

Gendered paths: Educational and occupational expectations and outcomes among adult children of immigrants

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Abstract

This article examines young adults' educational and occupational trajectories over a ten-year period using panel data from the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study in California. While many of the young men and women in the study are on straightforward paths to socio-economic success, others are falling well short of their goals and imagined futures. Males begin with lower educational and occupational expectations than females in junior high school, and are also less likely to translate high expectations into realities in early adulthood. While some occupational choices remain traditionally gendered, females are more likely than males to aspire to and to attain the highest status occupations, even those that are male-dominated. Early educational expectations are important predictors of subsequent success for both males and females. But determinants of outcomes differ significantly for men and women, showing how paths are segmented not only by class and ethnicity, but also by gender.

Keywords: Immigration; gender; education; occupations; aspirations; early adulthood.

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
and then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?

Or crust and sugar over–
like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load
Or does it just explode?

– *Harlem* by Langston Hughes (1994)

What happens to the dreams of children of immigrants as they become young adults, and how are these dreams and realities gendered? One of the lessons drawn from segmented assimilation theory is that children of immigrants' adaptation paths and outcomes are multi-directional (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Nevertheless, as adolescents, most second-generation boys and girls hold very high ambitions and hopes for the future (Kao and Tienda 1998; Goyette and Xie 1999; Kao 2000; Rumbaut and Portes 2001). How do the dreams of boys and girls differ and how do the paths to realize or abandon those dreams differ for young men and women? This article seeks to address these questions, using the San Diego-drawn sample of the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study [CILS]. Numerous cross-sectional studies of the early educational achievement of children in immigrant families show that they are doing well in comparison to native-born minorities and whites (Kao and Tienda 1995; Vernez and Abrahamse 1996; Fuligni 1997; Glick and White 2004), but the third wave of the CILS panel study is the first major effort to follow a large sample of children of immigrants as they progress through educational and occupational pipelines from mid-adolescence into their mid-twenties. This article examines the educational and occupational trajectories of the young men and women in the San Diego half of the study, with a focus on how their paths and outcomes are segmented along gender lines.

The power of expectations

Status attainment research has consistently shown that educational expectations are among the most important predictors of eventual socio-economic attainment (Sewell, Haller and Portes 1969; Duncan, Featherman and Duncan 1972; Haller and Portes 1973; Sewell and Hauser 1975, 1980). Within the status attainment paradigm, there are two views of the power of expectations. One view holds that expectations are essentially achievement ambitions, and are therefore a psychological resource that individuals draw upon to decide upon further schooling (Sewell and Shah 1968a, 1968b; Davies and Kandel 1981, Campbell 1983; Caplin, Choy and Whitmore 1992). Another perspective argues that expectations are realistic calculations of the prospects for future education (Alexander and Cook 1979; Jencks,

Crouse, and Mueser 1983). These views are not mutually exclusive, and it is likely that both help to explain why expectations are such strong influences on subsequent outcomes.

Some studies have suggested that educational aspirations and expectations are more important predictors of educational attainment for minority youths than for whites (Portes and Wilson 1976; Kerckhoff and Cambell 1977). High educational expectations, for example, have been shown to protect Latino youths against dropping out of school (Driscoll 1999). However, the process whereby educational aspirations and expectations are formed may differ for minorities compared to whites. Qian and Blair (1999) find that parental educational attainment and family income have stronger impacts on the educational aspirations of whites than of minorities. High aspirations among minority youths and those of low socioeconomic status do not translate into high attainments to the same extent as they do for others (Kerckhoff and Campbell 1977; Entwisle and Hayduk 1978). African, Asian and Hispanic Americans all report higher educational aspirations than might be expected given their socioeconomic backgrounds (Kao and Tienda 1998).

Most people tend to aspire to educational and occupational attainments that seem realistic, given what they have seen people achieve who are similar to themselves in race, class, and gender (Flanagan 1993). However, adolescents may initially view the world idealistically, and thus see a wide range of opportunities for themselves, unconstrained by race, class or gender (Grant and Sleeter 1988). As they grow up "... the range of possibilities that seem open and real to them gradually narrows" (Grant and Sleeter 1988: p. 35). This explains why there is such a high degree of 'lost talent' among Americans; that is, high expectations in adolescence that are not realized in adulthood (Hanson 1994). Similarly, Schneider and Stevenson (1999) find that while teenagers today are very ambitious, ambitions are often not connected to realistic planning to achieve goals. Schneider and Stevenson (1999) also examine how gender shapes educational ambitions. They find that over the past few decades, a redefinition of gender roles has resulted in both boys and girls expecting to work as adults, resulting in a shift in educational ambitions among young women, which are now more aligned with male ambitions (Schneider and Stevenson 1999).

Gender and education

Most research on gender and education has been concerned with women's under-representation in certain fields of study, such as math and science, or why girls have historically fared worse in schools than boys (Horner 1968; Gilligan 1982; Brown and Gill 1992;

American Association of University Women 1997). In recent decades, however, women in the United States have surpassed men in educational attainment and achievement (Mickelson 1989; NCES 2000). The higher educational achievement of women is somewhat of a paradox since high educational attainment often does not translate into high occupational outcomes, such as prestige and incomes, to the same extent for women as for men (Mickelson 1989). Several hypotheses have been put forward to account for this pattern, but one of the most common explanations concerns gender role socialization (Mickelson 1989). This hypothesis proposes that girls succeed in school because to be feminine is to 'be good' in general, while masculinity is associated with resisting authority (Mickelson 1989). Ethnographic studies of working-class boys support this interpretation by showing how working-class boys earn status and display their manliness by defying school rules, which ultimately helps to reproduce their class position (Willis 1977, MacLeod 1995).

Previous research suggests that different factors may influence male and female educational success. Young women's educational paths are thought to be more closely connected to their family and romantic relationships than are men's paths. For example, age at first marriage had a stronger effect on the educational attainments of women than men, and educational attainment also had a stronger effect on age at first marriage for women than men (Marini 1978). In their study of college women in the 1980s, Holland and Eisenhart (1990) found that women who struggled with schoolwork tended to invest more in romantic relationships than women who were successful in school. Inasmuch as these women were more likely to marry young and have children, this is consistent with Marini's (1984) study showing that, while having children is both a cause and determinant of educational attainment for women, the effect of educational attainment on the timing of childbearing is greater than the effect of childbearing on eventual educational attainment (Marini 1984). Moreover, for both women and men, educational choices are intertwined with career ambitions and choices.

Gender and occupational choices

Paid and unpaid work are fundamentally differentiated by gender (Padavic and Reskin 2002). Societies tend to label different occupations as appropriate for males or females, and in general, women's work tends to be devalued (Padavic and Reskin 2002). Gender role socialization theories suggest that boys and girls are socialized as children to be oriented towards jobs that are deemed appropriate for their gender (Kimmel 2000; Padavic and Reskin 2002, p. 53). However, occupational aspirations have been found to be only weakly related to

eventual occupations (Jacobs 1999, p. 137). Padavic and Reskin (1990, 2002) argue that the opportunities and constraints facing women who attempt to enter male-dominated fields are more important than personal preferences. As opportunities and demand for workers have increased, women have made inroads into traditionally male occupations (Reskin and Roos 1990).

