Family Case</b>	<b>Educational level After Deportation</b>	<b>Occupation after Deportation</b>
<b>Joseline’s Family</b>	B.A. in Accounting	Accountant
<b>Maria Jose’s Family</b>	Did not change	Public Assistance Recipient (SED program)
<b>Franchesca’s Family</b>	A.S. and B.A.	Admissions Officer in a private University
<b>Monica’s Family</b>	Did not change	Babysitter / Escort Services
<b>Nicole’s family</b>	Technical Institute	Office Assistant
<b>Amber’s family</b>	Did not change	Cake baker

As the data on Table 5.3.3 reveal, these families experienced incredible income increases after the deportation of the fathers resulting from the educational gain, but perhaps not enough to become middle class families in the United States. For example, Joseline, who obtained a bachelor’s degree in Accounting, has an income of \$55,000 per

year; Franchesca, who also obtained her bachelor's degree, is earning \$40,000, but was forced to move out of Manhattan because of living cost; while two families are earning under \$35,000 annually, and only one family continues to be on public assistance (See Table 5.3.2).

**Table 5.3.2—Family Income after Father's deportation**

<b>Family Case</b>	<b>Family Income</b>
<b>Joseline's Family</b>	\$55,000
<b>Maria Jose's Family</b>	Public Assistance
<b>Franchesca's Family</b>	\$40,000
<b>Monica's Family</b>	\$35,000
<b>Nicole's family</b>	\$27,000
<b>Amber's family</b>	<b>\$36,000</b>

It is important to recognize that three families have attempted to subsidize their income through an informal economy: Maria Jose unsuccessfully attempted to babysit children around her neighborhood, but failed because her apartment was not found suitable by parents to leave their children under her care. Monica and Amber have been successful at subsidizing their household income through informal economy; Monica reports her salary at \$35,000 as a nanny, while she also works as an escort three days a week, making \$1,000 per night, yielding \$3,000 per week, and \$156,000 annually. She claims to be able to support her household and send money to her husband in the Dominican Republic. She does not believe in banks; therefore, she keeps her earnings in her apartment. Monica also believed that her children do not know anything about her alternative lifestyle. She claims to live a modest life, *"no one could tell how much I make or how, all I know is that I will never have to beg to any public*

*agency to feed my children or pay my rent as long as I am able to work and provide for my children."*

For Amber the informal economy has not been as lucrative as Monica's. Although she reports an income of \$36,000, she opened a for-profit networking organization, where she assists entrepreneurs, from the community, who do not speak English and would not know how to navigate the business system in New York City. She offers advices on taxes, investments, and banking. In addition, she holds events where different business opportunities could come up, as she introduces 'former drug-dealers' to business owners looking for business partners with capital. Amber did not want to provide a weekly earning for her services.

There have been other changes among the families who participated in this investigation after the deportation of the fathers. For example, 33% of the families moved from previous addresses in Washington Heights, leaving their ethnic enclave to a different borough. Marital status for many of these families also changed; 50% of the women either got divorced or separated, but remarried; only 33% remarried, and 17% remained with the deported partner. Only 17% of the family had children from the new family.

Data on the educational status of the children left behind by undocumented deported fathers, gathered by different studies indicate they did experience disruptions in the short run including missed days of school, and that some of the children's grades slipped in the short term (Urban Institute, 2010). The data for this study reveal that after the deportation, the children's educational process was affected: one dropped out

of school, another failed, a child showed several missed school days and/or lateness, and one participant's overall average decreased. On the positive side, one completed high school and is attending college, and for some going to college is an option (See Table 5.3.3).

**Table 5.3.3—Children of Deportees' Educational Achievement**

**Dominick:** Dropped out of high school –at 9<sup>th</sup> grade, but completed a G.E.D when he turned 18 years old, and is currently attending a community college.

**Lanise,** just graduated from high school in the Bronx, and is currently applying to a college in upstate NY. She wants to go away to college and live in the dorms.

**Karina:** 10<sup>th</sup> grade, H.S. average of 60—had over 20 missed days, and 14 lateness throughout the academic year—several letters were sent home from school.

**Yesimel:** attends junior high, her school average is 73; has 12 absences and 16 lateness. Both attend school in Washington Heights.

**Frankie:** failed 9<sup>th</sup> grade three times; dropped out of school; has an EIP, and was attending special Ed.; he had to be escorted to classes, and is currently attending JobCorp.

**Nicole:** 11<sup>th</sup> grade, in Washington Heights; HS average of 82. Does not plan to attend college; she wants to find full time employment and move on her own. If she were to attend college, she likes something related to graphic design.

**Ashley:** 8<sup>th</sup> grade, attends school in Washington Heights. School average is 78, from a 92 in past grades. She wants to attend college because she doesn't want to be like her mother.

**Amber:** Completed H.S., just completed her bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice System. Currently works for the Board of Education. She did not want to continue depending on Drugs money and decided to complete her education. She currently is pursuing admissions to a master's program in Public Administration.

Studies on the impact of deportation on the health of children of deportees show that both their physical and mental health was compromised. For example, previous studies found that children of undocumented deportees exhibit difficulties sleeping, eating, and adjusting (Urban Institute, 2010). Information from the study regarding the health status of the children after the fathers were deported indicate not only post-traumatic stress disorder, but also anxiety, depression, disassociation, and other maladaptive behaviors (See Table 5.3.4).

**Table 5.3.4—Children of Deportees Health Status**

**Dominick:** overweight (height: 5'10"/Weight: 210); chronic asthma, high cholesterol, and clinically depressed, but is not on medication.

Although **Lanise** (h: 5'0" / w: 128) did not report any health issues, she shows all the signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as well as disassociation.

**Karina** is overweight (h: 5'8" / w: 170 pounds) and shows signs of PTSD; sexually active, but not on birth control pills.

**Yesimel,** overweight (h: 5'2" / w: 151 pounds), shows signs of PTSD and depression.

**Frankie:** a little underweight (h: 5'1"/w: 120); diagnosed with multiple learning disabilities, aggressive behavior, and definitely shows signs of PTSD.

**Nicole:** weight is on target (h: 5'10" /w: 135); she did not report any health issues, but shows signs of depression and PTSD. Has had suicidal thoughts, and drink alcohol, as well as induced to self-destructive behavior.

**Ashley:** overweight (h:5'4"/w:148); depressed; suffers from anxiety; is angry; avoids planning for the future; a binge eater; has low self-esteem; distrusts people in general; and is promiscuous.

**Amber:** weight is a little high (h: 5'7" / w: 155); reported having STDs; self-reporter as alcoholic, depressed, anxious and shows signs of PTSD. She had a good sense of her symptoms. She is very concern about her drinking problem, which she is currently under psychological treatment. She also reported having a low self-esteem.

As other research on the impact of the deportation of undocumented parents show, the children in this study also “experienced severe challenges, including separations from parents and economic hardships that likely contributed to adverse behavioral changes that parents reported” (Urban Institute, 2010). This is because “parent-child separations pose serious risks to children’s immediate safety, economic security, well-being, and longer term Development” (Urban Institute, 2010).

## **CHAPTER 6—Discussion of Findings on the Bulimia Cost of Social Exclusion of Children of Dominican Deportees**

*“What if we seriously were to commit ourselves to educating children and youth to become enlighten and engaged democratic citizens? With all the social and psychological forces compelling them (and us) toward a life comfortable idiocy, this would be an extraordinary aim.”*

*Nicholas M. Michelli & David Lee Keiser*

This chapter discusses the social “bulimization” cost of U.S.-born children of Dominican deportees. A central aim of this study was to identify the effect of deportation on U.S.-born children left behind in the United States. Through a qualitative approach, these analyses showed that there are social factors that contribute to socio-bulimic cost, which leads to the social exclusion of children of deportees as they attempt to integrate into mainstream society.

As discussed in Chapter 2, segmented and fragmented assimilation in the United States coupled with the socio-economic, educational structures and opportunities can potentially lead to greater social exclusion. Moreover, Chapter 2 outlines the ways in which the United States, as a bulimic society, employs an array of mechanisms that have resulted in furthering the social exclusion of already disadvantaged groups—e.g. U.S.-born children of immigrants and foreign-born immigrant children. As a result, children who grow up in bulimic conditions become collateral damage, which then taxes their potential future of social integration and financial mobility.

As documented in Chapter 5, for some children, social bulimia can partially be attributed to their parents’ level of education and financial standing, since both factors determine the social network and cultural capital available to them. In turn, both

elements define the type of neighborhood, educational opportunities, and school systems children are in general exposed to. As the finding of this investigation shows, another factor of exclusion is related to the fact that children left behind by documented Dominican fathers ended up in single female households which increased their risk for further exclusion from mainstream society. This study also documented that deportation is another, perhaps more effective, more permanent, and less costly way for the host country to ban and brand the unwanted parents forever. In this manner, the United States did not only succeed at eliminating the unwanted, but also at permanently positioning and disenfranchising families and children of deportees for they have also been participants in a cycle of social exclusion with a tremendous social cost and bulimic ramifications for all future generations of the immigrant community. As shown in the previous chapter, the psychosocial conditions of the parents left behind influence the environment in which children of deportees re-construct their identity.

The data obtained on the impact of a parental deportation on children left behind are now used to discuss their social bulimic cost. To accomplish this task, I propose to use four domains identified in the literature to create a model of “Socio-Bulimic Costs” which together with the ‘Social Exclusion Domains,’ facilitate the articulation of the impact of deportation on the children. The model describes how different variables interact, or lack interaction, in constructing the inclusion and exclusion of children of deportees and the families as they attempt to integrate into mainstream society.

The Social Exclusion Domains selected for this part of the analysis and discussion were as follows: (I) Educational, (II) Financial, (III) Psychosocial experience, and (IV) Health. Each domain includes a series of social indicators described below:

- I. ***Educational Domain:*** Examined children's educational ethos; aspirations; academic performance; school involvement; level of truancy and completion; and school curriculum. The idea is to look at the quality of education these children receive.
- II. ***Financial Domain:*** Looked at the household income level; the possible access to the work force; attainment of employable and marketable skills; and involvement in public assistance.
- III. ***Psychosocial Experience:*** Studied children's loss of hope; the level of stigmatization; fear of crime and law enforcement; social instability; and children's role in the household after parents' deportation.
- IV. ***Health Domain:*** Looked at whether these children are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after the deportation of their fathers. It also examined the different coping mechanisms used by the children to deal with their own processes of "bulimization."

Specifically, as shown on Table 6.1, the financial domain included household income, access to the labor market, involvement/participation in public assistance, professional skills, social network, cultural capital, and informal economy; the educational domain included low and high educational status, ethos, aspirations, academic performance, and school involvement and truancy; the psychosocial domain is comprised of indicators of the loss of hope, level of stigmatization, fear of crime,

social instability, and children’s role in the household; and the health domain included low and high health issues, post traumatic stress disorder, anger issues, coping mechanisms, weight management, and other related health concerns.

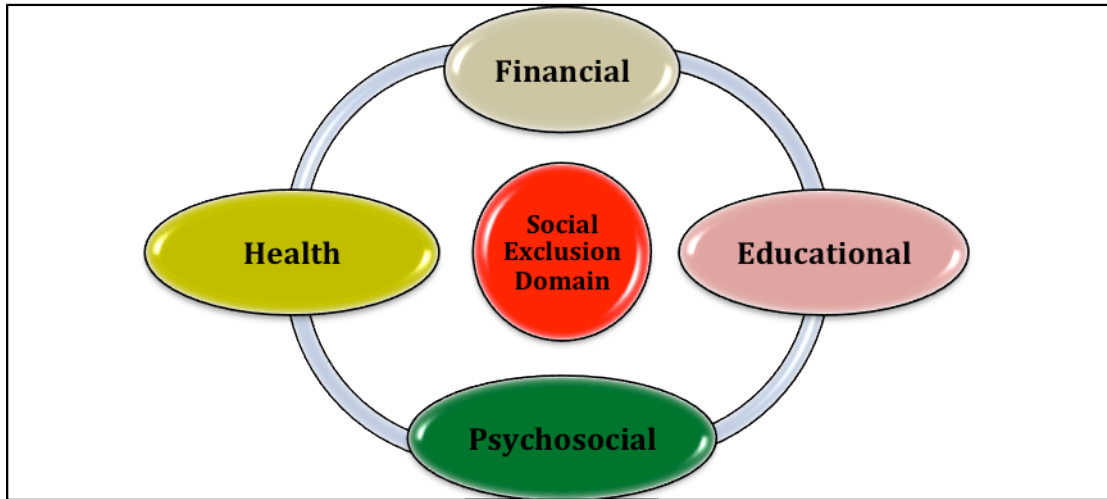
Furthermore, the indicators of each domain are described on the chart that follows. It should be noted that, isolated or combined, the social exclusion domains listed below affect the social integration of children of deportees creating a social domino-affect as depicted in Table 6.1, below (See also Figure 6.1).

Table 6.1—Children of Deportees’ Domino-Effect of Social Exclusion Domains

<b>Social Exclusion Domain of Children of Deportees</b>			
<i><b>Educational</b></i>	<i><b>Financial</b></i>	<i><b>Psychosocial</b></i>	<i><b>Health</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational Ethos (E.EE)</li> <li>• Educational attainment (E.EA)</li> <li>• Academic Performance (E.AP)</li> <li>• School Truancy (E.ST)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Responsibility (F.FR)</li> <li>• Access to Labor Force (F.ATLF)</li> <li>• Professional Skills (F.PS)</li> <li>• Informal Economy (F.IE)</li> <li>• Cultural Capital (F.CC)</li> <li>• Social Network (F.SN)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of hope (P.LOH)</li> <li>• Level of stigmatization (P.LOS)</li> <li>• Fear of crime (P.FOC)</li> <li>• Social instability (P.SI)</li> <li>• Children’s role (P.CR)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (H.PTSD)</li> <li>• Anger issues (H.AI)</li> <li>• Coping mechanisms (H.CM)</li> <li>• Weight management (H.WM)</li> <li>• Other related health issues (ORHI) (i.e. Asthma, High blood pressure, etc.)</li> </ul>

Each domain is inextricably linked to each other, and together they affect the social inclusion of children (as well as that of individuals and groups). For example, on one hand it is expected that if a left-behind parent has a high level of education (E.EE), such as a bachelor’s degree, then his/her financial status (F.FS) would be positive which means that the left-behind parent has employable skills (F.PS), and access to the labor force (F.ATLF).

Figure 6.1—Linkage of Social Exclusion Domain



In that case (E.ES), the family has greater opportunities to develop a positive social network (+F.SN) and cultural capital (+F.CC) that could possibly be transferable to the children in the household. However, a caveat in the outcome of children’s educational level and social integration to mainstream society could depend on the psychosocial ( $\pm$ P.LOS) and health status ( $\pm$  H.HI) they have been exposed to in their household, during or after the parental deportation—see figure 6.2.

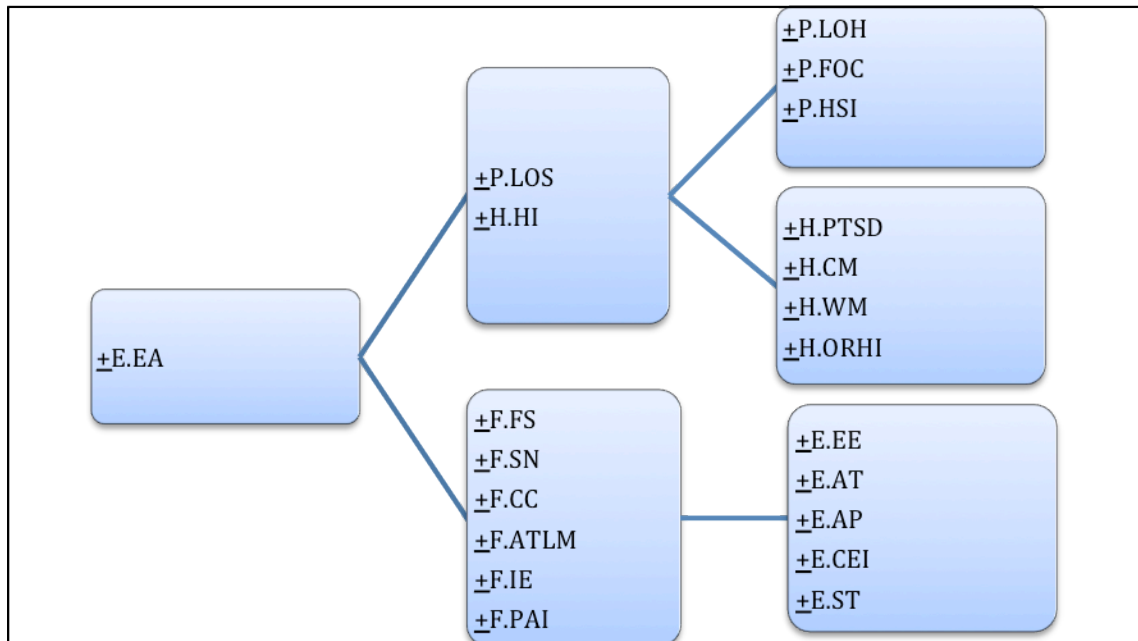


Figure 6.2—Social Exclusion Costs of a Parent Left Behind based on Educational Status

On the other hand, when the mother left behind has a low educational status (LES), this parent is most likely to have a negative or low financial status (F.LFS), which means that the formal household income (F.HFS) would be low, which could lead to a negative cultural capital (-F.CC) and social network (-F.NS). A low educational status also limits the left-behind parent access to the labor force (-F.ATLF). Resultantly, the family is likely to get involved in public assistance programs (F.IPA) or would be likely to participate in the informal economy (F.IE) to supplement the household's income.

In such circumstances, the necessary social network (-F.SN) and cultural capital (-F.CC) skills for a successful transition to mainstream society are unlikely to be transferred to these children in the family unit. Limited access to the labor market could lead to poor educational aspiration, academic performance, and lack of parental school involvement. School truancy may become the most rational and obvious choice among these children, because they felt hopeless about their future including their employment opportunities.

Parental levels of education attainment, as well as their financial standings, are important indicators considering that family participation in the informal economy or involvement in public assistance affect the children left behind in the household, because their educational ethos would be ambivalent and educational attainment uncertain. As a result, the social combination of two or more negative domains, such as the educational and financial outcomes, can be detrimental for the process of social inclusion of children of deportees. While, the parent left behind might instill strong educational ethos (E.EE) in the household, the transference and acceptance of such

ethos would be dependent on the extent to which children negotiate their own level of social stigmatization ( $\pm$ P.LOS), possible loss of hope ( $\pm$ P.LOH), and on the types of coping mechanisms (H.CM) they develop to deal with the situation.

Thus, educational ethos is more difficult to be transferred to children when parents have low education attainment and are on public assistance. This might not be true in all the cases, but overwhelming data exist on the negative consequences of long-term reliance on public assistance because the web of public assistance tends to generate a cycle of poverty, which can foster dependent generations, placing children at risk of becoming disconnected from school, adopting low work ethics, and continuing to rely on public assistance for generations.

Aspiring to an education (E.EA) after witnessing their parents' deportation and their mothers' financial struggle to support the household could either be discouraging or motivating for children. If the impact is negative, the educational aspiration of the children might truncate (E.EA), which might be reflected in their low academic performance (E.AP), leading to school truancy (E.ST). On the other hand, when the financial standing of the family motivates children to pursue an education, to avoid living the way they were brought up, then the child's academic performance (E.AP) might lead to an increase in the high school completion rate and, hopefully, the pursuit of professional skills.

The claim is not that an educated parent would be better prepared to confront the deportation of a loved one, but it can be assumed that an educated parent is more knowledgeable and experienced about navigating the United States educational and

financial systems. Hence through the parental social network and cultural capital, the likelihood of a child gaining access to the labor market and transitioning into mainstream society with the probability of financial mobility, is higher than that of the child of an uneducated parent.

The next section examined each of the children of deportees lived experiences using the Social Bulimic model and Social Exclusion domains discussed above. The analysis was conducted as follow: the first case consists of Joseline's children, Dominic and Lanise; the second case presented is that of Maria Jose's daughters, Karina and Yesimel; the third case presented is Franchesca's son, Frankie; the fourth case presented is that of Monica's daughter Ashley; the fifth case presented (no mother participation) is that of Amber; and the sixth and last case presented (no mother participation) is that of Nicole.

### 6.3.1- The Social Bulimic Cost and Level of Social Exclusion of Dominic and Lanise

#### A. Dominic's Socio-bulimic Costs and Level of Social Exclusion

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##### *Background Information*

- Born in the United States
  - Age at the time of the interview (Summer 2010): 20 years old
  - Date of Father's Incarceration: 1997
  - Date of Father's Deportation: 1999
  - Age at the time of deporation: 7 years old
  - Current Educational Status: H.S. dropout; Completed GED; attending Community College.
  - Mother's level of Education at the time of Interview: Bachelor's degree.
  - Financial Status at the time of the Interview: \$55,000
  - Height: 5'10"
  - Weight: 210
  - Personality Type: Introvert; shy
  - Coping Mechanism: depression, low socialization, overeating, anxiety, lack of trust, psychomatization, low attachment, and sadness.
- 

Dominic's current functioning level revealed that he became depressed and disinterested in school after his father's deportation. He reported that school was *"repetitive and [he] did not care much for what teachers were teaching; it was boring, the academic program imparted at the school was disconnected from my reality"*. Dominic dropped out of high school despite his mother's strong educational ethos (+E.HEE) and academic performance (+E.EP). According to self-reports, he does not currently enjoy social interaction and does not seek outside social contacts. He expressed the low level of interaction and his lack of friendship seeking behavior in the following manner: *"I opted to stay at home and play video games, and escape from my dull reality, a deported father, and a mother who was depressed and sad about our living conditions because we couldn't be with my dad."* Another maladaptive behavior he has exhibited as a coping mechanism after the father's deportation is overeating. He claimed that he *"adopted the*

*bad habits of eating for comfort and escaping reality.*” He eats more than he needs to in order to calm his anxiety and emotional pain. Dominic also serves as a supportive blanket for his mother’s loss of his father due to deportation. He reported that in order to deal with the pain he *“sort of identified with [his mother’s own] pain”* which can lead to anxiety, fear of separation, gender consistency, and even aggression (See Table 6.3.1.A).

