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**Multigenerational Punishment: Shared Experiences of Undocumented Immigration Status
within Mixed-Status Families**

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Abstract

Estimates suggest that there are approximately 16.6 million people in the U.S. who are members of mixed-status families composed of undocumented immigrants and U.S. citizens or documented immigrants. Drawing on interviews with 32 undocumented 1.5 generation parents, I explore how immigration laws impact undocumented parents and their citizen children. I find that U.S. citizen children and their undocumented parent often share in the risks and limitations associated with undocumented immigration status. I conceptualize this phenomenon as *multigenerational punishment*, a distinct form of legal violence wherein the sanctions intended for a specific population spill over to negatively impact individuals who are not targeted by laws. Though not restricted to familial relationships, multigenerational punishment tends to occur within families due to the strong social ties, sustained day-to-day interactions, and dependent relationships found among family members. This sheds light on how laws can further the reproduction of inequality within families and over generations.

Key words

Immigration/migrant families, Hispanic Americans, parenthood, childhood/children, intergenerational, qualitative research

Running head

Multigenerational Punishment

Daniela Sanchez, an upbeat 22-year-old undocumented immigrant who arrived in the U.S. at the age of four, began crying as she whispered that she had been pregnant and decided to have an abortion. While she had optimistically told me about her ability to overcome the barriers created by her undocumented immigration status, her demeanor shifted as she began to talk about her family plans. She explained, “For me, in my [undocumented] situation, what I had to offer, I felt like there’s no way [I could have a baby]. . . . I feel it would be too irresponsible of me to bring somebody into this world. . . . Just being undocumented makes it a little harder for anything . . . [and] their life is depending on you.” Although Daniela’s choice may not be representative, her fears reflect the lived reality of undocumented 1.5 generation parents who struggle to provide for and protect their citizen children while contending with laws that limit their day-to-day lives. In light of this, mixed-status families develop strategies to cope with these limitations as they attempt to resist the negative impact that undocumented immigration status can have across generations.

Research on undocumented immigration in the United States primarily focuses on how immigration laws shape the lives of undocumented immigrants. Yet, some scholars have begun to address how immigration laws, particularly deportation policies, impinge on the economic, social, and emotional well-being of individuals who are not undocumented immigrants, particularly family and community members in the U.S. and the country of origin (Dreby, 2012; Hagan et al., 2011; Yoshikawa, 2012). However, it remains unclear how the impact of immigration laws extends beyond undocumented immigrants and how mixed-status families resist the impact of these laws. To address this gap, I explore how a number of immigration laws and policies impact both undocumented immigrant parents and their citizen children, a particularly important case given the growing number of mixed-status families.

Drawing on interviews with undocumented 1.5 generation young adults who had U.S. citizen children, I argue that immigration laws and policies produce *multigenerational punishment* wherein the legal sanctions intended for undocumented immigrants extend into the lives of U.S. citizens. I found that undocumented young adults and their citizen children shared in the risks and consequences of various immigration laws and policies which govern four aspects of their everyday lives: (1) deportation fears, (2) driving, (3) travel, and (4) legal employment. The impact of these laws extended across immigration status through social ties and day-to-day interactions. Though this could occur across any mixed-status social relationship, the uniquely dependent relationship between parent and child led citizen children to experience a *de facto* undocumented status in some contexts. In this way, undocumented immigration status not only limited the lives of undocumented parents, but citizen children were penalized and also developed risk-management strategies as they attempted to cope with these limitations. This reveals how the impact of laws can extend beyond the target population and why family members are particularly vulnerable to multigenerational punishment.

The Legal Exclusion of Undocumented Immigrants

Estimates suggest that there are approximately 11.7 million undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States (Passel et al., 2013). Approximately two million are 1.5 generation undocumented youth and young adults who arrived before the age of 16 and are under the age of 35 (Batalova & McHugh, 2010). This youthful segment of undocumented immigrants grows up relatively integrated into U.S. society as they attend K-12 public education and are shielded from the consequences of their undocumented immigration status until they enter young adulthood (Gonzales, 2011). Although most research on these young adults focuses on how their immigration status limits access to higher education (see Abrego, 2006; Enriquez, 2011; Flores,

2010; Gonzales, 2010), their day-to-day lives are shaped by laws and policies which threaten deportation, limit their physical mobility, and prevent access to legal employment because of their undocumented immigration status.

At the most basic level, undocumented immigration status indicates that an individual does not have legal permission to be in the country and is subject to deportation. Deportation is one of the most severe, and increasingly enforced, consequences as over four million undocumented immigrants, the majority being Latino men, have been deported from the U.S. since 1997, almost double the number deported between 1892-1997 (Golash-Boza & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013). Further, even if an individual is not deported, their “deportability” – the potential for deportation – produces marginalization by promoting a constant state of hyper-vigilance and fear in everyday life (De Genova, 2002). Attempting to minimize their risk of detention and deportation, many limit their social participation (Menjívar, 2011; Sigona, 2012).

