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## The Romance of Assimilation: Studying the Demographic Outcomes of Ethnic Intermarriage in American History

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## Working Paper No. 230

### **The Romance of Assimilation?: Studying The Demographic Outcomes of Ethnic Inter-marriage in American History**

by

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The Jerome Levy Economics Institute

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I want to offer, however tentatively, a new approach to the history of American ethnic intermarriage--or at least to try to extend a relatively minor trend in current research. The sociological study of intermarriage is a well-developed field; yet it is simply astonishing how little historical work has been done on the way intermarriage operated to enhance the blending of peoples in the American past. Every historical survey of immigration or assimilation will make some mention of intermarriage, of course, but there is little to say beyond the observation that it occurred and mattered. There is work in process now, stimulated by the interest in people of multiracial origin, and in the construction of racial divisions. However, these are studies of legal arrangements or qualitative studies of family histories or of literature. Demographic studies of American intermarriage in the past are scarce--surely less than half a dozen extended papers or books.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, even these few historical studies do not really address what seems to me the most important aspect of the question. They deal with the past, but with one moment in the past, adapting insofar as possible the questions and perspectives of the sociologist. As I understand it, there are two principal intellectual justifications for studying the sociology of intermarriage. One is to show fault lines in the society: social distance is larger across some divisions than others. This justification in turn depends to a large extent on another justification of the intermarriage literature namely that intermarriage is a crucial, probably the crucial, mechanism of ethnic intermingling, and ultimately of whatever we mean by assimilation. So in a sense, it is less intermarriage itself that is ultimately interesting than the impact that intermarriage has on the society over time. In this sense, the offspring of intermarriages give the topic much of its importance. Yet my impression at least is that the demographic study of intermarriage has typically concentrated on the marriages and given very little attention to the resulting population of children. So while it is true that tables about children will show no more than the result of intermarriage (modified by fertility differentials), a refocus of attention would be useful for understanding change over time. Similarly, what is crucial about intermarriage historically is not so much understand the rates at any one time precisely; in this sense the impressive methodological refinements whose goal is to arrive at intermarriage rates that are independent of the size of relevant populations is less crucial to the historical development. The independent rates are welcome knowledge, but the historical story that needs to be told--about the creation of blended populations, is a story about the outcome of both independent intermarriage rates and group size--and also of group-specific fertility rates. It is the cumulative impact of all these, over generations, that leads to Crevecoeur's 'new man'.<sup>3</sup>

I pass over a problem of cause and effect here. Does intermarriage bring about social and cultural change or does intermarriage merely reflect it? By the time Crevecoeur's settlers are ready to intermarry are they already 'new men' (and women)? While I do not try to resolve this puzzle, it does seem to me that the sensible answer must be that typically both processes--causation and reflection--must be operating at once, that weakening ethnic allegiances are a source of intermarriage but also that the process of weakening is accelerated by the intermarriage itself, and the offspring develop in that further-weakened ethnic environment.

One kind of sociological study does focus on the long range effects of intermarriage, on the offspring of intermarriage over historical time: the study of ethnic ancestry. I want to contrast that approach with the

approach taken here. One way to think about intermarriage is the way a genealogist would think about social origins. That is, we can ask, for whole groups, questions about parents, grandparents and great grandparents; what can we say about the actual record of where these progenitors came from? The answer is going to be complex and confusing, as it should be in a society with extensive intermingling of peoples. But the complexity and confusion is itself what is most illuminating because it tells us (so to speak) that the descendants of Serbs and Croats in this country do not stay Serbs and Croats so very long. Another way to deal with this mix of origins is captured in the study of ancestry. We can ask people, including people whose ancestors have lived in the United States for several generations, with what ethnic ancestry, or ancestries, they identify. The U. S. Census Bureau has been asking such a question since 1980. This is not the genealogist's approach; one might call it the social psychologist's approach or the cultural anthropologist's approach, in the sense that it calls for a subjective response from the respondent. It says, more or less, we do not care what the actual roots were; the actual origins of people have become too complicated to ask about anyway; what matters is what people continue to care about. Obviously, each of these approaches, that inspired by the analogy of the genealogical record and that of ancestry, will have values and limitations.

I want to stress some of the limitations of the study of ethnic ancestry (based on an 'identity' question) since my approach in this paper will be to press as far as I can the genealogist's sorts of questions. First, identifications with ethnic ancestry is a subjective matter, so that an individual only lists the ancestries that matter, not all those that formed part of the historical record of origins. Second, the 'identifications' so chosen have tended to fluctuate a good deal: in the famous instance, the percentage of Germans and English shifted dramatically when the ordering of the examples on the Census form were changed. A similar shift occurred for Italians. Again, I do not deny that these confusions tell us something of value, but they do not tell us what the historical record actually was. Third, and perhaps even more important to the historian, the answers do not tell us much about timing -- when someone tells us they identify with Polish and Italian ancestries, we learn only that at some time in the past, the mixing of ancestors occurred.<sup>4</sup>

In this paper I experiment with one strategy for extending what I have called the genealogist's perspective. In particular, I am going to focus on the offspring of intermarriage over three generations. On the whole, of course, there is a very good reason we have not had more extensive study of such subjects: the data are unavailable. For fully a century (1880 - 1970), the United States Census asked individuals about their own birthplaces and about their parents' birthplaces. But it never went back farther than two generations (and since 1970, the census has asked only about birthplace, not about parental birthplace).

I have no magic to offer. Still, I do think I can make some headway on this question by utilizing an aspect of the census records. I will be exploiting the huge, machine readable census samples known as the Public Use Microdata Samples (in the Integrated format produced by the University of Minnesota team - the IPUMS). Recall that past censuses asked individuals where they had been born and where their parents had been born. Using this information, we can locate second-generation adult respondents -- those adults who said they had been born in the U.S. and that their parents had been born abroad. In the same household, we find their children; and the children of these second generation adults are members of the third generation. Now of course such an approach is limited: it is limited to those members of the third generation who were living with their second-generation parents. So the approach is restricted to the context in which the third generation was growing up, for example to questions about their family background and their early schooling. Now I had not in fact meant to study intermarriage using this strategy but rather to extend the study of immigrant absorption generally past the second generation. After all, the story of immigrant absorption continues through three, four and five generations. In particular, in many groups, the children of immigrants are still quite different from Americans whose families have been here for generations ( in terms of fertility, residential patterns, schooling, occupation, income)--and yet over the course of subsequent generations, those differences in social characteristics between the second generation and others must have faded since sociologists tell us (on the basis of ancestry studies) that the differences have largely disappeared by now. Can we then learn more about the specifics of the process of absorption after that second generation? With such questions I began to study the third-generation children in some of the IPUMS samples. As I did so, I found that there was another theme emerging, a theme of which I had been dimly aware, of course, but had not appreciated, and this is the theme of intermingling, and the relation between that intermingling and the way we think about generations and about ethnicity.