**Table 6.3.1.A—Dominic’s Levels of Social Exclusion by Domain**

<b>Educational</b>	<b>Financial</b>	<b>Psychosocial</b>	<b>Health</b>
+E.EE	+F.FR	+P.LOS	+H.PTSD
+E.EA	+F.HI	+P.LOS	+H.AM
+E.AT	+F.ATLM	+P.FOC	+H.CM
+E.AP	-F.PS	+P.SI	+H.WM
-E.SI	-F.IE	+P.CR	+H.ORHI (high blood pressure, depression)
+E.ST (dropped out of H.S.)	-F.PAI		

As can clearly be observed, as hard as his mother tried to provide Dominic with a stable and healthy home, Dominic grew up in what can be characterized as an unstable environment. Weinstock (1967) and Weigert & Hastings (1977) have suggested that the use of defense mechanisms and adaptive techniques are closely related to the family environment experienced in childhood and remain as relatively fixed aspects of character structure. To make matters worse, Dominic experienced the loss of his father three times, which added to his depression and withdrawal from social activities hindering the developmental process of his social network and social capital. First, he lost his father to incarceration at the age of five. He thought that his father was coming back home after completing his two-year sentence. The second time, to his surprise and disheartenment, happened when his father was deported six months prior to finishing

his sentence.

The third loss happened after he graduated from junior high school. His mother (Joseline) moved the family to the Dominican Republic to be with the father in an attempt to keep the family together—after having been separated for six years. Unfortunately, the family could not be together for long because of the financial situation they faced while living in the Dominican Republic. Thus, the family was forced to return to New York City and start all over. After moving back to New York City, Dominic became socially withdrawn, exhibiting loss of hope (+P.LOH), social instability (+P.SI), and fear of getting tangled with the law (+P.FOC). Although he doesn't show much concern about being stigmatized, he does show some apprehension about people feeling sorry for him or his family when talking about his father's deportation.

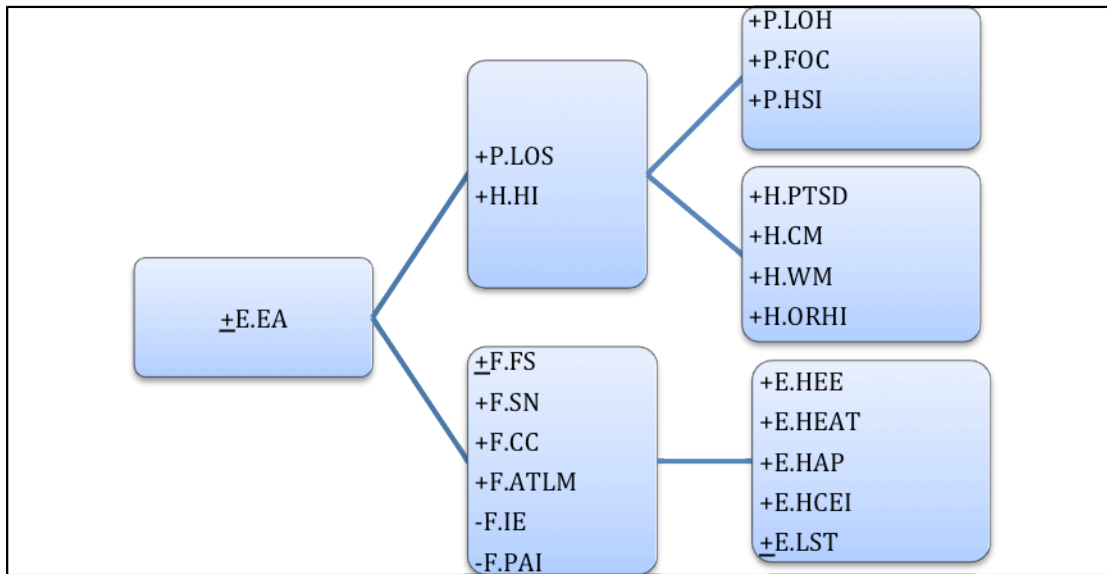
Since then, Dominic developed trust issues, which began by not being able to rely on anyone around him, as he felt that adults acted without regards to his feeling or his voice. He learned to observe and be quiet. He learned not to ask questions as these were not going to be answered. It can be stated that these trust issues will also influence his preparation for future intimacy because of difficulties with getting the necessary support and security within the family unit. Another difficulty associated with trust issues is related to attachment abilities later in life due to object relation consistence, fixation, and even sex-role development.

As a coping mechanism, he found comfort in food (-H.CM), which resulted in his being overweight (-H.WM). Because of his weight issues, he developed asthma and high

blood pressure. His weight problems further deepened his social instability (+P.SI) and social skills, he became introverted. In addition, he became clinically depressed (+H.HHI). He felt responsible for breaking the family apart for the third time (first, incarceration; second, deportation; and third, moving back and forth to New York City). He felt guilty for developing health problems while in the Dominican Republic, at a time when his parents could not afford to pay for his treatment at the local clinics.

Becoming overweight resulted in aggravating another health problem for Dominic because his asthma worsened. Becoming overweight also affected his self-esteem adding to the already existing burden of coping with all the other problems affecting Dominic and the family. Dominic also developed a symbiotic relationship with his mother as he took on the role of an adult prematurely. At sixteen, he adopted a parental role as he attempted to help his mother run the household. He dropped out of school and found a part-time job at McDonalds. He felt like a failure when he could not make enough money to help his mother.

Dominic claims, *"It saddens me to think that I grew up without a father. I was hesitant about participating in the stud, because I did not know if I was ready to remember my childhood without him. It was tough. Sometimes I wonder about gender stuff, and whether or not I am normal, as I didn't have a male role model around,; you know, to ask questions about my body; questions I couldn't ask my mother. I was young when he was deported, but I remember everything. The things I don't remember, my mom helps me by filling in a lot of blanks. Of course, it's with her own version of things!"* Below is Dominic's bulimic social exclusion model (See Figure 6.3.1.A).

**Figure 6.3.1.A Dominic's Level of Bulimic Social Exclusion Model**

Since his father's incarceration and deportation, and because of the level of secrecy concerning the situation, Dominic never received therapy to cope with it. To this date, he claimed, *"I never asked my mother about my father's deportation [he learned about it by overhearing conversations]; I only picked up whatever was discussed. At school, teachers would talk about people in prison because of drug dealing or illegal stuff, and though I would get confused as whether my father was one of those people, it was hard to ask my mom, who always seemed to put him on a pedestal. So, we never discussed my father at home. There were many nights when I would wake up listening to my mom crying in the other room. So I guess I tried to make her happy by helping with my sister and around the house. I didn't want to add any additional worries. She was suffering enough. It was not until last year (he was seventeen) that my uncle told me the truth about my father's deportation. We were raised to never question the adults."*

Dominic exhibited signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and was diagnosed with chronic depression at the age of fifteen. However, he was not prescribed psychotropic medications until he was seventeen years old, because of his mother's limitations in her insurance and the lack of access to mental health services in the community. He claimed to be confused and expressed feeling angry as he saw his mother not only struggling financially but also emotionally, *"I felt powerless and useless."* He thought that he needed to be strong, since he was *'the man of the house.'* He coped with the home environment by escaping into his room and adopting the lives of his video games (+H.CM). He had also battled weight management (+H.WM), but has developed obesity and other health related issues (+H.OHRI) such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol because *"food is my passion. I find comfort in it."*

Dominic felt lost, and reported, *"I was always hurting and didn't know the reasons. I felt sad all the time. The therapist I saw said that I was living caught in the memory of my father's deportation, as I continued to move forward without properly mourning his loss. Although he is alive and well, it was sort of a death to me. I only grew up with my mom, and cannot even see my dad as it costs too much money for us to go. So, I guess I know how to be a mom, but I couldn't learn how to be a dad (loud laugh). I know I messed up growing up, by manipulating my mom. Now, I am eighteen and need to own up to my life and help my mom. She has done a lot for us!"* Dominic seems to be very optimistic about the future, as he waits for his father to come back to the United States. The family just submitted a waiver form on behalf of his father to Homeland Security.

Despite his exceptional academic performance at the community college, Dominic still prefers the solitude of his room and the world exposed in his video games, as he chooses not to socialize at school. He claimed to have enough friends already—four to be exact. He is not working at the moment, but with his scholarship stipend, he helps his mother financially. His educational aspirations have improved, as he would like to pursue an education in medicine or something related to Math and Science. As per his financial status, it will all depend on his college completion.

Dominic's social integration to mainstream society is ambivalent, seeing that his educational disposition and attitudes towards his future are solely based on his desire to become a better person by the time his father returns to the United States. He wants his father to be proud of him. The source of his motivation is of concern as there have not been any cases reported of formerly deported legal permanent residents returning to the United States through waiver proceedings.

Given this type of psychosocial profile and other scores on the social exclusion domains, Dominic's social bulimic costs were expected to be high because the level of social exclusion should also reflect the high cost of losing his father, and being left behind in a toxic environment. However, due to his mother's strong educational ethos (+E.HES & +E.EE), he was able to decrease the social bulimic cost. Dominic had no choice but to complete his G.E.D. program; otherwise, he would have to move out of her household, as she threatened him. His father did not have an active role in his life, except to advise him to do as told by his mother. Shortly after obtaining his G.E.D diploma, Joseline's social network facilitated Dominic's enrollment into a local

community college, where she was an alumni. He was able to enroll in an Honor's Program and has enhanced his cultural capital by traveling abroad and participating in research programs that increased his interest in maintaining a good Grade Point Average—his current average is 3.91 and he only missed three days of class in the entire semester, surpassing his own expectations.

Afterwards, he exhibited strong educational ethos (+E.EE) and academic aspirations (+E.EA) as well as positive academic performance (+E.AP). He expects to graduate, and then transfer to an Ivy League institution. The Honor's Program in which he is enrolled also covers his tuition into an Ivy League institution. The scholarship also provides a stipend, which he divides between his mother's and his own expenses (i.e. school carfare, books, and food). He is currently looking into Columbia and Cornell Universities as possible college options. Currently, he is not working as he is concentrating his energy into being a full-time student.

Another factor which helped decrease the social bulimic cost for Dominic was his own exposure to the labor market and work experience. Prior to enrolling in the community college and obtaining his scholarship at the Honor's Program, he held menial jobs, which served as another motivating factor for him to go back to school. He felt he was exploited when working for minimum wage. He claimed to be the only one who spoke English, and yet he was treated like *"an undocumented immigrant who didn't speak English. I sort of developed a new respect towards my mother and everything she does. I am glad she went to school and acquired the skills she did. She deserves better, so*

*I will graduate from school and provide her with a better life. I must be responsible. I am not a child anymore."*

## **B. Lanise's Social Bulimic Costs and Level of Social Exclusion**

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### ***Background Information***

- Born in the United States
  - Age at the time of the interview (Summer 2010): 18 years old
  - Date of Father's Incarceration: 1997
  - Year of Father's Deportation: 1999
  - Age at the time of deportation: 5 years old
  - Current Educational Status: HS graduate. Begins college at a residential institution with a merit scholarship in Upstate NY.
  - Mother's level of Education at the time of Interview: Bachelor's degree
  - Financial Status at the time of the Interview: \$55,000
  - Height: 5'0"
  - Weight: 128
  - Personality Type: Introvert; shy
  - Coping Mechanism: Detachment from friends and family, low socialization, and becoming independent at an early age.
- 

Lanise's case is very different from her brother's despite sharing the same family background. Lanise was very young when her father was deported from the United States. She coyly admits that she did not remember the ordeal of her father's deportation; she was only five years old when it happened. If she does remember something about this important life stressful family event, she probably trivializes it, is in denial and/or represses her feelings. These are three common types of coping mechanisms which allow the person to deal past events. However, both denial and repression are dangerous mechanisms because they allow the person ways to reorganize the world on the premise of a false "reality." Weinstock (1967) and Lifshitz (1976) indicate that denial is highly related to several characteristics of the father in early childhood and the mother's indifference. If Lanise is trivializing what happened to the father and the family, then she reduces what is in effect something of huge consequences for the family's well-being, and the children's mental health.

It is possible that Lanise has also coped with the separation from her father by avoidance or psychologically trying to hide something that causes her pain and distress, and even perhaps through dissociation in which case she would manifest a tendency to separate from those parts of her life which caused her pain. As a result of using these coping mechanisms, she grew up thinking that Dominic, her brother, and the mother, Joseline, shared a special bond, the suffering of their father's deportation which she had not identified with or caused her any distress. She did not feel connected to their pain because she felt somewhat dissociated from it. She also often feels guilty for not feeling sad and depressed, as other family members did.

In addition, because the family never discussed her father's deportation, she never admitted feeling lost and confused about the situation, Lanise used repression to hide uncomfortable thoughts. Instead, she utilizes substitution to replace her feeling by silently questioning her father's lack of initiative to call or to assist the family, even from a distance, with the upbringing of the children left behind. Consequently, Lanise exhibits difficulties establishing relationships. She does not show any interest in getting involved in a romantic relationship; she believes that men only subtract from women's lives rather than adding meaning to their existence. She used as an example her friends' experiences as well as her mother's, *"I always see how my friends put their lives' worth in their boyfriend's hands; just like my mom, who doesn't enjoy herself because my father was deported! I am not saying she should cheat on him or leave him, but why be sad all the time? Why does she have to measure her happiness or lifestyle with my father's deportation? I am pretty sure he is not as devastated; otherwise, he would do anything within his power to have us living in the Dominican Republic. So, unlike my brother, I*

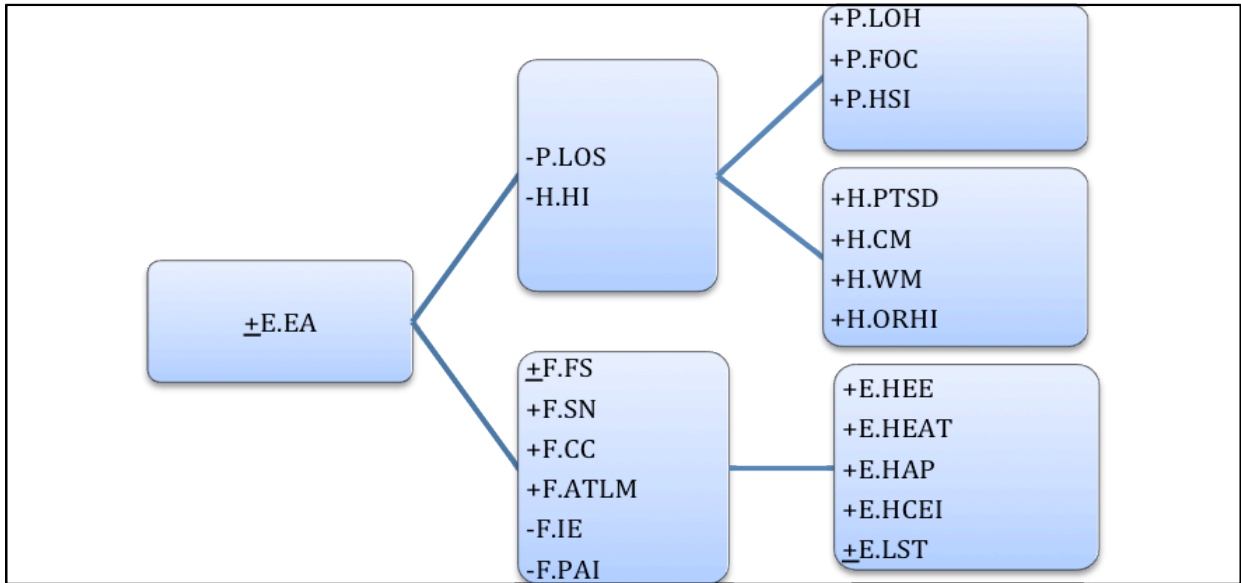
*want to live my life and make my own mistakes, instead of living someone else's mistakes. So, I am not putting my happiness in someone else's hands."* Lanise sounded very determined.

As a result, Lanise's social exclusion domain is different from her brother's. Lanise has strong educational ethos (+E.EE) and educational aspiration (+E.EA). She respects her mother for obtaining an education, and admires her for being a good provider. Lanise is independent, and strongly believes that through an education she will be able to move on her own, and live her life away from the sadness of her parental situation. She is graduating from high school, with a strong academic curriculum and high academic average (+E.EP), which made her eligible for scholarships at Saint Johns University, City College-CUNY, Hunter College-CUNY, and at an upstate university with a full scholarship that includes housing services. She has opted to attend the residential college in Upstate New York. She is to start her college education in the Fall, 2010.

Lanise's social exclusion domains are presented in the chart below. Unlike her brother Dominic, Lanise does not show lost of hope (-P.LOS); on the contrary, she seems very optimistic about her future and personal goals. She seems determined! Regarding her health, she is not overweight and exercises regularly. She doesn't see food as a comfort. She does show signs of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, as she reported to be afraid about losing her mother or experience discomfort with sudden changes in her life. She is attached to her little sister, Amy, and wishes to provide for her as much as possible.

<b>6.3.1.B—Lanise’s Levels of Social Exclusion by Domain</b>			
<b>Educational</b>	<b>Financial</b>	<b>Psychosocial</b>	<b>Health</b>
+E.EE	+F.FR	-P.LOH	+H.PTSD
+E.EA	+F.HI	+P.LOS	+H.AM
+E.AT	+F.ATLM	+P.FOC	+H.CM
+E.AP	-F.PS	-P.SI	-H.WM
+E.SI	-F.IE	+P.CR	-H.ORHI
-E.ST	-F.PAI		

The socio-bulimic costs that Lanise has incurred, discussed in the model presented in Figure 6.3.1.B, demonstrate her strong educational ethos and have led to a positive academic performance. She is working towards the attainment of employable skills. She has a positive outlook to potential employment, breaking the cycle of poverty and financial limitation she has experienced. She did not show a positive inclination towards involvement either in public assistance or in the informal economy; of course granting that she completes her college education and gains access to the labor market. Lanise’s social bulimic costs look as the following:



**Figure 6.3.1.B—Lanise's Socio-Bulimic Costs and Level of Social Exclusion**

The environment in which she grew up has made her strong, but she coped by becoming somewhat emotionally detached from her family; that is her way of dealing with the painful situation of having a deported father. She seems to have a distant attitude, connected with the sense that there might be something else besides the sad and gloomy home environment she has been exposed to due to being left behind in a toxic society. Her determination and tenacity to go away to school, graduate, and then move out of her mother’s household, show a noteworthy dissimilar approach from that of her brother, Dominic. The social bulimic cost of the deportation of the father and the influence of the family social domains, have forced her to deal with life differently. She has coped with her home environment by being out of the house, spending time at school activities or at her friends’ houses. Given her psychosocial background and her determination to go to school, her social bulimic is expected to be low considering her attitude towards life in general.

### 6.3.2- Karina and Yesimel's Social bulimic Costs and Level of Social Exclusion

#### A. Karina's Socio-bulimic Costs and Level of Social Exclusion

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##### ***Background Information***

- Born in the United States
  - Age at the time of the interview (Summer 2010): 15 years old
  - Date of Father's Incarceration:
  - Date of Father's Deportation:
  - Age at the time of deportation: 1 ½ years old
  - Current Educational Status: 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Failed 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Aspire to pursue a degree in nursing or fashion design.
  - Mother's level of Education at the time of Interview: Illiterate.
  - Financial Status at the time of the Interview: Public Assistance Recipient
  - Height: 5'8"
  - Weight: 170
  - Personality Type: Extrovert; low self-esteem.
  - Coping Mechanism: Sexual Promiscuity
- 

Karina is fifteen years old and she exhibits a multitude of maladaptive behaviors including the inability to sleep, lack of concentration, over eating, and elopement.

Studies indicate that the family environment influences the character structure of the children, and that attention should be paid to the behavior modeled by the parents on the family and to the demands of the social situation (toxic, exclusion, or human waste environment) in order to understand the coping and defense mechanisms adopted by the children of family of deportees left behind (Weinstock, 1967, p. 74). Furthermore, studies have also documented that the mother seems to play a relatively more important role in adolescents when strain in the mother-child relationship is related to displacement, projection, and isolation (Weinstock, 1967, p. 75).

Karina feels that she does not have anybody to turn to since her mother is not emotionally or psychologically available, indicating a strained relationship with mother, and her father is not in the country. To deal with the sense of isolation, rejection, and

lack of understanding and acceptance, she has employed the coping mechanism of over eating and dating older men. She eats to satisfy her emotional needs because there is no one there for her. Dating older men, or exhibiting the maladaptive mechanism of self-harm, is also a way to get attention from adults, to replace the father that she lost due to the deportation, and to get the material things she feels were denied to her due to the financial situation of family due to the father's permanent absence.

Karina also exhibits a high level of stigmatization, and is embarrassed to invite friends to her residence or her neighborhood. She feels that the friends will judge her for what she does not have and the place where she resides. Perhaps, Karina is projecting or seeing her unwanted feelings in her friends and other people around her. Furthermore, she thinks of her self as someone forced to live in two incompatible worlds. The fact that she feels this split, and does not know how to bridge the gaps, has further impeded her ability to develop a social network, which can enhance her cultural capital.

She is also frustrated and angry at her inability to benefit or use friends to get out of the cycle of poverty the family is in, or to move away from the neighborhood where she feels hopeless, and uses dissociation to separate herself from the living conditions which she has experienced after her father's deportation. In addition, Karina used displacement in the way she expressed her anger at the inability to perform her role of a child since she has many adult responsibilities in the house with her friends. As a result, she feels that she has been punished for her parents' wrongdoings, which

engender a sense of helplessness and hopelessness, since nothing matters, as she has to conform to her family's situation.

Becoming a child of a deportee, left behind in the United States with an illiterate mother, has also negatively impacted Karina's educational attainment. She attends a magnet high school that graduates 69 percent of its students with a regent's diploma, but her chances at graduating are uncertain. She is in the ninth grade and her school average is only 55 (-E.AP). Indications of school truancy (+E.ST) are already present as she cuts classes, does not do assignments, and does not inform her mother of parent-teacher conferences (as reported on a letter sent by her school principal in February, 2010). At the time of the interview she was attending summer school to make up for her deficiencies and be able to progress to the tenth grade. She uses her mother's low illiteracy level (-E.EA) to get away with not complying with her school responsibilities. Karina feels that she can get away with her school truancy (+E.ST) because no one is available to supervise her assignments or to respond to the school notifications sent home.

