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Assimilation and Gender in Naming[1]

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This article examines the naming practices of Hispanic parents who gave birth to children in Los Angeles County in 1995. The authors find that greater exposure to U.S. culture increases the chances of naming a child in English. However, they find that by giving children English names that are translatable into Spanish, U.S.-born Hispanic parents are able simultaneously to assimilate while maintaining a connection to their ethnic origins. In addition, the authors find that attitudes favoring assimilation are particularly great when naming daughters. Immigrant Hispanic couples tend to give sons Spanish names, but they often give daughters English names without Spanish referents. These gender differences persist even among U.S.-born Hispanics paired with non-Hispanics. Among intermarried couples, father's ethnicity has a disproportionately large influence in naming, especially for sons' names. These findings have implications for how the assimilation process is gendered.

ASSIMILATION AND GENDER IN NAMING

Selecting a name for a child represents an important cultural decision. Names oftentimes signify ethnic identity, particularly the identity that parents expect for their children. Given names have obvious long-term consequences; as labels they influence the socialization of children and contribute to the development of personal identities. Although parents

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may choose from an apparently boundless number of names, their choices are shaped by social and cultural influences. For immigrants and their descendants, first names can be a powerful sociological indicator of sociocultural assimilation in that they can be used to quantify the competing influences of two cultures. Classical assimilation theories (Gordon 1964; Park and Burgess 1921) would predict that immigrants and their descendants are less likely to choose ethnic names for their children as they become more exposed to their new society. However, recent theorists of assimilation have argued that ethnic identity can be maintained or reemerge in the host society (Alba 1990; Glazer and Moynihan 1970; Greeley 1971, 1974), and would predict that immigrant parents and successive generations may give names that maintain a connection to their ethnic origins. The study of naming provides us with an excellent opportunity to evaluate these theories.

Moreover, the study of naming potentially provides important evidence about the role of gender in the assimilation process, which has been greatly neglected in the literature. A study of naming practices in the context of immigration can specifically address how gender interacts with ethnicity. Immigrant parents are more likely to give sons ethnic names, as Watkins and London (1994) found for Italians and Jews in 1910 and Lieberson (2000) showed for Mexicans and Asians in recent decades. Lieberson also found that gender differences disappeared by the second generation, while Watkins and London did not address this issue. Regarding gender differences in the immigrant generation, Lieberson argued that fashion and premigration linguistic tastes were important influences that led to the differential treatment of sons' names compared to daughters'. With the ability to compare the naming outcomes of sons versus daughters, the study of naming practices of immigrants and their descendants can shed much light on the gendered process of assimilation.

By addressing the interaction of gender, ethnicity, and birthplace of parents, a study of naming can speak to issues of parental influence over children's names. Gender differences in naming, and particularly the gender gap produced in naming, may arise from gender ideologies and practices both from the host society as well as from the society of origin. In addition, gender differences in naming may arise from the varying ways in which fathers and mothers experience the immigration and assimilation process. For group members who ethnically intermarry, the decision of how to name their child is likely to involve more directly the negotiation of gender ideologies and practices from two cultures. By specifically looking at various parental combinations based on ethnicity and birthplace and the effect on the naming process, much can be learned.

This article examines naming choices by parents of babies born in Los Angeles County in 1995. Los Angeles County represents the primary des-

tination in the United States of the post-1965 immigration wave in which Hispanics are, by far, its largest component.[2] We investigate how ethnicity, birthplace of parents, and child's gender affect the extent to which parents give their children Spanish names. We also examine the ethnicity-birthplace-gender combination of parental couples. In order to score the Spanishness of a name, we use a language continuum ranging from least to most Spanish. In addition, we have designed a continuum for representing parental Hispanic ethnicity, which ranges from the most ethnic Hispanic (Hispanic immigrant couples) to the least ethnic Hispanic (non-Hispanic couples). Intermediate categories are used to represent "intermarried" couples, which include all parental combinations of foreign-born Hispanics, U.S.-born Hispanics, and non-Hispanics.[3]

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociological inquiry into naming practices provides an excellent opportunity to study complex social processes such as the formation of consciousness and identity. Zelinsky (1970, p. 743), a prominent onomastic scholar, suggests that naming practices and patterns of name choices "may prove to be the single most nearly ideal measure for analyzing spatial and temporal variation in total cultural systems." The study of naming practices provides a window into parental visions of the ethnic identity of their children, thereby addressing how ethnic identity is directly influenced from one generation to the next. Naming practices represent behaviors which are much more concrete measures than attitudes and opinions. Despite the great potential that the study of naming has for a wide variety of sociological theories, this field has been greatly overlooked. An earlier critique of the literature on names made by Zelinsky (1970) still rings true today: most of what is in the literature remains in the realm of philosophy, etymology, or grammar, with little attention paid to the social, cultural, or psychological dimensions of names.[4] Lieberson and Bell (1992) note that the extant literature on names generally lacks method-

[2] We chose to use the term *Hispanic* because it more adequately fits the study's context, which is the orientation to the Spanish language.

[3] We use the term *intermarried* loosely, simply referring to the mother-father combination. Relatedly, since we do not have a variable on marital status, we are not able to separate married couples from unmarried couples in this analysis.

[4] To the extent that a body of literature on naming exists, names are generally interpreted as a form of "fashion" (Gaffney 1971; Lieberson 2000; Wright 1954), as status markers (Lieberson 2000; Thonus 1991; Vandebosch 1998; Zweigenhaft 1983), as "political onomastics," (Paustian 1978; Zhongti 1989), as factors in identity formation (Brennen 2000; Dion 1983; Gaffney 1971; Maass 1958; Paustian 1978), and from a linguistic perspective.

ological complexity and a strong theoretical grounding. Systematic sociological studies are limited to a few, including Rossi (1965), Lieberson and Bell (1992), Lieberson (2000), and Watkins and London (1994).

Assimilation and Naming

The classic theory of assimilation posits that the more time spent in the United States, the more immigrant groups will become "Americanized" and leave their traditional cultural markers behind. For Robert Park and Ernest Burgess (1921) and Milton Gordon (1964), as primary relations are established with dominant group members, rapid assimilation ensues. Thus, classical assimilation theory expects that as individuals spend more time in the United States, intermarry, and adopt the English language, they will choose English names for their children rather than names from their language of origin. Furthermore, they interpret the retention of ethnicity as a hindrance to successful incorporation into society. These scholars saw assimilation as being unidirectional and for the most part, inevitable.

On the other hand, scholars such as Glazer and Moynihan (1970), Greeley (1971, 1974), and Alba (1990) suggest that ethnic identity can be maintained or even reemerge as ethnic groups integrate into the broader society. This group of scholars emphasizes the existence of cultural heritage and ethnic markers, even among U.S.-born descendants of immigrants, and argue that the retention of ethnic cultural traits is not necessarily a hindrance to successful incorporation. Most recently, Alba and Nee (2003) have called for more empirical studies to better understand the complex nature of assimilation, which often involves an uneven path toward the complete breakdown of ethnic boundaries and eventual assimilation. Although Alba and Nee define assimilation as the decline of an ethnic distinction in relation to other groups, they argue that this does not necessarily require the disappearance of ethnic markers. This definition, unlike some of the classical definitions, allows for the possibility that the nature of the "mainstream" changes in the process.

Alba and Nee point to the need to understand why rates of assimilation differ among groups and what conditions may influence the emergence of ethnicity. In the case of naming and ethnicity, parental choices may range from the belief that an ethnic name will establish a strong ethnic identity in the child, to the belief that a nonethnic name will improve a child's acceptance or minimize discrimination in the host society. Whereas the first choice may arise out of a conscious effort to preserve ethnic identity, the latter may be what Alba and Nee refer to as a pragmatic decision, which although not necessarily intentional, may lead toward assimilation.

Alba and Nee argue that the key to understanding group incorporation lies in the interplay between purposive actions of immigrants and their descendants and context. This position provides a contrast to an inevitable assimilation model, giving weight to individual agency. At the same time, their theory highlights the role of institutional structures. They argue that the choices of immigrants and their descendants are "inevitably context-bound, shaped not only by cultural beliefs but also by institutionalized constraints" (Alba and Nee 2003, p. 39). However, in the case of naming in the United States, decisions are largely made free of institutional as well as other constraints. For example, the government does not impose specifications on children's names. Economic constraints do not impede the ability of parents of low socioeconomic status to select a particular name. Marketing and mass media do not directly attempt to influence naming preferences. Other structural social factors can be seen as having an influential but not deterministic effect on the process of naming. Therefore, the study of names can arguably measure actors' purposive actions to a greater degree than other indicators.