Laws also limit undocumented immigrants physical mobility as they are unable to obtain driver’s licenses and risk being unable to re-enter the U.S. if they travel internationally. Most states, including California at the time of data collection, deny undocumented immigrants access to driver’s licenses (NILC, 2013). Despite this, many undocumented immigrants drive without a license, which puts them at risk for deportation if they are detected by local police and transferred into Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody (Armenta, 2012). Even if they manage to avoid detention, they are still financially penalized for their undocumented status – facing steep fines and vehicle impoundment – which creates economic stress (Gabrielson, 2010). These risks limit local and domestic travel. Additionally, although they are not prevented from leaving the U.S., international travel would require clandestine re-entry to the U.S., which is increasingly difficult given the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border (Andreas, 2009).

Undocumented immigrants are also limited by their inability to obtain a social security number and legally access employment. These structural limitations relegate undocumented immigrants to jobs where they work “under-the-table” and are underpaid, exploited, and exposed to unsafe working conditions (Fussell, 2011; Gleeson, 2010). Further, estimates suggest that they earn 14-24% less than their documented peers (Kossoudji & Cobb-Clark, 2002). These economic limitations can create family instability as parents must work long hours that prevent them from spending time with their children (Ayón & Becerra, 2013). In the event that parents are detained, economic situations can worsen as job and income loss leads to unstable housing and food insecurity (Chaudry et al., 2010). Further, undocumented status restricts residential mobility, keeping families in overcrowded and impoverished areas with limited resources (Cort et al., 2014).

Legal Violence and Multigenerational Punishment

The structural limitations discussed above are produced by immigration laws that directly and indirectly punish undocumented immigrants for being in the U.S. without authorization. Menjívar and Abrego (2012) conceptualize this process as *legal violence*, or “the suffering that results from and is made possible through the implementation of the body of laws that delimit and shape individuals’ lives on a routine basis” (1387). This term acknowledges how laws and policies are responsible for inflicting both structural violence – exploitation that produces unequal conditions – and symbolic violence that promotes the internalization of inequality. Further, legal violence becomes normalized because it is rooted in laws that are assumed to be legitimate and fair.

Though undocumented immigrants are the intended targets of immigration laws, legal violence can also impact U.S. citizens (see Dreby, 2012; Hagan et al., 2011). I develop the term

multigenerational punishment to conceptualize this phenomenon as a distinct form of legal violence wherein the sanctions intended for a specific population spill over to negatively impact individuals who are not targeted by the law. Although Menjívar and Abrego (2012) note that legal violence can extend beyond undocumented immigrants, the means through which this occurs is unclear. I contend that multigenerational punishment occurs as social ties and day-to-day interactions with members of the target population lead those who are not targeted to witness and share in the punishments and risk management strategies produced by laws. In this case, the laws meant to shape and limit undocumented immigrants' everyday lives also generate impacts across immigration status. Conceptualizing multigenerational punishment as a distinct form of legal violence highlights the structural nature of this phenomenon, rather than attributing these spillover effects to chance, and enables us to better conceptualize how laws produce broader consequences.

Although multigenerational punishment can occur across any relationship, the family is a prime site for this phenomenon because of the strong social ties between family members and its multi-generational character, which uniquely enables legal violence to extend across generations. In this context, the concept of multigenerational punishment captures how legally imposed inequalities can limit opportunities for mobility over generations. Just as others have used the concepts of structural and symbolic violence to examine the daily lives of various marginalized populations, including women, drug dealers, migrant farmworkers, and impoverished communities across the globe (see Bourdieu, 1998; Bourgois, 2002; Farmer, 2003; Holmes, 2013), the concept of multigenerational punishment can be extended beyond this case to examine how laws can perpetuate various types of social inequality within families. For example, children who have an incarcerated parent may face similar economic, social, and emotional consequences

as children who have a detained or deported parent (National Research Council, 2014). The concept of multigenerational punishment facilitates these types of comparisons to show how laws shape the contemporary experiences of individuals and their family members and limit opportunities for future mobility.

Mixed-Status Families

The consequences of immigration laws are a concern for a growing number of U.S. families as estimates suggest that 16.6 million people are members of mixed-status families where at least one member is an undocumented immigrant and others are citizens or documented immigrants (Taylor et al., 2011). Of these, approximately 4.5 million are U.S.-born children with at least one undocumented parent. This number has doubled over the past decade and will likely continue to grow as estimates suggest that eight percent of newborns have at least one undocumented parent, even though undocumented immigrants make up only four percent of the U.S. population (Passel & Cohn, 2011). This issue especially affects Latina/o families as approximately four out of five undocumented immigrants are Latina/o (Passel & Cohn, 2011). Despite growing significance, relatively little research addresses how families, and Latino families in particular, are affected by immigration status.

Research on first generation undocumented immigrant adults demonstrates that parental immigration status has consequences for citizen children. Citizen infants and toddlers (ages 0-3) experience delays in early cognitive development because their parent's undocumented legal status produces economic hardship, psychological distress, and limited access to good child care (Yoshikawa, 2012). Further, these limitations have long-term effects as the citizen children of undocumented immigrants tend to have worse educational, economic, and civic outcomes than the children of legalized parents when they reach adulthood (Brown et al., 2011). Additionally,

the detention and/or deportation of a parent has negative psycho-social effects on children who become fearful and anxious, socially withdraw from society, change eating and sleeping patterns, and learn to deny their immigrant background (Brabeck & Xu, 2010; Chaudry et al., 2010; Dreby, 2012). As deportation threats increase, these mixed-status families are bound to become separated by borders, especially as undocumented parents of U.S. citizen children make up almost a quarter of deportations (Wessler, 2012). This suggests that they may form transnational families which tend to struggle emotionally due to the long-term separation caused by increasingly restrictive immigration policies (Abrego, 2014; Dreby, 2010; Montes, 2013).