To understand this point, consider what we mean by first, second and third generations. One might respond, that we mean the immigrants, the children and grandchildren of the immigrants, respectively. Well, yes and no; things begin to get a little complicated even in the second generation, as can be seen in Figure 1. We can distinguish between two ways to define a member of the second generation. One definition is narrower and has the advantage of simplicity; that's the one I call the simplified definition. It tells us that the native-born child of two Italian-born parents, is a second generation Italian-American child. So far so good, but what about the native-born child of one Italian-born parent? The second parent might be an immigrant from some other foreign country, or the second parent might be born in the United States, of any ethnic derivation whatever. Do we include this child in the definition of second-generation Italians? I am calling the more complex, wider definition that does include this child the maximally inclusive definition of second generation membership. Well, so what? In thinking about any theme, we have to simplify and ignore some cases at the margins; naturally the simplified, core definition and the maximally inclusive definition vary slightly in scope. No doubt the two definitions of the second generation capture almost the same group of people. That is true, as Table 1 shows for the second-generation Italian-Americans of 1940. Some 84% of all the second-generation members captured by the maximally inclusive definition are also second-generation members in the simplified core-group definition.

Before preceding to the third generation, I want to introduce some material (in Tables 2-7) on the dynamics of the Italian immigration, material that will be more or less familiar, but which is important to keep in mind in this context for various reasons, some of which I will mention now, and some later. First of all, the Italian immigration occurred during a relatively short period, as such processes go--compared, for example, to the German or Irish immigrations (Table 2). Indeed, a huge proportion of the Italians came during the decade and a half following 1900. Second, recall the prevalent pattern of Italian remigration--and not just the fact of seasonal, or at any rate impermanent, immigration (Table 3). Note too that the pattern of remigration helps explain why the huge gender imbalances in the immigration stream did not lead to much intermarriage in the immigrant generation. While many more men than women came, the gender imbalance in the proportions leaving was even greater, so that among the persisters in the United States the imbalance (and the pressure for intermarriage) was considerably less than the annual immigration figures might lead one to expect. Also, at least in 1920, it appears that more than a fifth of the Italian men who had worked in this country for over five years had remained unmarried, whereas very few of the Italian immigrant women had never married (Table 4a). This factor too muted the pressure of gender imbalance on outmarriage. And finally, Italian men who had married could stay within the ethnic fold by marrying the growing number of Italian **second** generation women, the native-born daughters of Italian immigrants. Table 4b shows that Italian immigrant men married second generation Italian-American women some eight times as often as Italian immigrant women married second generation Italian-American men. Only 7% of the Italian men who had married had out-married; had those who married second-generation Italian-American women been obliged to out marry instead, the proportion of men who out married would have more than doubled. To put it another way, the second-generation Italian-American women provided a way to balance still further the sex ratio among Italian immigrants.

In any case, as Table 1 showed us, the second generation members, as late as 1940, were overwhelmingly the offspring of two Italian immigrants, mixed marriage patterns remaining a very minor theme. Table 5 shows when the second generation appeared on the scene. The huge immigration of 1900-1914 is of course reflected in the two giant cohorts of second generation members, born in 1911-30 (Table 6). Now I mention this because I want to focus on a third generation group, children of second generation members, that is not an atypical cohort. For example, I don't want to study the first few third generation members to reach adulthood, around 1900-1910, nor do I want to take the youngest third-generation members of 1970. I especially want to avoid the latter because toddlers in 1970 were likely to have had parents that were very unusual second-generation members--either their own parents had immigrated very late (after the mass immigration ended) or their own parents had come here as very young children. These immigrant parents had been formally members of the immigrant generation but they are likely to have shared more with the second generation than with the first. Sociologists of immigration today have come to refer to these immigrant children as 'the .15 generation.' And the children of the 1.5 generation, in turn, are surely at least 2.5 generation members.

To avoid these limitations, I have focused on the children of second-generation Italians in 1960, children in the age range 12-16. The ages of the second-generation parents of these children place the parents solidly in the

midst of the two largest birth cohorts of second-generation Italians (Table 7). So I feel reasonably confident that the trends we will be looking at describe mainstream third generation trends.

We can now leave the wider context of the Italian immigration and return to our examination of the generations of Italian-origin offspring. We saw earlier that there was relatively little difference between denoting the second generation groups by the ideal type and the maximally inclusive definitions. Now let us turn to the issue of the third generation. Who is a third generation member? Well, insofar as we have a working concept of this term at all, I would say that we have in mind the grandchildren of the immigrants. The simplified definition is drawn out in figure 2. There are four grandparents born in Italy, and two parents born here, and the child is born here. We have many more criteria of membership to consider. Second-generation membership depended on three peoples' birthplaces--two parents' and their child's. Third generation membership depends on seven people's birthplaces--the four grandparents are being added now. But clearly there are other possible ways to think about third generation members. The maximally inclusive definition of a third generation Italian-American would now include any child of one native born parent who is in turn the child of at least one Italian immigrant.

Table 8 shows first that people who are part third generation may be part some other number of generations--second or fourth or more. Most important, Table 8 shows that people who had an Italian grandparent are likely to have had a grandparent of some other ethnic origin too. The combination of these two insights is clear in one cell of the table, the cell Bb. This is the group covered by the simplified definition of third generation Italian-Americans. Only 24.3% of the grandchildren of Italian immigrants included in the maximally inclusive definition were in fact also members of the third generation by the simplified core-group definition. So our effort at conceptual simplification, which works well in the second generation already collapses miserably in the third generation. The overlap between the simplified definition and the maximally inclusive definition covered 84% of the second generation but it does NOT cover 76% of the third generation.