Naming is an especially useful indicator of cultural assimilation because everyone is given a first name, those names are all registered upon birth, and they can be quantified on a continuum from ethnic to nonethnic. The act of naming itself represents an important ethnic choice that does not require major parental investment. More assimilated ethnic group members are free to choose names from their language of origin even though they have lost the language fluency or cultural knowledge of their ethnic ancestors. Thus, naming may capture a cultural or ethnic orientation that is independent of other traditional ethnic behaviors.

Although generally understudied, a few sociologists have taken advantage of data on names in an attempt to understand the assimilation process. Contrary to their expectations, Watkins and London (1994) found no evidence of an abrupt transformation in social identity from Italian or Jewish to Anglo. Second-generation Italian and Jewish males and females during the classic period of immigration were much more likely to share names with the foreign-born generation than with native whites. Stanley Lieberson (2000), in his longitudinal analysis of naming patterns of various ethnic groups in the latter half of the 20th century, found that as individuals moved from the immigrant to the U.S.-born generation, they tended to choose "American" names, although significant premigration linguistic traits remained among the U.S. born.

Gender and Naming

Discussions of gender are largely neglected in the assimilation literature. The major works on assimilation from Park and Burgess (1921) and

Gordon (1964) to Glazer (1993) and Alba and Nee (1997, 2003) do not systematically discuss the role of gender, nor do they predict the potential effect that a gendered framework could imply for existing theories. Nevertheless, empirical evidence from several studies has begun to show that females acculturate at a quicker pace than males (Portes and Hao 1998; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut 1994; Waters 1999), assimilate linguistically faster than males (Liang and Ito 1999), and are more likely to outmarry than males (Kreider 1999; Murguia and Cazares 1982; Qian 1997; Qian and Lichter 2001). Since the literature on assimilation provides little guidance, we now turn to the developing literature on gender and immigration more broadly, as well as studies that look at gender and naming in other contexts, to help contextualize the present study.

Recent literature on gender and immigration claims that female immigrants are more positive about assimilation and more likely to break with tradition (Qian and Lichter 2001). Specific to the Mexican immigrant population, first-generation females are more likely to envision their lives permanently in the United States compared to males (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994) and are less likely than men to return to Mexico once they begin migrating (Massey, Durand, and Malone 2002). Other studies have confirmed the finding that immigrant women feel they have a better position in the United States and therefore are more reluctant to return to their home country (Jones-Correa 1998; Pedraza 1991; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Waters 1999). Given these findings, and the finding that fathers are more likely to give names to sons and mothers to daughters (Alford 1987; Herbert 1999), one could expect that daughters would be given less ethnic names than sons, at least in the early stages of assimilation.

Gender theorists argue that men represent family continuity and tradition (Rothman 1989). This assertion can be seen in the common practice in the United States of married women who replace their last name with that of their new husband. Browner (1986), in a Mexican case study, found that women often have less interest than men in seeing the traditional community endure. In regard to names, children can be understood as part of a genealogical chain that stretches over generations (Smith 1985). A handful of studies show a preference for traditional names for boys, which would support this theory. Rossi (1965) found that American middle-class parents more often choose kin names for boys. She argues that girls' names symbolize their mothers' contemporary social relations whereas boys' names reflect tradition, which is rooted in the past. Stahl (1992) similarly demonstrates that women replaced their foreign names with Hebrew names in newly formed Israel at a higher rate than men. Lieberson and Bell (1992), in their analysis of 1973 and 1985 New York birth records of white and black newborns, also conclude that boys' names represent tradition.

Assimilation, Gender, and Naming

Lieberson (2000) provides the most comprehensive examination of assimilation and naming to date and has set the theoretical and methodological stage for a promising area of study. He interprets names as indicators of fashion mechanisms that drive tastes in the absence of commercial influences (Lieberson 2000, p. xiii). He provides evidence on gender, assimilation, and naming for Mexican Americans, as well as Asians, Jews, and African-Americans. In his analysis of the top 20 names chosen for sons and daughters among Mexican-American mothers in Texas, he looks at the degree to which these names overlap with names chosen by non-Hispanic white mothers. He found that Mexican immigrants chose five names for sons and seven names for daughters that overlapped with Anglo choices in 1990, but for the U.S.-born Mexican population, those figures were 15 and 14, respectively. Comparing these numbers to the earlier 1965 data, Lieberson found the extent of overlap with Anglos was four for sons and six for daughters of Mexican immigrants and ten for both sons and daughters of Mexican Americans. Based on a difference of only two names, he is thus careful to note that the overlap in naming with Anglos is "somewhat greater" for daughter's names, although by the second generation, the difference disappears or even reverses (Lieberson 2000, p. 185).

In scrutinizing the linguistic content of the top 20 names, he also concludes that the gender difference in naming patterns is due to the selective choice of nonethnic names that end in "a" for daughters ("a" endings in names are strong female gender markers in Spanish). In other words, premigration language tastes remain even when Mexicans choose nonethnic names. By contrast, the option of choosing an "o"-suffix name for boys, the male gender marker in Spanish, is not available among common American names. However, Mexicans avoid the common American name "Joshua," because it ends in "a." Based on this logic, Lieberson (2000) argues that the transition from Spanish to English is easier for girls' names because premigration tastes interact with the structure of the language itself.

Intermarriage and Naming

When turning to the literature on intermarriage to inform our study as it relates to the interaction between gender, ethnicity, and birthplace of parents, we found that past studies provide little guidance. When intermarriage is addressed, the focus is on rates, which does not provide a complete account of the nature of intermarriage (Fu 2001) and does not address the dynamics within intermarriages and power differences over

children's issues. Moreover, the study of intermarriage between natives and immigrants is a significant but neglected aspect of the literature. Qian and Lichter (2001) argue that this native/immigrant intermarriage dynamic is especially important when looking at places like Los Angeles, where rates of immigration are so high that newly arrived immigrants replenish the supply of potential partners for second-generation natives of the same race. They assert that this new intermarriage dynamic will slow assimilation. An in-depth analysis of naming patterns among different parental ethnicity/birthplace combinations can shed light on the relative influence of fathers' ethnicity compared to mothers' ethnicity and speak to the dynamics of intermarriage more generally. More important, it can speak to the effect of intermarriage dynamics on their children.

Study Goals

In the current study we have three main objectives. First, by analyzing the naming practices of Hispanic parents in Los Angeles County, we seek to measure rates of assimilation as indicated in the ethnicity of a child's name, across parental generation. Second, we seek to measure if parents are giving "ethnic" names to daughters at a different rate than to their sons. Finally, we look at how the interaction of ethnicity and birthplace of parents affects whether or not they choose an "ethnic" name for their daughter or son. Our goals are to inform the current debate between classical theories and ethnic maintenance or resurgence theories of assimilation. In addition, we hope to emphasize the importance of addressing gender in assimilation theory. Finally, since there is little literature to guide our study, we hope to provide an original contribution to studies of intermarriage by looking at the complex intersection of the ethnicity and birthplace of parents and how these characteristics interact with the gender and ethnicity of their children to influence the process of naming.

DATA AND METHODS

We rely on data from the 1995 California Birth Records for the County of Los Angeles.[5] The data are confidential because they include full names for children and parents, but they were made available to the authors on the condition that they be used in the aggregate for a study of naming practices. The data include 176,950 cases, which represent all births in Los Angeles County in 1995, except those that occurred in Kaiser-Per-

[5] Data were furnished by the Data Collection and Analysis Unit of the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services.

manente Hospital facilities or in Pasadena and Long Beach cities, which collect their own birth data and represent two of the 88 cities in Los Angeles County. There were 14,545 births in Kaiser-Permanente facilities, 5,254 in Pasadena, and 10,869 in Long Beach, which means that our sample represents 83% of all the births in Los Angeles County. Based on census information for Pasadena and Long Beach, and from Kaiser records, the percentage of Hispanic births at those places is somewhat lower than for the county as a whole.