While immigration laws apply to all undocumented immigrants, other social locations, particularly race, gender, and immigrant generation, can differentiate if, when, and how undocumented immigrants experience the consequences of their immigration status. The criminalization of Latino men makes them more likely than Latina women or non-Latinas/os to be targeted for detention and deportation (Golash-Boza & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013). Further, gender roles differentiate when undocumented parents confront immigration laws as women's caretaking role leads them to contend with the limitations of their immigration status as they access social services for their children (Deeb-Sossa & Bickham Mendez, 2008; Schmalzbauer, 2009). Growing up in the U.S. and participating in K-12 education leads 1.5 generation undocumented young adults to acculturate to U.S. norms and feel stronger belonging in the U.S. than the first generation (Abrego, 2008; 2011). This suggests that the extent of the multigenerational punishment experienced by citizen children may differ by the race, gender, and immigrant generation of their undocumented parent and the extent to which their parent contends with and experiences the consequences of their undocumented immigration status.

METHOD

This article draws on 32 interviews with undocumented 1.5 generation young adults – twenty-one mothers, eight fathers, a couple who was expecting a child, and one woman who had been pregnant and decided not to have the baby. All of their children are U.S. citizens and ranged from infants to age 15. Eleven had a child with a citizen partner, two with a legal permanent resident partner, thirteen with an undocumented partner, and three did not report their partner's immigration status. A third are now separated from their child's other parent – ten are mothers who are the sole-caregiver and two are fathers who share parenting responsibilities.

All participants are between the ages of 21 and 34. Thirty immigrated from Mexico and two from Guatemala between the ages of one and fifteen. Twelve were under the age of five when they came to the U.S., twelve were between ages six and ten, and eight were between ages eleven and fifteen. The majority of their family members are undocumented immigrants but their friendship networks include both undocumented and citizen individuals. They all attended school in the U.S. with eight leaving high school before graduating, nine obtaining a high school degree or equivalency, seven having previously enrolled in a 2-year college but not obtaining a degree, four currently attending a 2-year college, and four having obtained a bachelor's degree. This educational breakdown reflects estimates that a quarter of undocumented 1.5 generation young adults do not complete high school and a quarter graduate but do not attend college (Passel & Cohn, 2009). They work an average of 38 hours a week in service occupations and earn an average annual income of \$16,800. Pseudonyms are used throughout to protect confidentiality.

The 32 interviews with parents are a subset of 92 interviews conducted for a larger study assessing how undocumented immigration status shapes participation in educational, economic, political, and social institutions. Interviews were conducted between November 2011 and August

2012 in Southern California. Respondents lived, and most grew up, in Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Orange counties, metropolitan areas that host some of the largest undocumented populations (Fortuny et al., 2007). I recruited respondents using dual incentive snowball sampling; participants received a \$20 incentive for being interviewed and an additional \$10 incentive for each individual they successfully referred for an interview. I initiated snowball sampling by selecting twelve individuals who I knew through personal contacts in the undocumented immigrant community and the extensive networks I had built through four years of previous research with college- and community-based undocumented youth organizations (Enriquez, 2011; 2014). Participants tended to refer extended family members, neighbors, former classmates, co-workers, and friends. All but twelve participants identified at least one individual they could refer and 42 successfully referred at least one participant. Those individuals who identified but did not successfully generate referrals was because they could not get a hold of the individual or because I elected not to pursue the referral. In only a few instances did the potential interviewee decide not to participate, usually citing not having enough time. Of the parent sample I discuss here, only one was part of the initial sample.

Interviews averaged two hours and were conducted in a place of the participant's choosing, most often their home or in public places including coffee shops, restaurants, and parks. Participants chose the language of the interview and all but five elected to be interviewed in English. Using a semi-structured interview guide, I gathered detailed information about their current and previous educational, economic, political, and social experiences. I focus here on the portion of the interviews which asked about their plans for having children, their feelings about being a parent, and how their undocumented status affects their parenting experiences and their children. Participants were engaged throughout the interview and spoke openly about their

immigration status. Discussions of parenting experiences were often tinged with frustration and sadness as marked by their words and body language as they sat up straighter, spoke loudly and emphatically, paused to gather their emotions, held back tears, or openly cried.

All interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed verbatim, and coded using qualitative research software. I conducted open coding of the full transcripts, which revealed that undocumented immigration status shapes a range of parenting experiences. Subsequent axial coding of the parenting portion of the interview identified four aspects of parenting that were clearly shaped by one's immigration status: plans for having children, pregnancy experiences, experiences raising kids, and reasons to discuss or not discuss one's immigration status with their children. Within these codes, I identified the sub-theme of "multigenerational punishment" and systematically coded for how parents perceive their immigration status as negatively affecting their children; this revealed the four types that I discuss here: (1) conversations about the threat of deportation, (2) attempts to manage the risks of driving without a license, (3) inability to travel, and (4) struggles to provide for their child's upward mobility. Although each parent had varied experiences and did not necessarily discuss all four types of multigenerational punishment, there were no substantive differences between who discussed which type of instance (i.e. women and men were equally likely to discuss each type).