Now there are various caveats about the data; covered in the notes to Table 8. I want to call attention to one of these caveats in particular (covered in note 5) because it is central to the methodological endeavor here, and has direct substantive bearing. Indeed whether I decide this approach can be extended fruitfully to other analyses will depend on the resolution of this issue. Notice that a good many of the third-generation sample members are shown as having had **grandparents** who were native-born (NB), and hence having had **parents** who are native-born of native parentage (NBNP)--in columns C, F and G and in rows c, f, and g of Table 8. However, given the way the census classified individuals, it is possible that these native-born grandparents were in fact themselves native-born of foreign parentage, that is, members of the second generation--and indeed, some of these native-born grandparents could have been second-generation Italians (the native-born children of earlier Italian immigrants). Table 8 is literally accurate--these grandparents were native born; however, if **many** native-born grandparents were second-generation Italian Americans, then the table would be misleading in that it encourages us to overstate the ethnic mingling that has occurred. If many of the native-born grandparents are themselves of Italian descent, but simply from families that arrived earlier, reading the table as a measure of ethnic intermingling, of the dilution of Italian stock, would be a mistake.

There surely must have been such unidentified descendants of Italian immigrants among those native-born grandparents in Table 8; the issue is how many. And one reason for focusing this paper on the Italians is that the only strategy I have been able to develop for dealing with this problem depends upon having an immigrant group that arrived over a relatively brief period. If a mass immigration occurred over the course of one generation or less, then there will be few children who had both an immigrant grandparent and an immigrant great grandparent from the country of origin. Still, in the case of our 1960 third-generation-Italian sample members, just how many of the 'native-born grandparents' were of Italian origin themselves? The appendix presents an attempt to answer that question.

The strategy used there can be briefly described. My goal here is to estimate the proportion of sample members who had only Italian origins, regardless of their generational standing. I make two adjustments to the proportions in Table 8. **The first adjustment** addresses cross-generational marriages. A common pattern may well have been for Italian immigrant men to marry second-generation Italian-American women. This pattern would have helped to reduce still further the impact of the male-female sex ratios in the immigration. The children of such unions, in turn, may well be disproportionately represented among the NB parents of Italian and NB parentage (those in row c and column C). I assume, arbitrarily that 75% of those NB spouses were

Italian (especially in the cells of greatest interest to us: cABC and Cab).

Those sample members in rows d, e and f and in columns D, E and F of Table 8 need not be considered, since we observe that they have ethnic origins in another country (besides the United States and Italy) either in their parents' or grandparents' generations. On the other hand, sample members in row g had a NB father and paternal grandparents who were also native-born, and sample members in column G had a NB mother and maternal grandparents who were also native-born. How many of these many sample members had maternal or paternal grandparents who were in fact second-generation Italian-Americans?

**The second adjustment.** Notice that the group of grandparents whose number we must estimate must **both** have been second-generation Italians; any others would bequeath to the sample members mixed ethnic origins. I ignore here the number that might have had **great**-grandparents born in Italy since their number would have been minuscule given the timing of the Italian immigration. Thus we ask how many of the sample members had grandparent **couples** on the paternal or maternal side who were NB but were also second generation Italian?

We cannot answer the question with regard to specific sample members--given the census information on the sample members and their families. However, we can get an estimate of what the answer is in the aggregate, an estimate of the proportion of such sample members, relative to the proportion observed in Table 8 to have only immigrant Italian grandparents.

To obtain that estimate we first determine (that is, again estimate) the birth cohorts of our sample members' grandparents. Then we can use census data from 1960 and from earlier years to determine the ratio of first and second generation Italians in the relevant birth cohorts. Finally, whatever the relative numbers of first and second generation members turn out to be, we also need to assume something about the intermarriage patterns among the **children** of the two sets of couples (children who in turn, were two sets of sample members' parents). I assume that children of the second generation followed the intermarriage patterns of the children of the immigrants. This is a strong assumption, that works to increase the number of sample members of only Italian origin (and thus against the points I stress). Whether the assumption is important in numeric terms will depend on the ratio of first to second generation Italian couples in the relevant birth cohorts.

The appendix works through the estimate; the upshot is that the proportion of sample members with only Italian ethnic origins is estimated at 42.3%, rather than the 31.8% we observe in the table. The larger part of the shift is caused by the first adjustment (discussed above), the assumption that when a sample member had one Italian-immigrant grandparent and one NB grandparent, the NB person would have been a second-generation Italian American in 75% of the cases. The estimated ratio for the second adjustment (of first-generation-grandparent couples to second-generation grandparent couples) was only 1.11 and thus had a fairly minor impact on the numbers in Table 8.

I want to offer two reactions to that conclusion. On the one hand, it is frustratingly uncertain to work with such estimates, especially when they may yield larger adjustments for other groups in other years. I had hoped to find a strategy for choosing sample members that would leave only a tiny number subject to miss-classification. The present example suggests that this method of studying the third generation will always be restricted. Given the heroic assumptions needed to carry out the estimates, even if the techniques of estimation are refined in time, can the estimates provide an adequate basis for comparing third generation members of one ethnic group across time, (Italians in 1920, 1960, 1970, for example) or for comparing various ethnic groups at one time (Italians, Poles, and Mexicans in 1960, for example)?

My second reaction to that conclusion about the true identity of the grandparents, however, cuts a different way. Even after these estimates for unidentified second-generation Italian grandparents have been taken into account, the basic substantive point derived from Table 8 still seems true: there was a very considerable degree of intermingling by the third generation. The revised estimates do not alter the percentage of third generation sample members who had two native-born parents and four Italian-born grandparents (the 'ideal type' third generation): it comprises only 24.3% of the sample members (i.e.: of those with an Italian grandparent and a native-born parent on the same side of the family). The adjustments raise the proportion of sample members who had only Italian origins from 32% to 43% of the sample members. Thus very nearly 3/5s of the sample

members were the products of ethnic intermingling.

Table 9 carries the analysis one step farther. Each row of the table summarizes the results of a cross tabulation arranged just like the one in Table 8. The observed origins are classified in terms of whether they unambiguously or ambiguously clarify the ethnic origins of the third generation sample members. The unambiguous cases are those in which we can be sure that the third generation sample member had origins only in the ethnic group in question or, at the other extreme, the sample member is listed as definitely having had an immigrant grandparent from **a different** group (column F). Two sorts of sample members whose situation is described as "ambiguous." The first sort includes those who had a maternal and/or paternal pair of grandparents that included one immigrant from the country in question and a spouse born in the United States; we cannot tell whether or not that spouse was a second-generation member of the same ethnic origins. The second sort of ambiguity involves sample members who had a maternal or paternal pair of grandparents both of whom were born in the United States. Again, we cannot tell whether or not the couple were both from the ethnic origin in which we are interested.