Karina's social integration to mainstream society with a possible rewarding financial mobility is also in doubt. Based on her possible school performance (-E.AP), it is then expected that her financial standing (-F.FS) and labor market (-F.ATLF) options would be negative. And this despite her mother's educational ethos (-E.EE), her mother who encourages her daughters to pursue and complete an education warning them of the consequences of having limited access to employment opportunities, who uses herself as an example of what happens when someone must depend on public

assistance (+F.PAI), and who expresses the social limitations, humiliation, and sense of helplessness she feels when she has to go to follow up meetings at the workfare center.

Karina's involvement in the informal economy (+F.IE) is also plausible given her social, educational and economic background, and the fact that she already receives gifts in lieu of sexual favors (-H.CM) to get what she thinks she needs to comply with social demands at her school. Her ideology that the "end justifies the means" prompts a sense of social instability, as she is unsure about her future (-P.SI). Although Karina stated on numerous occasions that she does not want to become a welfare recipient (like her mother), her lack of social network (F-F.SN) and cultural capital (-F.CC) make her unable to connect with the values of attaining an education. She expresses educational aspirations (+E.EA) as she claims to want to be a nurse or a fashion designer. However, this could be a way for her to use the coping mechanisms of fantasy or escape into a world of possibilities, idealization or a way for her to ignore her own limitations, or it may even be rationalization for she could be using these aspirations to compensate for the maladaptive behaviors exhibited. The lack of role models with an education or with professional skills could also hinder her educational aspiration given that she would not know how to bridge her educational aspiration with the possibility of an educational attainment. Karina's social exclusion domains are presented in Table 6.3.2.A:

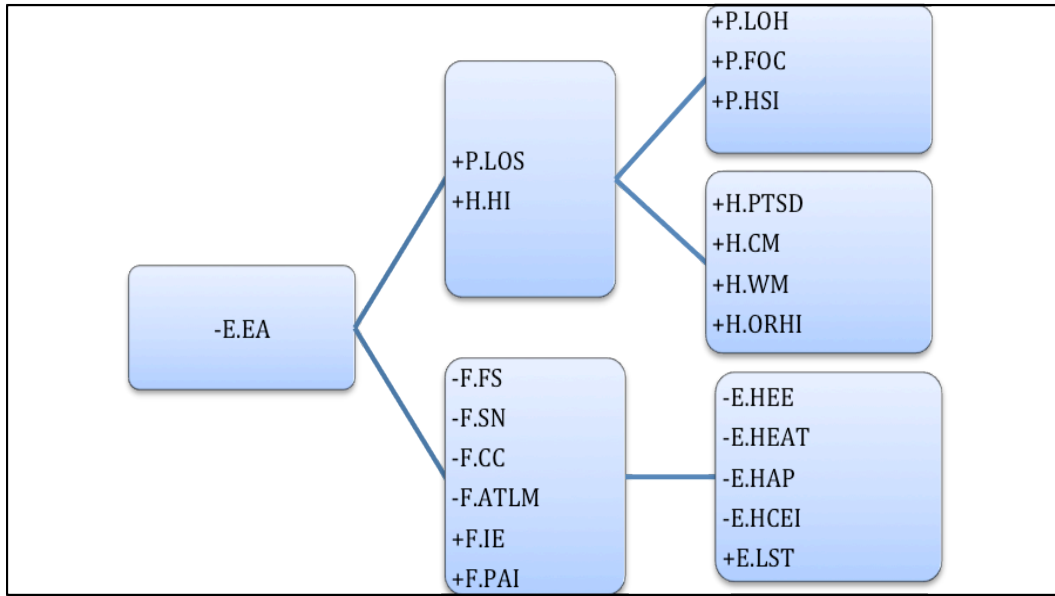
**Table 6.3.2.A—Karina’s Levels of Social Exclusion by Domain**

<b>Educational</b>	<b>Financial</b>	<b>Psychosocial</b>	<b>Health</b>
+E.EE	+F.FR	+P.LOH	+H.PTSD
-E.EA	+F.ATLM	+P.LOS	-H.AM
+E.AT	+F.PS	-P.FOC	-H.CM
-E.AP	+F.IE	-P.SI	-H.WM
+E.SI	+F.PAI (current recipient)	+P.CR	-H.ORHI (high blood pressure, depression)
+E.ST	-F.SN		
	-F.CC		

Karina might know that an education would be her ticket to a better financial standing and a different environment, but she would not know the disciplinary process or what it would entail for her to obtain a professional degree and/or a college education. In fact, if she were to understand the asset of an education, then her grades and attitude towards her academic responsibilities would be different. For example, her academic average would not be 55, her attendance would be near impeccable, and she would make an effort to involve her mother or a teacher in her educational process.

The social network (-F.SN) and cultural capital (-F.CC) experienced by Karina are not conducive to integration into mainstream society with possible social mobility. If she fails to graduate from high school and/or pursue a professional degree or education, she is at risk of repeating her mother’s cycle of poverty. Unfortunately, Karina is more familiar with the process of public assistance (+F.PAI) than with opportunities that could enhance her access to the labor force (-F.ATLF)--See her bulimic social cost model in Figure 6.3.2.A.

**Figure 6.3.2.A—Karina's Socio-Bulimic Costs and Level of Social Exclusion**



Based on Karina’s levels of social exclusion domains her socio-bulimic cost is expected to be high due to her family background and her lived experiences. Karina’s negative educational attainment and performance could lead to a negative financial standing, which could lead to her mother’s patterns of social exclusion—achieving a low level of education (+E.LES) due to school truancy (+E.ST), could result in public assistance involvement (+F.PAI), which eventually would limit her access to employment opportunities (-F.ATLM) and encourage participation in the informal economy. Karina’s bulimic cost model is described in Figure 6.3.2.A.

## **B. Yesimil's Social Bulimic Costs and Levels of Social Exclusion**

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### ***Background Information***

- Born in the United States
  - Age at the time of the interview (Summer 2010): 14 years old
  - Date of Father's Incarceration: 1994
  - Date of Father's Deportation: 1996
  - Age at the time of deportation: 3 months old
  - Current Educational Status: 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Failed 4<sup>th</sup> grade twice. Low average. Aspire to pursue a higher education in psychology or law
  - Mother's level of Education at the time of Interview: Illiterate
  - Financial Status at the time of the Interview: Public Assistance Recipient
  - Height: 5'2"
  - Weight: 151
  - Personality Type: Introvert; extremely shy
  - Coping Mechanism: Sleeping and eating.
- 

Yesimel is fourteen years old. Her educational experience has not been positive since she has already repeated the fourth grade twice because of misplacement. After four years in the New York City school system, the district did not know where to place her, and without her mother's advocacy, no one bothered to check her educational progress. First, she was placed in a monolingual class, given that she was born in New York City the school assumed that English was her first language; however, since Yesimel did not go to a day care or Head Start program, she did not learn English, adopting Spanish as her first language. She did not learn how to write and read in English, and, due to her mother's low level of illiteracy and lack of awareness about the school system, Yesimel completed three years of schooling without knowing how to read or write. Hence, the second time she repeated the fourth grade was when the school administrators finally realized that she should be placed in a bilingual class.

In her new grade, Yesimel was confused with the change of language, which affected her class progress, and she failed the grade again. Maria Jose didn't feel that

she could advocate for her daughter, and could only encourage her to do better the following year. Nevertheless, neither her mother nor her teachers explained the situation or the reasons for which she needed to repeat the fourth grade a third time. Since then, Yesimel believed that there was something wrong with her learning capabilities, as she explains, *"I thought that I was stupid or something or that maybe I inherited something from my mom because she doesn't know how to write or read, you know. So, school is fine, but I don't like to go, I prefer to stay home helping my mom. My first friends are no longer at the school, they are in high school now, and I am on the seventh grade."*

Yasimil is rationalizing her educational failure by blaming the teachers for not taking an interest in her since she had to repeat the fourth grade three times, but she rationalizes her feelings and multiple failures by expressing that the fact that she cannot learn makes the teachers' job even harder to do. This is another way for her to intellectualize her emotions and avoid focusing on the facts. Subsequently, her school stigmatization makes her feel sad and hopeless (+P.LOH). Although she was promoted to the seventh grade, she still claims to dislike school, and prays that she could be invisible in the classroom. As a result, she does not participate in school activities and also expressed concerns about making friends and then losing them in case she is left behind again. Her sense of reaction formation seems to have been affected by her father's deportation, and she is trying to possibly avoid departing with friends due to grade promotion, similar to what the father did when he was deported leaving the family and children behind. Yesimel's model and level of social exclusion is shown on the Table 6.3.2.B.

<b>Table 6.3.2.B—Yesimil’s Levels of Social Exclusion by Domain</b>			
<b>Educational</b>	<b>Financial</b>	<b>Psychosocial</b>	<b>Health</b>
+E.EE	+F.FR	-P.LOS	-H.PTSD
+E.EA	+F.ATLM	-P.LOS	-H.AM
+E.AT	+F.PS	-P.FOC	-H.CM
+E.AP	+F.IE	-P.SI	-H.WM
+E.SI	+F.PAI (current recipient)	+P.CR	-H.ORHI
+E.ST (for her children)	-F.CC		
	-F.SN		

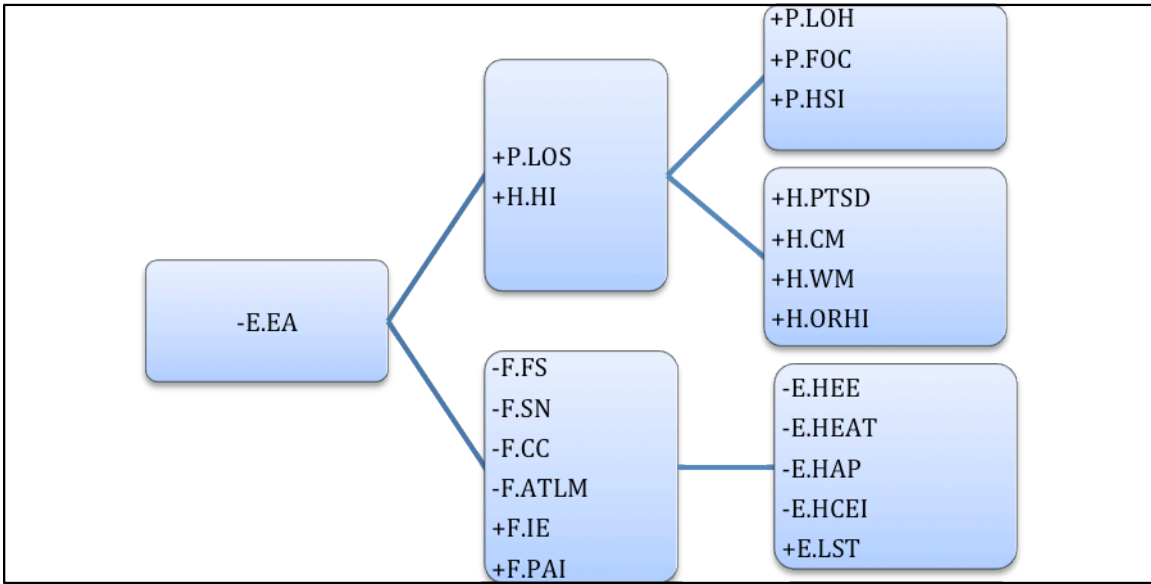
Despite the disjunctive of her family’s educational ethos (-E.EE) and the low levels of educational attainment in the entire family (+E.LES), Yesimel has educational aspirations (+E.EA). She would like to become an educational psychologist or someone who could help people like her mother with court proceedings. However, Yesimel’s educational aspirations could be truncated by her mother’s lack of educational involvement and low educational attainment (-E.EI & -E.EA), the lack of social network (-F.SN) and cultural capital (-F.CC) necessary to navigate the school system, complete her high school (+E.EA) with a regent’s diploma (required in New York City to access a baccalaureate degree) and pursue professional skills (+F.PS).

In addition, her grades are low and she exhibits high levels of stigmatization manifested by lack of interaction. She experiences social isolation and does not have many friends. Yesimel is extremely shy, and her social instability and lack of friends is due to fear and beliefs that her father was deported due to standing at a corner with friends. She also fears that if people get close to her, they could find out about the

family's financial standing, and she does not want to be judged or to add any burden to her mother's depression. She oversleeps as a way to deal with the painful situation caused by the lack of family social capital, her educational failure and father's deportation. Yesimel is also overweight. She weighs 160 pounds at a height of 5'1." Her weight has definitely affected her body image as well as her self-esteem. She is introverted, and only leaves the house to go to the supermarket, school, and to assist her mother with doctor's appointments.

Yesimel has also adopted a parental role (-P.CR), which she seems to enjoy because it makes her mother happy. She uses sublimation to channel energy into acceptable behavior of carrying and feeling sorry for her mother, and the type of life she has to live. She also uses avoidance, not to deal with what is causing her distress; compartmentalization by separating conflicting thoughts into different areas; and compensation by making up for her own weaknesses by helping her mother or becoming a parent to her. She did not report any health complications or concerns, but the weight could develop into potential serious health risks in the future. Figure 6.3.2.B shows Yesimel's social bulimic costs model.

**Figure 6.3.2.B Yesimel's Socio-Bulimic Cost and Level of Social Exclusion**



Overall, Yesimel’s social bulimic cost is expected to be high. Her integration into mainstream society does not seem optimistic. She is not developing her social network or cultural capital. Yesimel does not pay attention to her school performance or progress, as she has adopted a parental role, and wants to take care of her mother. Her financial standing also encroaches on her school participation since she has to miss school days due to lack of basic needs, such as menstrual pads, shoes, and other supplies that enhance her hygiene and personal appearance.

### 6.3.3- Frankie's Socio-bulimic Costs Model and Social Exclusion Domains

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#### **Background Information**

- Born in the United States
  - Age at the time of the interview (Summer 2010): 16 years old
  - Date of Father's Incarceration:
  - Year of Father's Deportation:
  - Age at the time of deportation: 8 years old
  - Current Educational Status: Dropped out of school; repeated 9<sup>th</sup> grade three times; currently enrolled in JobCorp.
  - Mother's level of Education at the time of Interview: HS Graduate; Bachelor's degree.
  - Financial Status at the time of the Interview:
  - Height: 5'1"
  - Weight: 120
  - Personality Type: Extrovert
  - Coping Mechanism: Partying; drinking; and dating.
- 

Frankie is eighteen years old. He repeated the ninth grade three times before dropping out of school. He felt disrespected by his teachers, and claimed they were unhelpful and uncooperative with his learning process since they usually expected assignments to be completed without any instructions or explanations beforehand in the classroom. According to Frankie, teachers kept blaming him for his failures, but he used the coping mechanism of rationalization to deal with the situation: *"if I get up everyday to go to school, why wouldn't I want to do well? I don't like failing. They [teachers] are stupid; they [teachers] don't know how to do their jobs, and want to blame me for their ignorance."* Frustrated, he decided to dropout of school (+E.ST). Frankie believes that he could learn more on the street than at school, and also feels that the school dehumanizes and disrespects students. He has a lot of anger issues and is a loner and claims that he does not look for or want any attachments in his life. His parents already disappointed him, one left him behind in the United States, and the other has

not been able to help the family escape from the toxic social environment. Frankie does not want to depend on anyone but himself indicating some difficulties with attachment, trust issues and displacement. His professional skills attainment and anger management depend now on what he learns at his present job training, it may give him access to the labor market and a moderate income in the future. But anger issues (-H.AI) could truncate Frankie’s future if he does not learn to manage his maladaptive behaviors. Frankie’s levels of socio exclusion domains are described in Table 6.3.3.

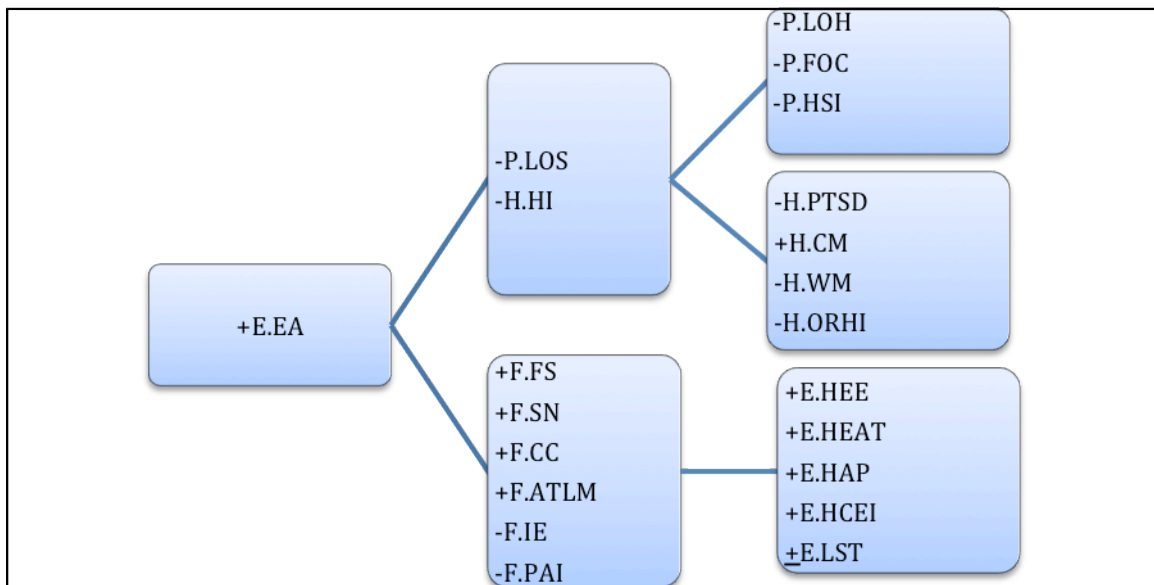
**Table 6.3.3—Frankie’s Levels of Social Exclusion by Domain**

<b>Educational</b>	<b>Financial</b>	<b>Psychosocial</b>	<b>Health</b>
+E.EE	+F.FR	-P.LOS	-H.PTSD
+E.EA	+F.ATLM	-P.LOS	-H.AM
+E.AT	+F.PS	-P.FOC	-H.CM
+E.AP	-F.IE	-P.SI	-H.WM
+E.SI	-F.PAI (past recipient)	+P.CR	-H.ORHI (high blood pressure, depression)
+E.ST (for her children)			

Despite his mother’s educational attainment (+E.EA) and educational ethos (+E.EE), Frankie’s educational experience has been negative. Given his mother’s strong educational ethos (+E.EE) and level of education (+E.HES), Frankie was told that he could not just stay home; he needed to obtain a G.E.D and apply to a community college. Because of his negative educational experience, he felt disconnected with his mother’s educational ethos, which made their relationship very difficult and spurred many arguments between them. As a result, Frankie did not have any educational

aspirations. He kept telling his mother that he was going to have his own business because he knew enough people in the streets to get the “capital” (money) he needed to have his own business (+F.IE). After many arguments with his mother, he decided to move out of the house, as he could not meet his mother’s educational demands and aspirations. After many unsuccessful efforts to get a job, without a high school diploma, or to start his own business, without the social network or background information to start his own business, he decided to enroll in Job Corp., in the Bronx. His social bulimic cost model is presented in Figure 6.3.3.

**Figure 6.3.3. Frankie's Social Bulimic Costs and Level of Social Exclusion**



His financial outlook and inclusion into mainstream society is uncertain. At the present time, his integration into the labor force is negative because of his limited educational background; he is a functional illiterate since he has never developed reading comprehension skills, which could hinder his educational attainment. He does not have any educational plans after Job Corp. He does hope to find employment. It is

also possible that Frankie is also developing his social network and cultural capital through his participation in Job Corp.

### 6.3.4- Ashley's Social Bulimic Costs Model and Level of Social Exclusion

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**Background Information**

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- Born in the United States
  - Age at the time of the interview (Summer 2010): 14 years old
  - Date of Father's Incarceration: Probation; no prison time.
  - Year of Father's Deportation: 2006
  - Age at the time of deportation: 10 years old
  - Current Educational Status: 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Does not know if pursuing a higher education
  - Mother's level of Education at the time of Interview: High School Graduate.
  - Financial Status at the time of the Interview:
  - Height: 5'4"
  - Weight: 146
  - Personality Type: Introvert
  - Coping Mechanism: Sexual Promiscuity & Self-destructive behavior
- 

Deportation has definitely affected Ashley's educational aspiration as well as her academic performance. After her father's deportation, her mother was no longer a housewife with time available to participate in school events and to continue with an active role in her children's education. Even checking Ashley's homework became a difficult task since she had to work in order to support the household. Education was still a priority, but it was not as important as being able to provide for her children. Ashley resented her mother and her new home environment because she was no longer able to go home after school to eat a fresh home cooked meal together as a family, and then to do homework with her loving mother. She had a set routine, which was disrupted by her father's deportation. When her mother, Monica, was faced with her household responsibilities, she was forced to work two jobs in order to meet her financial responsibilities. Meals were no longer fresh, on the contrary, Ashley had to come home after school, to heat up the meal and take care of her brother.

Due to her father's deportation, she was basically asked to put her childhood on hold, and to adopt a parental role since she was expected to babysit her younger brother, given that her older sister, Renata, had fled to the Dominican Republic to be with her father. Ashley disliked her new role. Ashley's home environment changed from a traditional one—two parents, with a mother performing the traditional role of a stay-at-home-mom, cooking, cleaning, and assisting in school activities, and with a loving and supportive father who was also a good provider—to a broken and unstable home, with an undocumented single mother who did not know how to speak English, nor had completed a higher educational level other than high school. As a result, she had to find meager jobs.

To make matters worse, her mother's secrecy about her father's deportation caused Ashley not only to begrudge her, but also to displace her anger on the mother. Ashley thought that her mother was responsible for breaking the family apart. She thought that her mother did not want to continue with her role as a wife and as a mother, but instead wanted to go to work and be out of the house. She felt rejected by both of her parents. She retaliated by exhibiting maladaptive behaviors at school. She acted out in a self-destructive manner as a way of coping with the situation in the home environment; she got into school fights, cut classes, disrespected teachers, and did not complete her schoolwork.