We investigate the language of the name on a five-point English-Spanish continuum for the top 500 names. By coding each name according to its place on the language continuum, we create a continuous dependent variable. We present the most common names and their respective codes. We proceed to examine how characteristics of mothers and fathers by birthplace (foreign born vs. U.S. born), ethnicity (Hispanic vs. non-Hispanic), and intermarriage affect the Spanishness of names. We then use ordered logistic regression equations to estimate the simultaneous effects of these parental characteristics along with child's sex, parental SES variables, and the ethnic composition of neighborhoods.

We believe that examining a short list of names, as previous authors have done, may bias the conclusions about gender differences made by these studies. By examining overlap only among the top 20 names, we are concerned that such a cutoff may be overly selective and thus yield specious findings. There may be a differential in the commonness of ethnic compared to American names, which would affect the rate of overlap. In addition, a difference of two names among 20 may suggest small differences, but the magnitude and direction of the results may change among a more representative list of names. By extending the analysis to the top 500 most commonly used names for boys and girls combined, our methodology accommodates a much wider range of names chosen.

The top 500 names, although only representing 2.3% of all names, account for 61% of all births.[6] By contrast, the top 20 girls' and boys' names account for only 19% of all births. We decided to limit our analysis

[6] The inclusion of only the top 500 names reduced the sample size from 176,950 to 116,331 observations. We also dropped 8,165 cases in which the parental variables in the model had missing data, and for the multivariate analysis, we dropped an additional 7,698 for lack of information on the proportion Hispanic in the census tract. The final data set consists of 108,166 births, which represent 54% of all male births and 68% of all female births. This sex ratio imbalance is simply the result of sons being more likely to receive common names than daughters. One could argue that the more selective sample based on the top 500 names is different than the total parent sample, therefore creating a selection bias. However, when we compared the means of control variables initially incorporated into the analysis of the reduced sample and the total sample (mother's and father's age, mother's and father's education), the means were almost identical, suggesting little or no bias on observed characteristics.

to the top 500 most frequently used names since the coding of the more than 20,000 first names would be a monumental task and, more important, one that would invite complications in coding rarely used names. In addition, our analysis relies on insights gained from preliminary interview data, which we have gathered for a separate qualitative study on the same topic. Finally, it is important to remember that since virtually all births in Los Angeles County are registered, these data are likely to include the large undocumented immigrant population which many studies of immigration are unable to capture.

THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE: THE SPANISHNESS OF NAMES

With increasing immigration throughout the globe, the need to negotiate multiple languages and ethnicities is growing. For immigrant parents and for many of their descendents, name choice inadvertently involves the decision of how "ethnic" a child's name should be; the choice of an "ethnic" name can be understood as the decision to give a name from the origin language rather than a standard "American" name. However, the giving of a name does not simply involve two categories, English or foreign language. For example, one can choose a language-neutral name which does not strictly connote one language or another. Moreover, when choosing an English or foreign language name, choices vary depending on whether or not that name is easily translatable into the other language. We believe that for a Hispanic parent, for example, naming a child *José* represents a more ethnic choice than *Joseph*, but we also believe that *Joseph* represents a more ethnic choice than *Ryan*. Linguistically, immigration between two societies often involves languages that overlap, as English does with Spanish, Italian, and German, to name prominent examples. Indeed, the cognates of names are often adapted in the lexicons of various languages as in the case of *John*, which has equivalents in 23 languages (Lieberson 2000, p. 175). These overlapping spaces between languages allow for immigrants and their descendants to choose a middle ground rather than having to select names from an ethnic/nonethnic dichotomy. Lieberson (2000) and Watkins and London (1994) seemed to recognize this possibility but their methodology examined only exact matches among the most common names.

To capture this linguistic continuum, we measure the Spanishness of first names by relying on an ordered variable created on a scale ranging from "1," representing the most English names, to "5," representing the most Spanish names. Specifically, "1" refers to English names that are not translatable into Spanish (e.g., Ashley), and "5" refers to Spanish names that are not translatable into English (e.g., Guadalupe). The intermediate

categories represent names that are neither strictly English nor Spanish. A "2" represents an English name that has a Spanish equivalent (e.g., Michael), and a "4" coding represents a Spanish name that has an English equivalent (e.g., Miguel). Finally, a "3" represents a name that is considered native in both languages (e.g., Andrea).

Coding the Dependent Variable

We sought to create a continuum of non-Spanish to exclusively Spanish names with as much objectivity as possible. To do so, we convened a focus group consisting of ourselves, a non-Hispanic bilingual female and a bilingual Mexican-American male, and four other individuals who included a bilingual Salvadoran female in her 20s; a bilingual Guatemalan male immigrant in his 60s; a non-Hispanic white female in her 40s who speaks English, is proficient in Spanish, and works in a school with a majority Hispanic population; and a recently immigrated 30-year-old Mexican male who speaks Spanish and limited English. Although a focus group can never fully represent the population being studied, we attempted to include diversity by age, ethnicity, gender, and familiarity with both languages.

To increase methodological rigor, each member of the focus group individually rated all of the 500 names as opposed to a sample, without collaboration with other coders, and were guided by a memo containing coding directions. The memo provided examples for each code, and coders were asked to take into consideration the spelling of the names, the language connotation of a name, the perceived frequency of use for names and their translations, and to treat diminutives as the original form of the name. In addition, coders were asked to flag difficult cases and explain their coding justification in writing. It is important to note that this project addresses the common connotations of names as opposed to linguistic origins, which we believe most accurately approximate parental understanding of whether names are Spanish or English. For the first pass, 62% of the names were coded exactly the same by all coders. In the great majority of the cases where codes varied, disagreements were primarily over whether a name was translatable or not, as opposed to disagreement about whether the name seemed Spanish as opposed to English. This first pass was designed to weed out the names in which the codes were obvious, in order for the group to focus its attention on the remaining names. Therefore, we convened several focus group meetings in an attempt to develop a consensus on these remaining names. In the large majority of the cases, just by carefully addressing each point in the coding instructions sheet and making sure that coders assigned codes related to the connoted

language of the name as opposed to its usage, we were able to arrive at a consensus.

The remaining controversial cases usually involved whether Spanish or English names were translatable or not. For this reason, we believe the coding scheme overall was able to capture the English versus Spanish phenomenon. If a coder identified a name as translatable, we requested that they provide the translation, and if no group member could supply one, the name was coded as nontranslatable. In other cases, the disagreement was simply a matter of whether the name was being interpreted as a boy's or girl's name, which created inconsistent codes during the first pass. In these cases, the group arrived at a consensus for both scenarios. For the approximately 20 names that proved very difficult for the focus group to agree on (4% of the total sample), we relied on baby name books in Spanish and English to help make a determination.

We are confident that our coding scheme represents language choices in naming, as perceived by parents. Certainly, we understand that the linguistic connotations of specific names may vary among parents, but we believe there is general agreement for most names. Our greatest methodological concern was that we avoid biasing the language coding of male versus female names. We were reassured that we avoided such a bias because we found that the means for sons' and daughters' names were the same when both parents were non-Hispanic, as table 3 will show.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

In the regression analysis, we coded gender of the child using a dummy variable and parental ethnicity/birthplace using a set of nine dummy variables. These capture the wide range of gender, ethnic, and birthplace possibilities for describing the characteristics of couples. We believe that the ordering on language naming preferences will tell us about how gender, ethnicity, and birthplace interact in ethnic naming choices. We expect that this scheme will also suggest something about the influence of the gender of the parents in naming and not only couples' preferences according to a child's sex. Specifically, the parental ethnicity/birthplace variables are (1) both parents are foreign born and Hispanic, (2) the father is foreign born and Hispanic and the mother is U.S. born and Hispanic, (3) the mother is foreign born and Hispanic and the father is U.S. born and Hispanic, (4) both parents are U.S. born and Hispanic, (5) the father is foreign born and Hispanic and the mother is non-Hispanic, (6) the mother is foreign born and Hispanic and the father is non-Hispanic, (7) the father is U.S. born and Hispanic and the mother is non-Hispanic, (8) the mother

is U.S. born and Hispanic and the father is non-Hispanic, and (9) both parents are non-Hispanic.