Overall, interviews generated detailed and reliable accounts of how undocumented immigration status shapes the lives of these young adults and their children. The semi-structured nature of the interview guide and my attention to maintaining a conversational style gave the interviews a natural flow; many participants reported afterwards that this helped them be more open. As a result, individuals discussed their immigration status in detail and even mentioned illicit activities, suggesting that they felt safe enough to openly share their lives with minimal

obfuscation of the truth. In addition to these indications of trustworthiness, these data reflect similar themes that emerged in my sustained fieldwork within undocumented immigrant communities from 2008-2014. Finally, I conducted informal “member checks” by discussing my findings with undocumented young adults in my social networks.

FINDINGS

The everyday interactions between undocumented 1.5 generation parents and their citizen children revealed that immigration laws also punished citizens. I argue that this constitutes multigenerational punishment as the sanctions intended for undocumented immigrants seeped into the lives of individuals who should have been protected by their citizenship status. Further, this often deepened parents’ experiences of legal violence as they saw how their immigration status disrupted traditional family dynamics where parents expect to provide their children with a carefree childhood and opportunities for upward mobility. Though not restricted to familial relationships, multigenerational punishment tended to occur within families due to the strong social ties, sustained day-to-day interactions, and dependent relationships found among family members.

Sharing Risks and Risk-Management Strategies across Immigration Status

Multigenerational punishment extended the legal sanctions intended for undocumented immigrants, and the resulting risk-management strategies, to citizens who had social ties to an undocumented immigrant. For the citizen children of undocumented immigrants, their deep ties to and sustained presence in the lives of their undocumented parents allowed legal violence and multigenerational punishment to emerge in two types of day-to-day interactions – conversations to manage anxiety about deportation and monitoring police activity to manage the risks of driving without a license. This disrupted family dynamics as citizen children experienced

multigenerational punishment and their parent's experience of legal violence deepened when they realized that they could not provide their children with a carefree childhood.

Managing Anxiety through Conversations about Deportation

Deportation is one of the clearest consequences and sources of legal violence in everyday life as it threatens to remove undocumented immigrants from their lives in the U.S. (De Genova, 2002). Exacerbating this, 1.5 generation undocumented young adults have few connections to their country of origin. Although only three participants had a close friend or family member who had been deported, the threat of deportation haunted most through constant media coverage of workplace raids, separated families, and rising deportation statistics (see Bennett, 2011; O'Neill, 2012). In light of this, most parents openly discussed the threat of deportation with their children to manage their own and their children's anxiety about this potentiality. These conversations led citizen children to experience multigenerational punishment as they came to share their parent's fears, attempted to alleviate their parent's anxiety, and assumed their own risk of deportation.

Although all participants feared being deported from the lives they have built in the U.S., this deepened for those who were parents. Pablo Ortiz spoke about how his fear of deportation grew once his daughter was born six months ago: "One of my greatest fears right now is for anybody to take me away from my baby, and that I cannot provide for my baby. Growing up as a child without a father [as I did], it's very painful. . . . [And for] my three sisters, . . . I felt like there was no male to protect them." Reacting to his own childhood with an absent father, Pablo feared that his deportation and absence could negatively impact his daughter as it did himself and his siblings who joined gangs, left school, and stayed in unhealthy relationships. In addition,

children who have had a parent detained or deported are at risk for increased emotional, psychological, and physical distress (Chaudry et al., 2010; Dreby, 2012).

In their role as parental protectors, undocumented young adult parents attempted to manage their own fears and their children's anxiety through conversations about the threat of deportation. Ten of the fifteen parents who had children over the age of five explicitly recalled discussing the threat of deportation with their children to manage their anxiety; only two refused to discuss their status with their children. Janet Godinez described her attempts to prepare her two children in case she or her husband were taken into immigration custody: "What I've been telling them is that in case something happens and I don't go for them at school. . . . Don't come home or don't run away. Don't get scared. . . . I see that they get sad." Talking to her children, Janet set out an emergency plan so that her children were prepared. She believed this scared her pre-teen son most because he watched news coverage of immigration raids and understood the reality of this threat. Parents attempted to protect their children and prepare them for the threat of deportation through these conversations; however, this also perpetuated the multigenerational punishment of this form of legal violence by ensuring that the fear of deportation extended to citizen children.

Children adopted their parent's conversational strategy to manage their parent's anxiety, which often deepened parent's experiences of legal violence. For example, Marta Sandoval recounted her preschool-aged daughter's reaction to discussions about her immigration status: "She asks me questions. Or . . . she comes to me, 'Mom, my little friend told me her mom was undocumented too. That's so cool! We both get to spend vacation together [since we can't travel]!' She's so positive." Marta's voice broke and tears filled her eyes as she continued, "She is my strength. Even though I don't tell her, she has very wise answers for things that I

sometimes don't understand." In these instances, family dynamics often shifted as children relieved their parent's anxiety with positive attitudes and innocent understandings of the law. Yet, Marta's tearful response suggests that children's comments also generated additional anguish for parents who expected to be the one soothing their children's fears. Although children intended to ease their parent's fears, these conversations exacerbated parents' experiences of legal violence as they developed feelings of guilt and anxiety upon realizing the shared punishment that their children experienced.