While much of the research on gender differences in educational and occupational choices have focused on a dichotomy between 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' careers, recent research suggests that this framework does not adequately capture women's experiences since women may often enter 'non-traditional' careers for reasons that differ from men's (Smulyan 2004). Increasingly, women are placing greater value on 'traditional' masculine occupational qualities such as status and authority, while also continuing to value altruism in occupational choices (Fiorentine 1988; Marini *et al.* 1996). However, even if men and women end up in the same occupations, the paths into those careers may be quite different. Both men and women's future ambitions are shaped by social norms and gender role expectations (Greene and DeBacker 2004). Men tend to focus more on employment goals, while women have a more diverse set of goals, including goals for marriage and family as well as a career (Greene and DeBacker 2004). Thus, especially for women, educational and occupational decisions are often made in conjunction with choices about marriage and children (Eccles 1994; Marini *et al.* 1996).

The educational and occupational choices of second-generation young men and women are likely to reflect gendered patterns that are common in U.S. society. However, their situations are somewhat distinctive in that most immigrant parents come from more patriarchal societies with fewer opportunities for women than in the United States. How families balance such cultural traditions within the American stratification system has only begun to be researched by immigration scholars.

Gendered paths in the second generation

Like studies on U.S. natives of native parentage, research on the second generation has revealed a pattern of gendered outcomes. For example, girls in immigrant families tend to get higher grades than boys (Kao and Tienda 1995; Fuligni 1997; Rumbaut 1997; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Zhou and Bankston 2001; Fuligni and Witkow 2004). As Rumbaut (this Issue) shows, young women have also completed more years of schooling than young men, although this difference is explained by early achievement in junior high and high school. Some research has also shown that girls report higher educational aspirations than boys (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Zhou and Bankston 2001).

These findings are perhaps more surprising in the case of children of immigrants because this pattern is such a sharp departure from that in most immigrants' home countries, where women are often much less educated than men. Thus, in just one generation, patterns of educational and occupational outcomes differ sharply from the previous generation (Zhou and Bankston 2001; López 2003; Tafoya-Estrada 2004). Nevertheless, Zhou and Bankston (2001) argue that Vietnamese parents' hopes that their daughters will attain higher educations is not a rejection of traditional gender roles, but rather a response to both the opportunities and necessities of education in the United States for both men and women. Likewise, López (2003) finds that girls in immigrant Caribbean families in New York are taught that they must be financially independent when they grow up because they cannot depend on men to support them (p. 125). Prieur (2002) also finds that children of immigrants from patriarchal societies renegotiate and recreate gender roles in response to the social and economic situations which young men and women encounter in their new society.

Recent studies of second-generation adolescents have found that the gendered treatment of boys and girls often promotes greater academic achievement for girls relative to boys (Zhou and Bankston 2001; Smith 2002; López 2003; Tafoya-Estrada 2004). Paradoxically, it is often the maintenance of traditional gender roles in the home that pushes girls to succeed academically, and thus to pursue educational and occupational ambitions that are non-traditionally gendered. For example, Zhou and Bankston (2001) find that, within Vietnamese immigrant families, parents exercise greater social control over their daughters. Since girls have higher standards for good behaviour, this carries over into good behaviour and achievement in school. Girls who succeed in school are more likely to want to continue their education and to aspire to high status careers. Smith (2002), López (2003), and Tafoya-Estrada (2004) come to similar conclusions for second-generation Caribbean and Mexican youths. Portes and Rumbaut's (2001) finding that second-generation girls maintain greater fluency in their native language than boys lends support to the idea that parents are able to transmit their languages, as well as their ambitions, more easily to girls than to boys because girls are often more strongly attached to their families. Still, traditional gender roles in immigrant families are not always conducive to girls' educational success. Kibria (1993) finds, for example, that some Vietnamese families do not allow their daughters to take advantage of all the educational opportunities available because they do not want them to attend schools that are far from the family or schools that they perceive as lax in discipline, even if those schools are the most prestigious or academically rigorous (Kibria 1993).

Ethnographic studies in schools have shown how second-generation experiences are shaped by gender. Gibson (1991) found that, like MacLeod's 'Hallway Hangers' or Willis's 'Lads', male children of West Indian immigrants proved their manliness by defying school rules, while girls were able to express their femininity through their good behaviour in school. Boys also saw fewer connections between school and work, while girls believed that their education would help them to get a job after high school (Gibson 1991). López (2003) and Cammarota (2004) show how young second-generation Latino or West Indian males were often 'criminalized' by school personnel, leading to antagonistic relations with teachers and administrators. Cammarota (2004) describes how Latino boys used cutting class as an act of resistance, while for girls, achievement in school itself was seen as an act of resistance by contradicting gender and race-based expectancies of them.

Prior research also suggests that certain life events may differentially affect the educational and occupational trajectories of second-generation men and women. For example, in her study of highly successful Mexican-American women, Gandara (1982, 1995) finds that the one characteristic that was most crucial to the women's success was that none had married or had children at an early age. Marriage and childbearing were not identified as crucial factors for men (Gandara 1995). Rumbaut (this Issue) identifies early childbearing for women and incarceration for men as crucial 'turning points' that negatively affect their life trajectories.

In sum, prior research suggests that the highly optimistic ambitions of second-generation adolescents are likely to dampen as they move into young adulthood. Educational and occupational ambitions and outcomes are also likely to be closely interrelated for both young men and women. The previous literature on gender differences in occupational and educational outcomes in the United States in general, and on the second generation in particular, suggests that educational and occupational trajectories of second-generation males and females differ. Not only does prior research suggest that females may fare better, but also that different factors may affect educational and occupational ambitions and outcomes for each gender. To explore these possibilities further, we now turn to empirical analyses of the latest CILS data.

Empirical findings from CILS, San Diego

The empirical results in this article are drawn from the San Diego portion of the CILS data set, as detailed in the Introduction to this Issue. While the San Diego sample is not necessarily representative of children of immigrants across the country, it does provide an

illustrative picture of the range of possible educational and occupational trajectories facing the new second generation¹ as they make the transition into adulthood. The first wave of data collection was carried out in 1992, when the respondents were in 8th or 9th grade in San Diego public schools and most were 14–15 years old, and yielded 2,420 cases, 85 per cent of whom were re-interviewed in 1995. Nearly two-thirds of the original respondents were re-interviewed at the time of the third wave of the survey, in 2001–2003, when most were 24–25 years old. Sample attrition is a consideration, since it was not random; respondents from two-parent families, those with higher educational achievement in high school, females, and those from families of higher socio-economic status were more likely to be located and included in the third survey a decade later. In consideration of the sample attrition problem, we include all these variables as predictors in our regression results.