Ashley's educational drive has diminished since her father's deportation, and she no longer speaks about pursuing a profession because, although she wants to go to college, she doesn't know what she wants to study or do. However, Ashley is cognizant

of the fact that she does not want to become like her mother. She also wants to go to college because she wants to help her father, but mostly, she would like to get out of the slums, and break the cycle of poverty. She was promoted to 8<sup>th</sup> grade at the time of the interview; but reported a dramatic drop in her grades. She used to be “the teacher’s pet;” but it changed when she began to fall asleep in the classroom because she is hanging out at night or chatting on her computer the entire night, while her mother goes out to work as an escort—unknown to Ashley, though. She no longer completes her homework/assignments and claimed that her educational motivation is gone. Her teachers called her mother for a parent-teacher meeting, but Monica was not able to attend the meeting.

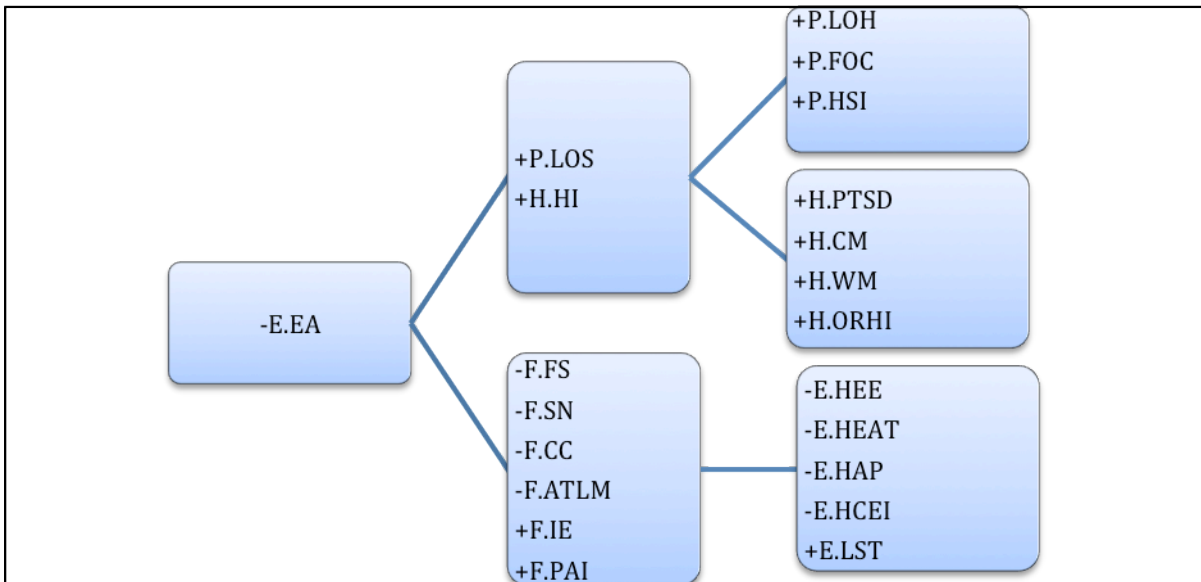
Ashley’s levels of social exclusion are as follows:

<b>6.3.4—Ashley’s Levels of Social Exclusion Domain</b>			
<b>Educational</b>	<b>Financial</b>	<b>Psychosocial</b>	<b>Health</b>
-E.EE	-F.FR	+P.LOS	+H.PTSD
-E.EA	-F.ATLM	+P.LOS	+H.AM
-E.AT	-F.PS	+P.FOC	+H.CM
-E.AP	+F.IE	+P.SI	+H.WM
-E.SI	+F.PAI	+P.CR	+H.ORHI
+E.ST (for her children)			

Ashley reports that she doesn’t eat at times, nor does she sleep, thinking about her life, and worrying about her the future; something she did not do when her father resided in the United States. She doesn’t feel safe anymore, and blames the mother for her loneliness. She is also stressed about money given that her mother can no longer afford the gifts her husband used to buy for the children. She has also noticed that the

quality of the food her family used to purchase has changed by what they have or do not have in the refrigerator. Hence, she punishes her mother by not eating anything from the refrigerator. She exhibits both passive aggressive behavior and denial as coping mechanisms to deal with her present home environment. Ashley thinks she has too much drama in her life, given her unstable home environment, the situation at school, and the absence of her father. Her social bulimic cost model is presented in Figure 6.3.4.

**Figure 6.3.4. Monica's Social Bulimic Costs and Levels of Social Exclusion Model**



Ashley’s social bulimic cost is expected to be high. She lives in a neighborhood where education is not reinforced amongst her peers. They hang out at night, have parties on their own, but none discuss school or what is necessary to do in order to be successful. She is not developing a social capital that could eventually assist her in the future. She presents signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. She is afraid of growing up without a father, without his support, care, and protection. She is upset at the fact that

her mother has to work instead of being at home, like before. She displaced her anger by expressing resentment to others because her home environment changed. Also, Ashley has had to prematurely become another adult in the household; a role change which she resents because she now stresses a lot about money, relationships and seeing her mother suffering about her father. The mother adopted some maladaptive behaviors in order to cope with the father's deportation; she cries every night in front of her children, drinks everyday, and smokes one pack of cigarette a day—she did not drink or smoke prior to experiencing the deportation of her husband.

### 6.3.5-Amber's Social Exclusion Domain and Socio-Bulimic Costs

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#### ***Background Information***

- Born in the United States
  - Age at the time of the interview (Summer 2010): 24 years old
  - Date of Father's Incarceration: 2005
  - Date of Father's Deportation: 2006
  - Age at the time of deporation: 21 years old
  - Current Educational Status: HS graduate; Bachelor's degree.
  - Mother's level of Education at the time of Interview: High School Graduate.
  - Financial Status at the time of the Interview:
  - Height: 5'7"
  - Weight: 155
  - Personality Type: Extrovert
  - Coping Mechanism: Alcoholism & Shopping Addict
- 

Amber grew up in a violent environment, where she was not only exposed to domestic violence, but also to informal economy as a medium to supplement her family income. She also learned at a young age that her family's income could not support or provide for her expensive taste in name brand clothing and other material things she felt were important in order to be accepted by or belong to her circle of friends at school. Amber adopted destructive behaviors to socially compete with her friends. She has very little fear of crime, something she learned from her father as he surrounded her with drug-dealers.

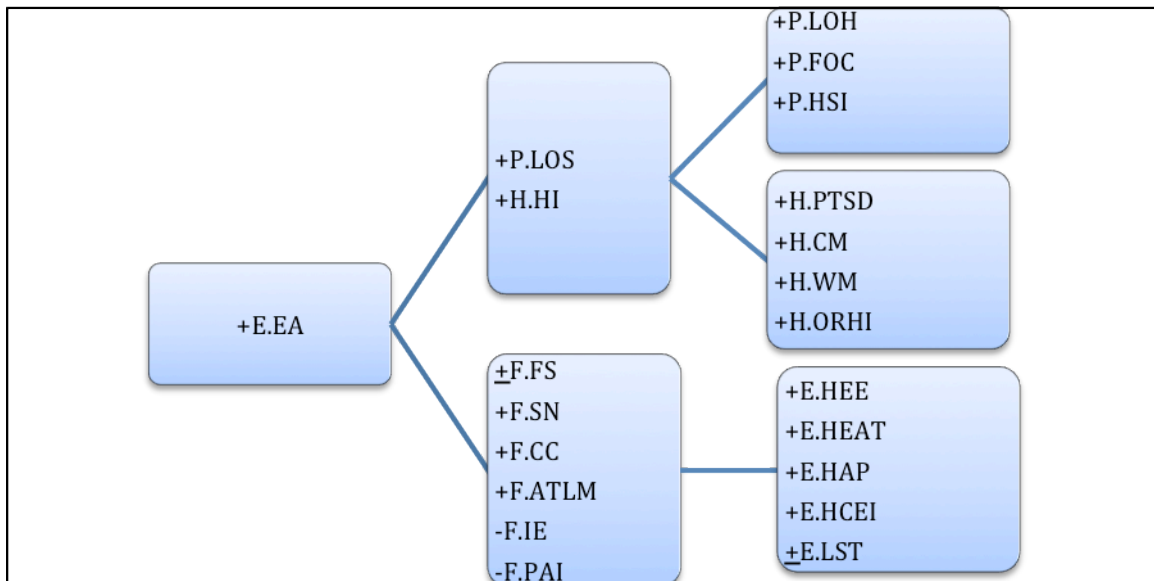
Amber became addicted to expensive cars, clothes, and excessive partying. She grew up with the conviction that people from her neighborhood could break the law because it was already expected of them; hence, some succeeded at learning ways to do so without getting caught. Her social exclusion model is presented in Table 6.3.5, which depicts Amber's social exclusion domains).

**Table 6.3.5—Amber’s Levels of Social Exclusion by Domain**

Educational	Financial	Psychosocial	Health
+E.EE	+F.FR	+P.LOH	+H.PTSD
+E.EA	+F.ATLM	+P.LOS	+H.AI
+E.AT	+F.PS	+P.FOC	+H.CM
+E.AP	+F.IE	+P.SI	+H.WM
+E.SI	-F.PAI (past recipient)	+P.CR	+H.ORHI (dealing with alcoholism)

Upon their arrivals in New York City, both of her parents became factory workers. Amber’s mother no longer worked at the factory since she had to take care of the household. Despite receiving food stamps and having subsidized housing, they were still struggling to support the household which led Amber’s mother to bake and sell “Dominican” cakes at her house. After working at the factory for fourteen years and struggling to support the household of five children, Amber’s father was lured into drug dealing. Below is her social bulimic cost (See her social bulimic model in Figure 6.3.5).

**Figure 6.3.5. Amber's Social Bulimic Costs and Level of Social Exclusion Model**



Amber's social bulimic cost would be expected to be high given her psychosocial profile and her family history. However, her educational ethos was not passed on to her from her parents, but from her elementary school teachers. Amber completed her high school diploma, attained a bachelor degree, and is currently pursuing a master's degree thanks to the support she got from the school and some of her teachers. She was able to turn a terrible environmental situation into a motivating factor which allowed her to complete her education. Through reaction formation, a coping mechanism, Amber has been able to avoid the high cost of her bulimic environment because she has done the opposite of what was expected. Also through avoidance, compartmentalization, and compensation, she has avoided becoming among the dregs of society and another wasted human.

Those looking at her social integration might think that she succeeded at becoming integrated into mainstream society and also at possibly achieving a financial standing better than the ones her parents offered her while growing up. Her educational journey and social integration was not as traditional or smooth as it appears, however. Neither of her parents pursued an education beyond their high school diplomas which they completed in the Dominican Republic.

### 6.3.6- Nicole's Social Exclusion Domains and Socio-Bulimic Costs

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#### ***Background Information***

- Born in the United States
  - Age at the time of the interview (Summer 2010): 16 years old
  - Date of Father's Incarceration: 1997
  - Date of Father's Deportation: 2008
  - Age at the time of deportation: 14 years old
  - Current Educational Status: 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Does not aspire to pursue a higher education
  - Mother's level of Education at the time of Interview: High School Graduate.
  - Financial Status at the time of the Interview: \$27,000 + stepfather's income: \$42,000= \$69,000.
  - Height: 5'10"
  - Weight: 135
  - Personality Type: Introvert
  - Coping Mechanism: Sexual Promiscuity & Self-destructive behavior
- 

Despite her willingness to participate in this study, Nicole was one of the most challenging subjects from whom to collect sufficient information to be able to construct a case study of a child of a deportee who had been left behind in the United States. In spite of the warnings of the emotional toll she might experience when reliving her father's deportation, she underestimated the scope of her emotions attached to her father, and the pain she had experienced growing up with a stepfather. To make matters even more difficult, her mother did not want to participate in the study, claiming that the situation did not pertain to her as she had remarried since Nicole's father went to prison (Nicole was three years old at the time). Hence, Nicole's mother stated that the concept of "deportation of a loved one" was no longer applicable to her, which she felt disqualified her from the study. Her mother's refusal to participate saddened Nicole, as she was looking forward to the possibility of exploring her feelings and her family condition with her mother. Nicole did not feel a part of the family; in

fact, she felt unwanted given that her mother has had two daughters from her current marriage. She felt that they were on their way of being a true family and that she was a left over from a failed relationship.

Unfortunately, as described in Nicole's vignette, her mother described her reasons for not participating in front on Nicole. Nicole felt misunderstood, as her mother's disdain for her father's deportation only aggravated her sense of loneliness, as she felt unwanted in her household. She felt that her mother did not care about her feelings towards her father, which made Nicole very angry. In turn, to cope with her perceived family situation, Nicole has developed a set of maladaptive behaviors that has affected not only her school performance, but the relationship between her and both her stepfather and mother.

Nicole's social integration to mainstream society does not yet have a positive outcome as she had already decided that she is not going to pursue an education, but to get a job in order to move out of her mother's household. She stated, "*I'm not planning to go to college. I need to find a job and be independent...move out of this place, my mom's apartment, so she can have her little family together.*" Nicole has a lot of anger towards her mother, which is ironic given that her father was incarcerated when she was three years old, and had never provided her either financially or emotionally. When asked about the relationship between her father and her, her response was with tears. She did not describe their relationship, which was painful for her, as she could not find any words to articulate their non-existent relationship. She only referred to the letters and the various promises he had made from prison.

Nicole was upset with her father's deportation because in every letter she received from her father, since she was eight years old and could read, she held on to the promise that "someday they will be together," but such a day never arrived. To everyone's surprise, her father was deported the same day he was expected to be released from prison. Nicole was fourteen at the time. She waited for her aunt to call her to go and pick up her father from prison, but her aunt never called. A week later, Nicole's mother was informed about her father's deportation.

Since her father's deportation, Nicole's attitude changed. She became indifferent and detached from her academic responsibilities, as well as from her family activities. She felt that no one in the world cared for her since her mother had her stepfather and two daughters, and her father, according to Nicole's perception of her reality, had decided to leave the United States, far away from her, breaking the many promises he had made to amend their father-daughter relationship.

Nicole's academic performance became negative; she went from a 92 school average in ninth grade, to a 65 in tenth grade. She had to attend summer school, which helped her raise her average to 80. She became very aggressive at school and was suspended three times, which prompted her mother to send Nicole to the Dominican Republic, as she was becoming a negative role model for her younger sister (she had only one sister at the time she was sent to live with her maternal grandmother to the Dominican Republic; and she could not go to her father's house as he could not receive her since it was not his household and he did not have any form of employment to support her). Nicole's education was interrupted, as she had to continue her education in Spanish, a foreign language that she was barely able to speak, read, and write.

Concerned that she might fail in her new academic environment, Nicole was registered at a bilingual institution, where she met other U.S.-born children who had been sent to the Dominican Republic because of maladaptive behaviors.

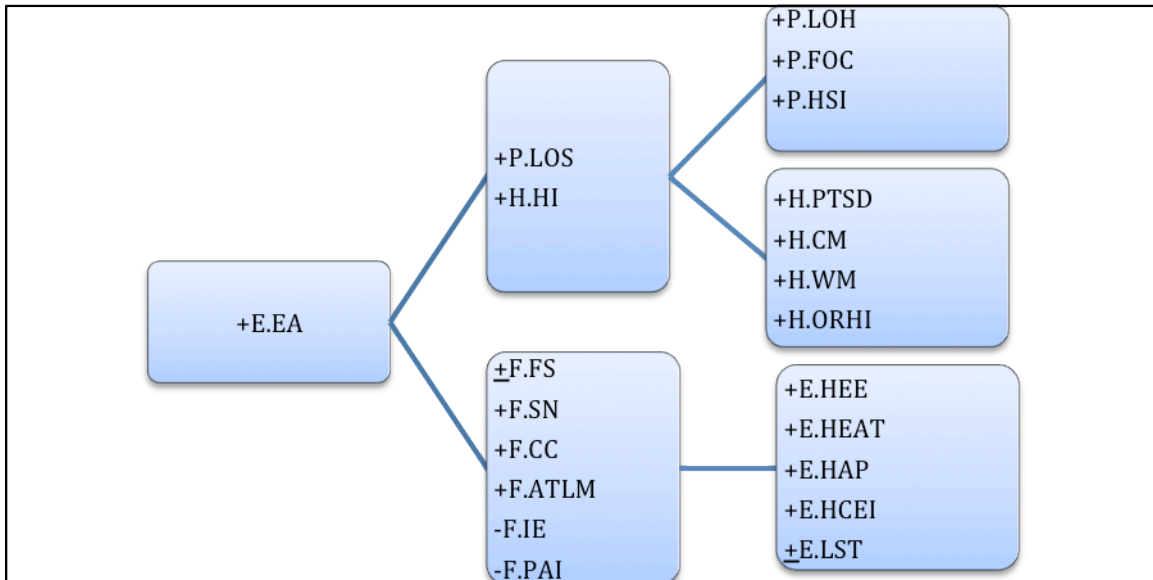
Her new friends triggered Nicole's anger, but this time she coped with her anger by engaging in sexual encounters with adult men—Nicole was fifteen at the time. She also started drinking alcohol and self-mutilation. After six months, her grandmother could no longer deal with her aggressive and self-destructive behaviors and decided to send her back to her mother. Back in New York, she felt lost and her insecurity about her mother's love grew even deeper. Nicole continued to seek self-destructive behaviors by tattooing her private parts, engaging in promiscuous sexual behavior, and ditching school to attend parties where drug paraphernalia were distributed.

After her father's deportation, she began to exhibit signs of maladaptive behaviors, such as mood instability, deep sadness and depression; and mood problems, anger, confusion as to her household role, sleep disturbance ( she stays up during the night reading her father's letters and thinking about his abandonment) which impacted her educational outcome. Nicole explains that her study habits depend on her mood. When she is sad, which is most of the time, she doesn't think of school; these are self-destructive and passive aggressive behaviors. This constant mood swing makes her educational outcome an uncertain one because it has affected her grades, impacting on her chances for school promotion. She is currently in 11<sup>th</sup> grade at a New York City public high school. After a closer view at her report cards, the fluctuation in her grades is reflected in her school average, which is in the low 80s. Her social exclusion model is presented in Table 6.3.6.

<b>Educational</b>	<b>Financial</b>	<b>Psychosocial</b>	<b>Health</b>
+E.EE	+F.FR	+P.LOH	+H.PTSD
+E.EA	+F.ATLM	+P.LOS	+H.AI
+E.AT	+F.PS	+P.FOC	+H.CM
+E.AP	+F.IE	+P.SI	+H.WM
+E.SI	-F.PAI	+P.CR	+H.ORHI

Based on her interview, she does not aspire to go to college. She wants to find a job and move out of her mother’s household. She feels unwanted in her household, as the mother is married to her stepfather, and together they have two daughters. Although her father has not made an attempt to contact her, she longs for his companionship and acceptance. She hopes to move by herself and be able to bring her father back to the United States. See her social bulimic cost model shown in Figure 6.3.6.

**Figure 6.3.6—Nicole's Social Bulimic Costs and Level of Social Exclusion Model**



Nicole's mother does not have a positive social network, one that could encourage her to be the first one to attend college; her cultural capital is also limited, as she is surrounded by immigrant children who attend the same school, and whose parents have not attained an educational level higher than high school. Educational ethos in her household is not reinforced or consistent. She is confident that she could find employment, as her mother did, without an education. Unless Nicole finds a role model who could explain the benefits of pursuing an education in this global economy, she will not change her attitude towards education.

Nicole's other coping mechanisms include sexual activities, self-mutilations, and tattooing her body. She seeks self-inflicting painful experiences. At this time, her social bulimic costs can go either way if she does not pursue an education, which will then have consequences on her ability to access the labor market impacting her financial standing and inclusion into mainstream society. Failing to pursue an education, her financial status is uncertain. The social bulimic cost for Nicole is expected to be very high given the above psychosocial profile and her family background.

#### 6.4. Overall Findings

The objective of the present study was to explore the impact of the deportation of a parent on the children and families left behind using the bulimic paradigm as the theoretical frame for the investigation, and the social exclusion domains. The transition from a world “which accent was on assimilation to incorporation to one which separates and excludes,” marks the end of the era of consensual politics and equality “which...saw society in terms of social contract enveloping the vast majority of adults,” (Young, 1999, p. 4) as in the case of blacks and women in the United States, but I would also add children and families in the case of the immigrant population.

In the analysis of the results presented on the previous chapter, I examined the consequences of deportation on the parents left behind in the United States after the fathers were deported to the Dominican Republic. In terms of the mothers left behind, it was found that they were forced to pick up the pieces and move on. However, some needed to develop different survival strategies to provide for their children. Others felt committed and were compelled to emotionally and economically help the deported father in the Dominican Republic. Family separation, in these cases due to deportation, was found to have affected both the parents and the children left behind.

All the mothers became the heads of the household after the deportation of the husbands, and the families were turned into what is called fragile families “facing greater risk in terms both of family stability and economic security—risks that can imperil child well-being” (Princeton-Brookings, 2010). In the United States, “The highest poverty rates among female-headed households occur among African American,

Latino, and Native American-headed households...” (Snyder, McLaughlin and Findeis, 2006). According to some scholars, “race/ethnicity and residence highlight economic well-being outcomes” (McLaughlin and Sachs 1988; Snyder and McLaughlin 2004). Studies show that deportation can lead to families’ economic hardships (The Urban Institute, 2010, p 27-39). For instance, these families experience loss of employment or decline in household income; difficulties paying bills; housing instability such as frequent moves or even loss of homeownership; food hardship; humiliation of asking family, friends, local churches or community organizations for assistance; and the need to apply for public assistance or benefits.

Also, these women are now single mothers trying very hard to provide for their children and to support them through the painful experience of the deportation of the fathers. The literature on the socio-economic conditions of women heads of the household in the United States indicates that Latina women heads of households are by and large poorer than married females. The rate of poverty is higher among female-headed households with children when compared with other household types (Snyder, McLaughlin and Findeis, 2006). At the same time, there has been a steady rise in female-headed households and in the number of children living in female-headed households (Casper and Bianchi 2002), which has important life consequences and implications for women and children.

According to recent trends, about half of all women will experience single motherhood at some point in their lifetimes (Moffitt and Rendall 1995), and a majority of children will live in a female-headed household (Graefe and Lichter 1999). It has also

been contended that female-headed households with children are noted for their high poverty rates, as are most racial and ethnic minority groups (Jones and Kodras 1990; Lichter 1997). The economic situation of the families in the six case studies is further compounded by the fact that they are immigrant families, and the fact that women's earnings are lower than those of males (Blank, 2002; Ellwood, 2000). It has also been documented that "the poverty rates of children growing up in immigrant homes are double that of native-born families in the United States" (Suarez-Orozco, 2008, p. 9).