The programming effort required to analyze the five different national samples here is dramatically reduced by working with the IPUMS version of the census samples (in which all datasets are arranged in identical manner), and the great power and storage capabilities of the PCs today make the manipulation of these samples radically simpler than it would have only a few years ago. Nevertheless, the ease of manipulation of datasets reflecting 80 years of immigration and ethnic development cannot simplify the great complexity of processes reflected in the rows of the table. I do not claim anything like a full analysis at this point. However, I want to draw attention to two features of the table. The first is that in the earliest third generation cohorts in several ethnic groups we can see a distinct pattern in which the children of the earliest immigrants married members of the massive group of later immigrant arrivals--see the 'part 3<sup>rd</sup>, part 2<sup>nd</sup> group in column D, who had a second generation parent and a first generation parent. In each of the five groups, this proportion starts out large and after four decades has dropped to a quite low proportion, as the size of the immigrant wave drops, and as more members of the second generation are available as mates. The second point is more central to the present analysis: the size of most of the adjustments are actually fairly modest; and so in every case but one, the more than half of the third generation sample members do appear to have been the product of mixed ethnic origins. The adjustment process confirms, then, the basic insight from Table 8, that not only the is the 'core' type third generation member a distinct minority--in fact the Italians of 1960 are something of an acid test, in that their proportion in the core type of third generation membership is now seen to be the second highest in among the fourteen cases shown in column C of Table 9.

With regard to future work, there is no guarantee that the estimation process will yield only this low an adjustment. On the other hand, the magnitude of the adjustments is in fact fairly heartening. And the adjustment process itself provides a warning about those cases, such as the Irish and Germans in 1920, when the adjustment is quite substantial (that is, the adjustment process shows us the ratio of unobserved to observed grandparents from the group in question). Finally, and perhaps most important, it should be possible to utilize the comparisons of subgroups to good effect: sample members characterized by

- i. 4 observed immigrant grandparents from one country,
- ii. assumed likely to have had only one ethnic origin (row c and column C),
- iii. observed mixed origins (rows d, e and f and columns D, E and F),
- iv. and possibly those-- assumed likely to have not had only one ethnic origin (row g and column G).

Now in one sense, all this should be very obvious. We know that there is very considerable ethnic intermingling in American history. But it is the rapidity with which extensive intermingling became a reality ,the rapidity in generational terms, that I think is striking. We are not speaking of distant origins when we speak of intermingling of descendants here; grandchildren typically know their grandparents. And we have observed this pattern among the Italians, the largest immigrant group of the "new" groups that entered America between 1890-1920. They were overwhelmingly low-skill workers, with plenty of opportunity to form closed-in immigrant communities that would not have been expected to encourage intermarriage.

Before concluding, I want to present a crude model that demonstrates why this surprisingly high level of mixing occurs by the third generation, why upon reflection it is not so surprising. For this reason, the model



also tends to support the thrust of the estimation just discussed - that the level of ethnic intermingling was strikingly high notwithstanding the difficulties of identifying all relevant grandparents by origin. The model shows that even relatively low levels of intermarriage in the first and second generations are likely to lead to remarkably high proportions of third generation members who are of mixed origin.

Assume low levels of intermarriage in the first and second generation: 10% of the immigrants marry outside their own group, and 20% of the native-born children of two immigrants do so. Even in this situation **nearly half** the third-generation children are likely to be of mixed ethnic origin. Consider the first part of Table 10. Suppose among 1,000 immigrants 900 marry their own and 100 (that is 10%) intermarry. The 900 who marry their own create 450 marriages and the 100 who intermarry create 100 marriages. For every two people who in marry there is one marriage created. However, for every one of the people who out marry there is one marriage created--because those who in marry hook up with each other and those who intermarry bring in someone new, not part of our community of 1,000 immigrants. The upshot is that the 10% who intermarry create 18% of all the marriages in which the immigrants are found [ $100/(100 + 450)$ ]. Now the point is that, other things being equal, the ethnic origins of the next generation's kids are determined by the percentages of marriages involving intermarriages, not by the percentage of Italians who intermarried--by the 18% not the 10%. In the next generation, when we assume that there will be a 20% out marriage rate the effect of this dynamic will be even more extreme (see the second part of the table). And finally the effect of the time of the two generations is actually found in a of compounding of the rates (as shown in the third part of Table 10). But it all comes back to the difference between the number of individuals who intermarry and the number of marriages involving an intermarriage (a well-known distinction in intermarriage literature, by the way). Here that distinction is extended to contrast individuals who intermarry children who are the results of intermarriage.

Finally, it seems to me useful to see the extent of intermingling laid out as it is in Tables 8 and 9 because it suggests how the concept of the ethnic generation, loses its precise meaning sooner than, I think, we typically assume. The concept really works cleanly only for two generations--Marcus Hansen's observations of the upper Midwest notwithstanding. Those observations may indeed hold for subgroups that remained more ethnically distinct (those with four Italian grandparents, let us say), or they may hold even for the very mixed-origin third generation member, because that third generation individual may seek something relevant to only part of his or her background. But the background is surely more complex than the 'law' implied.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, the notion of ethnic upward mobility should in some way incorporate the perception that as the descendants of groups are rising through the class structure, they are also becoming descendants of other origins, and that asking about how the group moved up is in some sense to miss the point that it is not the group that moved up but something else. I hope (although I am not sure) that notwithstanding the problem of miss-classified native-born grandparents that I mentioned earlier the data will be adequate for deriving the social correlates for different degrees of ethnic intermingling. It would be possible, for example to compare the children with four Italian grandparents to those with one Italian grandparent-in terms of mother tongue, family size, socioeconomic situation, region of origin, suburbanization, even educational attainment (albeit incomplete educational attainment, since the children have not yet left their parents' home).

And finally, it is well to remember the message of extensive intermingling for its predictive value, in the midst of today's immigration, and in the midst of projections that claim American society will be comprised of x% white and y% nonwhite in some future year. It has been a great disservice of the U. S. Census Bureau to present projections that ignore future intermarriage.<sup>6</sup> There is every reason to believe that a great many Americans in some future year will indeed have had 'non-white' ancestors in the United States; but a great many of these same individuals will have had 'white' ancestors from the United States too-just as so many in the Italian third generation have had Italian and non-Italian grandparents.