Our empirical analyses include both descriptive and multivariate regression results, as well as some illustrative qualitative data. We begin by focusing on how educational expectations of young second-generation men and women in high school translate into educational attainment outcomes and future occupational expectations by their mid-twenties. Next, we present descriptive analyses of the characteristics associated with educational success for young men and women, followed by gender differences in occupational expectations and aspirations. We then present multivariate analyses of the different predictors of educational attainment and expected occupational prestige for males and females. Finally, we describe several types of educational and occupational trajectories, which we illustrate with gendered stories drawn from in-depth, open-ended interviews conducted with a subsample of 134 respondents during 2002–03.

What happens to educational expectations?

Figures 1 and 2 depict the educational and occupational trajectories of second-generation young adults in the San Diego CILS sample. Here, educational expectations were measured in 1995, when most of the adolescents in the sample were on the brink of high school graduation, and thus in a fairly good position to evaluate their future educational prospects. Comparing Figure 1 (males) and 2 (females), we see that educational expectations were quite high for both young men and women. Although a substantial minority did not expect to achieve a college degree; this minority was higher for boys (22.4%) than for girls (15.3%). Likewise, a higher proportion of girls expected to attain an advanced degree (45.6%) as compared to boys (34.6%). This suggests one possible reason why girls may go on to have higher educational

Figure 1. Educational and occupational trajectories of the new second generation, MALES

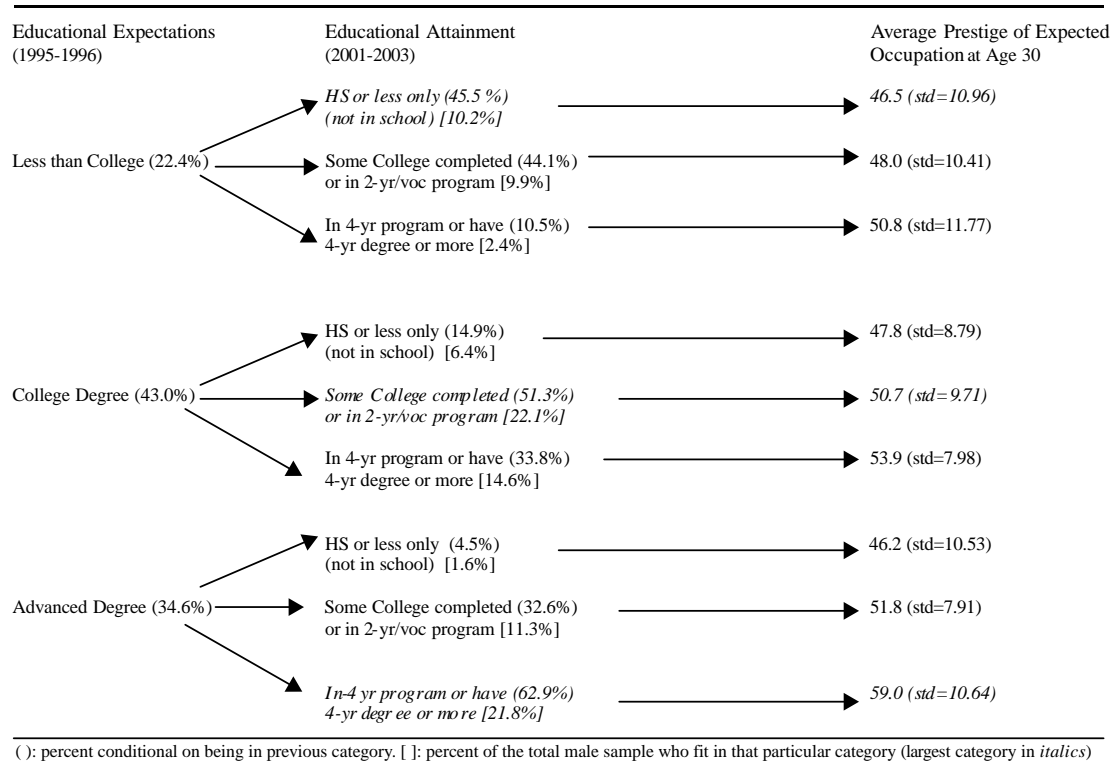
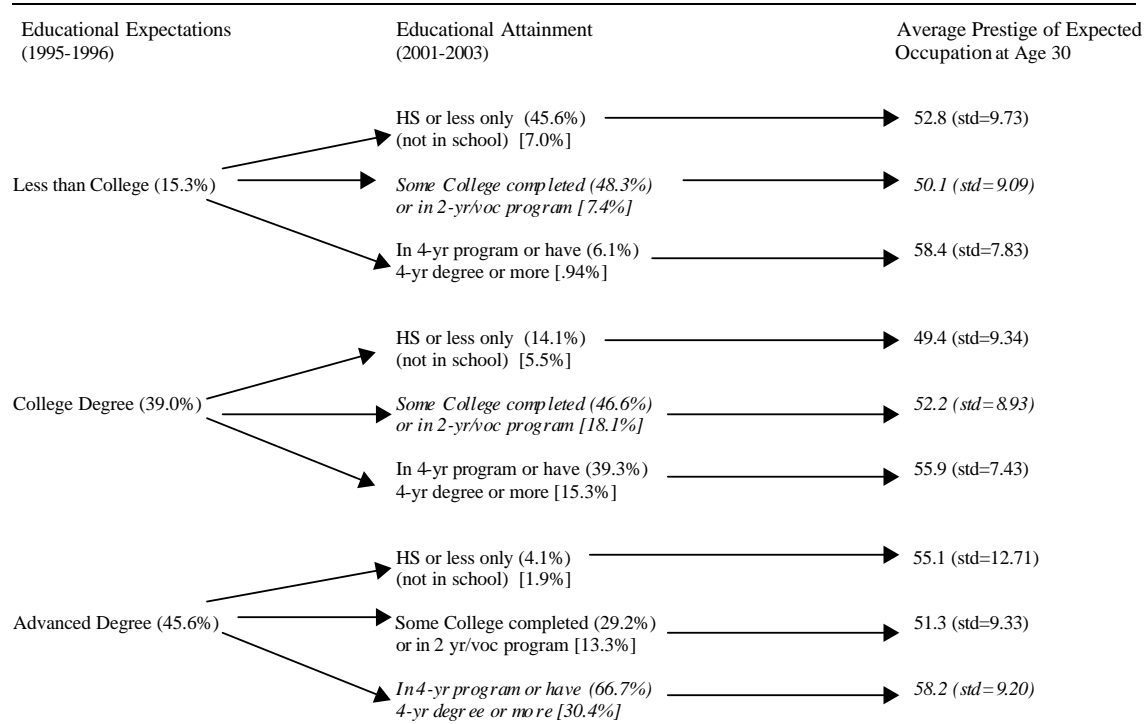


Figure 2. Educational and occupational trajectories of the new second generation, FEMALES



(): percent conditional on being in previous category. []: proportion of the total female sample who fit in that particular category (largest category in *italics*)

attainments than boys: they leave high school with higher educational expectations.