Unlike the Italians and Jews in 1910 studied by Watkins and London, most U.S.-born Hispanic parents in 1995 are not likely to be children of immigrants since they were mostly born prior to the large-scale immigration from Latin America. In fact, according to the 1998–2000 Current Population Survey, which distinguishes children of immigrants from later generations, 65% of the U.S.-born population of Mexican origin (82% of the Hispanics in our sample are of Mexican origin) that was born between 1945 and 1980, the birth years of parents in 1995, was of a third or later generation. In other words, only 35% are children of immigrants. Therefore, many of the U.S. Hispanics in our sample are grandchildren of immigrants or later generations since immigration. Following the logic of classical assimilation models, the U.S Hispanics in our sample would be expected to have largely lost ties to immigrant culture.

Our last parental category represents our reference group in the regression analysis. Rather than use a single group such as non-Hispanic whites or U.S.-born non-Hispanics, we decided to use all non-Hispanics because we believe that this group represents the society from which Hispanics draw non-Spanish names. We are thus interested in the extent of boundary making between Hispanics and others, which represents a contemporary version of the mainstream (Alba and Nee 2003) as opposed to earlier versions of Anglo conformity. As measures of SES, we also include mother's age and education and father's education minus mother's education, the latter of which measures father's SES while reducing collinearity. Finally, as a control variable we include the proportion Hispanic in the census tract. We predict that this variable could be influential in naming patterns because it measures ethnic isolation. In areas with a high proportion of Hispanics, we would expect that Spanish is much more common, if not the dominant language, and therefore that exposure to Spanish names would increase. Two more variables, father's age and birth order, were tested in the models but dropped because they had no effect on any naming outcomes.

FINDINGS

Although our analysis goes beyond the traditional evaluation of the top 20 names, we begin by comparing the top 20 popular names across Hispanic immigrants, U.S.-born Hispanics, and non-Hispanics. This allows us to draw comparisons with the findings presented by Lieberson and Bell (1992), Watkins and London (1994), and Lieberson (2000), as well as illustrate our coding scheme. Table 1 shows the 20 most common names

TABLE 1

TOP 20 NAMES OF NEWBORN DAUGHTERS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY FOR IMMIGRANT HISPANIC COUPLES, U.S.-BORN HISPANIC COUPLES, AND NON-HISPANIC COUPLES, 1995

	IMMIGRANT HISPANICS		U.S.-BORN HISPANICS		NON-HISPANICS	
RANK	Name	Code	Name	Code	Name	Code
1	Stephanie	2	Alyssa	2	Jessica	2
2	Jessica	2	Samantha	2	Sarah	2
3	Jennifer	1	Jessica	2	Emily	2
4	Kimberly	1	Ashley	1	Ashley	1
5	Maria	4	Amanda	3	Rachel	2
6	Vanessa	3	Alexis	1	Megan	1
7	Elizabeth	3	Jasmine	2	Amanda	3
8	Daisy	2	Brianna	1	Samantha	2
9	Karina	4	Vanessa	3	Lauren	2
10	Jocelyn	1	Stephanie	2	Taylor	1
11	Melissa	3	Destiny	1	Nicole	1
12	Diana	3	Marissa	2	Hannah	1
13	Gabriela	3	Melissa	3	Danielle	2
14	Alejandra	4	Sabrina	3	Michelle	2
15	Karen	2	Desiree	1	Alexandra	2
16	Michelle	2	Danielle	2	Stephanie	2
17	Brenda	3	Amber	1	Elizabeth	3
18	Andrea	3	Lauren	2	Kayla	1
19	Jacqueline	1	Monique	2	Rebecca	2
20	Ana	4	Andrea	3	Tiffany	1
			Valerie	2		

NOTE.—*Immigrant Hispanics* denotes both parents are foreign-born Hispanics, *U.S.-born Hispanics* denotes both parents are U.S.-born Hispanics, and *non-Hispanics* denotes both parents are non-Hispanic.

for daughters and table 2 for sons, along with the value of each name along the English-Spanish continuum for the three parental groups. For example, in naming their daughters, immigrant Hispanic parents gave four names that were coded as "1" (nontranslatable English), whereas U.S.-born Hispanic parents gave six names that were coded as "1," and non-Hispanic parents gave seven names coded as "1." Although Lieberson (2000, pp. 189–91) asserted that Hispanic girls were receiving names in English that were similar to gender-marked names in Spanish, specifically with an "a" suffix, as can be seen in table 1, out of the top 20 daughters' names for daughters born to immigrant Hispanic parents and categorized as "English or English translatable to Spanish" (codes 1 or 2), only one ended in "a," compared to nine that did not. And out of the top 20 names for daughters born to U.S.-born Hispanics, five out of sixteen ended in "a." Indeed, only in one of the 10 instances when immigrant or U.S.-born Hispanics chose an untranslatable English name did it end in "a"

TABLE 2
TOP 20 NAMES OF NEWBORN SONS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY FOR IMMIGRANT HISPANIC COUPLES, U.S.-BORN HISPANIC COUPLES, AND NON-HISPANIC COUPLES, 1995

	IMMIGRANT HISPANICS		U.S.-BORN HISPANICS		NON-HISPANICS	
RANK	Name	Code	Name	Code	Name	Code
1	Jose	4	Anthony	2	Michael	2
2	Juan	4	Andrew	2	Matthew	2
3	Daniel	3	Daniel	3	Ryan	1
4	Luis	4	Joseph	2	Christopher	2
5	Kevin	1	Michael	2	Joshua	2
6	Carlos	4	Christopher	2	Nicholas	2
7	Jonathan	2	Robert	2	Daniel	3
8	Jesus	5	David	3	Andrew	2
9	David	3	Matthew	2	Justin	2
10	Christian	2	Gabriel	3	Kevin	1
11	Eduardo	4	Joshua	2	David	3
12	Miguel	4	Angel	5	Brandon	1
13	Jorge	4	Jacob	2	Joseph	2
14	Alejandro	4	Adrian	3	Tyler	1
15	Angel	5	Christian	2	Jacob	2
16	Anthony	2	Richard	2	Jonathan	2
17	Christopher	2	Jose	4	Kyle	1
18	Oscar	4	Nicholas	2	James	2
19	Bryan	1	Jonathan	2	Alexander	2
20	Victor	3	Jesse	2	Austin	1

NOTE.—*Immigrant Hispanics* denotes both parents are foreign-born Hispanics, *U.S.-born Hispanics* denotes both parents are U.S.-born Hispanics, and *non-Hispanics* denotes both parents are non-Hispanic.

(*Brianna*). Although names like *Jessica* may have originally been seen as untranslatable English names, they have gradually become accepted as translatable names (commonly translated into Spanish as *Yessica*). Therefore, our data do not support Lieberson's (2000) argument that when choosing English names for girls, Hispanic parents are choosing them out of their facility for displaying Spanish gender markers (an "a" suffix).

Interestingly, the top four names for daughters of immigrant Hispanics are in English (either translatable or nontranslatable). This suggests a strong and early trend toward assimilation. A closer look reveals that two of these names (*Jennifer* and *Kimberly*) do not even appear on the top 20 list for U.S.-born Hispanics or non-Hispanics. This may reflect the global spread of English through mass media and transnationalism, in which premigration tastes affect immigrants' choices in the United States (Lieberson 2000). Turning to prior naming data, we find that the name *Jennifer* was the most popular name in California between 1982 and 1986 not only for native whites but for other ethnic groups as well (Lieberson

2000, p. 196). In other words, there is a lag behind that of the dominant culture (Lieberson 2000, pp. 197–200). It is not that *Jennifer* is a randomly selected English name; it is a name that used to be extremely popular among non-Hispanics. One may then wonder why the names *Stephanie* and *Jessica*, which were in the top four names of our sample and did appear on the top 20 list for non-Hispanics in the same year, do not show a similar lag.[7] The difference with these names is that at least from 1982–86 in California, they were in the top 20 for native whites (Lieberson 2000, p. 196), and they continue to be popular in our 1995 sample.

Therefore, our findings are consistent with Lieberson's that immigrants oftentimes choose English names that were once very popular among native whites. For our sample, this lag decreases for the U.S.-born Hispanic parents. Whereas two-thirds or six out of the nine English names (1, 2) given to daughters of immigrants were not on the non-Hispanic top 20 list for the same year, only three of sixteen names given by U.S.-born Hispanics were not on the non-Hispanic list. This suggests that across generations, immigrants increasingly draw from the current non-Hispanic naming pool in the United States. Whereas immigrant Hispanics may desire to give their child an English name, they may draw from an English pool of names that represents former preferences of non-Hispanics.