As mentioned before, these mothers also have to financially support their children while often lacking educational, social capital, and economic resources. This is taking place in an era in the United States when income and wealth are more unequally distributed than at any time in the past half-century, family income growth has slowed, and social mobility is not as high as it was before (Princeton-Brookings, 2006). In America, women continue to lag behind white men, minorities have an educational gap and women lag behind due, in part, to family/work trade offs (Princeton-Brookings, 2006). It has been stated that "it takes about five generations for the effects of one's family background to disappear," and "unless economic growth picks up, the next generation will experience an improvement in its standard of living that is only about one-third as large as the historical average for earlier generations" (Princeton-Brookings, 2006).

The level of trauma experienced by these children when the parents were arrested and deported is, I think, comparable to suffering a long lasting emotional trauma/shock. The deportation, as discussed in this chapter using social exclusion

domains, and a model of bulimia social costs, has made “lasting impressions on their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.” This is fully expected given the fact that children have a tendency to experience higher levels of anxiety and fear after a traumatic event due to the threat to their security and safety (Act Against Violence). The literature also points out that children who experience traumatic events also exhibit maladaptive behaviors such as having trouble sleeping, nightmares, personality changes; they can become easily irritable or difficult to manage, showing an increase in temper tantrums and often becoming more withdrawn (Act Against Violence). Furthermore, according to a study conducted by the National Council of La Raza in 2007, “The children of parents arrested in immigration raids have to cope with serious health issues such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and separation anxiety “(The Progressive, 2007). They also suffer from instability, growing isolation, fear, and psychological effects (The Progressive, 2007). According to the Urban Institute (2010), children of deportees also exhibit generic fears of law enforcement authorities, short term eating and sleeping disorders, increased clinging and attachment, and aggression and rebellion; and they can suffer from speech and other developmental difficulties (pp. 41-47). In many these cases, immigrant families were afraid to seek help for their children for fear that they would be arrested (The Progressive, 2007).

Studies and reports indicate that the deportation of a parent violates the right of the children for special protection, a right, which is respected and recognized by international human rights laws and domestic family law (2010, p. 6). The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in the United States, states that the family is protected by the society and the State, and that measures are taken to ensure the

unity or reunification of families (2010). The Convention on the Rights of the Child states that in all legal actions, the best interest of the child should be a primary consideration (2010, p. 6).

The deportation of a parent negatively impacts the, mental and physical health, education, and protection of the children left behind (2010, p. 8). Children of separated parents are more likely than other children to show signs of depression and feelings of loss and sadness (Suarez-Orozco, 2008). These children also cry more frequently; are more anxious, withdrawn, and aggressive; show more fear; and have difficulties controlling their emotions (The Urban Institute, 2010, p. 53).

In terms of the impact on education of children of deported undocumented parents, it has been suggested that these children tend to miss many days from school due to fear of what could happen to the parent, in this case the mother, who stayed behind. These children exhibit behavior and emotional changes in the classroom such as not being able to focus and pay attention; declining school performance because they were unable to keep their grades, or do their homework; academic resilience. They were also struggling with changing family routines and with problems coping with the disruption caused by the deportation (The Urban Institute, 2010, pp. 49-53).

To summarize, the twenty-two children of the six families who participated in this study are part of a larger population of children and families whose fathers have been removed from the United States. The literature indicates that 1.6 million spouses and children in the United States have experienced separation from their husbands and parents through deportation (Breakthrough, <http://www.breakthrough.tv/>). If current

exclusive deportation practices continue, more immigrants will be forcibly removed from the United States, and more children will be left behind.

Recent reports indicate that 1.8 million children are in the United States without legal papers (Suarez-Orozco, Suarez-Orozco, and Todorova, 2008, p. 5). A 2007 study estimated that about 3.1 million American children had at least one parent who was an undocumented immigrant (Pew Latin@ Center, 2007). Under present laws, undocumented, documented, and even naturalized parents can be deported, and are frequently removed, from the country. These laws place all foreign parents of immigrant children at a greater form of social exclusion, the risk of deportation, and the children at risk of a variety of educational, psychological, health, and economic problems.

While parents (documented, undocumented, and naturalized citizens) are deported, the children left behind can experience severe psychological (depression, insomnia, anxiety), health and educational (falling grades) problems (Woerner, 2010). That being the case, why does the government continue to deport parents, not only violating the rights of the children left behind, but also decreasing the chances of children (who are often citizens) to make it in society? To answer this question, it is necessary to articulate how current deportation laws were designed. Were these laws designed as an integral part of a process of ethnic regulation? Are deportation laws embedded within cultural assumptions about specific social, political, educational and economic contracts? How do current immigration laws reflect the economic, educational, political, and social exclusion (and integration) of immigrants?

According to Traywick (2010), the United States is deporting 392,000 people annually at a cost of about \$9.2 million dollars on deportation procedures. It costs the country an average of \$23,480 per deportee, and it is becoming very difficult for the country to justify spending all that money to remove people who have often only committed a traffic violation or a minor offense (Break Through). The total spent can be disaggregated as follows: \$18,310 on apprehension; \$3,355 on detention; \$817 on legal processing; and \$1,000 on transportation (Traywick, 2010, p. 2). Another report adds that ICE pays in the range of \$50-95 per day for each detainee in the different facilities (Breakthrough, <http://www.breakthrough.tv/>). That is more than what it costs the country per day to educate a child (Breakthrough Organization). Furthermore, it has been stated that \$1.2 million of taxpayers' money is spent every year on deportation procedures (Breakthrough Organization, <http://www.breakthrough.tv/>).

These data justify stopping deportation because this type of exclusion has a high cost to taxpayers, and a social bulimization cost on U.S.-born children of deportees. But, a 2007 report discusses the reasons for continuing the exclusion of people from the United States (Greenville Forum, 2007); the primary reason is economic. According to that report, between \$11-22 billion per year are spent on public assistance to undocumented immigrants; \$17 billion a year for education of anchor babies or children born to undocumented immigrants; 30 percent of all Federal prison inmates are undocumented immigrants; \$200 billion a year in suppressed American wages were caused by undocumented immigrants; in 2006, undocumented immigrants sent home \$45 billion in remittances; and the average costs of deportation would only be between \$41 and \$46 billion per year over a five year period (Greenville Forum, 2007).

But, putting a price on stopping (due to the need to include) or continuing deportation (due to the need to exclude) partially explains current levels of exclusion through deportation. Presently, immigration laws such as The Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (AEDPA) and The Illegal Immigration Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) are currently used and enforced by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) to detain and to deport people from the country. This is due to the expansion of the 287g program which “deputizes local cops as immigrant agents,” and by vastly expanding “Secure Communities” which “checks the immigration status of people booked into local jails” (Colorlines Magazine, <http://colorlines.com/>).

Today, removal from the United States may occur without due process or a hearing, immigrants facing deportation may not necessarily have a lawyer to defend them in court, thousands of children are left without parents, husbands and wives are separated from their spouses, people may be automatically imprisoned without a trial, some immigrants may be imprisoned (and/or deported) twice for the same often minor crime, and some detainees have died due to medical negligence (Break Through). These actions violate the human rights of individuals, families and children.

Millions of people have been removed from the country without due process through what is called mandatory laws, which include minor crimes and crimes for which offenders have already paid their debt to society, but for whom there seems not to be a re-entering process (Breakthrough, <http://www.breakthrough.tv/>). Only US citizens by birth are exempted from the application of these laws, but undocumented, documented as well as naturalized citizens have become deportable in an effort to stop

deviants, criminals, and societal dissent; they force people (every one in the country and those aspiring to enter) to be more receptive to the existing social order; and to achieve stability in crisis (Young, 1999). Some immigrants, together with minorities and criminals, are the “others” who, not only need to be controlled, but also socialized, cured, or rehabilitated until they are like those in mainstream society (Young, 1999, p. 5).

According to the literature, before the exclusion of individuals happened in the above manner, the institutions of family and work no longer provided the cradle to grave trajectories which embraced, engulfed and ensured; there was a process involving the transformation and the separation of the labor markets; and a massive rise in structural unemployment (Young, 1999, p. 6 and 7). This happened when the economy was downsized, the primary labor market was reduced, and the secondary sector expanded creating an underclass of structurally unemployed people (Young, 1999). The process of globalization has fueled this phenomenon. The de-skilling of labor, the stress on the flexibility of the work force, the shift from manufacturing to service, and the outsourcing of labor often beyond the borders of the country, can create chronic relative deprivation amongst the poor that can lead to crime (Young, 1999). But, rising crime rates can also fuel public fear, generate patterns of avoidance, and lead to an increase in incarceration rates, the need for crime control, differences in the administration of justice, and the privatization of public space (Young, 1999).

As described before, deportation has not been the only way to exclude people from the United States. Another way has involved the segmentation and stratification of

individuals (immigrants) and their families (and children) within the country. Education has played a pivotal role in this process, and in that sense, when examining education within the social exclusion framework that exists in a bulimic society the very goals of the educational system must be critically evaluated. Education is a multi-dimensional tool of social exclusion that serves as a vehicle to interconnect the remaining domains of social exclusion; income and poverty, employment, health, housing, transportation, crime and fear of crime, social support/social capital and the impact of the neighborhood.

As a key domain of social exclusion, education bolsters the mutually reinforcing systemic cycles of exclusion and marginalization for already marginalized people and communities. Education is widely perceived as playing a pivotal role in the prevention of social exclusion (Burchardt, Le Grand, & Piachaud, 2002). This perception is problematic for children who are already disenfranchised, given that low-income families send their children to mostly ill-equipped, low-performing and failing schools, which effectively dams their gateway to higher education and possible social mobility.

From this viewpoint, education in the United States is a dream deferred for many low-income families who believed that education was their one-way ticket out of poverty. Living under the cloud of discrimination, they believe that by gaining social mobility, through education, they were going to be able to provide a better living condition to their families and enhance their community. Looking at the history of education, it seems that education in the United States has not been a right but a privilege in this land of democracy and “equal” opportunity.

Those in the middle class social strata and in white communities –the hegemony--have access to the best possible curriculum, teachers, and programs to continue enhancing their social spectrum. Socially excluded children are, then, left in the run-down (less privileged) schools, without enough resources, a watered-down curriculum, and teachers without agency, “those who impose inarticulateness on students who seem alien and whose voice they prefer not to hear” (Greene, 2001 & 2004), teachers with little or no interests to teach due to standardizations, the poor working conditions and the academically disadvantaged children they get to teach under the deprived circumstances. Not to mention that both groups are assessed with the same measurement of standards, and expected to perform equally; thus, once results are published, the responsibilities for low performance is placed on the teachers, the parents, even the children themselves–never on the system and its policies.

Bulimic nations such as the United States, manage to include, stratify, segment and exclude immigrants through deportation or any other means from full participation in larger societal processes. These processes (of inclusion through immigration, partial assimilation through segmentation and stratification, and exclusion through deportation) have been facilitated by the larger phenomenon of globalization. The United States is a social cannibal nation which regurgitates its deviants at the rate of hundred of thousands per year. It has focused on ghetto youth and immigrants (documented and undocumented) to block people from fully participating in society; it has created problems of identity among many; and it has also promoted and fostered the idea of the American Dream for all.

When examining education within the social exclusion framework that exists in a bulimic society, the very goals of the educational system must be critically evaluated. Education is a multi-dimensional tool of social exclusion that serves as a vehicle to interconnect the remaining domains of social exclusion; income and poverty, employment, health, housing, transportation, crime and fear of crime, social support/social capital and the impact of the neighborhood. As a key domain of social exclusion, education bolsters the mutually reinforcing systemic cycles of exclusion for already marginalized people and communities.

Education as a socially inclusive and exclusivity tool cannot be assessed in a socio-political and financial vacuum. It is necessary to point out and understand that education in the United States operates in a social, political and economic context of considerable uncertainty, which ultimately socially excludes members of minority groups. Rapid changes in global economic forces and domestic policies create conditions that prevent the government from bringing the promise of *effective schooling* for any group of students particularly those who are excluded, or classified as minorities, i.e. Blacks and Latinos.

Today's bulimic condition in the United States, specifically in New York, is more palpable than ever, as social exclusion drivers are accentuated with a down turn in the economy. The economic situation is marked by expensive wars, failures of financial institutions, widespread industrial layoffs, record high unemployment rates, greater need but less funds for welfare, spiraling housing costs due to gentrification (especially in Washington Heights and Harlem), inadequate health insurance, and the departure of

businesses as well as jobs to other nations where cost of operation are less. Resultantly, the ultimate priority of effective education for minority students remains highly questionable, as governmental priorities are noticeably placed elsewhere despite intense discussions on educational policies.

The most recent example is the February 2, 2011 announcement to close twenty-two schools throughout New York City; the newly appointed, short-lived Chancellor of the Department of Education, Cathleen Black—along with her strongest supporter, Mayor Michael Bloomberg—explained that “the twenty schools will be transformed into smaller schools;” but nothing was said about schools’ curricula and/or pedagogical approach that would improve the academic performance of minority students or even increase their chances at pursuing a higher education instead of dropping/stopping out (NYT, Hernandez, City Room).

However, on a larger scale it is clear that the system is not working. Despite reduced student-to-teacher ratios and increased per-pupil education spending, academic performance has not improved. In 2009, 69% of eighth graders scored below proficient in reading and 68% of eighth graders scored below proficient in math (Time Magazine, 35) Looking at the performance of the New York City Public Schools, approximately 50% of black and Latino students meet state reading and math standards. When examining graduation rates, while 57% of white students attained a Regents diploma, only 26% of Latino students and 22% of Latino males attained a Regents diploma in 2007. In the case of Latino students, a local diploma, GED and even a Regents diploma does not necessarily represent college readiness. As explained in the

New York City Coalition For Educational Justice Report (2009), “many New York City public school students are caught in [a] systemic vise of low expectations and inadequate academic preparation” (p. 19).

This is further demonstrated in the same report, by the fact that in CUNY’s community colleges, where Latino students are over-represented, over 80% of all students entering in 2007-2008 failed their placement exams (Writing, Reading and Math) and required remedial courses. Furthermore, in order to earn a Regents, even an Advanced Regents diploma, students are required to score at least 65 on the math and English exams but in order to qualify for college-level course work at CUNY’s four-year colleges, they must score at least 75 (2009).

Beyond the argument that standardized testing is culturally biased, let’s remember that in and of itself, standardized testing is a mechanism of social exclusion since its ultimate aim is to classify and determine access. Warranting greater concern is the fact that despite “successfully” completing high school many students are not actually ready for college, which is a blatantly contradictory message. A good example of a socio-bulimic process is when a member of a minority group graduates from high school with their class, which represents a form of inclusion; however, the lack of college preparedness from their K-12 education represents a form of exclusion, since “only 18 percent of CUNY incoming students obtain a bachelor’s degree within eight years of enrolling; and 15 percent earn an associate degree” (Bailey, O’Neill, and O’Neill, 2007, p.4). Bailey et al. also claimed that “many [students] fail to make it through their first year [of enrollment], much less reap the benefits of programs that help them take

advantage of new opportunities in the global economy.” Again, this simultaneous inclusionary and exclusionary process is characteristic of the bulimic society.

Analyzing the impact of education within a framework of social exclusion theory, it is clear that education has a high degree of correlation with the other domains of exclusion, namely, income and poverty, health, employment, housing, neighborhoods, transportation, crime or fear of crime and social support/social capital. The data shows that academic achievement directly impacts employment and income; for high school dropouts in the United States in 2008, the unemployment rate was 10.9, for those who completed high school but did not attend college it was 7.7, for those with some college it was 5.6 and for those with a bachelor’s degree or higher it was 3.7. In 2005, average income for high school drop outs was \$17,299, for high school graduates it was \$26,933, for those with Associate’s degrees it was \$36,645 and for those with Bachelor’s degrees it was \$52,671. The correlation between education, employment, income and poverty is stark.

This begs the question of what the goal of the educational system is. Are we educating children to integrate them to the global market economy, which leads to an interconnected dimension of social inclusion where civic engagement organically emerges, or are we pushing these already marginalized children into an informal economy which could result in imprisonment, thus definitively excluding them and feeding the prison industrial complex? If it is the latter this means that the neighborhoods will continue to foster human waste because through the informal economy there is no tax base which affects funding for schools and other social services

and reinforces the toxicity of the environment. Pedro Noguera (2003), in his book *City Schools and the American Dream*, posits the questions, “does the American society truly value all of its children? Do we genuinely believe that education could serve as the great ‘equalizer’ of opportunity, as the early architects of public education envisioned, that it should serve as a beacon of hope and a source of mobility for the poor and the powerless?” Unfortunately, in this bulimic society, Noguera’s questions do not have optimistic answers. In bulimic societies, like the United States, limited quality of education and social services that enhance social mobility impact the levels of social inclusion available to the excluded, as seen in the presented case studies.

Allowing social reformers to permeate school systems with the aim to fix social problems rather than meeting children’s academic needs, causes educational policies to cycle based on social trends and social membership, such cycling disadvantages low-income minority students. Thus, education policies do not last long enough for academically disadvantaged students to improve their education; as a result, education becomes stagnant for those in the lower spectrum of the social scale. Then it is possible that policy makers do not assess educational issues through the social lenses of minority students-perhaps indirectly- to alienate minority students who are in educational need; perhaps, this is the most effective way for capitalistic hegemony to protect the current social strata and always maintain minority groups at an educational disadvantage, so they stay in the lower socioeconomic scale. The fact that the children’s skills can so clearly be predicted by their race and family economic status is a direct challenge to our democratic ideals. “There is no question that some students face fearful obstacles due to inequalities in this country. The facts of race, class, and ethnic

membership need to be taken into account along with the necessity of extensive social and economic restructuring” (Greene, 2004).

Paulo Freire used the term of “limit situations” to “imply the existence of persons who are directly or indirectly served by situation in which humans are unable to transcend the limit-situations in order to discover that beyond these situations—in contradiction to them—lies an untested feasibility and of those who are negated and curbed by them” (Freire, 1970, p.102). Freire also observes “those who are served by the present limit-situation regard the untested feasibility as a threatening limit-situation which must not be allowed to materialize, and act to maintain status-quo (p. 102). New York City public schools represent a big part of the untested feasibility that limit-situations for the excluded who are most likely to attend an inner-city school. Despite downsizing bigger schools into smaller ones, these children will continue to face “limit-situations” when it comes to their educational opportunities and possible integration to mainstream society and U.S. global labor force. In fact, compiled data showed that the lack of educational attainments affects the social inclusion of children of deportees, and their social integration to mainstream society with a possible financial mobility through formal economy.

Villanueva (1993) argues in Bootstraps: From an American Academic of Color that until minority students develop an awareness of the social issues that prevent them from being and feeling oppressed, until then, education will not enable minority students to reach their educational goals, but will only limit their social conditions and inclusion into United States global labor force. This consciousness, as described by

Freire, is a critical consciousness, which is the recognition that society contains social, political, and economic conditions that are at odds with the individual will to freedom. Without this critical consciousness, no matter what policy is in place, as the key domain to social exclusion, the educational system will continue to reinforce inequality and marginalization. As schools continue to be funded through neighborhood taxes and the curriculum continues to be watered down then the system itself is generating dregs of society. If we allow education to be a dream deferred, it will be an American Dream Faux Pas.

## **6.2. Education: An American Dream Faux Pas**

Schools operate as factories of dregs of society; schools for the poor used to be factories for workers with a direct pipeline into the factories. Now that there are no more blue color jobs, these schools are pipelines to prison and the informal economy. Even those who graduate, on time, “successfully” completing their education, have little opportunity to thrive academically or economically and thus, exit the cycle of exclusion. Unfortunately, there is a pessimistic outlook for the future of many of these children who live in a capitalist society, given that we always need a proletariat, and groups that are oppressed to execute less lucrative jobs.

Barriers to incorporation, social inequalities, and lack of human capital skills have not been the only mechanism used to slowdown, impede or delay the assimilation of newcomers into mainstream society. In the 1800s, the United States used deportation to exclude “undesirable” people including those immigrants who were considered to be dangerous, sick, and poor. Ellis Island served as a port of entry, but

also as a place of departure, for immigrants who were ill or dangerous; some needed to be quarantined to prevent contamination of the population, others needed to be sent back (Baker, 1998).

According to some scholars, social exclusion “encompasses not only material deprivation but also more broadly the denial of opportunities to participate fully in social and civic life” (Chigona, Vally, Beukes, and Tanner, 2009, p. 2). Individuals and groups can experience exclusion in housing, education, employment, healthcare, legal and political systems, and social networks (Todman, 2004, p. 7). It describes a process in which people can end up with persistent multiple disadvantages which lead to exclusion which can then lead to more disadvantages (Erostat Task Force, 1998) which can become a vicious cycle for some people.

Though there is no open recognition that “certain groups or individuals are systematically barred” from the American meritocratic system (Flynn, 2008, p. 221); the children of Dominican deportees are systematically stigmatized because despite being born in the US, they are still children of immigrants— and not just any immigrant but those who have experienced the ultimate act of exclusion; deportation because they have been deemed *immoral*. These children live in an environment where they are treated as children of social outcasts, outsiders, clustering them as lower class citizens. Manuel Castells (2003, p.115) defined social exclusion as “the process by which certain individuals and groups are systematically barred from access to positions in an autonomous livelihood within the social standards framed by institutions and values in a given context.” Forced to stay with the parent left behind, or in state custody, these

children are systematically forced to live in a socially and culturally toxic environment; eventually becoming wasted lives according to American's meritocratic standards; individuals without an education or the necessary social network or social/cultural capital to join the middle class or even to a decent livelihood by means of a financial mobility. Even if they make it by pulling up their own bootstraps, culturally they still belong to a socially excluded group, making them vulnerable to social and cultural stigmatizations. They are still social scapegoats, struggling to function in an "exclusive society" or as per Young's views, in a "bulimic society." Therefore, social exclusion "offends the mythopoeic core of America as the keeper and protector of the meritocratic urge and inclusion, of equal opportunity, of just rewards for effort and hard work" (Flynn, 2008, p.221).