Parents and children also shared in the risk of deportation and family separation. Victoria Sandoval explained her older children's (ages 11, 12, and 15) views: "They say, 'We're going with you. We're gonna tell them [immigration] we want to go with our mom because she's the only one that we have.'" This suggests that in addition to the shared fear of deportation, there was a shared potential for deportation as citizen children asserted that they would self-deport with their parent. Yet, parents struggled to agree with their children's plans because of the consequences it would have for their children's future. Tanya Diaz explained that she would hate to be separated from her ten-year-old son but might endure a separation because, "there is no life for him over there [in Mexico]. . . . He does put his education to use because he's a bright kid. . . . He could be so much more here [in the U.S.]." Given this impossible dilemma and a belief that their deportation was unlikely, only four individuals, all mothers, definitively planned to take their children with them if they were deported. Yet, seven individuals – six of whom were fathers – discussed their fear of separation, implying that they would not take their children with them. This suggests that gender roles, which charge women with caring for children, impacted whether parents and children experienced legal violence and multigenerational punishment through

family separation or through deportation and the deprivation of opportunities afforded to citizens remaining in the U.S.

Finally, it is important to note that this form of multigenerational punishment was not exclusively experienced by citizen children. Edgar Gonzalez explained how his deportation would also affect his citizen wife: “I’m thinking if they deport me, probably we will go [to Mexico]. I don’t know. She [my wife] actually wants to be here [in the U.S.]; I mean it’s understandable for her not wanting to go.” This suggests that any familial tie, in this case one to a romantic partner, could foster the shared risks and consequences of multigenerational punishment.

Managing the Material Risks of Driving without a License

Undocumented young adult parents also managed the risks associated with driving without a license. Although this could increase the threat of deportation through interactions with law enforcement officials (Armenta, 2012), most participants focused on the material consequences of driving without a license – a fine of approximately \$400 and the possibility of having a car towed, impounded for 30 days, and subjected to thousands of dollars in impound fees (Gabrielson, 2010; Judicial Council of California, 2013). Though these laws were not intended for immigration enforcement purposes, they enacted legal violence and multigenerational punishment as undocumented parents and citizen children shared in the limitations and risk-management strategies developed to move about the sprawling Los Angeles metropolis. These experiences reflected those in other contexts with limited public transportation, including rural communities (see Schmalzbauer, 2009).

Undocumented parents’ decisions to drive without a license were complicated by the threat of multigenerational punishment to their children. Cruz Vargas explained that he tried not

to drive with his one-year-old son in the car: “What am I supposed to do if I get pulled over and I have my son? Some cops don’t care. They’re like, ‘So? Take your son out and go walk!’ My son doesn’t deserve that.” Cruz’ fear highlighted how the punishment for being undocumented – having your car towed – can extend across immigration status to citizen children. He was adamant that his son’s status as a U.S. citizen should shield him from such mistreatment. In these instances, multigenerational punishment relegated the citizen children of undocumented young adults to a type of second-class citizenship where their rights were not respected because of their parent’s immigration status.

Sharing in this punishment can traumatize citizen children, as noted by the five parents who reported being pulled over by police with their children in the car. Janet Godinez recalled,

My kids [were] crying because they were taking the car. But they [police officers] don’t care at all. . . . I had blankets [and clothes] because I was gonna go wash [at the Laundromat]. And they told me, “. . . I’m gonna, under the table, let you take out stuff.” . . . Then my kids start crying when they were taking the car in the [tow] truck. And then the cops told me . . . , “Well, we’re gonna take you home.”

Janet believed that the visible fear of her 12-year-old son and 3-year-old daughter led the police to eventually go against policies – letting her take the laundry out of her car and then driving her family a few blocks to their house. Despite the semi-supportive reaction of the police officers, she and her children were all traumatized by this event and remained highly cautious and fearful. Parents who helplessly watched their children experience these sanctions, and those who feared having to do so in the future, became frustrated because they were unable to shield their children from this trauma, intensifying their own experience of legal violence.

Attempting to protect their children from material punishment and emotional trauma, parents developed a variety of risk-management strategies, which their children often witnessed and adopted. First, they attempted to “pass” as documented by practicing “impression management” strategies (Goffman, 1959; 1963) – adjusting their appearance to avoid racial profiling, driving newer cars to counter assumptions that undocumented immigrants drive run-down cars, and keeping school-related materials (e.g. books, backpacks) in their cars. These strategies reflected similar ones identified among undocumented workers legally crossing the U.S.-Mexican border (Chávez, 2011). Secondly, undocumented young adults attempted to prevent interactions with police by constantly monitoring their surroundings for police cars, avoiding streets where there tend to be checkpoints, and keeping track of checkpoints posted on police websites, social media, and mass text messages (LAPD, 2013; Rosales, 2013; Unknown, 2012). As older children witnessed their parents practicing these strategies, they adopted one of the most apparent techniques – watching for police cars. Alicia Medina explained how her eleven-year-old daughter adopted her vigilance: “When I’m driving . . . she helps me. She says, ‘Pull over to the side mamá. Over there I see a police car.’” Essentially, citizen children mimicked their parent’s most visible risk-management strategy and learned to navigate social spaces as if they were themselves undocumented. This constituted multigenerational punishment as they were not the intended targets of these laws and thus should not have had to develop behavior to navigate these structural limitations.