For the sons' names, table 2 shows that there is a somewhat greater overlap between the English names given to sons of immigrant Hispanics and non-Hispanics (three out of six), as compared to the girls' names. This we would anticipate since there is a smaller pool of names for boys compared to girls. The names *Christian*, *Anthony*, and *Bryan* are English names that are among the top 20 for immigrant Hispanic, but not non-Hispanic, parents. Consulting the data on the top 20 names given to sons born in California between 1982 and 1986 (Lieberson 2000, p. 198), the name *Brian*, albeit spelled differently, appears.[8] In general, although immigrant Hispanics were not always giving English names that were popular for non-Hispanics in the same year, we do not interpret this as lesser evidence of assimilation. These findings showing lags in naming caution us against the total reliance on the cross-sectional matching method as a way of studying naming practices.

For their sons (shown in table 2), immigrant Hispanic parents gave two names that were coded as untranslatable English (1). U.S.-born Hispanic parents did not give any such names to their sons, and non-Hispanic parents gave their sons six of these names. Although U.S.-born Hispanics

[7] Although *Kimberly* was not on the top 20 list for these years, it possibly was for the years between 1987 and 1995, although we do not have the data to confirm this.

[8] We do not have access to data from 1987 to 1995 to see if *Christian* and *Anthony* are names that were popular for native whites.

did not chose any nontranslatable English names, they chose 14 translatable English names (2) among the 20, whereas Hispanic immigrants chose only six English names of any sort (1 or 2). Thus, while U.S.-born Hispanics tend to choose English names for their sons, they seem to be especially careful to select names that have equivalents in the Spanish language.

Returning to Lieberson's study, not only had he found a preference for a name with an "a" suffix for girls, but he also suggested that there is an "antipathy" for Mexican immigrant parents toward male names ending in "a." In the top 20 names for all parental groups in this study, only one name, *Joshua*, ends in an "a." Lieberson also discovered that this name appeared in the top 20 names for Anglos as well as U.S.-born Hispanics (although not until 1985 in his sample), but it did not appear in the top 20 names for Mexican immigrants. It is not clear whether immigrant Hispanics in our sample are avoiding this name because of its "a" ending or because of the lag that was discussed earlier. Moreover, Hispanic immigrants more often than U.S. Hispanics choose untranslatable English names like *Kevin* and *Bryan*. Does this mean that Hispanic immigrants are more willing than their U.S.-born counterparts to cross ethnic boundaries? Probably not, but we will later turn to a wider range of names to examine this further.

Tables 1 and 2 allow us to compare the rate of assimilation in naming among the top 20 names between Hispanics in contemporary Los Angeles and with Italians and Jews in the United States in 1910. Watkins and London (1994) show that foreign-born Italians chose six of the same names as the native whites in the case of sons and five in the case of daughters.[9] For the Jewish sample, the overlap was seven for sons and eight for daughters. This compares to five girl names and four boy names for Los Angeles Hispanics in 1995. This difference does not appear to be significant. Therefore, using this method we may conclude that 1910 and 1995 groups were assimilating at fairly comparable rates. We do not compare second-generation Italians and Jews to our sample since our U.S.-born Hispanic generation, unlike that of Watkins and London, includes many of the third or more generation.

Beginning with table 3, our analysis proceeds to the evaluation of the top 500 names. Table 3 summarizes the language of names given by the three endogamous groups of parents: immigrant Hispanics, U.S.-born Hispanics, and non-Hispanics. This table suggests a progression from Spanish

[9] Watkins and London define native whites as whites born in the United States of a U.S-born mother. This category includes some third-generation immigrants, but they point out that since massive Italian and Jewish immigration only began in the 1880s, there were probably few third-generation Italians or Jews in that category.

TABLE 3

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION AND MEAN SCORES OF THE TOP 500 NAMES FOR DAUGHTERS AND SONS BY SELECT PARENTAL ETHNICITY AND BIRTHPLACE, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, 1995

PARENTAL CATEGORY	ENGLISH			SPANISH			
	(1) Untranslatable	(2) Translatable	(3) Neutral	(4) Translatable	(5) Untranslatable	Mean	*N*
Immigrant Hispanic:							
Daughters	20.88	26.42	26.83	18.89	6.98	2.65	20,994
Sons	9.31	22.01	17.72	42.66	8.31	3.19	26,896
U.S.-born Hispanic:							
Daughters	28.19	37.97	26.08	6.81	.94	2.14	3,600
Sons	7.00	55.82	17.67	15.28	4.23	2.54	5,111
Non-Hispanic:							
Daughters	42.84	38.43	16.77	1.84	.12	1.78	13,878
Sons	36.31	51.39	11.22	.97	.10	1.77	19,199

NOTE.—*Immigrant Hispanics* denotes both parents are foreign-born Hispanics, *U.S.-born Hispanics* denotes both parents are U.S.-born Hispanics, and *non-Hispanics* denotes both parents are non-Hispanic.

to English as parents move further away from Hispanic culture, for both sons' and daughters' names. The last column of table 3 shows the mean Spanishness of names for each of the parental groups who fall into the top 500 cutoff. The mean Spanishness varies from 2.65 for daughters of immigrant Hispanic parents to 2.14 for daughters of U.S.-born Hispanic parents and from 3.19 to 2.54 for sons, revealing a clear trend of assimilation. Table 3 also shows that for the sons of immigrant Hispanic parents, about 51% are given Spanish names and 26% of daughters receive Spanish names, and for the U.S. Hispanics, 20% of sons are given Spanish names compared to 8% of daughters. Thus, daughters are clearly less likely to receive Spanish names than sons for both immigrant and U.S.-born Hispanics. This finding of daughters' receiving less ethnic names than are sons in the first generation is consistent with both Watkins and London (1994) and Lieberson (2000), and the change from immigrants to U.S. born is evidence of especially rapid assimilation in naming daughters.

Table 3 shows that Hispanic immigrant parents are more than twice as likely to give their daughters (20.88%) untranslatable English names compared to their sons (9.31%) but twice as likely to give sons (42.66%) translatable Spanish names as to their daughters (18.89%). U.S.-born Hispanic parents are nearly four times as likely to give untranslatable English names to daughters (28.19%) as they are to sons (7.00%) and more than twice as likely to give translatable or untranslatable Spanish names to sons.[10] Thus, the gendered pattern of naming children is similar for immigrants and U.S.-born Hispanics, although there is a difference in giving translatable English names. U.S.-born Hispanics are substantially more likely to give such names to sons compared to daughters while immigrant Hispanics prefer to give these names to daughters compared to sons. In addition, table 3 shows that for sons, there is no evidence of assimilation occurring with regard to choosing untranslatable English names. In fact, contrary to what one would expect, immigrant Hispanics are more likely to give their sons untranslatable English names than U.S. Hispanics. The data presented for the top 20 names in table 2 strongly suggested this, but data in table 3 show that differences across a large number of names are actually quite small. Instead, a clear difference can be seen between immigrant Hispanics and U.S. Hispanics, where the latter overwhelmingly prefer English names that are translatable into Spanish. Although Watkins and London did not place as much emphasis on whether the names being given were translatable, their data suggest that U.S.-born Italians and Jews held a strong preference for translatable names. By placing special emphasis on whether or not a name is translatable, our

[10] The top 20 lists did not show any names in this category, revealing the usefulness of the more inclusive scoring of names.

findings show that although there is evidence of assimilation in the fact that sons are more likely to receive English names from U.S. Hispanic parents than from immigrant Hispanic parents, these parents assign names that do not sever connections to the Spanish language. In other words, one could say that U.S.-born Hispanics, in what may also be the case for other U.S.-born ethnics, find a middle ground between assimilation and ethnic maintenance.