## Appendix: Second-generation Italian Grandparents in Table 8

The basics of the estimation strategy are found on pages 11-12 of the text. The **first adjustment** rests on the arbitrary assumption that 75% of those in cells cABC and Cab of Table 8 had all Italian origins, netting an adjustment of 6.3% ( $0.75 * 0.084 = 0.063\%$ ).

**The second adjustment** involves first the estimation of the grandparents birth cohorts. These can rest on the



fathers and grandfathers ages alone (or on mothers and grandmothers alone) since only couples in which both husband and wife were second generation Italian Americans will be relevant. The age distributions of the parents are available from the census and are shown in Table A, columns a-c.

- 1) Assume that the distribution of grandparents' ages at the birth of the (Italian-origin) parents had been the same as the distribution of parents' ages at the birth of the sample members.
- 2) Assume that individual parents' and grandparents' ages at the birth of their children were independent.
- 3) We calculate the grandfathers age at the birth of the father as grandfather birth cohorts as:  
(father's age range) - (sample member's age range).

And then we can calculate the grandfather's birth cohort as:

$$1960 - (\text{father's age range observed}) - ((\text{father's age range}) - (\text{sample member's age range})).$$

For example, a 43 year-old father falls in the 40-44 age range. And so:

$$1960 - (40 \text{ to } 44) - ((40 \text{ to } 44) - (12 \text{ to } 16)) = 1884 - 1896.$$

The result is 12-year overlapping birth cohorts for grandfathers. These are shown in Table A columns d and e.

4) The proportion of second first generation couples in each of these birth cohorts was calculated from IPUMS samples. Specifically, I obtained the number of second-generation men with second-generation wives and the number of first-generation men with first-generation wives in each birth cohort. The first number is a proxy for the Italian immigrant grandparents (observed in the table) and the second number is a proxy for the (unobserved) second-generation Italian grandparents. I used the 1960 IPUMS and from the 1920 IPUMS (see note to table A). Of the IPUMS samples prior to 1960, 1920 was the nearest in time that met my needs; the 1930 census is not yet available to researchers, and the 1940 and 1950 censuses asked about parental birthplaces for no more than one member of the household, the so-called sample-line individual. The resulting proportions are shown in column f of Table A.

We can now estimate the proportion of all sample members who should be reclassified from row g and column G to the part of Table 8 in the text. We would actually have to create new rows and columns for these reclassified individuals, in the upper left quadrant of the table, since the table does not now have a place for fourth generation sample members (those with second-generation grandparents). Cells aB, bA and bB include sample members with only Italian origins, however the sample members in those three cells are either third generation members or part third and part second generation members.

5) Weighting each proportion in Table A, column f by the proportion of grandparents in the relevant birth cohort, and summing across all birth cohorts gives us the figure in column g, .11.

Thus, if

$$\text{RATIO} = (\text{UNOBS} + \text{OBS}) / \text{OBS}.$$

and

$$\text{Cell } nN = \text{proportion of sample members observed in the cell of row } n \text{ column } N.$$

then we adjust the observed proportion with only Italian origins as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{RATIO} * (\text{cells } aB + bA + bB) \\ + & \text{RATIO} * (0.75 * [\text{cells } cAB + Cab + cC]). \end{aligned}$$

In the case of the Italians in 1960:  $(1.11 * 31.8) + (1.11 * 0.75 * 8.4) = 42.3$ .

We observed 31.8% of the sample members as having four Italian-born grandparents, and we speculate that another  $0.75 * 8.4\%$  ( $= 6.3\%$ ) of those observed may well have had three Italian-born and one

second-generation Italian grandparents-- 38.1% (31.8% + 6.3%). And finally, we adjust these proportions to take account of the number of second-generation grandparents thought to included in row g and column G of the table, raising the adjusted total to 42.3%. **SOURCES OF ERROR** tend to make the method a conservative adjustment.

1) **FERTILITY DIFFERENTIALS.** The ratio (UNOBS+OBS)/OBS is likely to have been affected by fertility differences that I have ignored. Specifically I assume that the proportion of sample members shown in row g is equal to the proportion of paternal grandparent couples who were NB and similarly, that the proportion of sample members shown in column G is assumed to be equal to the proportion of maternal grandparent couples who were NB. To appreciate the point more clearly, consider a related ratio to the one shown above:

$$\text{UNOBSm/OBSm} = \text{UNOBSc/OBSc} * \text{UNOBSf/OBSf} \text{ where}$$

UNOBSm and OBSm = respectively Unobserved and Observed sample members with only Italian origins

UNOBSc and OBSc = couples of grandparents whose Italian origins are Unobserved and Observed respectively (Unobserved being second-generation and Observed being first generation couples of grandparents)

and

UNOBSf and OBSf = the fertility rates in families with Unobserved and Observed Italian origins respectively (that is, in families in which the grandparents were immigrant couples or second generation couples respectively).

Fertility rates were likely to have been higher in the immigrant generation than in the second generation (and perhaps also in the second generation than in the third) - in the same birth cohorts. Taking them into account would therefore tend to lower the ratio of UNOBSm/OBSm compared to treating the fertility rates as equal.

2) **ASSUMED INTERMARRIAGE RATES.** The method implies that the children of second generation grandparents will intermarry with first and second generation Italians at the same rate that the children of Italian immigrants will do so.

3) **LIMITATIONS IN THE CENSUS DATASETS.** The 1960 Census public use sample does not tell us the birthplaces of mothers when the father and mother were both foreign born. We are obliged to assume therefore that they had the same birthplace. For consistency of programming in this first effort, I treated all groups in Table 9 (not just those observed in 1960) as subject to this limitation. This assumption will raise the likelihood that a sample member is shown with four grandparents from the same country.

4) **FATHER'S AGES,** used to estimate grandfather's ages may have counterbalanced some of these biases in a conservative direction. My method implies that grandfathers were the same age at the birth of the fathers as fathers were at the birth of the sample members. However, if grandfathers had children at a somewhat earlier age, then they fall into slightly younger birth cohorts in which the ratio of second to first generation couples will be somewhat more in favor of the second generation than in the cohorts actually used in the estimations.