These navigational techniques may stick with citizen children as they grow up, suggesting that multigenerational punishment may have potentially life-long consequences for this generation of citizen children. Allie Ortega, the 20-year-old citizen sister of a participant, explained how a lifetime watching her undocumented siblings and mother affected her driving:

“It makes me drive carefully as well [as be] a bit scared of cops. Because they may not have shown it, but they were scared. . . . [And] checkpoints it does make me be more aware.” Despite recognizing the differences between herself as a licensed driver and her unlicensed family members, Allie internalized their hyper-vigilant driving practices – driving cautiously, fearing police, and noting checkpoints. She shared in the psychological toll of this hyper-vigilance, experiencing stress and fear that she believed her citizen peers with citizen parents do not. This suggests that the young children of my participants may continue to practice the risk-management strategies they have adopted, even as they age and can legally drive. Further, the fact that she was responding to her undocumented siblings’ experiences suggests that multigenerational punishment can extend across various mixed-status relationships, not solely that of parent and child.

Parent-child interactions regarding the threat of deportation and driving without a license suggest that the legal sanctions targeting undocumented immigrants extend across immigration status to produce multigenerational punishment in the lives of U.S. citizens. Despite their citizenship status, the children of undocumented young adults shared in the risks, trauma, and punishment experienced by their undocumented parents and adopted similar risk-management strategies. As such, the laws that shaped their undocumented parent’s lives disrupted their childhood experiences and replicated the legal violence experienced in the parent generation. This multigenerational punishment also magnified the legal violence undocumented immigrants experienced as they became dismayed when they saw how their undocumented immigration status disrupted family dynamics and negatively impacted their citizen children’s lives. Although citizen children are particularly at risk for multigenerational punishment because of their close relationship to their parents, the transfer of risk-management strategies and punishment could

potentially happen through any citizen's social tie to an undocumented immigrant, including siblings, romantic partners, and friends. This reflects previous findings that deportations negatively impact citizen family and community members (Hagan et al., 2011).

Children's Dependence and De Facto Undocumented Status across Generations

Due to their young age, children are relatively dependent on their parents. This dictates their opportunities as children and also sets the stage for their future upward mobility, or lack thereof, through the intergenerational transfer and accumulation of economic, social, and cultural capital (Lareau, 2003; White & Gager, 2007). This unique aspect of the parent-child relationship allowed the multigenerational punishment of legal violence to travel across generations and positioned citizen children of undocumented 1.5 generation immigrants to experience a *de facto* undocumented status. Most notably in this case, citizen children shared in their undocumented parent's inability to travel and their limited economic circumstances. This disrupted traditional family dynamics as parents had limited opportunities to foster the upward mobility of their children.

Shared Inability to Travel and Build Social and Cultural Capital

Undocumented immigrants have a limited ability to travel domestically – due to the threat of deportation and the material risks of driving without a license – and they cannot travel internationally because they would have to re-enter the U.S. by clandestinely crossing an increasingly militarized U.S. border. Though citizen children do not face these restrictions, their young age and dependence on their parents often translated to a shared inability to travel. This created multigenerational punishment as the citizen children of undocumented young adults were unable to fit in with their peers and did not develop the same social and cultural capital.

Ten of the fifteen parents with children over the age of five contended with their children's pleas to travel to the same vacation destinations as their peers who had citizen parents – often the tourist attractions of nearby San Diego or visiting family in Mexico. Adán Olivera recounted a conversation with his children, ages seven and five: “They see [on] the TV – SeaWorld! How do you explain that you can't go to SeaWorld? Sometimes I do try to tell them – You can't go because your mom and dad can't go. . . . You guys were [born here] so you guys can go, but you can't go alone.” Though this popular attraction and others are only two hours away, travel to the area is risky because of its proximity to the U.S.-Mexican border and heightened immigration enforcement in the region. Because of this, Adán believed that his children's dependence on him and his undocumented wife prevented them from exercising their citizenship privilege to travel. Similarly, Celia Alvarez worried that this was how her immigration status would eventually impact her daughter, who was only a few months old: “When she hears her classmates say, . . . ‘We went to visit my grandma in Mexico.’ She's probably going to wonder why we don't take trips like that.” This shared inability to travel produced multigenerational punishment as these conversations alerted children to the opportunities that they were missing out on and increased the legal violence that parents' experienced as they could not provide their children with these opportunities. Although the specific travel desires and limitations noted by my participants reflect their Southern Californian context and proximity to the U.S.-Mexican border, similar experiences likely occur in other geographic areas when the children of undocumented young adults cannot replicate similar social norms.

Citizen children coped with these limitations by developing strategies that resembled those of their undocumented parent. As Marta noted earlier, her inability to travel shaped her

daughter's social life – encouraging her daughter to develop a friendship with another citizen who also had an undocumented mother because they both could not go on vacations. This reflected Marta's own childhood experiences as she remembered feeling “bad” when her friends talked about their vacations in Mexico and how this pushed her to “try to hang out with people that I thought were kind of like me [undocumented].” Thus, the limitations of undocumented status affected the social relationships built by both undocumented young adult parents and their citizen children. These shared coping strategies suggest that the social consequences of legal violence can be replicated across generations as citizen children are unable to develop the same social capital as their peers who have citizen parents.