On the Spanish end of the continuum, table 3 shows that the gender differences for immigrants and U.S.-born Hispanics are largely driven by sons receiving Spanish names that are translatable to English, as opposed to untranslatable Spanish names. In fact, for untranslatable Spanish names, the gender difference is negligible. On the English end of the continuum, we can see that parents are much more likely to give daughters English untranslatable names compared to sons, which leads to the overall finding that daughters receive more English names than sons. For sons' names, the major shift in naming patterns from the immigrant to the U.S.-born generation is from Spanish translatable names to English translatable names.

Lieberson (2000) found that gender differences all but disappeared for Mexicans and Asians born in the United States. Our results indicate that these differences do not in fact disappear for the U.S.-born generation immigrants, which is shown in table 3. In fact, the gender gap probably persists beyond the second generation since our U.S.-born Hispanic category is largely composed of third-generation immigrants and beyond. Strong gender differences occur for both immigrants and natives in the use of untranslatable English names. However, when adding both translatable and untranslatable names, gender differences remain large for the first generation (47.30 vs. 31.32), but nearly disappear for the second (66.16 vs. 62.82). Thus, when one simplifies the linguistic character of names, the true nature of the gender phenomenon may be obscured. This explanation seems to account, at least in part, for our divergence with Lieberson's findings.[11]

As was mentioned, non-Hispanic couples are an important control for whether certain patterns in naming are ethnic phenomena or if they are generalizable. The findings show that the Spanish language pattern of names also varies for sons and daughters of non-Hispanic couples, but these differences are much slighter than those for Hispanics and occur only at the English end of the continuum. More important, mean Spanishness is virtually the same for sons (1.78) and daughters (1.77) of non-

[11] This is further complicated if one interprets language-neutral names as English ones. With this interpretation, large gender differences reemerge for the U.S. born.

Hispanics, and these parents choose Spanish names of any kind in only about 2% of all cases.

Table 4 presents the mean scores of the Spanishness of names for daughters and sons, according to the ethnicity/birthplace of mothers and fathers. The characteristics of parents are listed in descending order according to the mean Spanishness score of daughters' names. As expected, when both parents are foreign-born Hispanics, sons and daughters are most likely to receive Spanish names, as compared to other couples. However, this group of parents is especially likely to give sons Spanish names. The mean score for sons (3.19) is well above the mean score for daughters (2.65), thus mirroring the results shown in tables 1, 2, and 3. At the other extreme, non-Hispanics have the lowest Spanishness scores, as would be expected, and there is no gender gap. All other groups, including U.S.-born Hispanic parents, are intermediate in their mean score of Spanishness. Thus, a pattern of gendered behavior appears which depends on both the sex of the child and the gender-ethnicity/birthplace coupling pattern of the parents. Gender differences are greatest among the least assimilated parents, and they eventually converge to the point where there is no difference for the most assimilated.

Among the "intermarriages," Hispanic immigrants paired with U.S.-born Hispanics choose the most Spanish names, followed by Hispanic immigrants paired with non-Hispanics. U.S.-born Hispanics paired with non-Hispanics are most likely to give English names. None of this may be surprising but the gender of the parents within each combination yields unexpected results. When fathers are more ethnic or closer to the Hispanic culture than the mothers, couples are more likely to give Spanish names to their children than when the mother is more ethnic. This pattern holds whether the baby is a boy or a girl. In addition, the gender difference is greater when fathers are more ethnic. For example, the difference between the mean Spanishness scores of daughters and sons of immigrant Hispanic fathers paired with non-Hispanic mothers is .31 (2.09 vs. 2.40) compared to the scores of daughters and sons of immigrant mothers paired with non-Hispanic fathers, which is −.03 (1.98 vs. 1.95). Thus, paternal ethnicity influences the language of children's names more than maternal ethnicity. Moreover, this pattern is stronger for sons' names than daughters' names, suggesting that fathers' ethnicity has a disproportionate effect on sons' names. We will address reasons as to why this may occur in the discussion section.

To examine the effect of parental ethnicity/birthplace for naming daughters and sons, independent of parental demographic and contextual factors, we now turn to our ordered logit models, which we present in table

TABLE 4
MEAN SCORES OF SPANISHNESS OF NAMES FOR DAUGHTERS AND SONS BY PARENTAL ETHNICITY AND BIRTHPLACE

Parental Ethnicity	Daughters	Sons	Difference
Foreign-born Hispanic, foreign-born Hispanic	2.65	3.19	.54
Foreign-born Hispanic father, U.S. Hispanic mother	2.37	3.05	.68
Foreign-born Hispanic mother, U.S. Hispanic father	2.28	2.75	.47
U.S. Hispanic, U.S. Hispanic	2.14	2.54	.40
Foreign-born Hispanic father, non-Hispanic mother	2.09	2.40	.31
Foreign-born Hispanic mother, non-Hispanic father	1.98	1.95	−.03
U.S. Hispanic father, non-Hispanic mother	1.95	2.06	.11
U.S. Hispanic mother, non-Hispanic father	1.84	1.85	.01
Non-Hispanic, non-Hispanic	1.78	1.77	−.01

5.[12] The first column of table 5 shows the means for the sample, for which we used full information on all variables. It shows that only 31% of all births are to two non-Hispanic parents and thus fully 69% of births in our sample occurred to couples in which at least one parent was Hispanic. Most of the births to Hispanics are to mothers and fathers who are both immigrants (44% of all births). From the perspective of mothers, the sum of several categories shows that 48% of births were to Hispanic immigrant women and fully 65% to Hispanic women.

We present standard regression statistics in models for daughters and sons in table 5.[13] Each of the parental ethnicity/birthplace categories in which at least one Hispanic parent is involved is presented as variables in the model, and they are compared to the reference category of non-

[12] We specify the ordered logit model in the standard form and using the standard ologit model in Stata, which assumes that all coefficients are the same across all values of the dependent variable (Williams 2006). However, we failed to meet the parallel lines assumption (proportionality of odds test for both models: Prob > χ^2 = 0.0000), and thus we ran a less restrictive model, which regresses all consecutive paired values of the dependent variable. However, our findings with the standard model, which we present in table 5 and discuss in the following paragraphs, are similar to those predicted by the less restrictive model. With rare exception, all of the coefficients in both models run in the same direction. Results from the less restrictive model are more detailed and difficult to interpret but are available from the authors.

[13] We present significance tests even though we have nearly all Los Angeles County births in 1995.

TABLE 5

Logistic Regression Coefficients Predicting Spanishness of Names for Daughters and Sons, Los Angeles County, 1995

Independent Variable	Total	Daughters			Sons		
	Mean	Coefficient	SE	$P>\|z\|$	Coefficient	SE	$P>\|z\|$
Parental ethnicity and birthplace:							
Foreign-born Hispanic, foreign-born Hispanic	.44	1.114	.031	.000	2.060	.028	.000
Foreign-born Hispanic father, U.S. Hispanic mother	.06	.880	.043	.000	1.932	.038	.000
Foreign-born Hispanic mother, U.S. Hispanic father	.03	.776	.055	.000	1.469	.048	.000
U.S. Hispanic, U.S. Hispanic	.08	.577	.038	.000	1.147	.033	.000
Foreign-born Hispanic father, non-Hispanic mother	.01	.483	.079	.000	.965	.071	.000
Foreign-born Hispanic mother, non-Hispanic father	.01	.323	.074	.000	.339	.066	.000
U.S. Hispanic father, non-Hispanic mother	.03	.281	.058	.000	.428	.051	.000
U.S. Hispanic mother, non-Hispanic father	.03	.043	.058	.456	.071	.050	.162
Non-Hispanic, non-Hispanic (reference)	.31						
Parental status and context:							
Mother's schooling	11.32	−.061	.004	.000	−.076	.003	.000
Father's schooling−mother's schooling	.079	−.031	.004	.000	−.046	.003	.000
Mother's age	27.26	.016	.001	.000	−.007	.001	.000
Proportion Hispanic in census tract	.466	.031	.039	.426	.215	.034	.000
Cut point 1		−.566	.071		−1.727	.063	
Cut point 2		.904	.071		.514	.063	
Cut point 3		2.280	.072		1.404	.063	
Cut point 4		3.867	.075		3.719	.065	
N		43,060	43,060	43,060	57,408	57,408	57,408
LR χ^2		4,993	4,993	4,993	19,082	19,082	19,082
Prob > χ^2		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Hispanic parents. Table 5 demonstrates the general trend that as parental ethnicity/birthplace becomes closer to that of the non-Hispanic population, the likelihood of Spanish naming decreases, although the change is steeper for sons. In other words, as we discovered with the descriptive data in table 3, Hispanic immigrant parents give their children the most Spanish names, followed by U.S.-born Hispanic parents and then non-Hispanics. This general assimilatory pattern may not seem surprising. However, as seen in the descriptive data, the multivariate findings for the intermarried categories are especially innovative as they reflect a hierarchy in assimilation around an ethnicity-gender interaction. Specifically, the coefficients consistently show that couples in which the father is more ethnic than the mother give more Spanish names both to daughters, but especially to sons, than when the mother is more ethnic. Thus, the composition of intermarriages reveals a pattern of greater assimilation for females, which is consistent with gender differences in naming sons versus daughters.