Sen (2000) emphasizes that an impoverished life prevents children from developing into the type of leaders this nation needs in order to continue its global economic advancement, and instead disempowered these children from fabric of society, keeping them clustered in their own toxic environment, forcing them into a cycle of poverty and possible high crime surroundings. He affirms "social exclusion is often related to poverty, since income, properly defined, has an enormous influence on the kind of lives we can lead; ...the impoverishment of our lives results frequently from the inadequacy of income, and in this sense, low income must be an important cause of poor living" (p.3).

Though Smith (1776) defines poverty as "capability deprivation" which is the ability to live a minimally decent life that has an effect on the freedom to live non-

impoverished lives, such as “the ability to appear in public without shame,” the definition of poverty cannot be limited to income level, but to *impoverished lives*. A lack of social and cultural capital hinders children of immigrants’ socio-economic development and access to opportunities that would provide a better livelihood to children and family at large. Poverty and the resultant marginalization and exclusion are not simply contingent upon indicators of income but more so on social class.

## CHAPTER 7—CONCLUSION

### 7.1—Conclusion and Future Research With Families and Children of Deportees

*“The Oppressors do not perceive their monopoly on having more as a privilege, which dehumanizes others and themselves. They cannot see that in the egotistic pursuit of having, as a possessing class, they suffocate in their own possessions and no longer are; they merely have.” Paulo Freire (Pedagogy of the Oppressed)*

*“Washing one’s hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral.” Paulo Freire*

In this investigation, I explored my concerns about the children and families of Dominican deportees left behind in the United States. My interest in the subject developed as I tried to assist a Dominican family of a deported father in need of educational services and psychological intervention. Their daughter, Annie, began to experience academic and behavioral problems at school as a result of the father’s deportation, but the secrecy, embarrassment about the deportation, and the fear of social stereotyping prevented them from seeking assistance at governmental and/or social agencies in the community of Washington Heights on the Upper West Side of Manhattan in New York City.

When I began this inquiry, I was not aware of the magnitude of the problem, and had no idea that this family was not unique, but represented one of thousands facing similar circumstances in the community and in this country. What was also revealing was that, in the case of the Castillo family, the people for whom I was seeking

assistance, the deportation was of a documented immigrant, not of an undocumented person, as has traditionally been the case in immigrant communities. I thought this was an extremely unusual circumstance.

At first, I thought that the deportation of a documented immigrant was a clerical error or mistake, as the person has been granted permission to legally reside in the United States. For me, and many others in the community, the plausibility of the deportation of documented immigrant from the United States was something unimaginable. Something like this did not happen because documented immigrants with permanent residents are allowed to reside in the country forever. I thought, as many other people do in the country, that for these taxpayers no action or crime would ever put that type of permanent residency in the country in jeopardy.

Then, I became cognizant of the fact that the deportation of documented immigrants was a different socio-political phenomenon in the United States used, not only to remove the unwanted or disenfranchised or a new mode of dealing with undesirable people which was resulting in the deportation of million of people, but also a tool to further redefine the country's rights of belongingness as well as political space. Little did I know that with this new mode of exclusion, the United States had turned a new page in history, and had done a complete turn around in their commitment to assist newcomers to assimilate and adapt to mainstream society. As depicted in Chapter 2, immigrants who experience downward-segmented assimilation, or those who failed to become part of a formal economy that required them to attain an education or a professional skill to participate in the global labor subsistence

technology, in addition to incarceration and a poor quality of life, these people now faced permanent removal from the United States, and apart from their family.

I must also disclose that the complete disregard for the future of the families and children left behind made me question not only existing immigration processes, but also the policy embedded in the declaration of children's rights, which this country had failed to rectify, putting at risk its commitment to the future of the nation—children. I wondered about the future generation of 'minority children,' including low-income Asian and Whites, as well as traditionally excluded groups such as Blacks and Latinos. I wondered, what was the new integration or assimilation process to mainstream society with regards to immigrants and minority people? Is there accountability for policy makers and policy implementation, as thousands of U.S.-born children are impacted by such policies?

One thing that has become clear from this study is that the established social exclusion drivers in education, health, employment, cultural capital, and low-income neighborhood—discussed in Chapters 2, 5, and 6—continue to reinforce a cycle of poverty and exclusion for many Latino and Black children, who according to the 2010 Census data could roughly represent a 30 percent of the population. This means that over time, the United States has become more bulimic because it has continued to exclude people from full participation in the social fabric of the society.

This study was designed to address different questions about home environment, family structure, financial standing, educational level, health and mental health status that generate, and in some cases reinforce, social exclusion drivers, with

the aim to better understand the impact of the deportation on the children and the families left behind. The data revealed that documented immigrants could be ejected from the United States due to committing an instance of “moral turpitude” even if it happened many years ago. This is a consequence of the implementation of IIRAIRA, the 1996 immigration policy, which was applied retroactively after the 9/11 catastrophe—also explained in Chapter 2.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), under the branch of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) targets documented or undocumented immigrants with criminal backgrounds, despite the severity of the crime or even when they are not a threat to national security, which was the original intention of the law. By converting a criminal offense into an immoral crime of turpitude, the United States has found a new way to regurgitate and eject greater numbers of people from the country for no longer is deportation, total exclusion, restricted just for undocumented immigrants. Furthermore, a crime of turpitude does not require the full enforcement of normal court proceedings, which leaves immigrants and their families without the protection of the law. Curiously, however, paying twice for the same crime, no matter when it happened and if the person has already paid the debt to society, seems to also violate the moral laws of the country. But, in the case of deportees with children, the right of children of immigrants and immigrant children to grow in a supportive environment with both parents has also been violated.

The need to find other families who, like the Castillo family (introduced in the preface), were undergoing or had undergone the process of deportation, for the study of U.S.-born children or immigrant children of deportees left behind in the United States

became more apparent and important. Unfortunately, I searched and I asked people for referral, but only through the method of snowball sampling was I able to locate a few of these traumatized and broken families—as seen in Chapter 5.

I was able to interviewed and gathered data on only six families. The sample size was larger, but some families decided not to participate due to fear and stigma of having a deported documented family member. Some mothers shared that it is best that fewer people know about what happened because it minimizes the possibilities and burden of public condemnation. Hence, despite the reduction in the sample size (six families), many children were affected by the deportation of the fathers. Eight children, out of the twenty-two, shared their lived experiences as they witnessed and lived the deportation of their fathers. Unfortunately, the deported husbands and fathers are not part of the investigation because they were no longer in the country. It is important, however, to explore the experiences of the deported fathers in relation to their children in future research to facilitate the development of policies and the impact on the family structure.

The Annual Homeland Security Reports from 2001 to 2010 indicate that the majority of the deportees from the United States are Latinos. As shown in Chapter 3, Mexicans hold the first place on the list of most deported documented immigrants, followed by Salvadorians, and then Hondurans; Dominicans hold the fourth place. It has also been stated that Latinos are silently deported from the country because the new “Criminal Alien Program;” under this program immigrants (documented or undocumented) who enter the penal system, city law enforcement officials provide the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency the names of all arrestees, regardless of the crime they are accused of committing and regardless of whether they are convicted.

The current process mandates that when immigrants are located by agents, they are transferred to federal custody (Stringer and Friedman, 2011). Without notifying the family members or with no inquiries about the family, these immigrants are then removed from the U.S. (Latin America News Dispatch, 2010<sup>10</sup>). It has also been documented that often, people who have not committed any crime or have already paid for the crime, have also been deported from the United States (Latin America News Dispatch, 2010).

As to the number of people removed from the United States, Homeland Security documents that 319,382 were deported in 2007; 358,886 in 2008; 393,289 in 2009 (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Enforce Alien Removal Module, 2010); and over 400,000 in 2010, a “70 percent increase since the Bush administration” (Traywick, 2010). Even scarier is the numbers of pending cases for immigrants in retention; the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC) reports that “immigration courts reached a new all-time high of 267,752.” They also assured that the case backlog “had continued to grow –up 2.6 percent.” For countries with larger numbers of deportees, described in chapter 2 and 3, this could mean a significant increase of deportees, and even a higher number of children of deportees who would be left behind in the United States, in different states of the country—42,992 pending cases in New York State and 65,055 in California. For example, an examination of TRAC data revealed the following pending cases: “84,508 Mexican, 22,466 Salvadorans, 9,205 Hondurans, and 4,700 Dominicans” ([http://trac.syr.edu/phptools/immigration/court\\_backlog/](http://trac.syr.edu/phptools/immigration/court_backlog/)). A notable

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<sup>10</sup> Also found at <http://latindispatch.com/2010/12/10/immigration-enforcement-program-secure-communities-sparks-protest-in-new-york/>

increase on the number of potential deportees is for Chinese and Guatemalan, with a 24,600 and 19,070 respectively, pending cases. Reports indicate that “the average time these pending cases have been waiting in the Immigration Courts of the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) is now 467 days, compared with 456 days at the end of September last year.” However, when looking at Dominican pending cases, there is an average of 487 days; some immigrants must wait for their court day in prison. These numbers are indicative of the type of deportation machine and/or exclusive society the country has become; it regurgitates even green card holders, leaving their U.S. born children fatherless or parentless. Despite the problem that the deportation of fathers represent to the families left behind, there are no reliable data sources on the exact number of children affected by deportation.

This study indicates that parental deportation further compromises the educational achievement of immigrant children and children of immigrants because it helps to further compound the type of toxic environment these families live in. In bulimic societies such as the United States, the educational system reflects both inclusionary and exclusionary policies and practices. In a recent article, Michelli examined the current state of policy and practice related to the role of education in a democratic United States (Michelli, 2011). In “Education in a Democracy: Why, How and What?” Michelli suggested a core curriculum comprised of four areas to transform the current exclusive educational system into education for democracy. Basically, he contends that “critical analysis of ideas and decisions and actions based on that analysis” will help students become prepare for critical democracy (2011, p. 5). For

Michelli, "Thinking critically is important to taking advantage of life's opportunities, and it is central to quality of life" (2011, p. 7).

Michelli feels that "opportunity and support to succeed must be provided to all" (p. 9), and that "Meeting the purpose of helping students have full access to life's chances, requires...preparing [them] to consider all the options open to them, to understand what it takes to pursue one option or another and embrace chances--opportunities--that life provides" (p. 10). In a sense, he is suggesting that schools do have the responsibility and "obligation to think about how rich and rewarding the lives of their students will be," and that the "school have an important place in developing the social and emotional well being of students" (2011, p. 10). Finally, he reminds us that "Social justice is a deeply embedded principle that we must keep in mind as we seek equality in the education of all children" (2011, p. 16).

I profoundly agree with the implementation of a democratic curriculum in the United States. I feel that the type of educational program proposed by Michelli is what is needed in order to address, at some level, the "bulimization" process of children of Dominican deportees and other minority children in the United States. The problem is, however, that defenders of the exclusionary component of social bulimia have the social and political capital to stop different types of advocacy before any social or political actions begins. As Michelli explained, some people who have strongly advocated for this type of curriculum have also been branded and accused of engaging in a "Socialist Conspiracy" (p. 13) or "even terrorism" (p. 15).

So, what are we to do about the continuous "bulimization" of all poor children in the United States, particularly those of Dominican deportees? At this juncture, I would

like to concentrate in addressing the implication of social “bulimization” for the development and implementation of educational policies. In order to discuss possible protocols and logistics for school to use when addressing the needs of children of deportees, there needs to be some acceptance of the problem first because people continue to be in denial, anger is displaced throughout the society, and xenophobia is used to create uncertainty and pit groups against each other.

The nation has to come to terms with the fact that the country has refused to ratify the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. This alone, has huge implications and potential for change and transformation in the United States. In order to move towards change, as proposed by Michelli at the end of his article, advocates need to also become critical thinkers about the social “bulimization” of minorities in the United States (p. 12). Teaching about democracy in a bulimic society only addresses one half of the equation. The total picture requires that we look at both inclusion and exclusion simultaneously due to the multiple layers (political, socio-economic, immigration, and educational) associated with the phenomenon of social bulimia. In other words, the process of inclusion and exclusion needs to be studied as a function of the “whole” (a bulimic society), and its relationship with each part of gorging and ejecting people.

The bottom line is that this is a nation that includes and excludes people; it suffers from social bulimia. It has also become a place where those that are no longer desirable are regurgitated through current deportation processes executed by the federal branch of the government under present immigration policies. The problem with the existing immigration policy is that the government has not assessed its outcome or impact on U.S.-born children or children of immigrants left behind. The

same people, who may wonder about the importance of including children when developing such policies, are also ignoring the great risks of harboring and perpetuating a generation of possible dregs of society, toxic people, or wasted humans.

With this risk in mind, education plays a major role in providing marginalized children with the social and cultural capital they might need for a possible integration to mainstream society and into a global labor market. Based on the findings of this study on children of deportees, education cannot be studied in a social vacuum; we cannot only focus on curricula agendas or on operational and managerial cost, but we should also consider the learning readiness of children. For example, when children are neglected from policy construction, they may end up facing negative socio-economic and political consequences, which is the case of children of deportees. As documented in the cases presented in this research, despite some of the family having strong educational ethos, their home and social environment has hindered the children's capacity to learn and ability to persist in their educational quest.

Consequently, when policy makers do not consider the totality of society when implementing a policy, the weakest groups, children of deportees and immigrant families, suffer the most, confining many of these children and families to a cycle of poverty. This is the reason I argue that on-going evaluation of policy implementation is necessary in establishing a more inclusive and democratic society.

In addition, I contend that new policies are needed for psychologists and guidance counselors to deal with the types of coping mechanisms these children have learned and adopted in order survive and address the fragile emotional state created by the deportation of the fathers. The federal branch of the government has developed and

implemented policies that ignore the well-being of children of immigrants, minority children, and immigrant children. Sadly, this is a component of exclusion in an oligopoly democratic social bulimic society which needs further research and investigation.

## **7.2—Socio-Bulimic Costs in the United States**

The hypotheses that guided this investigation were several. They are listed below for the purpose of an examination of the findings: 1) the deportation of a parent has negative consequences on the children and families left behind. This study found that the deportation of parents has negative consequences on children's ability to succeed educationally. In this society, income and education are correlated; low educational attainment signifies low income. 2) Children of deportees experience low educational performance placing them at risk of failure. It was documented that some children of deportees dropped out of school and others were at risk of falling behind in school. 3) There is a decrease in academic aspiration or motivation among children of deportees. Many of the children in the study were not motivated to do well educationally or to acquire a college degree. 4) Families of deportees experienced some form of stigmatization in the community. Many of these families expressed feelings of being unable to seek services for fear that people in the community would find out about what had happened to the other parents and condemned the members that stayed behind. 5) Some families of deportees in order to meet different economic needs are forced to use different economic survival strategies. The data for this investigation showed that some of the mothers who were left behind resorted to public assistance

and the informal labor market in order to provide for the family. 6.) Children left behind blamed both parents for the deportation. Some of these children do blame the parents for the changes in the circumstances that they find themselves in as a result of the deportation. But, some have turned this anger onto themselves and consequently are hampering their opportunity to excel educationally.

The six families that participated in this study provided valuable information regarding what happens to the family unit as a consequence of the deportation of one of the parents. It also became obvious that in the case of Dominican immigrants, men or fathers comprised the studied group being regurgitated and ejected from the society. Consequently, Dominican men are leaving behind their wives (mothers), and their children in the United States. Other changes in the households of the deportees were documented. Many of these families experienced a drastic change in household income as a consequence of losing, in many cases, the only economic provider. Becoming a single-female-headed household also means that the family has less access to resources because these mothers lack the education and social capital necessary to provide financial support needed by the family.

With regards to the children of deportees left behind in the United States, this research, as well as other studies, documented that deportation can cause severe psychological traumas to children. It was noted that the children exhibit a series of maladaptive behaviors which included not being able to sleep (as often reflect in sleep waking), becoming rebellious, having nightmares, having temper tantrums, fear, becoming easily irritable, difficult to manage, depression, separation anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorders. The education process of these children is also impacted by

the deportation of the parent. For example, it has been documented that children of deportees tend to miss more days of classes; exhibit negative behaviors in the classroom; struggle with the new family routine because in some cases, the father was the person who picked the children at school or took them there; some experience declining school performance; did not do their homework due to lack of motivation or not being able to concentrate; and some dropped out of school. In general, children of deportees experience problems coping with the parental deportation.

Theoretically, this study has helped to clarify the processes of inclusion and exclusion in a bulimic society such as the United States. It has become clear, using the data gathered for this investigation, that the final act of exclusion is no longer incarceration or warehousing people who have been found guilty of committing crimes. The final phase of exclusion is, unfortunately for many thousands of parents and children, the regurgitation and ejection from the society. Through deportation, the society has been able to achieve some kind of social order because it rids itself from individuals without having to tolerate crime, deviance, or acts against the moral fabric of the society. It seems that the United States is no longer in the business of assimilating everyone, parading diversity, dealing with multiculturalism, or paying for the rehabilitation of individuals. The name of the new game is, if you do not assimilate to mainstream society, then you are not fit to reside in the country, or to compete in a formal global economy. Dregs and human wastes, often generated in the receiving society, are forced to leave because they are no longer useful to the nation. They cannot stay because the country no longer needs a reserve army within the national borders

since is able to pull people from different countries as a result of globalization and transnationalization.

Recently, the United States has expended thousands of dollars deporting people in an attempt to clean or cleanse the society of its human wastes and dumping grounds. The country has been able to regurgitate immigrants at a tremendous rate because the application of the immigration laws are now done without regards to the consequences to families and children or anybody in the society. America has now become an anthropophagic (cannabis) and an anthropoemic (throwing up) society. The United States now suffers from social bulimia; it eats, regurgitates, and ejects wasted or contaminated humans. In terms of the population studied, it means that it facilitates immigration from the Dominican Republic at the same time that it promotes and fosters deportation of those having difficulties adjusting, integrating and assimilating.

The problem is, however, as it was found in this study and the literature, that children left behind are also condemned to social bulimia because it is doubtful that educationally and economically, they would be able to escape the poverty cycle. First, they lack social capital, an important mechanism through which jobs are obtained and ladders are climbed. Second, they have not acquired the necessary educational skills that facilitate getting a higher education. If and when some of these children go to college, the chances are that they will end-up in a two year college and it will probably take them more than four years to complete an associate degree. Third, they live in segregated communities. According to recent data released by the 2010 census, New York is becoming more segregated with many minority communities experiencing rapid processes of gentrification (Census 2010). Finally, some immigrants are rapidly

pursuing the American Dream seeking everything that the society has to offer even when they get involved in questionable activities with criminal or moral consequences leading to future deportation.

### **7.3—Future Research in area of the Socio-Bulimic Costs to Children**

Given the demographic profile of presented families, it can be concluded that the integration process of children of deportees to mainstream society is affected by a parental deportation. The following points are extrapolated from the data gathered for this investigation:

1. These six families came from a poor background as indicated by the levels of education and the type of work that parents did or do in the United States.
2. Presented data also shows that green card holders are expected to have permission to work in the country, but without any expectation of a quality of education or training, and if a mistake is made, the law is harsher to them, as demonstrated by the charges against the fathers. Despite the fact that there are variations between non-violent and violent crimes, the consequences were the same—deportation.
3. The ages of the children at the time of the fathers' deportation revealed that many could have not possibly understood the severity of the crime, which caused the ejection or removal of the parents from the country—since the crime could have been committed before children were even born. However, many of the children were told that their fathers have abandoned them, breaking up their

family, disrupting their financial stability, and leaving them in an unstable home and community environment.

As a result, a parental deportation triggers key social exclusion drivers that generate socio-bulimic consequences or costs affecting children of deportees' socioeconomic integration to mainstream society. Future research should also explore the incorporation of these children into the labor market.

As shown in the analysis, children of deportees are at-risk of repeating a cycle of social exclusion and poverty as their education and financial goals are negatively impacted; consequently, they might not get to participate in the United States global labor force, as they will not have the necessary skills to compete in the market. Sadly, the data also show that even if these children were to pursue an education or professional skills, but fail to develop their social network and cultural capital, employment opportunities available to them would also be limited. The lack of social and cultural capital can prevent them from successfully integrating to mainstream society, which could enhance their inclusion, overcoming social exclusion drivers that cluster them in dumping ground, convert them into toxic people, push them into segmented or stratified assimilation, and foster different degrees of social bulimia.

The study on children of deportees offers a synthesis of existing knowledge in the relationship between immigration and inequality, using the theoretical framework grounded in the theory of social bulimic. The data show that educational attainment is not only influenced by school curricula and school organizational structure (currently in shambles), but also by the home environment, community resources, and the deportation of parents. Children who grow up in a bulimic society are not able to “Race

to the Top”, as intended by President Obama, given that educational opportunity are limited and weakened by existing policies, and the lack of both financial and human capital resources. These children are not able to generate the cultural and social capital required for them to succeed in a global market.

When resources are limited and the quality of education questionable, dreams are deferred, but even more dangerous is plausibility that society is taking greater risks with socially excluded children because it is harboring a generation of dregs, toxic people, and human waste with limited employment opportunities and resources that further trigger social exclusion and keeps them ghettoized communities. While completing the cycle of poverty, characteristic in a bulimic society, the less fortunate are given a false promise of a dream, but wake up to a nightmare and succumb to the informal economy and some governmental meager opportunities.

Imagine then the future of minority children when faced with limited educational and financial resources in an oligopoly democratic society. The limited environment in which they are growing up is not allowing any room for civic engagement and personal development unless they strive through their own bootstraps, which would be expected in a monopolistic democratic society--where everyone has the same socio-political and financial opportunities. The law and policy makers bureaucratizes immigrants and minority groups, framing the inclusion of these groups in welfare reforms, from deserving to undeserving, or from patients to clients or customers, by default removing the human agency from the individual. In short, they are dehumanized, and feed into the current prison’s system which generates federal and local employment for many. Future research should articulate the human cost of

the phenomenon of using immigrants and their U.S-born children to foster and promote job opportunities in the United States.

Another policy opportunity for assessment that should also be considered is current public assistance program. Many parents are provided with assistance, but there seems to be a lack of training, skills attainment, and more importantly, a lack of parenting skills workshops where parents can learn about nutrition, skills opportunity, social and professional training on how to cope with depression or any other particular health issues hindering the social development of the children. In the case of families with deported parents, the provision of training courses and paying attention to the mental health status of the only parent left behind is crucial, vital, and important because the household stability rests in the hand of a single parent left with very little supportive mechanisms.