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## Notes

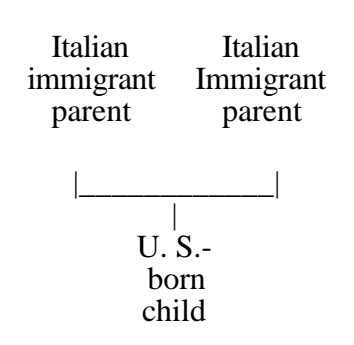
1. The classical issues in the intermarriage literature are summarized in David M. Heer, "Intermarriage," in Stephan Thernstrom, ed., *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, Cambridge, Mass., 1980, 513-21; much new analysis appears in Stanley Lieberson and Mary Waters, *From Many Strands: Ethnic and Racial Groups in Contemporary America*, New York, 1988; Zhenchao Qian, "Breaking the Racial Barriers: Variations in Interracial Marriage Between 1980 and 1990" paper presented at American Sociological Association, 1998 and Matthijs Kalmijn, "Trends in Black/White Intermarriage," *Social Forces*, September,

1993, 72(1), 127-129 are examples of the methodologically sophisticated present state of work that also do grapple with historical change (especially Kalmijn); on change over time see also Richard D. Alba Reid M. Golden, "Patterns of Ethnic Marriage in the United States," *Social Forces*, 65:1 (1986), 202-23. Gary B. Nash, "The Hidden History of Mestizo America," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 82, No. 3 (December, 1995), 941-64 and is an example of recent concern with the multiracials, and Joel Williamson, *New People: Miscegenation and Mulattoes In the United States*, New York, 1980 [Baton Rouge, 1995] a somewhat older example. For other studies of older patterns see Deanna L. Pagnini and S. Philip Morgan, "Intermarriage and Social Distance among U. S. Immigrants at the Turn of the Century," *American Journal of Sociology* 96:2 (1990) 405-32; and Richard M. Bernard, *The Melting Pot and the Altar: Marital Assimilation In Early Twentieth-century Wisconsin* (Minneapolis, 1980).

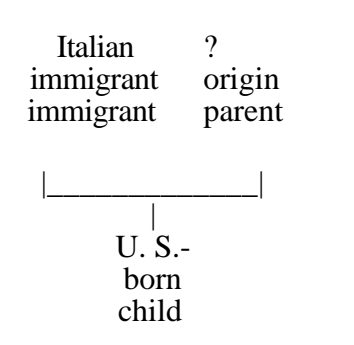
2. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (New York, 1963 [1782]).
3. Richard D. Alba, "Assimilation's Quiet Tide," *The Public Interest*, No. 119, Spring 1995, 5 summarizes the fluctuating responses to the ancestry question. See also Lieberman and Waters, *From Many Strands*.
4. On M. Hansen and generations, see Werner Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity* (New York, 1986).
5. My own "'Multiracials', Intermarriage and the American Future" *Society*, 1997 and *Multiracials, Racial Classification, and American Intermarriage* Levy Institute Policy Brief, #35, Oct., 1997 deal with the current classification and future projections of the American population and the relation of this subject to intermarriage patterns.

Figure 1. Definitions of a Second-generation Italian-american

a. The Simplified Definition



b. The Maximally-inclusive Definition



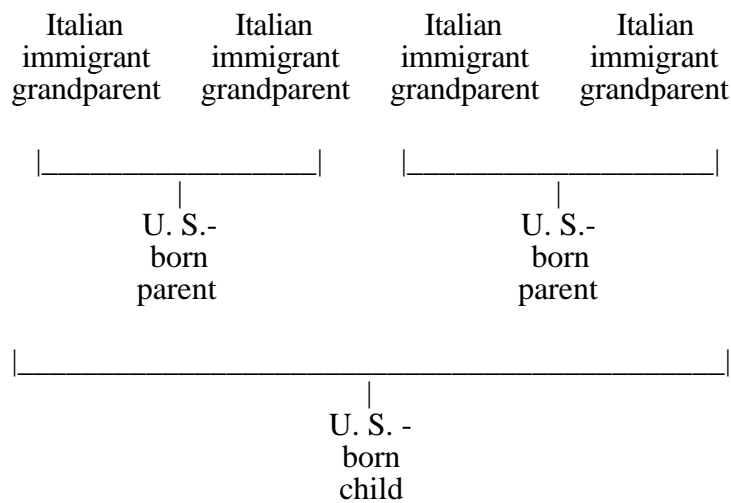
**Table 1. Second-generation Italians by Type of Parentage, 1940\***

Parents	% of all*
2 Italian-born	84
1 Italian-born, 1 other foreign-born	4
1 Italian-born, 1 U.S.-born	12
Total	100

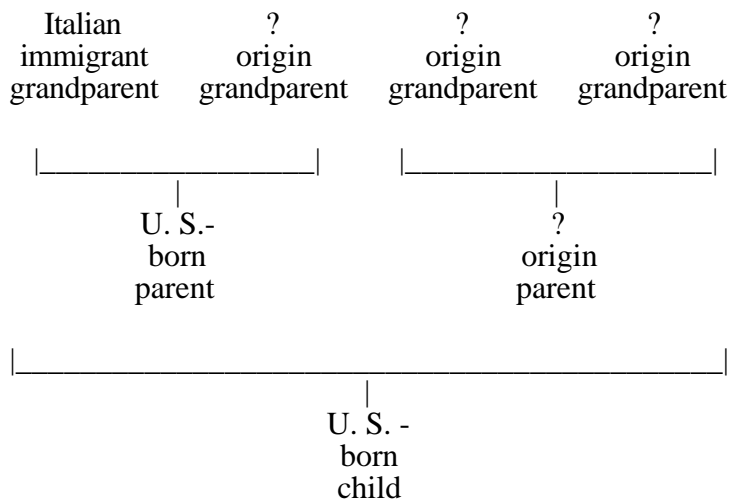
\*From IPUMS data.  
Includes U.S.-born individuals (ages 16-30) who had at least one parent born in Italy -- follows the maximally inclusive definition.

**Figure 2. Definition of a third-generation Italian-American**

**a. The Simplified Definition**



**b. The Maximally-inclusive Definition**



**Table 2. The Italian Immigration to the United States, 1871-1925**

Years	Number of immigrants (000s)	% of all years
1871 - 75	26	1
1881 - 85	110	2
1876 - 80	287	1
1886 - 90	198	4
1891 - 95	288	6
1896 - 00	366	8
1901 - 05	1063	22
1906 - 10	1218	25
1911 - 15	980	20
1916 - 20	185	4
1921 - 25	371	8
Total: 1871-1924	4828	100

NOTE: Only in one year after 1914 did annual arrivals reach the levels of 1900-14: in 1921, when 222 thousand arrived. Immigration restrictions reduced the figure to 40, 47, and 56 thousand in 1922, 1923, and 1924 respectively. SOURCE for Tables 2-3: W.Wilcox, ed., *International Migrations* (New York, 1929) v1, 419-49, 477. During the entire period 1925-1945 another 153 thousand arrived (U. S. Census, *Historical Statistics* (Washington, 1975), v1. 105.