For young men, the two most common combinations of educational expectations and outcomes are to have expected a college degree, but to have only actually attained or be in the process of attaining a two-year degree (22% of all the male cases), or to have expected an advanced degree, and to have attained at least a bachelor's degree or currently be attending a four-year programme (also 22% of all the male cases). For women, the most common outcome, by far, is to have expected an advanced degree, and to be either in a four-year programme or to have graduated from one (30% of all female cases). Not surprisingly, those who did not expect to attain college degrees are not likely to be on their way to achieving four-year degrees.

It is among those who had higher educational expectations that we begin to see how often dreams are 'deferred'. Consistent with prior research on U.S. youths, we find that high expectations are often not realized. Among those who expected to attain at least college degrees in 1995, 54 per cent of males and 46 per cent of females were *not* on a path to earn them approximately six years later (results not shown). Focusing only on those with moderately high expectations, only 34 per cent of second generation young men who expected that their highest level of educational attainment would be a bachelor's degree were on their way towards completing a degree or had completed one by their mid-twenties. Among women, a somewhat higher percentage (39 per cent) of those expecting college degrees had completed them or were on their way towards completing one, suggesting that perhaps young women made more realistic calculations about their future educational prospects as adolescents than men.

Among those young men and women who had the highest educational expectations in high school, it is perhaps still too early to tell how they will ultimately fare, since many are still in school or may decide to return to school to complete advanced degrees at a later date. Most of those who expected advanced degrees have either completed, or are currently enrolled in, bachelor's degree programmes (63% of men, 67% of women). Still, it is apparent that a substantial portion probably will not get advanced degrees as they anticipated. Only 11 per cent of women and 8 per cent of males were enrolled in graduate programmes (or had completed them), while another 27 per cent of males and 28 per cent of females with the highest educational expectations had already graduated from college (results not shown). The results suggest that those with the highest ambitions were perhaps overly optimistic, and that women seemed to be more realistic in their calculations than men.

Where will these paths lead in terms of occupational outcomes? With so many (nearly half) of these young adults still in school, it is

difficult to tell. But their responses to a question about their expected occupations at age 30 (approximately five years away) provide some indication. Figures 1 and 2 show the average occupational prestige (measured in Treiman scores) of the intended future occupations for the various combinations of educational expectations and attainment outcomes. Clearly, expected occupational prestige is related to educational attainment. For both males and females, those who are in four-year degree programmes or had already completed them expect to work in occupations of higher status than those who are on trajectories towards lower overall educational attainment.

In addition, high educational expectations seem to be related to high occupational expectations, even if the previously desired educational attainment level is not achieved. This seems to be especially true for males. For example, among young men who have, at most, only completed a two-year degree and are not enrolled in a four-year programme, those who expected to attain an advanced degree have average expected occupational prestige scores of 51.8, compared to 50.7 for those who expected college degrees, and 48.0 for those who expected less than college degrees. It is possible that this finding simply indicates that young men with high, unrealistic educational expectations also have high, unrealistic occupational expectations. However, it is also possible that these young men were highly ambitious and found their way towards occupational paths that pay very highly, but that do not require advanced degrees. Future research will be needed to ascertain whether these high projected occupational statuses in later adulthood will be realized.

Do the characteristics associated with educational success vary by gender?

Since nearly half of the respondents at the time of the third wave of the study were still enrolled in some sort of educational programme, having completed college or being enrolled in a four-year degree programme by their mid-twenties is a relatively good indicator of educational success.² As Table 1 shows, 46 per cent of the female respondents and 37 per cent of the male respondents were either on their way towards, or had completed, four-year degrees.³ Clearly, second-generation women are outperforming their male counterparts, but whether the characteristics of successful young men and women differ is another matter. Table 1 shows the percentages of men and women who are enrolled in, or have completed, four-year programmes, by select characteristics.

Beginning with the ethnicities listed in Table 1, we see that within the largest ethnic categories presented here, women outperform men. In some cases, such as the Mexicans, the gender differences are small,

Table 1. Characteristics of young adults enrolled in a 4-year college program or with a bachelor's degree, by gender (*N* in parentheses)

	Males	Females
Overall Percentage with Bachelor's degree or in 4-year program	36.8% (680)	46.1% (788)
Mexican	18.9% (175)	19.9% (216)
Cambodian	18.2% (22)	22.5% (40)
Filipino	43.2% (271)	55.2% (297)
Vietnamese	51.7% (89)	84.0% (94)
Lived w/2 natural parents, 1992	38.3% (514)	50.2% (582)
Did not live with 2 natural parents, 1992	33.6% (155)	33.2% (193)
One parent born in U.S.	30.5% (95)	37.4% (123)
Both parents born abroad	38.3% (574)	47.6% (652)
Ever been suspended from school	16.9% (148)	30.8% (65)
Never been suspended from school	43.0% (521)	47.3% (710)
Ever spent time in jail	16.7% (66)	15.4% (13)
Never spent time in jail	39.3% (596)	46.5% (748)
Do not have children	41.8% (555)	59.7% (561)
Have children – born after age 20	15.6% (90)	14.3% (119)
Have children – born before age 20	11.4% (35)	10.2% (108)
Married or cohabitating	20.8% (120)	20.3% (232)
Single	40.8% (549)	56.9% (543)

Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS), third wave survey, San Diego-drawn sample, 2001–03

but for other ethnicities, such as Vietnamese and Filipinos, there seems to be a sharp bifurcation of success along gender lines. This is most apparent among the Vietnamese: an astounding 84 per cent of Vietnamese women are on the four-year degree path, compared to just over half of Vietnamese men.

Not surprisingly, family background also seems to be associated with educational attainment. Living in families with both natural parents present (during 8th grade) is clearly advantageous for both young men and young women. Yet, it seems that intact two-parent homes are especially advantageous for girls, as over half of those who came from two-parent homes are now on the bachelor's degree track or higher, while only 38 per cent of young men from two-parent homes have a similar educational trajectory. Insofar as having two parents allows for more supervision, this finding provides some support for past research suggesting that the increased social control experienced by girls in immigrant families promotes their academic achievement (Rumbaut 1997; Zhou and Bankston 2001; López 2003; Tafuya-Estrada 2004).

Some support for the 'immigrant optimism' hypothesis (Kao and Tienda 1995), which suggests that immigrant parents hold high expectations for their children, is evidenced by the differences in four-year college trajectories by parental nativity. Young men and women with two parents who are immigrants are more likely to be college graduates or in four-year programmes than men and women with only one parent born abroad (the latter has been dubbed the '2.5' generation). Women with two parents born abroad seem especially advantaged, as nearly 48 per cent are on the four-year degree trajectory compared with only 38 per cent of comparable men and 37 per cent of women with only one immigrant parent. One possible explanation for this pattern may be that immigrant parents maintain stricter controls over their daughters than do native-born parents, in keeping with the more traditional gender roles in most of their origin countries; it is also likely that families with two immigrant parents may communicate higher aspirations to their children.