#### **7.4—Future Research in the Area of the Socio-Bulimic Costs to Families**

This study found that the deportation of fathers has devastating consequences on the entire family unit. For the families in the study, the first step was the incarceration of the parent, which in this case consisted of Dominican fathers. These fathers were in jail in the United States paying for whatever crimes they were charged with. They were expected, at some point, to return to the household to be with their families. Both the children and the mothers were waiting for them. But, the coming home never happened; some of the fathers and the families were penalized twice through the processes of incarceration and deportation.

The study shows that the mental health status of the children was affected, and that, many felt that they were lied to because the father never came home. There is a need to further explore the long-term consequences of deportation behind closed doors of immigrants with families and children in the United States.

Many of the fathers were also expecting to go back home based on the application of criminal laws of the United States; those found guilty of committing crimes are mandated to do jail time. However, they never did return home because, after doing time and paying for the crimes in the United States, they were destined for deportation under the new immigration regulations and policies which turns criminal acts into moral crimes. Hence, when immigrants are charge with crimes, not only will they do the time, but will also face deportation to their homelands. Deportees are also expected to do time in the home country when they return form the United States. The long-term consequences to both society of this type of deportation proceedings need to also be explored in future investigations.

The data show that the family of deportees reacted to the deportation of the fathers in different ways. For example, immediately after the deportation, the family becomes fragile, fragmented, and disorganized. There is a need to regroup once again often without adequate resources to meet the needs of the family unit left behind. The mothers face the double burden of having to pick up the pieces, while trying to continue to function, at some level, for the children's sake. They now go from assuming total financial responsibility which started with the incarceration of the parent, where the government subsidized children of prisoners financial expenses, to becoming single

mothers with the entire responsibility of the household and with limited governmental assistance (public assistance).

As indicated by the data of the study, in order to meet the financial responsibilities of the family, some of the mothers had to enroll in public assistance to assure that the children had food, clothing, and shelter. Some mothers, however, reconnected to the labor market. There were some whose income increased by using a combination of formal and informal market strategies. Future research should further examine the long-term consequences of family fragmentation caused by deportation.

Some of the children who participated in this study were often forced to fill adult's gaps created by the deportation of the fathers. This investigation showed that the deportation of the fathers might have long-term consequences as priority in the household changed and identity roles were challenged. The children often withdrew and experienced fear that something similar or worse could happen to them, and to the parent left behind. They now have a tendency to exhibit maladaptive behaviors at home and at school, and their school performance was affected with some even dropping out. For example, many of the children interviewed (Dominic, Karina, Yesimel, Frankie, and Ashley) reported that they were no longer just children because they had to act as adult and caretaker of younger siblings while their mothers went to work.

The change of roles was confusing for these children, as they were expected to act as children at school, complete their assignments and play with their classmates; while at home, there was no room for childhood, as they had to contribute to the household, facing at times, adults' responsibilities, and often becoming family rescuers, enabler, and parental children (Hancock, 1997, p. 86).

The literature indicates that rescuers fulfill their own needs through helping others. These are children (or adults) who feel valuable when they help others because it is through rescuing that they are able to achieve some degree of self-esteem. The study showed how a male participant assumed the role of the father in order to help the mother cope with the void left by the deportee. Enablers are people who help others achieve (or are supportive of others) even when they behave in destructive manners. These children want to be with their parents, including the deported fathers, despite of their criminal backgrounds or whatever a judge says about the behavior of the father. Parental children often act and take care of their parents to compensate for something lacking in the family; in this case, the deported father (Anderson and Sabatelli, 2007). Further research is needed to decipher the consequences of deportation of the fathers on the process of socialization and individualization of the children who are left behind in the United States.

### **7.5—Concluding Remarks**

Although I'm generally optimistic and like happy ending, after interviewing these six families left behind in the United States by deported fathers and reading the vast literature on social exclusion, globalization, and the educational agenda along with its achievement gaps, it is unfortunate to culminate this study with a pessimistic view on the process of adaption to mainstream society for low-income minority children, who are caught in the United States whirl of social exclusion. It seems that the United States will no longer need immigrants or foreigners to comprise its labor force, as many of our children are in danger of not meeting the educational demands to participate in the global labor force. The dregs of society, the toxic people, or the human wastes are

already been fostered and produced in the belly of the country; immigrant children and children of immigrants, and minorities are destined and positioned to become the cushion needed by the capitalist system to continue to strive without the need of importing people from within its globalized economic orbit. Hence, it can be claimed that children of Dominican deportees left behind in the United States represent a sector further excluded than other immigrant children due to the stigma associated with deportation in the Dominican Republic as well as in the United States. Then, it can be concluded that Dominican families left behind, undergo and suffer the same type of alienation and stereotyping experienced by deported parents.

Although the United States is not the only bulimic nation in the world, it is among those whose democratic process has definitely been challenged. I contend that it is difficult for democracy to coexist with social bulimia because these processes are not comparable; exclusion, and important aspect of social bulimia, undermines democracy. Globalization has also created, through the process of the internationalization of businesses, companies and firms, an oligopoly in which a few businesses control the local as well as the world economic market of some goods and services that generate a monopoly of policy making, which affect the excluded. Consequently, the system further supports the oligarchy in which a few small groups control the political process. These intertwined mechanisms further define the social excluded and support the cycle of poverty since they delimit the required social capital and qualifications to participate in the global labor market—the new substance technology of the United States as described in Chapter 2.

Analysis of current academic achievement gaps, unemployment rates, and globalization reinforce the cycle of poverty many minority, children of immigrants and immigrant children will face in the United States. Hence, further research is needed to accurately assess the impact that the cycle of poverty might have in low-income children, as they maneuver through the social bulimia machine created by the United States. Research in social production theory could help us understand the social reproduction and level of inequalities children are exposed to, such as school systems, health care services, and community policing or surveillances. What social exclusion drivers are enhancing the level of inequalities disenfranchised children must face in their toxic environment and dumping grounds, where the human wastes co-exist. The question is therefore, to what degree will these children repeat their parents' fate?

When assessing social exclusion drivers and the social processes that generate and reinforce them, it is important to also look at the social production theory. According to Moscovici (1974) social representation theory means "systems of values, ideas and practices ... to establish an order which will enable individuals to orientate themselves in their material and social world and to master it" and "to enable communication to take place amongst members of a community by providing them with a code for social exchange and a code for naming and classifying unambiguously the various aspects of their world and their individual and group history" (1974, p. 236)

Social justice theory can assist in the articulation of the level of political disassociation these children might face due to their lack of positive socialization in their surroundings. Using this theoretical framework helps to posit the following questions: How are these children dealing with the labeling and stigmatization society

has prescribed them (i.e., low-income, minority, poor quality of education, and child of a deportee)? How are they to cope with such social status? Are they to retaliate these labels by joining a gang or engaging in the informal economy to cope with their reality? Or are these children to graduate from high school and pursue a higher education against all social odds?

Social identity is also an important area of study for children of deportees, as they may feel unwelcomed and question their sense of belongingness in the community and the society. Questioning their sense of belongingness could be detrimental for some of these children who may even consider suicide as explained by Emile Durkheim's theory of *anomie*. Some of the participants have already considered suicide as a need to escape from their reality, as they feel unwelcomed in their community and the school system. They also feared being harassed by the police, which could also disengaged them politically as well as from their civic duties, putting them at a greater risk of participating in an informal economy.

In addition, the health conditions of children of deportees should also be considered for future analysis, as many of these children exhibited symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anger management, obesity, high blood pressure, and asthma to name just a few. Further studies should be designed to assess the long-term consequences of the stigma attached to deportation of documented (and undocumented) parents on the male children in this population. The girls also suffer psychological consequences as showed by this investigation. Studies are needed to explore the impact of the deportation of fathers on the future family formation and relationship in general, but specifically on female children.

Even with the aforementioned limitations created by the sample size, this study has helped to shed some light on the implications for future research with children and families of deportees. The present study has also helped to propose a different approach to the processes of policymaking in key legislation areas, which directly or indirectly affect United States' children of immigrants or immigrant children. We should also be mindful that without proper assessment, implementation, and social accountability, the collateral damages to children could have destructive social and political consequences for the future of this nation. The country is responsible for the well being of all the children—despite the rectification of Human Rights—and for their future social inclusion. The deportation of fathers, without any proper family intervention, is not a responsible governmental policy, nor is the lack of educational resources to enhance and facilitate integration into the global labor market.

## Appendixes

### Appendix A—Specific Crimes Rendering Non-Citizens Deportable [Due to]

#### Aggravated Felonies

The 1996 laws added new crimes to the aggravated felony ground of deportation. First, Congress added 17 additional types of crimes to the category when it passed AEDPA in April 1996. In September 1996, shortly before Congress adjourned to campaign, it passed IIRIRA, which added four more types of crimes to the aggravated felony definition and lowered certain threshold requirements. For example, before IIRIRA, theft offenses and crimes of violence were aggravated felonies only if the term of imprisonment was five years or more; IIRIRA reduced the term of imprisonment provision to a one-year threshold.

Therefore, since 1996, aggravated felonies include the following broad categories of crime.

- any crime of violence (including crimes involving a substantial risk of the use of physical force) for which the term of imprisonment is at least one year;
- any crime of theft (including the receipt of stolen property) or burglary for which the term of imprisonment is at least one year; and
- illegal trafficking in drugs, firearms, or destructive devices.
- The following specific crimes are also listed as aggravated felonies:
  - murder;
  - rape;
  - sexual abuse of a minor;
  - illicit trafficking in a controlled substance, including a federal drug trafficking offense;
  - illicit trafficking in a firearm, explosive, or destructive device;
  - federal money laundering or engaging in monetary transactions in property derived from specific unlawful activity, if the amount of the funds exceeded \$10,000;
  - any of various federal firearms or explosives offenses;
  - any of various federal offenses relating to a demand for, or receipt of, ransom;
  - any of various federal offenses relating to child pornography;
  - a federal racketeering offense;
  - a federal gambling offense (including the transmission of wagering information in commerce, if the offense is a second or subsequent offense) that is punishable by imprisonment of at least one year;
  - a federal offense relating to the prostitution business;

- a federal offense relating to peonage, slavery, involuntary servitude, or trafficking in persons;
- any of various offenses relating to espionage, protecting undercover agents, classified information, sabotage, or treason;
- fraud, deceit, or federal tax evasion, if the offense involves more than \$10,000;
- alien smuggling, other than a first offense involving the alien's spouse, child, or parent;
- illegal entry or re-entry of an alien previously deported on account of committing an aggravated felony;
- an offense relating to falsely making, forging, counterfeiting, mutilating, or altering a passport or immigration document if (1) the term of imprisonment is at least one year and (2) the offense is not a first offense relating to the alien's spouse, parent, or child;
- failure to appear for service of a sentence, if the underlying offense is punishable by imprisonment of at least five years;
- an offense relating to commercial bribery, counterfeiting, forgery, or trafficking in vehicles with altered identification numbers, for which the term of imprisonment is at least one year;
- an offense relating to obstruction of justice, perjury or subornation of perjury, or bribery of a witness, for which the term of imprisonment is at least one year;
- an offense relating to a failure to appear before a court pursuant to a court order to answer to or dispose of a charge of a felony for which a sentence of two years' imprisonment or more may be imposed; and
- an attempt or conspiracy to commit one of the foregoing offenses.

While some of the above examples of aggravated felonies would seem to be severe offenses for which deportation is an appropriate punishment, in practice it is not always clear-cut.

## Appendix B—Participants' Letter of Consent

### Letterhead

#### Left Behind: Children of Dominican Deportees in a Bulimic Society

(Date)

Dear (participant's name):

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study on children of Dominican deportees. I am a doctoral candidate in the Urban Education, Ph.D. program at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY). For my dissertation research I am interested in studying the experiences of children left behind in the United States by a deported Dominican parent, by looking at children's education and eventual social integration into American society.

Because the purpose of this survey is to collect general information about the children of Dominican deportees, your participation is key in learning more about your experiences as someone who have undergone the process of losing a family member to deportation, and in gaining knowledge concerning your livelihood since your parent's removal from the United States.

Please know that the information herewith will not be used to judge your living conditions. This survey only aims to gain insightful information about your educational outcome, socioeconomic standing, and your overall social experience as a child of a deportee. This will be an open-ended interview, which means that we will not have a structured—yes or no—survey. There is only *one* interview with your parent/guardian. However, there is a three-part interview with you. The first interview, for both you and your parent/guardian, will be in your home environment; the second interview will be at a place of your choice, preferably between your school surrounding and place of employment (if applicable and possible), and the last interview could be back to your home or a place of your choice, wherever you would feel most comfortable.

Please be *as honest as possible*. I assure you that your personal information will not be disclosed through the course of this research, or during the analysis of the collected information. In fact, I encourage you to choose a pseudonym today, which we will use from this point forward.

Once again, thank you for your collaboration and honest response. Please feel free to contact me if you have any concerns or questions at 917-202-6864 or via e-mail at [farias@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:farias@gc.cuny.edu) throughout the course of the study. Once we are done with the

interviews, you will be given the opportunity to evaluate the validity of the reported information.

I agree to have this interview audio-taped (please circle one):      Yes    No

The signature below indicates that I have read and understood the procedures, goals and objectives of the research on *Children of Dominican Deportees*.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print your name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (Guardian's signature)

I look forward to our insightful conversations.

Respectfully,

Ms Fenix Nikaurys Arias  
PhD Candidate  
The Graduate Center-CUNY

### Appendix C—Formulario de autorización

Mi nombre es Fenix Arias y soy estudiante en el programa doctoral de Planificación Urbana (Urban Planning) del Centro de Estudios Graduados de C.U.N.Y. (The Graduate Center Of The City University of New York). Soy la investigadora principal de un proyecto titulado: “Left behind: children of Dominican deportees in a bulimic society” (**Los que se quedan atrás**: hijos de dominicanos deportados en una sociedad bulímica). Esta investigación estudia familias que han pasado por la experiencia de la deportación. El estudio busca captar la experiencia de niños que se han quedado en los Estados Unidos de América luego de la partida de un padre o madre deportado/a, y considerará cómo estas experiencias impactan la educación y eventual integración social del niño/a en la sociedad estadounidense.

Me gustaría obtener su permiso para entrevistarle/la a usted y a sus niños menores, si aplica, para que expliquen el proceso de deportación y las consecuencias financieras, emocionales y educativas que ha traído este proceso a sus vidas.

Esta entrevista tomará de una a dos horas. Con su autorización, me gustaría grabar esta entrevista para poder captar todos los detalles que usted/es describe/n. Mi supervisor de tesis y yo seremos los únicos autorizados a escuchar estas grabaciones. Toda la información recopilada será estrictamente confidencial y será guardada en un archivo cerrado, al cual solamente mi supervisor de tesis y yo tendremos acceso. Usted puede negarse a responder cualquier pregunta formulada en esta entrevista en cualquier momento.

El único riesgo que usted corre en este estudio, es que usted reviva las experiencias dolorosas por haber perdido a un ser querido por deportación. Este tema no ha sido ampliamente investigado; por consecuencia, el beneficio de su participación es que usted podrá expresar sus preocupaciones y las de sus hijos, en cuanto al tema de deportación y la separación de los familiares que se quedan atrás. Un total aproximado de 6 familias formará parte de este estudio.

Posiblemente yo publique los resultados de este estudio, pero los nombres de las personas o algunas características que puedan identificarlas, no serán usados en ninguna publicación. Si le interesa obtener una copia de este estudio, por favor provéame su dirección y se le enviará una copia en el futuro.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta sobre esta investigación, puede contactarme al (917) 202-6864 o vía email [farias@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:farias@gc.cuny.edu), o a través de mi supervisor de tesis Dr. Nicholas Michelli al (917) 882-7670 o vía email [nmichelli@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:nmichelli@gc.cuny.edu). Si usted tiene alguna pregunta sobre sus derechos como participante de este estudio, puede contactar a Kay Powell, Administradora de la Junta de Revisión Investigativa (IRB), The Graduate Center/City University of New York, (212) 817-7525, [kpowell@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:kpowell@gc.cuny.edu).

*Gracias por su participación en este estudio. Se le proveerá una copia de este formulario.*

Autorizo que se me entreviste (por favor circule una opción): Sí      No

Estoy de acuerdo con que mi hijo sea entrevistado (por favor circule una opción): Sí

No

Estoy de acuerdo con que esta entrevista sea grabada: Sí No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firma del participante Fecha

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nombre del Niño o Niña

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nombre del Niño o Niña

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firma de la investigadora Fecha

## Appendix D—Parent’s Questionnaire (PQ)

### Purpose

This survey has five parts: Part 1 asks about general information on your household, part 2 requests you to describe your employment and socioeconomic condition, part 3 inquires about your spouse’s deportation process, part 4 focuses on your children’s educational outcome. The last part, part 5, is about moving forward, your plans for the future. This set of questions is designed to help me understand your experiences as they relate to the deportation of your spouse.

### Part 1- Tell me about you and your family

About you:

- Name (real name)                      Pseudonym
- Address (how long have you lived on this address?)
- Telephone
- Age
- Marital status
- Family income (estimate)
- Do you have children? If yes, how many children do you have? What are the ages of your children? How many of these children will participate in this study?
- How many people live in your household?
- Ethnicity
- Country of origin
- How long have you been living in the United States?
- Do you speak English?
- What is your highest level of education?

### Part 2- Employment history: tell me about your financial experience since the deportation.

- Tell me about the experience of losing a breadwinner in the house? Is there any difference? Or was he/she the main contributor to the household?
- Were you working at the time your spouse was deported?
  - If yes, where?
- Did you change jobs after your spouse’s deportation?
  - How long did you work there? Why did you leave this job?
- Are you currently working? Yes    No
  - If yes, where? How much do you make per hour (or weekly)? How many jobs do you have?
  - If no, how do you support your household? Are you on public assistance or in any government program?
- Are your children aware of your financial standing?
- Are you they currently working? Do they help you financially?

### **Part 3-Deportation: I will lead you through the details of your spouse's deportation process.**

- Tell me about the experience of hearing that the father of your children might be deported from the United States.
  - What went through your mind?
  - What was your main concern?
  - What feelings did you experience?
- Did you hire a lawyer? If yes, what type of lawyer?
- What do you remember about the process? Walk me through the process.
- Was your spouse detained before being deported? If yes, for how long? Did you visit your spouse in jail or at the detention center?
- Was your spouse deported? If yes, when?
- What were the reasons he/she was deported?
- Were you married at the time of the deportation?
- Do you keep in touch with your spouse?
- How has your relationship changed since his/her deportation?
  - If the relationship has not changed, how often do you visit him or her?
  - If the relationship has changed, did you re-married?
- Do your children know that their parent was deported?
  - If no, why not?
  - If yes, do they know the reasons for the deportation?
- Do your children have a relationship with their father/mother?
- How old were they when your spouse was sent back to his/her country of origin?
- Tell me about your experience of losing a loved one to deportation leaving your behind with your children.
- Did the fact of having your spouse deported change the relationship with your children/child?
  - If yes, how?
  - If not, why not?

### **Part 4-Educational involvement**

- Are your children attending school?
- In what grades are you children?
- Are you involved in your children's education?
- Have they experienced any problems with the police?
  - If yes, what kind of problems?
  - If no, what about with the community? Are they treated differently? Are people in your community aware of what happened to their father/mother? Why? Why not?
- Did the experience of having your spouse deported change the dreams you had for your children?
  - If yes, how? What did you envision for them before the deportation?
  - If no, what do you envision for them? How are they going to accomplish it?
- How is the experience of having the father/mother of your children different from being divorced?

- If yes, in what ways?
- If no, why do you think it has not affected them?
- Have they experienced any behavioral problems at school?
- Do you get any complaints from school about their behavior?
- Do you have time to attend school's meetings?
- Has the experience of having their father deported affected their school performance? Have this experience changed your children's behavior?

#### **Part 5-Personal Impact – Looking Back, Moving Forward**

- Has this process changed your outlook in life?
- What has changed in you since the deportation? Has it affected your life? In what ways?
- Did the experience of having someone deported change your perception about the United States?
  - If yes, please describe in what ways.

## Appendix E—Child’s Questionnaire (CQ)

### Purpose

This survey has six parts: Part 1 asks about background information on your family, part 2 focuses on your educational aspirations, part 3 inquires about your employment standing, part 4 pertains to your parent’s deportation process, part 5 is about the social experiences you have had since your parent’s deportation, and the last section, part 6, is about looking forward, what are your plans for the future. This set of questions is designed to help me understand your experiences as they relate to the deportation of your parent.

### Part 1- Tell me about you and your family

About you

- Name (real name)                      Pseudonym
- Address (how long have you lived on this address?)
- Telephone
- Age
- Do you have siblings? If yes, how many brothers and sisters do you have? What are their ages?
- How many people live in your household?
- What is your Ethnicity?              Country of origin
- Were you born in the United States?
  - If yes, when?
  - If no, how long have you been living in the United States?
- Do you have any hobbies? Tell me, what do you do for fun.
- Describe yourself...
- Are you dating anyone?

### Part 2-Educational perspective

- Are you in school?
  - If yes, in what grade?
  - If no, why not? What contributed to your stopping out? Have you considered going back to school or getting a G.E.D?
- Where do you go to school?
- What do you think about education in general?
- Tell me about your friends at school. Who do you hang out with?
- Are your teachers and advisors aware of your family dynamic?
  - Would they care to know?
- Has the experience of having your father/mother deported affected your school performance?
  - If yes, in what ways?
  - If no, why do you think it has not affected you?
- Have you experienced any behavioral problems at school?

- If yes, how?
- Are you planning to attend college?
  - If yes, do you believe that you will get the job of your dreams once you are done with college?
  - If no, how do you plan on supporting yourself?
- Tell me about your aspirations, what do you expect from life?

### **Part 3- Employment history: tell me about your family financial experience since your father/mother's deportation.**

- Are you currently working? Yes No
  - If yes, where?
    - How much do you make per hour (or weekly)?
    - How many jobs do you have?
    - Do you financially contribute to the family at this time?
    - Is your employer familiar with your family dynamics? If yes, tell me about it.
  - If no, do you feel stressed out about money?
- Do you know your family income (estimate)?
- Looking into the future, what kind of job do you hope to get?
- Do you plan on financially helping your family in the future?
- Are you planning to move out on your own?
  - If yes, tell me why and tell me about your plans.
  - If no, tell me why not?