**TABLE 3. ITALIAN IMMIGRATION AND REMIGRATION, BY GENDER 1871-1924**

Years	Male/female ratios		
	immigrants	emigrants	immigrants less emigrants
1871 - 75	3.4	.	.
1876 - 80	2.6	.	.
1881 - 85	4.6	.	.
1886 - 90	3.5	.	.
1891 - 95*	3.4	.	.
1896 - 00	2.6	.	.
1901 - 05	1.0	.	.
1901 - 07	2.2	.	.
1908 - 10	3.6	8.2	1.5
1911 - 13	2.8	8.8	1.5
1914 - 18	2.1	9.5	.4
1919 - 21	1.6	7.4	.4
1922 - 24	2.0	4.1	.6

\*Sex ratios unavailable for 1893-5; estimated from 1892 and 1896.

NOTE: Male and female immigrants and emigrants, 1908-24

Years	Immigrants to United States		Emigrants from United States	
	Male	female	male	female
1908-10	420020	129078	273016	33327
1911-13	460633	165737	247963	28194
1914-18	294952	142751	252061	26548
1919-22	197971	125698	154770	20998
1922-24	98703	49940	80995	19649

Source: see Table 2.

---

TABLE 4A. ITALIAN LONG-TERM IMMIGRANTS 25-60 YEARS OF AGE, 1920



Characteristic	Men	Women
Number (000s)*	650.6	400.8
Ratio of men to women	1.6	-
Marital Status		
Married spouse pres.	69	90
Married spouse abs.	6	1
Divorced or widowed	3	6
Never married	21	3
Total	100%	100%
Ratio of men to women -- excl. 'never married'	1.3	-

TABLE 4B. THOSE IN TABLE 4A WHO WERE MARRIED, SPOUSE PRESENT

Spouse's origin	Men	Women
Italian immigrant	85%	98%
U.S.-born of Italian or mixed parentage	8	1
Other immigrant	2	1
Other U.S. born	5	0
Number (000s)	438	352
Ratio of men to women	1.2	-
Ratio with 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation*	1.1	-

NOTES: Source: 1920 IPUMS-98; weighted to reflect population size.

Long-term immigrants refers to those residing in the U.S. for at least 5 years in 1920.

\*Ratio of men to women when second generation Italian-American spouses are included.

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TABLE 5. SIZE OF THE ITALIAN SECOND-GENERATION COHORTS (M+F, 000S)

AGE	Census year							
	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970
1-9	234	518	960		459	210	182	161
10-19	50	189	496		974	436	229	175
20-29	12	56	154		951	885	445	227
30-39	5	13	44		432	855	940	433
40-49	2	5	14		122	448	945	886
50-59	1	1	3		36	141	430	827
60-99	0	1	1		13	35	140	438

SOURCE: IPUMS, weighted to reflect population size.

Includes U. S. born with one or both parents born in Italy.

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TABLE 6. APPROXIMATE SIZE OF SECOND-GENERATION ITALIAN-AMERICAN BIRTH COHORTS, 1871-1924

Birth cohort	40-49 in	Apprx. size of birth cohort (000s)	% of all 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation members
1871-80	1911-20	18	0
1881-90	1921-30	55	1
1891-1900	1931-40	234	6
1901-10	1941-50	518	14
1911-20	1951-60	960	25
1921-30	1961-70	974	26
1931-40	1971-80	459	12
1940-50	1981-90	210	6
1951-60	1991-2000	182	5
1961-70	2001-2010	161	4
1871-1970	1911-2010	3771	100

Note: Most magnitudes derive from the preceding table; for the first two cohorts and for the cohort of 1921-30 magnitudes were estimated from the cohort's size in later years. A few second generation members may have been born after 1970, however by that date an immigrant who arrived as a 20-year old in 1924 would have been 64 and an immigrant who arrived as an infant would have been at least 46 years of age.

---

TABLE 7. AGES OF ITALIAN-AMERICAN PARENTS OF CHILDREN, AGES 12-16

Age range	Parents' ages, 1960	
	Father	Mother
30-39	24%	36%
40-49	61	57
50-59	14	7
30-59	100%	100%

NOTE: If one of the parents was not native-born of Italian parentage, that parent is not included in the table. Parents of other ages amounted to 1% of all parents.

TABLE 8. THE ETHNIC ORIGINS OF THE THIRD-GENERATION: ITALIAN CHILDREN, AGES 12-16 IN 1960:  
Percentages of children from each type of marriage (sum of all shown=100%)

FATHER	MOTHER						
	All or some Italian origin			No Italian origin			
	All		some				
	Mother born in Italy	Mother born in U.S.; her parents:		foreign born	U. S. born, her parent(s) for.-born		NB
		both It-born	1 It-bn, 1 NB		both par	1, 1NB	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
<b>All/some Ital orig -All: Ital-born (a)</b>	-	5.5	.5	-	-	-	-
- U.S. born -All: 2 Itpar (b)	2.0	24.3	4.0	1.3	6.3	2.6	18.8
-- <b>Some: 1 It, 1 NB (c)</b>	.2	2.8	.9	.2	1.0	.5	4.9
<b>No Ital origin - foreign-born (d)</b>	-	1.3	.3	-	-	-	-
- US b: -- both par fb (e)	-	5.1	1.1	-	-	-	-
-- 1fb, 1 NB (f)	-	1.5	.6	-	-	-	-
- NBNP (g)	-	10.2	4.0	-	-	-	-

NOTES TO TABLE 8 follow Table 9.