Although a shared inability to travel may seem like a less significant form of multigenerational punishment, it is critical for providing opportunities to build cultural capital and promoting upward mobility. Nancy Ortega explained that it is important that her sons, ages two and four, be able to travel both in and outside of the United States, “So they can see other places, learn different customs and traditions. Not [only] to San Diego [but] all around, especially in third-world countries. That way they can see how easy they have it but also give them that desire to one day help [others].” Nancy saw traveling as a key means of raising her sons to be successful and responsible men. As undocumented parents, she and her husband could not provide these opportunities, thus compromising their children's development of cultural capital. Although parents told their children that they would be able to travel on their own when they were older, this shared punishment had already compromised their early development of social and cultural capital and potentially positioned them to have fewer opportunities for upward mobility than their citizen peers who have citizen parents.

Shared Economic Instability and Limited Opportunities

Children's dependence on their parents also means that they will share in their economic situation as they grow up. As such, the children of the undocumented young adults I interviewed were growing up in households where their parents earned an average of \$8.50 an hour by obtaining employment through a false social security number or being paid under the table. In effect, laws limited parents' employment opportunities by denying them legal permission to work and promoting legal violence through economic instability. Although these sanctions were intended for undocumented immigrants, this economic instability was experienced broadly within the family context as citizen children shared in their parent's economic instability and experienced its consequences in their own lives.

Twenty-two parents explicitly noted that their immigration status and restricted employment prospects were limiting their economic stability and what they could provide for their citizen children. Luis Escobar and Aida Mendoza provided examples of how their citizen children, who were both less than one year old, suffered because of their dependent status:

Luis: I'm still [supposed to be] perceived as this male provider . . . [but] we lost our place [after my job found out about my status], and now I'm [living] with my in-laws, and it's hard to find a great paying job. . . . It makes you feel like [people are saying], "How dare you do that to a little child. . . ." It's hard because you do feel guilty, you feel that you're punishing someone that shouldn't be punished.

Aida: We wanna give him so much more. He's needed stuff. Just recently he got very sick; he needed a humidifier. . . . It breaks my heart that I can't do anything for him because I don't [work], we don't have that extra money.

Luis and Aida's citizen children experienced multigenerational punishment because their young age and dependent status led them to share in the economic insecurity aimed at their undocumented parents. Further, these types of experiences also constituted symbolic legal violence of the parent generation as they internalized feelings that they were failing as parents. Yet, a parent's risk of symbolic legal violence was gendered as they negotiated gendered parenting roles of fathers as economic providers and mothers as caregivers (Ridgeway, 2011; Townsend, 2002). While economic instability led most men to feel, like Luis, that they were not or could not meet expectations that they provide financial stability, few women felt, like Aida, that they were "bad" mothers because most could provide care and emotional support despite their economic situation. This reflects previous research that gender roles led mothers to experience the limitations of their immigration status primarily when obtaining services or providing opportunities for their children (Deeb-Sossa & Bickham Mendez, 2008).

Financial instability also produced multigenerational punishment by endangering the upward mobility expected between the parent and child generations. Irene Correas explained how she and her undocumented partner struggled to provide their daughter, age six, with educational opportunities.

We have long working hours, and so we can't really participate in her school as much as we want to. So it [our undocumented status] affects us in that way. For example, right now with the summer camps, they're so expensive that we want her to be active but we can't really pay the tuition.

Irene linked her employment opportunities directly to her undocumented status explaining that her job did not pay enough nor allow the flexible hours she needed to provide educational opportunities for her daughter, either on her own or through structured activities. Even though

Irene was able to provide for the immediate needs of her daughter, being unable to afford these extra opportunities could endanger her daughter's future upward mobility as she would have fewer opportunities to develop social and cultural capital. To avoid this, Delia Trujillo elected to switch to a job selling cookware door-to-door rather than working long hours in a factory. She said, "In this job, if you sell, what you [used to] make all week you can make in two days. . . . But it's a risk. . . . I like it . . . because I can take care of my kids. Because I can have time for them – their sports and everything." Even though her job paid much less and she struggled to financially support her children, ages 4, 9, 10, and 13, she was able to support their extracurricular activities. As Irene and Delia's experiences suggest, undocumented status could limit a parent's ability to financially support their children while simultaneously cultivating the social and cultural capital needed for future upward mobility. This produced multigenerational punishment as parents' employment restrictions limited opportunities for upward mobility since their young children depended on them to pay for and take them to activities. This phenomenon elucidates how the economic instability of the immigrant generation restricts the next generation's opportunities for upward mobility so that similar pathways likely enable exclusion to persist over immigrant generations (see Telles & Ortiz, 2008).

The dependent relationship of children on parents allowed legal violence to extend across generations so that this particular group of citizens experienced a *de facto* undocumented status and limited opportunities for future upward mobility. Specifically, their young age and dependent relationship limited citizen children's ability to travel and experience economic security. This essentially restricted their development of social, cultural, and economic capital. Though these children's citizenship status may allow them to secure these opportunities on their own when they are older, they will likely face a cumulative disadvantage compared to their peers

who have citizen parents. In fact, the adult citizen children of undocumented immigrants have less educational and economic incorporation than their peers whose parents legalized their status (Brown et al., 2011). This suggests that citizen children will struggle to make up for the limited resources and opportunities of these formative years.