Parental SES and context variables serve as important controls but they also reveal interesting trends in the data.[14] Table 5 demonstrates that as mothers' education increases, the likelihood of both sons and daughters receiving a Spanish name decreases. In addition, when fathers have more education than mothers, both sons and daughters are less likely to receive a Spanish name. Mothers' age has a positive effect on the likelihood of daughters receiving a Spanish name but a negative effect on the likelihood that sons will receive a Spanish name. Rather than strictly an age effect, the lower likelihood of giving Spanish names to sons may be the result of older mothers' having resided in the United States for a longer period of time and thus having greater exposure to the English language. However, the opposite effect for daughters may be surprising, but this is consistent with the finding that generation has less effect on the naming of daughters. There is simply less of a difference in the language of names chosen for daughters between the most and least assimilated population sectors than there is for sons.

The effect of the percentage of Hispanics in one's neighborhood or census tract is more influential in the naming of sons compared to daughters. Living in a segregated Hispanic neighborhood predicts a Spanish name for sons but has virtually no effect on the naming of daughters. Again, this finding for residence is consistent with our primary findings that assimilation is particularly important for naming sons. Thus, both

[14] We were concerned that these effects may be driven by the non-Hispanic couples in the model, but we replicated this table excluding these couples, and the direction of the results and the general magnitude remained the same.

spatial and generational assimilation clearly make less of a difference for naming daughters.

Although the logistic regression coefficients can help show the direction of effects of the independent variables, the magnitude of the effect is difficult to interpret. Therefore, based on table 5 findings, we generated predicted probabilities for sons and daughters (Long 1997; Powers and Xie 1999), which we present in table 6. Table 6 compares the predicted probabilities of daughters and sons receiving a name on the 1 to 5 language scale by parental ethnicity/birthplace, in which the parental socioeconomic and context variables are given the mean values for the total sample. First of all, table 6 confirms that Hispanic couples are more likely to give boys Spanish names.[15] For example, foreign-born Hispanic parents are more than twice as likely (.43 vs .20) to give a Spanish name (4 or 5) to sons than daughters. Table 6 also confirms that as parental ethnicity/birthplace becomes closer to that of the non-Hispanic population, the probability that sons or daughters receive a Spanish name decreases. For example, foreign-born Hispanic parents have a 20% chance of giving a Spanish name (4 and 5) to daughters compared to a 13% chance when both parents are U.S.-born Hispanics and an 8% chance when both parents are non-Hispanics.[16] The same trend can be seen in sons' names (43% vs. 23% vs. 9%, respectively). Third, the gender gap in giving more Spanish names to sons decreases as parental ethnicity/birthplace becomes closer to that of the non-Hispanic population. The overall trends are consistent with those observed in the descriptive tables.

The other striking finding, which is substantiated in these more statistically rigorous analyses, is that the gender gap between the probability of daughters receiving Spanish names compared to sons is generally larger when the father is more ethnic than the mother. Also, the gender gap

[15] In 9,038 cases, fathers' names were passed on to sons, whereas only in 730 cases were mothers' names passed on to daughters. Although one may believe that the gender difference between giving a Spanish name to sons compared to daughters is solely the result of the tradition of fathers passing names on to sons, this explanation cannot fully explain the results. Although the regressions are not presented, we did run the same regressions while excluding cases in which the father's name was the same as the son's. Although the difference between the probability that daughters and sons will receive Spanish names did decrease, the basic trends remained the same. Furthermore, we would like to point out that the dynamic of passing fathers' names on to sons supports theories that males are the carriers of the family line.

[16] Our model, which assumes parallel lines, overestimates probabilities in some cases. A particularly large overestimate from our model is in giving Spanish names by couples in which non-Hispanic parents are involved. The less restrictive model predicts a 1% chance that non-Hispanic parents will give their son a Spanish name and 3% for daughters, which is more consistent with the actual percentages as shown in table 3. The predicted probabilities for the less restrictive models are also available from the authors.

TABLE 6
PREDICTED PROBABILITIES OF SPANISHNESS OF NAMES FOR DAUGHTERS AND SONS, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, 1995 (Based on Table 5)

PARENTAL ETHNICITY AND BIRTHPLACE	DAUGHTERS					SONS				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Foreign-born Hispanic, foreign-born Hispanic	.19	.31	.30	.15	.05	.06	.30	.22	.36	.07
Foreign-born Hispanic father, U.S. Hispanic mother	.23	.33	.27	.12	.04	.06	.32	.22	.33	.06
Foreign-born Hispanic mother, U.S. Hispanic father	.25	.34	.26	.11	.03	.10	.40	.21	.25	.04
U.S. Hispanic, U.S. Hispanic	.29	.35	.24	.10	.03	.13	.45	.19	.20	.03
Foreign-born Hispanic father, non-Hispanic mother	.31	.35	.23	.09	.03	.15	.47	.18	.17	.02
Foreign-born Hispanic mother, non-Hispanic father	.34	.35	.21	.08	.02	.25	.51	.13	.10	.01
U.S. Hispanic father, non-Hispanic mother	.35	.35	.20	.08	.02	.23	.51	.13	.11	.01
U.S. Hispanic mother, non-Hispanic father	.41	.34	.17	.06	.02	.30	.50	.11	.08	.01
Non-Hispanic, non-Hispanic (reference)	.42	.34	.17	.06	.02	.32	.50	.10	.08	.01

NOTE.—All categorical variables are held at 0 (negative outcome), and all continuous variables are held at their mean value.

most often changes because of fluctuations in the probability of naming sons, not daughters. To take a case in point, when the mother is a foreign-born Hispanic and the father a U.S.-born Hispanic, there is almost no gender difference (.02) in giving a Spanish name (4 and 5), but when the father is a foreign-born Hispanic and the mother a U.S.-born Hispanic, the gender difference is .10. From another perspective, the probability of giving sons a Spanish name in these categories jumps from 29% when the mother is foreign born, to 39% when the father is foreign born. However, the probability for daughters changes only from 14% to 16%. Thus, when the father is more ethnic in an intermarriage, sons are given more ethnic names than in comparable marriages where the mother is more ethnic.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The study of names is an important resource for sociologists, yet it is largely unexplored. This is unfortunate since naming practices can inform theories of assimilation, gender, and intermarriage. Our analysis considers

the linguistic properties of the most popular 500 names, which we believe provides a methodological advance over a handful of earlier sociological studies, which focused on the top 20 most popular names. By broadening the range of names and analyzing the nuances of language, this methodology has yielded new findings that provide stronger generalizations. Moreover, our multivariate analyses demonstrate that purely descriptive findings downplay the true extent of the gender difference that occurs in naming practices. Finally, we examined the relation between the ethnicity of parents in an intermarriage and the ethnic identity of their children, an area that has been virtually unexplored.

There are many meanings that can be attributed to the naming patterns we have uncovered. It is important to clarify that we are not arguing that daughters are assimilating more rapidly than sons, but instead, we are using names as indicators of parental attitudes toward assimilation. As mentioned in the introduction, we argue that names, in part, can measure the degree of the parents' sociocultural assimilation. Or, on the flip side, they can measure parents' desires to reject such assimilation in hopes of maintaining or passing on a strong ethnic identity to their children. By addressing the nuances of language itself, we feel that there may be a way for parents to integrate these seemingly opposing forces in the giving of a translatable name, which can simultaneously signal assimilation and ethnic identity maintenance. Finally, our findings have demonstrated how names can also be an indictor of gender dynamics that occur within families, both between mother and father and the gender of the child.