Behaviour problems in school are associated with lower levels of educational success, especially for boys. There is a much larger disparity in educational success for men than for women between those who had ever been suspended in school and those who had not. Only about 17 per cent of men who had ever been suspended from school were now bound for a college degree, compared to 43 per cent of those who had ever been suspended. Women who had ever been suspended are also less likely to be on a four-year degree trajectory than women who had not (31% vs. 47%), but early troubles in school seem to be a stronger correlate of a less successful educational trajectory for men than for women. Likewise, having spent time in jail or prison is detrimental for both men and women, although a much larger percentage of males had ever been incarcerated. Only 17 per cent of men who had spent time in jail were on four-year degree trajectories compared to 39 per cent of men who had never been in jail. The disparity is even greater for women (15% vs. 47%), but there are few women who had spent time in jail (only 1.7%).

On the other hand, a relatively large number of the young women have had children (29% of women compared to 18% of men), and this too is negatively associated with educational outcomes. Moreover, *not* having children seems to be especially important to women's success: over 59 per cent of women who do not have children are on four-year college trajectories, compared to 14 per cent of those with children born after age 20, and only 10 per cent of those who had children as teenagers. These differences are not as pronounced among men. This relationship, however, is likely to work in two directions: women who want to start families at a young age probably do not pursue higher education, but having children may also prevent women from pursuing

higher education; conversely, women who want to pursue higher education may delay childbearing until their education is completed.

Similarly, although to a lesser extent than childbearing, being married or cohabiting is associated with less educational success for both men and women, but especially for women. Fifty-seven per cent of women who are not married or cohabiting are on a four-year degree trajectory compared to only about 20 per cent of women who are married/cohabiting. Again, the difference between married/cohabiting vs. single men in educational success is smaller than it is for women.

This descriptive analysis reveals some factors that are associated with educational success for men and women. While most of these factors are themselves intertwined in different combinations of vulnerabilities and resources, educational outcomes and decisions are also closely associated with young men and women's *occupational* expectations. That is, young men and women make decisions about the kind and amount of schooling they want in conjunction with their decisions about the kinds of occupations they would like to pursue (Eccles 1994). In the next section, we show how their occupational goals are gendered.

Gendered occupational ambitions and expectations

Since the CILS sample is relatively young and such a large proportion were still attending school as of the third wave of the study, examining current occupational attainments would not give us a clear picture of these young adults' eventual occupational outcomes. Instead, we focus on their occupational expectations at age 30, which, for most respondents is approximately five or six years away. While responses to questions about future occupational attainments may not correspond exactly to eventual careers, by their mid-twenties most men and women have a clearer picture of their intended occupations than they did when they were 14 or 17 years old. In Table 2, we show, by gender, how occupational ambitions in 1992, when most respondents were in 8th or 9th grade, relate to their occupational expectations at age 30, as asked in 2001–2003.

First, focusing on occupational aspirations in 1992, we see that occupational preferences are gendered. For example, the occupations of engineer and computer programmer/technician are male-dominated. Nearly 22 per cent of 8th grade boys aspired to be engineers, compared to only 3 per cent of girls. Conversely, the occupations of professor/teacher and nurse/physical therapist are highly gendered in the opposite direction. About 10 per cent of girls aspired to be either a teacher or nurse, compared to less than 3 per cent of boys.

Despite the fact that many second-generation youths aspired to traditionally gendered occupations, it is also clear that second-

generation girls, as early as 8th grade, were aspiring to break out of traditional gender roles. A substantial proportion of girls aspired to high-status and traditionally male-dominated occupations, even more so than boys. In the most striking example, nearly 31 per cent of girls aspired to be physicians, compared to only 18 per cent of boys, but the same pattern is found for lawyers and business managers. These findings reflect very high status aspirations for girls *and* a rejection of stereotypical gender roles. Status aspirations are thus higher for girls than they are for boys, *both* in terms of occupational ambitions, as well as educational expectations (which we noted in Figures 1 and 2 earlier).

What becomes of occupational aspirations in the future? On the left side of the table, we see the breakdown of the occupations that men and women expect to have at age 30, based on their responses in the 2001–2003 survey. While nearly half expect to be in occupations other than those listed, we can see the somewhat lower status occupations that are listed, such as teacher, nurse, and computer programmer, now have a higher proportion of responses than they did when respondents were first asked about their future occupations in 1992. Occupational choices are still gendered: a higher proportion of women expect to be teachers and nurses (14%, 18%) than men (6%, 9%), and a higher proportion of men expect to be computer programmers (25%) than women (6%).

For the highest status occupations, such as physician, lawyer, business manager, and engineer, much smaller proportions of men and women expect to have these occupations at age 30 than aspired to them as adolescents. For example, while 31 per cent of females aspired to be physicians in 1992, now, at ages 24–25, only about 3 per cent actually expect that they will be a physician when they are 30. Likewise, 18 per cent of males had aspired to be physicians a decade earlier, but only 3 per cent now expect to become doctors. Clearly, among both males and females, the second generation in adolescence tended to aspire to more than it now looks likely they are ever going to attain in adulthood.

From the table it is also clear that, consistent with past research, there is not a large amount of convergence between specific occupational aspirations and later occupational expectations, although this varies by occupation and gender. Among those who aspired to be physicians, for example, more males than females now expect to be physicians by age 30 (10% for men compared to 5% for women). However, a much smaller proportion of boys than girls had aspired to be physicians in the first place. Somewhat surprisingly, a higher proportion of females who aspired to be business executives/managers now expect to be business executives/managers than males (17% vs. 6%). The strongest convergence between aspirations and expectations

is found within the professional occupations of slightly less status, such as computer programmers (for males) and teachers (for females).

The descriptive analyses of educational success and occupational aspirations and expectations show how both the factors associated with success and the goals aspired to are gendered. However, it is important to keep in mind that the relationships among educational and occupational goals and the factors associated with success are intertwined in cumulative processes of advantage or disadvantage. Thus, for example, women who perceive few educational opportunities will have modest occupational goals and may be more likely to get married and have children at an early age, instead of pursuing college educations. Young men from poor families are more likely to have experienced early difficulties in school, resulting in suspensions, and are less likely to expect high occupational statuses or to get college degrees. Thus, there are multiple, overlapping vulnerabilities that keep both men and women from achieving their dreams, or from ever having entertained high hopes for the future. These intertwined associations are best illustrated with qualitative data, to which we shall turn below. Multivariate analyses, on the other hand, are best used to show which factors, controlling for others, are *most* predictive of subsequent outcomes. Accordingly, we turn next to multivariate analyses of educational success and expected occupational prestige for men and women.

Multivariate analyses of educational success and expected occupational prestige

Building upon Rumbaut's models of years of schooling in his article in this Issue, Table 3 presents, separately by gender, multivariate regression analyses of educational success (defined as enrolment in or completion of at least a Bachelor's Degree programme by 2001–2003), as well as expected occupational prestige at age 30. We also show whether the interactions between the various predictors and gender are significant (interaction tests available upon request). The variables included in each model are the same, although the analyses of expected occupational prestige also include educational attainment and enrolment as predictors.