### **Part 4-The Impact of Your Parent's Deportation**

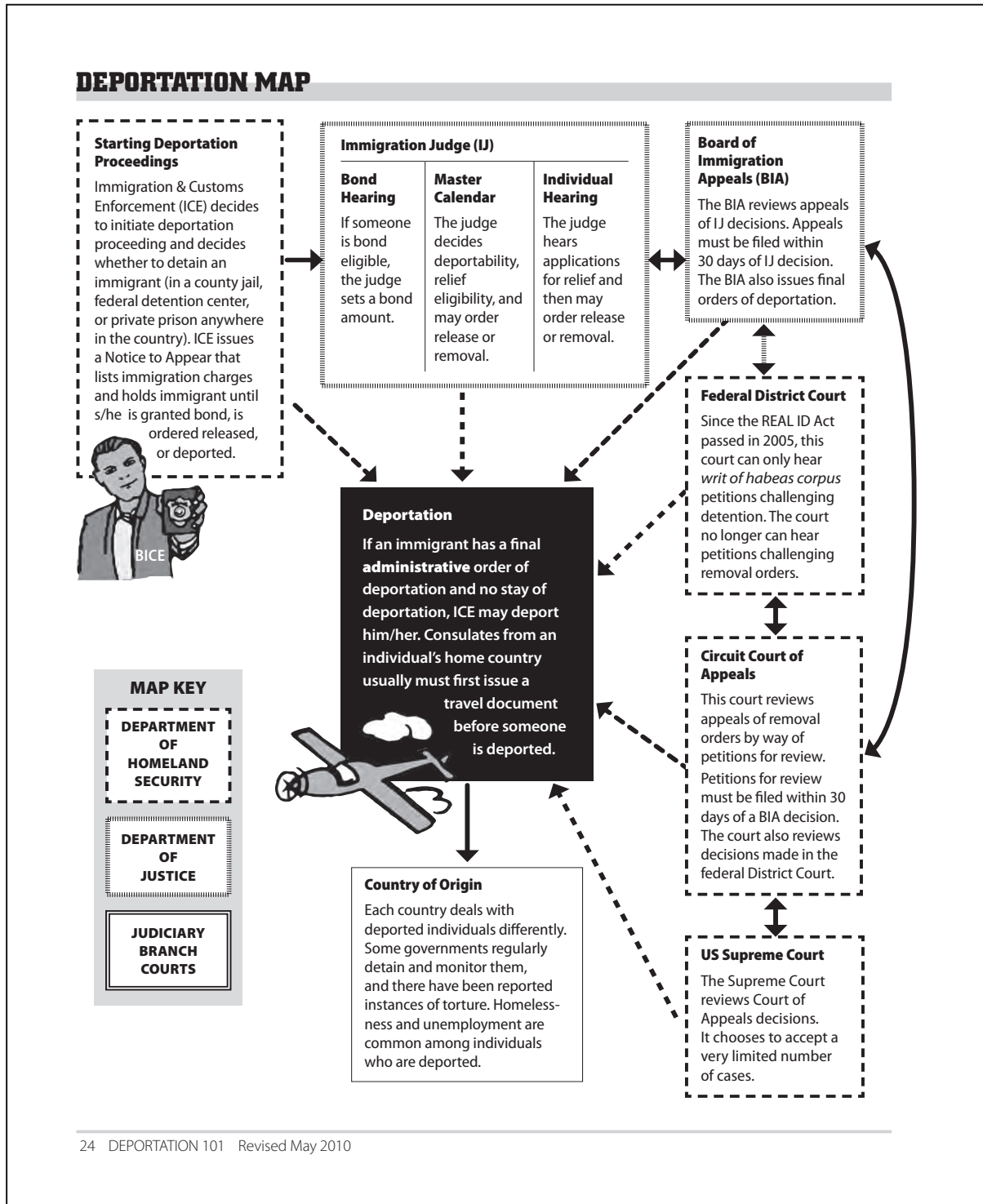
- Tell me about the experience of hearing that your mother/father of your children was about to be deported from the United States.
  - What went through your mind?
  - What was your main concern?
  - What feelings did you experience?
- Did you witness the deportation process? Tell me about it.
  - If no, at what age did you learn your mother/father was deported?
- Was your mother/father detained before being deported? If yes, for how long? Did you visit her/him in jail or at the detention center?
- How old were they when your parent was sent back to his/her country of origin?
- Were you living with him/her at the time of the deportation?
- When was your father/mother deported?
- Are you familiar with the reasons he/she was deported?
- Do you keep in touch with your parent? How has your relationship with your mother/father changed since his/her deportation?
  - If the relationship has not changed, how often do you visit him or her?
  - If the relationship has changed, tell me in what way.
- How often do you speak with her/him?

### **Part 5 –Personal Impact**

- Tell me about your experience of losing a loved one to deportation leaving you behind in the United States; did the fact of having your mother/father deported change the relationship with your mother/father left behind?
  - If yes, how?
  - If not, why not?
- Have this experience changed your life? Your attitude towards the United States?
- Have you experienced any problems with the police?
  - If yes, what kind of problems?
  - If no, what about with the community? Do you feel that you are treated different? Are people in your community aware of what happened to your father/mother? Why? Why not?

### **Part 6—Looking Back, Moving Forward**

- Did the experience of having your mother/father deported change the dreams you had about your life?
  - If yes, how? What did you envision for them before the deportation?
  - If no, what do you envision for them? How are they going to accomplish it?
- Have your mother/father (the one left behind) remarried?
  - If yes, how do you feel about it?
  - If no, do you think he/she would be able to move back to the Dominican Republic to be with your mother/father?
- What has changed in you since the deportation? Has it affected your life? In what ways?
- Did this process change your outlook in life? Tell me how.



### Appendix F- Process of Deportation

## Appendix F-Immigration’s Grounds for Deportation and Inadmissibility

### Immigrant Defense Project Immigration Consequences of Convictions Summary Checklist\*

GROUNDS OF DEPORTABILITY (apply to lawfully admitted noncitizens, such as a lawful permanent resident (LPR)—greencard holder)	GROUNDS OF INADMISSIBILITY (apply to noncitizens seeking lawful admission, including LPRs who travel out of US)	INELIGIBILITY FOR US CITIZENSHIP
<p><b>Aggravated Felony Conviction</b></p> <p>➤ <i>Consequences</i> (in addition to deportability):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Ineligibility for most waivers of removal</li> <li>◆ Ineligibility for voluntary departure</li> <li>◆ Permanent inadmissibility after removal</li> <li>◆ Subjects client to up to 20 years of prison if s/he illegally reenters the US after removal</li> </ul> <p>➤ <i>Crimes covered</i> (possibly even if not a felony):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Murder</li> <li>◆ Rape</li> <li>◆ Sexual Abuse of a Minor</li> <li>◆ Drug Trafficking (may include, whether felony or misdemeanor, any sale or intent to sell offense, second or subsequent possession offense, or possession of more than 5 grams of crack or any amount of flunitrazepam)</li> <li>◆ Firearm Trafficking</li> <li>◆ Crime of Violence + 1 year sentence**</li> <li>◆ Theft or Burglary + 1 year sentence**</li> <li>◆ Fraud or tax evasion + loss to victim(s) &gt; \$10,000</li> <li>◆ Prostitution business offenses</li> <li>◆ Commercial bribery, counterfeiting, or forgery + 1 year sentence**</li> <li>◆ Obstruction of justice or perjury + 1 year sentence**</li> <li>◆ Certain bail-jumping offenses</li> <li>◆ Various federal offenses and possibly state analogues (money laundering, various federal firearms offenses, alien smuggling, failure to register as sex offender, etc.)</li> <li>◆ Attempt or conspiracy to commit any of the above</li> </ul>	<p>Conviction or <i>admitted commission</i> of a <b>Controlled Substance Offense</b>, or DHS has reason to believe individual is a drug trafficker</p> <p>➤ No 212(h) waiver possibility (except for a single offense of simple possession of 30g or less of marijuana)</p> <p>Conviction or <i>admitted commission</i> of a <b>Crime Involving Moral Turpitude (CIMT)</b></p> <p>➤ Crimes in this category cover a broad range of crimes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Crimes with an <i>intent to steal or defraud</i> as an element (e.g., theft, forgery)</li> <li>◆ Crimes in which <i>bodily harm</i> is caused or threatened by an intentional act, or <i>serious bodily harm</i> is caused or threatened by a reckless act (e.g., murder, rape, some manslaughter/assault crimes)</li> <li>◆ Most sex offenses</li> </ul> <p>➤ <i>Petty Offense Exception</i>—for one CIMT if the client has no other CIMT + the offense is not punishable &gt; 1 year (e.g., in New York can't be a felony) + does not involve a prison sentence &gt; 6 months</p> <p><b>Prostitution and Commercialized Vice</b></p> <p>Conviction of <b>2 or more offenses</b> of any type + <b>aggregate prison sentence of 5 years</b></p>	<p>Conviction or admission of the following crimes bars a finding of good moral character for up to 5 years:</p> <p>➤ <b>Controlled Substance Offense</b> (unless single offense of simple possession of 30g or less of marijuana)</p> <p>➤ <b>Crime Involving Moral Turpitude</b> (unless single CIMT and the offense is not punishable &gt; 1 year (e.g., in New York, not a felony) + does not involve a prison sentence &gt; 6 months)</p> <p>➤ <b>2 or more offenses</b> of any type + <b>aggregate prison sentence of 5 years</b></p> <p>➤ <b>2 gambling offenses</b></p> <p>➤ <b>Confinement</b> to a jail for an aggregate period of 180 days</p> <p><b>Aggravated felony</b> conviction on or after Nov. 29, 1990 (and murder conviction at any time) <i>permanently</i> bars a finding of moral character and thus citizenship eligibility</p>
<p><b>Controlled Substance Conviction</b></p> <p>➤ EXCEPT a single offense of simple possession of 30g or less of marijuana</p>		
<p><b>Crime Involving Moral Turpitude (CIMT) Conviction</b></p> <p>➤ For crimes included, see Grounds of Inadmissibility</p> <p>➤ One CIMT committed within 5 years of admission into the US and for which a sentence of 1 year or longer may be imposed (e.g., in New York, may be a Class A misdemeanor)</p> <p>➤ Two CIMTs committed at any time “not arising out of a single scheme”</p>	<p><b>CONVICTION DEFINED</b></p> <p>A formal judgment of guilt of the noncitizen entered by a court or, if adjudication of guilt has been withheld, where:</p> <p>(i) a judge or jury has found the noncitizen guilty or the noncitizen has entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere or has admitted sufficient facts to warrant a finding of guilt, AND</p> <p>(ii) the judge has ordered some form of punishment, penalty, or restraint on the noncitizen's liberty to be imposed.</p> <p><b>THUS:</b></p> <p>➤ A court-ordered drug treatment or domestic violence counseling alternative to incarceration disposition IS a conviction for immigration purposes if a guilty plea is taken (even if the guilty plea is or might later be vacated)</p> <p>➤ A deferred adjudication disposition without a guilty plea (e.g., NY ACD) is NOT a conviction</p> <p>➤ A youthful offender adjudication (e.g., NY YO) is NOT a conviction</p>	
<p><b>Firearm or Destructive Device Conviction</b></p> <p><b>Domestic Violence Conviction</b> or other domestic offenses, including:</p> <p>➤ Crime of Domestic Violence</p> <p>➤ Stalking</p> <p>➤ Child abuse, neglect or abandonment</p> <p>➤ Violation of order of protection (criminal or civil)</p>		
<p><b>INELIGIBILITY FOR LPR CANCELLATION OF REMOVAL</b></p>		
<p>➤ Aggravated felony conviction</p> <p>➤ Offense covered under Ground of Inadmissibility when committed within the first 7 years of residence after admission in the United States</p>		
<p><b>INELIGIBILITY FOR ASYLUM OR WITHHOLDING OF REMOVAL BASED ON THREAT TO LIFE OR FREEDOM IN COUNTRY OF REMOVAL</b></p>		
<p><b>“Particularly serious crimes”</b> make noncitizens ineligible for asylum and withholding. They include:</p> <p>➤ Aggravated felonies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ All will bar asylum</li> <li>◆ Aggravated felonies with aggregate 5 year sentence of imprisonment will bar withholding</li> <li>◆ Aggravated felonies involving unlawful trafficking in controlled substances will presumptively bar withholding</li> </ul> <p>➤ Other serious crimes—no statutory definition (for sample case law determination, see Appendix F)</p>		

\*For the most up-to-date version of this checklist, please visit us at <http://www.immigrantdefenseproject.org>. ➤ See reverse

\*\*The 1-year requirement refers to an actual or suspended prison sentence of 1 year or more. [A New York straight probation or conditional discharge without a suspended sentence is not considered a part of the prison sentence for immigration purposes.]

**Appendix G—Homeland Security Organizational Chart**

**IMMIGRATION IN THE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT** (PARTIAL CHART)

 **EXECUTIVE US President & Federal Officers**

<p><b>DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)</b> Secretary Janet Napolitano</p>			<p><b>DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ)</b> Attorney General Eric Holder</p>		<p><b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH &amp; HUMAN SERVICES (DHHS)</b> Secretary Kathleen Sebelius</p>
<p><b>Customs &amp; Border Patrol (CBP)</b> Border patrol and customs at ports of entry (airport, seaport, etc.). Refers deportation cases to ICE. <a href="http://cbp.gov/">http://cbp.gov/</a></p>	<p><b>U.S. Citizenship &amp; Immigration Services (USCIS)</b> Processes applications for adjustment, naturalization, etc. Refers deportation cases to ICE. <a href="http://uscis.gov">http://uscis.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Immigration &amp; Customs Enforcement (ICE)</b> Carries out enforcement actions, issues detainer ("hold") and Notice to Appear (NTA). Decides to detain or release immigrants from detention. <a href="http://ice.gov">http://ice.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR)</b> Chief Judge Brian M. O'Leary</p> <p>Call the EOIR hotline for general information about your deportation case: (800) 898-7180</p>		<p><b>Office of Refugee Resettlement</b> Responsible for placement of unaccompanied children.</p>
		<p><b>Detention &amp; Removal</b> Has deportation officers assigned to manage each case. Contracts with Bureau of Prisons, private prison companies, and county jails for detention space.</p>	<p><b>Immigration Judge (IJ)</b> Part of the immigration court system. IJ reviews deportation cases.</p>	<p><b>Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA)</b> Appeals court of the immigration court system. (703) 305-0289</p>	

 **LEGISLATIVE Congress**

<p><b>SENATE</b> Senator (2 per state) <a href="http://www.senate.gov">http://www.senate.gov</a></p>	<p><b>HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES</b> Congressperson (1 per district) <a href="http://www.house.gov">http://www.house.gov</a></p>
<p>Call the Switchboard: 202-224-3121 or 202-225-3121 Congress writes and passes laws. Each elected official has: <b>Legislative Office (D.C.)</b> Immigration Legislative Aide works on public and private bills. <b>District Office (Local)</b> Immigration Caseworker investigates specific cases, refers matters to DC. Find out who represents your district or state!</p>	

 **JUDICIARY Federal Judges**

<p><b>DISTRICT COURT</b> Hears habeas corpus petitions challenging detention (including citizenship claims).</p>	<p><b>CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS</b> Reviews appeals filed within 30 days of BIA decision, where person challenges that she or he is a noncitizen, deportable or excludable; and appeals of District Court decisions. Many people with convictions are barred from review here.</p>
<p><b>SUPREME COURT</b> Reviews Court of Appeals decisions that it chooses to accept.</p>	

## Endnotes

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i Throughout this report, we refer to “children of immigrants” or “children in immigrant families” as those children with at least one parent born outside the United States. In some cases, children of immigrants have one U.S.-born and one foreign-born parent. Following the definition used by the U.S. Census Bureau, we do not consider children with parents born in Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories children of immigrants.

ii The National School Lunch Program offers free and reduced-price school lunches to children with family incomes under 185 percent of the federal poverty level. In 2000, this eligibility threshold equaled about \$31,500 for a family of four (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2005). NCLB uses this as the definition for the low-income or “economically disadvantaged” subgroup.

iii Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy (SCIRP), U.S. Immigration Policy and the National Interest (Washington, DC.: SCIRP, 1981).

iv 50 U.S.C. Sections 21-23, 1798.

v Although US Congress has not clearly defined crimes involving moral turpitude, courts have interpreted it to include offenses that are ‘inherently’ evil, immoral, vile or base. NYSDA explains “crimes which require an intent to steal or defraud (such as theft and forgery offenses); crimes in which bodily harm is caused by an intentional act or serious bodily harm is caused by a reckless act (such as murder and certain manslaughter and assault offenses); and most sex offenses (Deportation 101 Manual by Families for Freedom & NYSDA Immigrant Defense Project, p.15).

vi Anti-Drug Abuse Act, 1988, Section 7344(a).

vii 8 U.S.C. Section 1251(a)(4)(1952).

viii 8 U.S.C. Section 1251(a)(11)(1952)

ix 8 U.S.C. Section 1251(a)(14)(1952).

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x Human Rights Watch 2007. *Forced Apart: Families Separated and Immigrants Harmed by United States Deportation Policy*. July 2007.

Volume 19, No. 3 (G)

xi For a copy of the manual visit: <http://www.familiesforfreedom.org/httpdocs/deportation101.html>

xii See the February 12, 2002 New York Times article in the New York and Region session: *Judge Gives Children Voice In Deportation*

By William Glaberson.

xiii Researcher Bernardo Vega advises not to take these figures as exact, but as an approximation—since the information was collected from different sources that use different methodologies.

xiv *Between 2 Worlds: Dominicans in New York –A special Report; Between 2 Worlds: Dominicans in New York* by Sara Rimer. New York Times. September 16, 1991.

xv The principal investigators and source wish to remain anonymous

xvi The source of the 2005 Marketing Report of Washington Heights wishes to remain anonymous.

xvii New report about deportations of Dominicans By Candida Portugues, *El Diario La Prensa*, 1 May 2009. Translated from Spanish by Emily Leavitt. New York Community Media Alliance, Edition 371, May 7, 2009.

[http://www.indypressny.org/nycma/voices/371/news/news\\_2/](http://www.indypressny.org/nycma/voices/371/news/news_2/) (last visited June 17, 2009)

xviii The Dominican Population in the U.S. is projected to be 1.6 million in 2010, as based on Census 2000 figures. MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE, *THE DOMINICAN POPULATION IN THE U.S.: GROWTH AND DISTRIBUTION*, 1 (Sept. 2004), available at [http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/MPI\\_Report\\_Dominican\\_Pop\\_US.pdf](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/MPI_Report_Dominican_Pop_US.pdf) (last visited Apr. 27, 2009) [hereinafter MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE].

xix In a statement made in 2006, Dominican Police Colonel Francis Abreu Peña stated that

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90% of the 23,800 registered Dominicans repatriated for crimes had only committed drug offenses. Panky Corcino, Más de 23,000

deportados desde EE.UU., EL DIARIO, Mar. 26,

2006. This finding is corroborated by findings from a report prepared for the Dominican

Studies Institute of the City University of New York, which show that the majority of deportees have been repatriated for drug offenses. See

Charles R. Venator-Santiago, Dominican Deportees: Notes for Further Research 29 (2008) (Unpublished Monograph, on file with Storrs:

University of Connecticut).

xx According to a recent study by Human Rights Watch, 77 percent of legal immigrants who were deported had been convicted of

nonviolent crimes. Some of the most common crimes for which people were deported were relatively minor offenses, such as marijuana and

cocaine possession or traffic offenses. HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, FORCED APART (BY THE NUMBERS): NON-CITIZENS

DEPORTED MOSTLY FOR NONVIOLENT OFFENSES (Apr. 2008), available at

<http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/us0409web.pdf> (last visited Apr. 27, 2009)

xxi A recent spike in application costs for citizenship provides further barriers to Dominicans seeking citizenship in the future. Fees rose

from \$400 to \$675 on July 30, 2007, immediately followed by plummeting numbers of applicants. See Emily Bazar, Higher Form Fees

Limit Citizenship Seekers, USA TODAY, Sept. 10, 2008, available at <http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-09-09->

[citizenship\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-09-09-citizenship_N.htm) (last visited March 26, 2009).

xxii See Harry G. Levine & Deborah Peterson Small, New York Civil Liberties Union, Marijuana Arrest Crusade: Racial Bias and Police

Policy in New York City, 1997-2007 (April 2008), available at [http://www.nyclu.org/files/MARIJUANA-ARREST-CRUSADE\\_Final.pdf](http://www.nyclu.org/files/MARIJUANA-ARREST-CRUSADE_Final.pdf)

(last visited Feb. 20, 2009).

xxiii Id.

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xxiv State of New YORK DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES (DOCS), THE IMPACT OF FOREIGN-BORN INMATES

ON THE NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES 2 (Jul. 2008), available at

[http://www.docs.state.ny.us/Research/Reports/2008/Impact\\_of\\_Foreign-Born\\_Inmates\\_2008.pdf](http://www.docs.state.ny.us/Research/Reports/2008/Impact_of_Foreign-Born_Inmates_2008.pdf) (last visited Mar. 16, 2009) [hereinafter DOCS].

xxv There were 2,732 Dominicans under DOCS custody on December 31, 1996. The total foreign-born inmates number at 9,052. DOCS, *supra* note 17, Table 3.2.

xxvi HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, FORCED APART: FAMILIES SEPARATED AND IMMIGRANTS

HARMED BY UNITED STATES DEPORTATION POLICY (Jul. 2007), available at

<http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2007/07/16/forced-apart> (last visited Apr. 27, 2009).

xxvii See DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS), REMOVALS INVOLVING ILLEGAL ALIEN PARENTS OF UNITED STATES CITIZEN CHILDREN 5 (Jan. 2009), available at

[http://www.dhs.gov/xoig/assets/mgmt/rpts/OIG\\_09-15\\_Jan09.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/xoig/assets/mgmt/rpts/OIG_09-15_Jan09.pdf) (last visited Apr. 27,

2009) (citing that 108,434 noncitizen parents of U.S. citizen children were removed between 1998 and 2007).

xxviii Human Rights Watch, *Forced Apart: Families Separated and Immigrants Harmed by United States Deportation Policy*. (Jul. 2007),

available at <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2007/07/16/forced-apart> (last visited Apr. 27, 2009).

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