TABLE 9. THE ETHNIC ORIGINS OF THIRD GENERATION MEMBERS, SELECTED ETHNIC GROUPS, 1880-1960

Group	Year	Observed origins						adjusted column E
		unambiguous				ambiguous		
		all 4 grandparents immigrants from country in col A			some immigrant grand-parents from other countries	grandparent couple		
		Core 3 <sup>rd</sup>	pt 3 <sup>rd</sup> pt 2 <sup>nd</sup>	All 3 <sup>rd</sup> (C+D)		immg from col A cntry married to NB person	NB couple	
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Irish	1880	4.3	24.2	28.5	13.4	4.6	53.6	33
	1900	18.1	16.3	34.4	21.2	4.7	39.7	39
	1910	16.3	7.9	24.2	27.7	6.9	41.3	33
	1920	13.6	6.8	20.4	25.9	9.4	44.2	40
Germans	1800	6.1	37.5	43.6	11.6	5.2	40.9	48
	1900	18.3	25.3	43.6	16.2	4.9	35.3	48
	1910	19.3	18.6	37.9	19.5	7.9	34.9	46
	1920	15.4	12.2	27.6	21.6	9.5	41.4	44
Italians	1920	11.2	48.6	59.8	15.9	6.5	17.8	65
	1960	24.3	7.6	31.9	21.9	8.4	37.9	42
Poles	1920	13.4	36.6	50.0	33.2	3.5	13.4	54
	1960	15.9	2.6	18.5	39.3	5.7	36.6	28
Mexicans	1920	25.4	36.6	62.0	0	15.5	22.6	na
	1960	16.1	17.8	33.9	5.5	22.5	38.0	56

NOTES TO TABLES 8 AND 9.

NOTES TO TABLE 8.

1. SOURCE: IPUMS, 1960 file.

2. N (in 000s)= 670.

3.Children included had at least one native-born parent who in turn had at least one Italian-born parent. Each parental couple was counted as many times as the number of their eligible children. If attention were restricted to the parents themselves, counting each couple only once, no proportion in the table would differ by as much as 1 percentage point.

3) Only children in two-parent households included (92% of 3rd generation sample members).

4) When two parents were foreign-born the IPUMS data set only provides the fathers' place of birth. The percentages presented here are based on the assumption that in such cases both parents were born in the same foreign country (the bias created should be slight: see the rate of intermarriage between Italians and other immigrants reflected in Table 1).

5) Some of the sample members who had 1-3 native-born grandparents (cols. C, F, and G and rows c, f and g) could have had 2<sup>nd</sup>. generation Italian-American grandparents. Estimating how many (see appendix) suggests adjustments to the table. Sample members with only Italian origins on both sides of the family: observed 32% vs. estimated 42%.

## NOTES TO TABLE 9.

The figures in this table summarize a series of crosstabulations, each arranged in the same way as Table 8 is arranged -- for each of the groups in each census year (IPUMS data). Each row of Table 9 corresponds to one such crosstabulation. Columns of Table are based on the following cells of the corresponding Table 8:

column C: cell bB column D: cells bA and aB

column E: cells bAB and Bab column F: cells in rows d, e or f or in columns D, E or F

column G: cells cABC and Cab column H: cells in row g or Column G

The adjustments in Table 9 (column I) were made in the same way as those described for Table 8. na: too few cases . Note that for 1880, 1900, and for the Italians and Poles in 1920, virtually none of the NB grandparent couples were in fact estimated to have been second generation couples from the relevant country of origin.

However, the adjustments here are somewhat cruder than for the 1960 Italian third generation since the age distributions of the 1960 Italian fathers were used in estimates for the adjustment in each row of this table in order to save time and energy on a first pass. 75% of the number in column G was added to the number in column E. Then the latter was multiplied by the ratio estimated for: (first generation couples + second generation couples) / first generation couples. For 1880 the ratio was estimated from that same year, for 1900 from 1880, for 1910 from 1900, for 1920 from an average of 1900 and 1910 (1920 Poles based on Italian adjustment since no Polish place of birth in 1910), and for 1960 from 1920 and 1960 (as explained in the note to Appendix Table A).

TABLE 10. A SIMPLE MODEL OF INTERMARRIAGE OVER TWO GENERATIONS

Kinds of marriages	% of Italians in these marriages	Number of people in these marriages			number of marriages	% of marriages involving Italians	% of children from these marriages*
		Italians	non-Ital.	total			
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
1. THE IMMIGRANT GENERATION: 1,000 Italian immigrants, 90% in-marrying							
Inmarriage: Italian husband with Italian wife	90%	900	0	900	450	81%	81%
Out marriage Ital. + non-Ital.	10%	100	100	200	100	19%	19%
All	100%	1,000	100	1,100	550	100%	100%

2. THE 2ND GENERATION: 1,000 children of two Italian immigrants, 80% in-marrying

Inmarriage: children of Ital. immigrants only	80%	800	0	800	400	67%	67%
Out marriage: child of Italians + non-Italian	20%	200	200	400	200	33%	33%
All	100%	1,000	100	1,100	600	100%	100%

\*Assuming the same fertility rate in each type of marriage.

### 3. CUMULATIVE EFFECT: over two generations

Proportion of all marriages involving only Italians -- and proportion of 3rd generation children with 4 Italian grandparents **	.81 * .67 = .54
---	-----------------

\*\*Assuming the same fertility rate in each type of marriage (over 2 generations).

TABLE A. ESTIMATING THE PREVALENCE OF 2<sup>ND</sup>-GENERATION ITALIAN GRANDPARENTS IN TABLE 8.

Age range	Parents' ages in 1960 (Ital. origin only)		Distribution of Grandfathers across birth cohorts: estimated		Second to first generation: married couples, Italians only**	Estimated adjustment for Table 8: sum (col. e *col. f)
	Father	Mother	birth cohort	distrib.		
a	b	c	d	e	f	g
30-34	.03	.07	1904-1916	.00	6.08	
35-39	.21	.28	1899-1911	.01	2.08	
40-44	.33	.34	1894-1906	.06	.51	
45-49	.28	.22	1889-1901	.16	.16	
50-54	.10	.06	1884-1896	.24	.06	
55-59	.04	.02	1879-1891	.25	.01	
60-69	.01	-	1874-1886	.18	.01	
			1869-1881	.08	.01	
			1864-1876	.02	.00	
TOTAL	1.00	1.00	na	1.00	na	



\_\_\_\_\_

\*\* The ratio of the number of couples in which both husband and wife were first generation to the number of couples in which both husband and wife were second generation in the birth cohort. Col. f is based on the 1920 IPUMS for the three oldest cohorts, on the 1960 IPUMS for the four youngest cohorts, and on the average of the ratios in each of the two censuses for the 1884-1896 and 1879-91 cohorts.