In this article we have argued that when looking at naming patterns, it is vital to understand the nuances of language itself. We believe that previous scholars have oversimplified naming choices by categorizing them in the dichotomous variables of ethnic and nonethnic. Time and time again, scholars have critiqued the use of categorical dichotomies to explicate sociological processes as being inaccurate representations of the social world. The use of language is no exception. Our treatment of the dependent variable as a five-point scale highlights a flexibility inherent in name giving that more accurately reflects true language choices. Whereas scholars such as Watkins, London, and Lieberson have focused on exact matches between "American" and ethnic names, we have argued that naming choices are not simply a question of exact matching, but also have to do with the ability for a name to translate into the other language, and thus capture the complexity of assimilation. This is especially true for languages that are related to English, such as Spanish (which is spoken by the largest group of immigrants today), and Italian (which was spoken by the largest immigrant group nearly a century ago).

Our treatment of names as having many nuances has also helped us to better address larger theories of assimilation. As we mentioned in the

literature review, various theories of assimilation have been posited. One intellectual camp has described a constant and mostly inevitable path to assimilation. Another group focused instead on the possibility of ethnic maintenance or even resurgence in the process of assimilation. Our finding that U.S.-born Hispanics were much more likely than immigrant Hispanics to give sons translatable English names could be interpreted as rapid assimilation, since English names, untranslatable or not, are, in essence, English names. However, an alternate interpretation, which we support, is that a different kind of assimilation is taking place—an assimilation that provides a bridge between the old culture and the new one. Therefore, instead of supporting the classical assimilation model or the ethnic resurgence theories, our data seem to partially support both. Moreover, they seem to provide support for the more contemporary theory of assimilation proposed by Alba and Nee (2003), which predicts some decline in ethnic distinction between groups but also allows for the persistence of certain ethnic markers.

In light of Alba and Nee's conception of the mainstream, the use of translatable names can be interpreted as a practice in which ethnic group members do not sense a rupture between participation in the mainstream and traditional cultural practices, thereby easing the assimilation process. In other words, translatable names are accepted as mainstream names, while they simultaneously maintain a connection to the ethnic community. The giving of translatable English names applies more to the case of naming sons, while the naming patterns of daughters suggest greater overall assimilation, reflected in the greater use of untranslatable English names. Even in the first generation, Hispanic immigrants have a strong tendency to give very American names to their daughters, which is early evidence of assimilation. Such findings are unlikely to be detected with the analysis of the more common indicators, such as SES, language ability, and intermarriage.

Our finding that parents are more likely to give Spanish names to sons compared to daughters is consistent with previous studies. This suggests that parents hope for or envision their daughters assimilating at a faster rate than their sons, and arguably, English names may indeed facilitate the assimilation process. Although additional qualitative research is needed to investigate directly parental motivations for treating daughters differently than sons in naming practices, we can turn to the literature for possible explanations for such outcomes. Based on our findings, we tend to agree with Rossi (1965), Lieberson and Bell (1992), and Stahl (1992) that males are more likely to be carriers of the family line, both in the symbolic sense of parents giving Spanish names to sons and in the tendency for fathers' ethnicity to be more influential in naming both sons and daughters. Moreover, we found that the simple explanation of the

tradition of passing names from father to son cannot fully explain the gender difference. In addition to the males as symbolizers of family continuity and tradition argument, the fashion explanation helps us understand gender differences. These two theories are compatible because if sons' names are more restricted in their naming patterns because of parents' wishes to follow tradition, parents are more likely to turn to more fashionable names for daughters. However, we need to go beyond the theories of tradition and fashion to take into account further the social forces involving gender in assimilation.

An instrumental explanation for why daughters receive more English names than sons relates to perceived race- or ethnicity-based discrimination. Sociologists of immigration have shown that immigrant parents feel a stronger need to protect their daughters compared to their sons (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Waters 1999). If we assume that parents believe that an ethnic name (especially when that ethnicity is stigmatized) could potentially prevent upward mobility and/or elicit discrimination, and if we hypothesize that parents seek to protect daughters more than sons, we could conclude that daughters would be less likely to receive ethnic names. This argument is consistent with the boys as carriers of tradition argument in that sons may be made carriers of tradition largely because parents may believe they are better equipped to withstand host society intolerance against foreign country languages and cultures.

By combining the literatures on naming and immigration, we can better account for the persistent gender gap along the path to assimilation. The naming literature consistently shows that fathers are more likely to give names to sons and mothers more likely to give names to daughters (Alford 1987; Herbert 1999). As we discussed earlier, the literature shows that Hispanic immigrant women are more likely than immigrant men to be content in the United States and envision themselves there permanently (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Qian and Lichter 2001). It is possible that in their greater influence over naming daughters, mothers project their vision for future U.S. settlement and positive feelings about the United States by giving more English names. On the other hand, immigrant men, by projecting their greater nostalgia or future plans to return to their homeland, may give their sons Spanish names. Our findings that U.S.-born Hispanics are also more likely to give daughters English names compared to sons are indirectly supported by the literature that shows a willingness of females to assimilate faster than males on various indicators (Murguia and Cazares 1982; Rumbaut 1994; Waters 1999).

Furthermore, we discovered a pattern of assimilation in naming for couples that is not simply a progression from foreign born to U.S. born but is also influenced by the intermarriage composition of the parents.

Our analysis speaks to how parental ethnicity/birthplace interacts with the gender of the child to affect whether parents give a child a Spanish name. In the case of intermarried parents, our findings show that father's ethnicity is stronger than the mother's, especially when the child is a boy. Thus, not only are boys seen as carriers of the family line and tradition to the extent that they are more likely to carry an ethnic name, but fathers, indirectly or directly, have a stronger influence than mothers in determining the language of children's names. These findings are consistent with those of Estrada (1993), who found that for Hispanics who intermarry, the ethnic identification of children is more likely to match the fathers'.

Regarding power dynamics in intermarriages, our results could suggest that fathers have more direct influence than mothers in naming. Support for this interpretation can be found in the literature on gender (Komter 1989; Zipp, Prohaska, and Bemiller 2004), literature specific to naming (Alford 1987; Herbert 1999), as well as that on Hispanic families (Coltrane 1996; Cromwell and Ruiz 1979; Pesquera 1993). From a different perspective, our findings could also reflect mothers' beliefs that the ethnicity of a child's name should be more like that of the father, which also suggests the indirect power of men. This interpretation is supported by the findings of Knight et al. (1993) that the decision of mothers to teach Mexican values to their children is more influenced by the father's generation of migration than with their own generation. Or finally, since the act of naming is most likely a joint effort, these results could suggest that there is a shared belief among intermarried couples that children should carry names more closely related to the father's ethnicity. In this scenario, our findings may address Komter's (1989) argument that invisible power mechanisms confirm and justify power inequality. Our study not only speaks to the important but neglected dynamics of intermarriage between same group natives and immigrants (Qian and Lichter 2001), but also shows how the ethnicity-gender characteristics of parents may influence the ethnic identity of their children.

It is also important to discuss social forces beyond the United States that undoubtedly play a role in the naming process. With the increasing globalization of culture, it might well be the case that fashionable American girls' names are becoming more common in the immigrants' countries of origin. The learning of and exposure to English, especially through mass media, is becoming more and more common throughout Latin America. In addition, the phenomenon of transnationalism and proximity of the United States to Latin America, especially Mexico, would make the use of translatable names more practical since immigrants often find themselves negotiating between multiple countries and languages. Also, a new

social context that arguably promotes multiculturalism and discourages ethnic discrimination may affect naming choices.

More generally, our findings have implications for the future, given the continuing importance of immigration in American society. Demographic changes from immigration, fertility, generational succession, and intermarriage will affect the extent of choosing ethnic names and not always in the direction expected. In Los Angeles, the most important immigrant destination in the United States, the most common names for boys are *José* and *Juan*. In the many places where Hispanic immigration is also large and growing, Spanish names will rank among the most common. However, this will be especially true for boys' names, since immigration trends will be less influential on the naming practices for daughters. As the children of immigrants age, they will have their own children and continue a tradition of naming sons in Spanish, although at a lower rate than their immigrant parents. Expectedly, being born in the United States and intermarrying will lead to greater assimilation and an overall favoring of English names, but the custom of giving boys more Spanish names will not easily fade away.

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