The table underscores the importance of adolescent educational expectations as predictors of both educational attainment and expected occupational prestige for both men and women. As suggested by Figures 1 and 2, early educational expectations matter not only because they are strong determinants of educational success, but also because they independently affect expected occupational attainments, even controlling for education. In fact, educational expectations are the *only* adolescent measure that significantly predicts expected

Table 3. Logistic regressions of educational attainment and OLS regressions of expected occupational prestige, by gender, 2001–2003

	Odds Ratios:			Coefficients:		
	Enrolled in or Completed BA/BS Program			Expected Occupational Prestige at age 30		
	Males	Females	sig diff	Males	Females	sig diff
Age	.796+	.715**	NS	-.274	-.877*	NS
Mexican	1.085	.767	NS	.526	-2.757*	NS
Cambodian	1.309	.543	NS	1.004	1.668	NS
Filipino	.957	.730	NS	-.037	-3.372**	*
Vietnamese	2.183+	3.536**	*	.660	-2.730*	NS
Parent SES (1992)	1.648*	1.347+	NS	.207	-.201	NS
Two-parent family (1992)	.676	1.250	+	.624	1.489	NS
One U.S. Born Parent	.597	.773	NS	-0.585	.435	NS
N of Siblings at Home (1992)	.874+	.947	NS	-.135	.355	NS
Educational Expectations Index (1992–1995)	1.380**	1.261*	NS	.767+	1.120**	NS
Daily Homework Hours (1992–1995)	1.158	1.210+	NS	.721+	.284	NS
Daily TV Hours (1992–1995)	.919	.883	NS	-.129	-.727*	NS
Achievement Test Scores (1991)	1.008***	1.004*	NS	.003	.014*	NS
GPA (1992)	1.795**	2.912***	NS	.465	0.689	NS
Number of School Suspensions	.585*	1.370	**	-.744	-.439	NS
English Proficiency Index (1992–1995)	.778	1.172	NS	.424	0.691	NS
Ever Been Incarcerated	.469	.242	NS	.623	1.300	NS
Has children – born after age 20	.392*	.458*	NS	3.582*	-.711	NS
Has Children – born before age 20	.212*	.289**	NS	2.987	-1.428	NS
Single (vs. Married or Cohabiting)	.559	2.644***	***	4.467**	-.948	**
Years of education completed (2001–2003)				1.395***	-.018	**
Attending 2 year/vocational/other program (2001–2003)				.705	-.686	NS
Attending 4 year college (2001–2003)				1.729	1.062	NS
Attending graduate program (2001–2003)				8.637**	4.050*	*
Constant				22.845	49.137	
Observations	572	671		488	563	
Pseudo R2/R2	0.307	0.384		0.224	0.174	

Source: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS), third wave survey, San Diego-drawn sample, 2001–03

Significance: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, + $p < .10$, NS = not significant

occupational prestige for *both* men and women (although the male coefficient only borders on significance).

That several factors have significantly different effects for males and females illustrates the extent to which educational and occupational trajectories are segmented along gender lines. While most ethnic differences by gender are explained by the factors in the model, we see that Vietnamese females are significantly advantaged over their male counterparts in educational success, while Filipino females have notably lower expected occupational prestige scores than males. While most effects of family background do not differ greatly by gender, the educational advantage of growing up in a two-parent family may be more important for females (the gender interaction borders on significance). This finding may reflect an increased influence of families and parents on daughters than on sons, consistent with prior research on how parental social control is greater for girls than boys (Zhou and Bankston 2001; López 2003; Tafoya-Estrada 2004).

Early behavioural troubles in school appear to be detrimental to educational success for males, but not females. As the number of school suspensions increased for boys, boys are half as likely to be on four-year degree trajectories. For girls, early school suspensions had no effect, and the damage of early behaviour troubles for boys is exacerbated by the fact that so many more boys than girls had ever been suspended from school. (The average number of suspensions for boys was .53 compared to only .16 for girls; see Rumbaut, this Issue, for further details.)

Importantly, marital status has different effects on educational attainment and occupational expectations for men and women. Single women are over two and a half times as likely to be enrolled in or have completed a bachelor's degree programme than married or cohabiting women. This suggests that women who remain single are more focused on educational goals than married or cohabiting women. In contrast, marital status has no significant net effect on educational attainment for men (although the direction of the odds ratios suggests that being single may be *disadvantageous*). Marital status has no significant net effect on occupational expectations for women, but single men have significantly higher occupational prestige expectations than married or cohabiting men. One potential explanation for this pattern may be that single men, net of education and other factors, are more career than family focused as young adults. By focusing on their careers, young men can expect to have higher status occupations in the future.

Educational attainment and enrolment are among the most important predictors of occupational expectations at age 30. However, for males, but not females, increased years of schooling, net of other predictors, leads to significantly higher expected occupational prestige scores. Not surprisingly, both men and women who are currently in

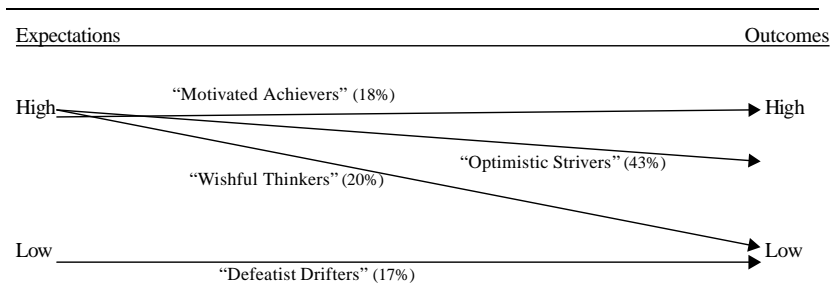
graduate school expect to have higher status occupations at age 30 than those who are not currently in school; however, once again, the effect is much stronger for men than for women. For men, being in graduate school leads to expected occupational prestige scores that are over 8 1/2 points higher than those of men who are not in school, while for women, the difference is 4 points.

The quantitative data reveal how expectations and outcomes are gendered, while continuing to reinforce the power of expectations for both young men and women. However there is a paradox: while educational expectations are the *only* significant predictor of *both* educational success and occupational expectations for *both* men and women, expectations are often not realized. Based on the data, we were able to identify four common trajectories, three of which involve some notion of ‘a dream deferred’.

Types of trajectories

As suggested earlier, the educational and occupational outcomes of the second generation often do not follow linearly from their expectations. Instead, paths are more often non-linear, and final educational and occupational outcomes are arrived at only after individuals experience many twists and turns that are highly influenced by gender, as well as class and race. We found that the adult children of immigrants we studied can be characterized by four types of trajectories, which are illustrated graphically in Figure 3. These types encompass 98 per cent of all of the San Diego respondents; we have dubbed them ‘motivated achievers’, ‘defeatist drifters’, ‘optimistic strivers’, and ‘wishful thinkers’. First, about 18 per cent could be classified as ‘motivated achievers’, who followed the most straightforward paths towards fulfilling their high educational expectations. These individuals expected to attain college degrees or higher, and by their mid-twenties have achieved, or are on their way towards

Figure 3. *Four common types of trajectories*



achieving that goal; women were slightly more likely than men to fall into this category.