DISCUSSION

Living in the U.S. without authorization, undocumented immigrants must negotiate various laws and policies which sanction them with the threat of detention and deportation, an inability to obtain a driver's license, limited opportunities to travel, and a lack of employment authorization. These laws promote legal violence as they are implemented in ways that limit the everyday lives of undocumented immigrants by promoting structural and symbolic inequality (Menjívar & Abrego, 2012). I contend that these same laws and policies also produce multigenerational punishment in the lives of the citizen children of undocumented parents. Specifically, the legal sanctions intended for undocumented immigrants spill over to negatively impact the lives of children who should be protected by their status as U.S. citizens. I argue that the mixed-status and multi-generational nature of families create a unique space where strong social ties, day-to-day interactions, and a dependent parent-child relationship allow these laws and policies to alter family dynamics and generate legal violence and multigenerational punishment.

The concept of multigenerational punishment captures how the legal sanctions intended for a specific population diffuse through social ties and day-to-day interactions to impact individuals who are not targeted by the law. Though this phenomenon could occur across any sustained cross-status relationship, familial relationships – particularly that between a parent and child – foster strong social ties and sustained daily interactions that increase the risk of

multigenerational punishment. In this case, social ties and interactions led citizen children to share in the consequences of their parents undocumented immigration status – risking deportation, facing material consequences for being driven by an unlicensed driver, and altering social interactions to manage risks. While this captures how multigenerational punishment extends across immigration status, the dependent relationship between parent and child fosters a distinct form of multigenerational punishment that leads citizen children to experience a *de facto* undocumented status. Specifically, citizen children’s dependence on their undocumented parent limited their development of social, cultural, and economic capital as they shared in their parent’s social and economic limitations. Observing this, parents’ own experiences of legal violence intensified as they realized that their immigration status had disrupted traditional family dynamics. In particular, they became dismayed with being unable to neither provide their children with a carefree childhood nor facilitate their upward mobility through the transfer of social, cultural, and economic capital.

I contend that the multigenerational punishment taking place within immigrant families helps reproduce inequality over immigrant generations. As would be expected, undocumented immigrants have limited incorporation opportunities because their immigration status restricts their ability to formally participate in mainstream social institutions (e.g. school, work, politics) and constrains their social life. Although scholars have shown that the limited incorporation of undocumented parents has consequences for the next generation (Brown et al., 2011), the means through which this occurs is unclear. I suggest that multigenerational punishment is one of the mechanisms through which this inequality is transferred from one generation to the next. Thus, future studies of immigrant incorporation and assimilation should examine the multigenerational punishment associated with undocumented immigration status as a potential mechanism

affecting the incorporation of immigrants and their descendants. This could be of particular use for explaining the limited incorporation and assimilation patterns of Latinas/os as they make up over three quarters of the undocumented immigrant population (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Telles & Ortiz, 2008).

I have mapped how a number of immigration laws can produce multigenerational punishment in the lives of the citizen children of undocumented 1.5 generation parents. This fills a gap in the family literature which has focused on the consequences of undocumented immigration status for transnational families (see Abrego, 2014; Dreby, 2010) and first generation undocumented parents and their children in the U.S. (see Dreby, 2012; Menjívar, 2006; Menjívar & Abrego, 2012). Yet, my study is limited by its focus on Southern California, a relatively supportive legal context. Future work should examine how the contours and experiences of legal violence and multigenerational punishment shift as a result of the different legal contexts in other states. It seems likely that these consequences are more severe in less supportive contexts (see Deeb-Sossa & Bickham Mendez, 2008; Menjívar, 2011; Schmalzbauer, 2009). Additionally, although semi-structured interviews allowed me to discern the range and depth of multigenerational punishment within mixed-status immigrant families, I was unable to shed light on the frequency of these various forms of multigenerational punishment. Quantitative studies should be done to assess the extent of this particular form of legal violence.

Finally, I suggest that the concept of multigenerational punishment can be applied in the cases of other socially marginal individuals who are also targets of legal violence. For example, we can understand the criminalization of racial minority men as legal violence that disrupts the lives of a large number of men of color who are targeted by police and disproportionately imprisoned (The Sentencing Project, 2013). Although most research addresses the consequences

of racialized laws and law enforcement practices on targeted individuals (Rios, 2011; Western, 2006), some have sought to demonstrate how these laws shape families and disrupt children's lives (Johnson & Waldfogel, 2002; Perry & Bright, 2012; Wilson, 1987). Further, family-specific policies, such as welfare regulations or limited parental leave policies, can be conceptualized as multigenerational punishment as they shape the everyday lives of parents in ways that impact children's outcomes (Edin & Kefalas, 2005; Fujiwara, 2008; Hayes, 2003; Ruhm, 2000). Clearly conceptualizing these family-based phenomena as multigenerational punishment allows us to see the laws and structural forces at work, rather than blame parents. Future work should continue to examine families and social ties, rather than only targeted individuals, in order to understand the broader social consequences of laws and the shared nature of legal violence.

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