Most of the respondents, however, fell into three categories that illustrate how the dreams of the second generation often come to be deferred, denied, dampened, or dissipated. Most of the respondents (43%) could be categorized as 'optimistic strivers'. These include those who had expected to attain graduate degrees, but are only on track to attain bachelor degrees, or those who had expected to attain bachelor degrees, but are only on trajectories towards associate degrees. This path illustrates how common it is for those with high expectations not to realize their ambitions. While they may have fallen short of their initial goals, the fact that they aimed high in the first place led them to strive, in a positive direction, towards the fulfilment of more modest educational and occupational goals. 'Wishful thinkers', on the other hand, had high expectations as teenagers that they have not come close to fulfilling (20% of the sample). These include those who expected to attain a graduate degree, and, as of their mid-twenties, were only enrolled in or had only completed community college, as well as those who had expected to attain bachelor degrees, but did not attend school at all past high school. Like many of the teenagers in Schneider and Stevenson's (1999) study, these young adults had high ambitions, but were 'directionless', and did not take any steps towards fulfilling those goals; this path is more common among those from lower socio-economic backgrounds who were often inadequately prepared for college or lacked resources to help them to navigate California's complex post-secondary educational system.

Finally, about 17 per cent of the sample could be characterized as 'defeatist drifters' because, while they may have voiced high *aspirations*, they did not *expect* to ever attain a college degree. This path was more common among males (20%) than among females (14%). This was also a more common response to low socio-economic status for males, since 35 per cent of males from the lowest socio-economic backgrounds could be classified as 'defeatist drifters' compared to 23 per cent of low socio-economic status females (results available upon request). As suggested earlier, expectations are quite powerful: almost without exception, those who did not expect to attain college degrees did not earn them. Even more telling is that these four types, which account for 98 per cent of the respondents, all involve attaining *the same or less* schooling than anticipated. Only 2 per cent of the respondents attained *more* education than they expected – we might term these individuals 'uncertain achievers' to describe their unwillingness to assert high ambitions despite their potential to achieve (not shown in the Figure). As suggested by the quantitative findings, it is not just that the outcomes differ by gender (such as that males are more often 'defeatist drifters'), but that the *paths* to these different

outcomes are also gendered – different factors along the way affect the trajectories for men and women. The complexities of this process are best illustrated through qualitative data, which can also show how cumulative processes can disadvantage young men and women in their pursuit of educational and occupational goals.

The young second-generation men and women in the San Diego study who were able to achieve their educational and occupational goals share many things in common: they were able to mobilize social and economic resources, came from supportive families, had clear-cut goals, were relatively high achievers in junior high and high school, and were determined to succeed. However, the many young adults who did not achieve their goals faced various obstacles that often varied by gender. The following two vignettes are illustrative examples of how dreams are deferred and dissipated, and correspond to the two least successful trajectories we identified: ‘defeatist drifters’ and ‘wishful thinkers’.

Dan: ‘Defeatist Drifter’

Dan⁴ would be characterized as a ‘defeatist drifter’ because he never realistically expected to earn a bachelor’s degree and, although he is currently enrolled full time at a community college, is not sure what degree he wants to attain and has not been very successful with his coursework. As a student in junior high and high school, Dan dreamt of becoming a physician one day, but never thought realistically that he would even graduate from college. Part of his defeatist attitude stems from his disadvantaged family background. He is 25 years old and was born in a refugee camp at the Thai/Cambodian border. He grew up (and continues to live) in a large extended family household, the youngest of seven siblings, none of whom completed any schooling past high school and all of whom currently work in low-skilled assembly or service work. His parents only completed elementary schooling and the family has always struggled financially. He currently has two part-time jobs, as a food server and as an assistant for a disabled student, and he describes himself as ‘always broke’.

The resignation to fail that he had as an adolescent stemmed partly from the high school he attended, which he describes as ‘not good’ because most of the students were minorities and many were African Americans. He felt that teachers did not care about the students and counsellors treated him ‘like a number’. He was not a good student in high school and has also struggled academically in community college when attending his classes (he often enrolls, but does not attend). After high school, during his ‘party years’, he worked in low-wage service positions, often quitting and getting fired because the supervisors ‘did

not like him'. Now, he says he would like to become a nurse's assistant and earn his Associate's degree in 3–4 years. Someday, he still dreams of being a doctor, 'even if it takes 20, 25, or 30 years', although he admits that he does not know what earning a higher degree would entail. Dan regrets being where he is today: 'I do wish that I could go back in time and study more harder so I could go to universities and become a doctor for my mom, but I got into some situations and now I just have to take time day-by-day.' One of the situations Dan regrets is that he was arrested for a DUI when he was 21 years old, for which he spent one week in jail, is still on probation, and is still paying back a fine. He considers this one of the worst things that ever happened to him and fears that he might not be as successful in life because of this.

'Defeatist drifter' describes Dan well because, even though he no longer has the overwhelmingly defeatist attitude he had as a teenager, he still remains somewhat 'lost' and directionless. The cumulative processes of disadvantage are clear in Dan's case: his family had few economic or social resources. He therefore had no choice but to attend the local public schools that did not provide him with a strong foundation to succeed. Since his own family was not knowledgeable about the educational system and his teachers and counsellors did not seem to care,⁵ it is not surprising that Dan did not have high expectations for the future. His story is also a gendered one – Dan's early rejection of schooling, rebelliousness, and trouble with the law are not uncommon displays of young men's masculinity.

Tey: 'Wishful Thinker'

Tey is a 26-year-old woman who was born in Mexico and came to the United States with her mother at the age of six; she was raised by her mother and stepfather in a lower-middle-class neighbourhood in San Diego. Unlike Dan, she has always been optimistic about the future, although her ambitious dreams have not been accompanied by concrete plans and steps to achieve her goals – thus, her categorization as a 'wishful thinker'. Unlike Dan, she has positive memories of high school and her teachers, and feels her early schooling prepared her well for college. Even though she was only an average student, as an adolescent Tey dreamt of going to college to earn a business degree or an MD, and was very sure she would earn at least a bachelor's degree. Instead, after graduating from high school, Tey attended community college for one semester before getting married and having a child. She is currently unemployed and lives with her husband, who works as a longshoreman, and their six-year-old son in an apartment owned by her husband's parents. Since high school she has worked in several part-time low-wage service jobs, including a retail stores and a hotel, where she was fired for being late too many times.

Tey and her husband have been 'getting by' with the help of his parents. Now, Tey says she plans to follow in her mother's footsteps and go back to community college to become a registered nurse assistant (her mother was a nurse in Mexico, but worked as a babysitter in the U.S.). She does not want to have more children in the near future because she first hopes to 'finish the dreams I had when I was single', but, she says fatalistically, 'if it happens, it happens'. With the demands of marriage and raising a son, Tey has not completely given up on her dream of being a physician so she can help others, but she has put more modest goals first: 'I want to get the RNA and keep on going. Maybe sometime become a doctor or something. But, for now, start at the bottom and just help out . . . because if I stay in the same stage where I'm at right now . . . I think I'll never go up . . .' While Tey remains hopeful and optimistic, she has not yet taken concrete steps towards achieving her goals.

Tey's optimism stems in part from her relatively secure family background and her positive experiences in high school. Still, her lack of knowledge about the steps needed to achieve her career goals and her lack of action suggest that her hopes amount to little more than 'wishful thinking'. Although Tey voiced high educational and occupational expectations as a teenager, she left her parents' home at age 18 to start her own family rather than concentrate on school. Her family responsibilities as a wife and mother have made it difficult for her to pursue her dreams for higher education and a career. Tey's motivations for wanting a career are highly gendered. She wants to be a doctor or nurse so that she can help others, and seems unconcerned with status or money. Like many of the young women in Holland and Eisenhart's (1990) study, Tey prioritizes romance and family relationships over education and career, following a common path for young women.

Conclusion

To gain a full picture of the educational and occupational trajectories of children of immigrants as they enter young adulthood, it is necessary to examine how these processes are gendered. The CILS data illustrate how educational and occupational choices are intertwined, and how goals and trajectories differ for young men and women. In cumulative processes of advantage or disadvantage, gender, social class, and ethnicity intersect to lead to segmented outcomes. Several findings highlight these gendered paths and suggest directions for future research.

First, the importance of expectations for both males and females is underscored by the finding that educational expectations measured in adolescence emerged as significant predictors of both educational

attainment and expected occupational prestige for both men and women in early adulthood. Early ambitions matter a great deal, and those who expected to have high educational attainments a decade ago now also expect to attain high status careers, even after controlling for their actual educational attainments.

However, while many of the second-generation young men and women in the San Diego study are on straightforward trajectories towards socio-economic success, many are not fulfilling their educational and occupational goals. In fact, a much higher degree of 'lost talent' is found among the young men and women in the CILS sample than was found in a national sample of U.S.-born youths (Hanson 1994). Partly, this is because the second generation begins with such high ambitions: as high school students, about 75 per cent of boys and 85 per cent of girls *expected* to earn *at least* a college diploma. Such high ambitions partly reflect the knowledge that in order to compete in a bifurcated labour market, children of immigrants must far surpass their parents' modest educational attainments (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). High ambitions may also reflect a certain optimism that comes from having immigrant parents, who may push their children to take advantage of the opportunities in the United States (Kao and Tienda 1995). However, by their mid-twenties only 37 per cent of males and 46 per cent of females had either earned college diplomas or were on trajectories that were likely to lead to four-year degrees. Boys not only begin with lower educational and occupational expectations, they are also less likely to translate high expectations into realities. Within certain ethnic groups, such as the Vietnamese, these gender disparities are even more pronounced, with women far out-surpassing men in educational attainment.

Second, the young men and women in the CILS study not only have different outcomes, but they take different paths to achieve educational and occupational success or failure. We found that these adult children of immigrants can be characterized by four types of trajectories which encompassed 98 per cent of the respondents; we dubbed these 'motivated achievers', 'defeatist drifters', 'optimistic strivers', and 'wishful thinkers'. Our analyses show that few factors significantly influence outcomes for *both* young men and women, while some factors have decidedly different effects on males and females. In particular, we showed that early behavioural troubles in school, which are often ways of displaying masculinity, were strongly associated with downward educational trajectories for young males, but had no effect on females. In contrast, marital status emerged as a strong factor predicting educational success for women. Single women were much more likely to achieve educational success – rejecting feminine stereotypes by putting education before marriage and children – while marital status had no similar effect for males.

The young women in the CILS study not only have higher educational expectations and attainment, they also aspire to higher status occupational than their male counterparts. While some occupational choices, such as nurse and teacher, are still very traditionally gendered, girls were more likely than boys to aspire to the highest status occupations, even those that are traditionally male-dominated, such as physician or business executive. Nevertheless, young women's motivations often differ from men's. For example, in qualitative interviews, many of the young women who aspired to be physicians stated they wanted a career that would allow them to help others, while men more often mentioned desires for high salaries. Given women's historical under-representation in many of these high status occupations, it is unclear whether the young women with such high occupational goals will be able to attain them as they reach full adulthood.

Recent debates have focused on women's under-representation in science (Cox and Alm 2005), but the emerging gender gap in college admissions and degrees, in which females outnumber males, has not gone unnoticed. Indeed, a recent article in the *Los Angeles Times* referred to males as an 'underrepresented group' in many colleges (Hong 2004). Thus, the gender gap in success we observe among young second-generation men and women appears to be part of a larger phenomenon in the United States. Still, children of immigrants are unique in that their parents often come from societies that espouse more traditional gender roles. It seems that, in one generation, a dramatic redefinition of gender roles appears to have taken place. Ethnographic work on the second generation, however, reveals that gender roles changes may not be as startling as they seem, but that, paradoxically, a pattern of adherence to traditional gender roles – such as expecting better behaviour of girls, and monitoring their movements more closely – can result in girls' higher educational achievement (Zhou and Bankston 2001; López 2003; Tafoya-Estrada 2004). With high achievement often comes high ambition, and indeed our data show that girls often expect not only to succeed in school, but also to pursue high-status, male-dominated occupations. We are unable to adequately address here the question of what the ramifications of girls' achievements and ambitions are for immigrant family dynamics and conflict. However, how young women negotiate and renegotiate their roles in immigrant families is one of the most important questions for future research.

In sum, we argue that segmented assimilation theory needs to acknowledge more explicitly the ways in which gender shapes distinct patterns of adaptation among children of immigrants in their transitions to adulthood. Patterns of success, stagnation, or failure not only vary by gender, but are arrived at through alternative paths

for young men and women. Educational and occupational trajectories are segmented not only by class and ethnicity, but also by gender. While many young second-generation men and women have aspired to more than they are ever likely to attain, young men's dreams are more often 'deferred'. As adolescents, second-generation young women tended to be very optimistic about their futures; many are still pursuing their educational goals and express ambitious occupational goals. However, given that women historically have not been able to translate high educational attainments into high occupational prestige or incomes, we do not know to what extent these young women will achieve their ambitions. For the many young men and women who have dampened their initially high educational and occupational goals to aim for more modest goals, only time will tell if even these aspirations will ultimately be realized.

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Notes

1. The first CILS survey was administered to 8th and 9th graders attending schools in the San Diego Unified School District who were born in the United States and had at least one foreign-born parent, or who themselves immigrated at an early age (all before age 12). For simplicity and for the general purposes of this analysis, we refer to all of the respondents as a *de facto* 'second generation', although those born outside the United States are more accurately designated the 1.5 generation and differ from their U.S.-born peers in significant ways (see Rumbaut 2004).
2. Since ethnic minority students often take more years to graduate (Lavin and Crook 1990), including those who are still enrolled in four-year programmes is a reasonable measure of educational success.
3. See Rumbaut, Table 8 (this Issue), for the educational attainment of the entire San Diego sample of CILS respondents, as well as additional descriptive statistics of educational attainment by ethnicity.
4. The names are pseudonyms chosen by the respondents.
5. See Valenzuela (1999) for an excellent discussion of the importance of teachers' caring for student success.

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