

mate, upper- and middle-class mothers will not be free from the sense of responsibility for passing on their education, skills, and social connections to their children any time soon. Professional-class mothers will not take part- or flex-time schedules unless they are ensured that these policies will not mommy-track them.

In all, *Shadow Mothers* provides a rich and detailed analysis of the mother-nanny relationship that reflects a range of issues surrounding working mothers, such as cultural expectations of high standards of maternal involvement, inadequate workplace policies, parenting anxiety, and devaluation of child care workers. It makes an important contribution to the studies of motherhood, work-family balance, and care work.

Getting Ahead: Social Mobility, Public Housing, and Immigrant Networks. By Silvia Dominguez. New York: New York University Press, 2011. Pp. viii+269. \$45.00.

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Getting Ahead is a fascinating and richly informative account of immigrant life in two Boston neighborhoods, South Boston and East Boston. It highlights several key social and structural factors that shape the social mobility of low-income Latin American immigrant women and makes valuable contributions to the study of immigration, public housing, gender dynamics, and social networks in urban settings. Through longitudinal in-depth interviews, participant observation, and extensive ethnographic observations, Silvia Dominguez observes that immigrants are “getting ahead” despite living in poverty, which is consistent with the literature on assimilation and on the Latino paradox. In contrast to previous work, however, she argues that social mobility does not occur through assimilation, nor are immigrants’ outcomes explained by the self-selection of exceptional individuals into migratory pathways. Instead, their success is shaped through the combination of individual agency, dual frames of reference, supporting social networks, “bridging” ties, and a certain level of agency and social modeling within the groups with which immigrants are associated. This book reminds me of Mario L. Small’s *Villa Victoria* (University of Chicago Press, 2004), a study of a Puerto Rican housing development, with a key difference being Dominguez’s primary focus on individual social mobility over time rather than on neighborhood social capital.

Getting Ahead develops its argument in eight chapters. Chapter 1 presents the conceptual framework that supports the argument, discussing in detail the five main factors of immigrant social mobility, the combination of which make up what the author calls “social flow” (p. 10). Individual “self-propelling agency” refers to a combination of self-efficacy and am-

bition to improve one's status and opportunities (p. 13). All respondents are highly motivated to translate their own or their parents' migration efforts into a better future for themselves and their children. The narrative of immigrant struggle and the constant reference to the scarcity of opportunity in the countries of origin seem to play a major role in maintaining motivation to act rather than remaining passive or reacting when faced with chronic resource deprivation, structural barriers, violence, and discrimination in their contexts of reception. The formation, maintenance, and recalibration of social support groups, together with forging "bridging" ties across racial or social class divides, constitute additional key antecedents of social mobility. Finally, it is also important, Dominguez argues, that the groups within which immigrants are embedded exhibit a certain level of collective agency such that they provide immigrants not only with access to multiple and varied resources and information but also with multiple examples of successful stories.

Chapter 2 describes the historical and socioeconomic trajectory of the two low-income neighborhoods in which respondents lived and explores the structural and social factors that are expected to shape immigrants' social advancement. The 19 core respondents are first- or second-generation immigrants, mostly mothers of young children. They were interviewed on multiple occasions and were also followed during their daily activities, events, and interactions with friends, family members, neighbors, service agencies, and other organizations. The author also interviewed service providers, clergy, health workers, retail merchants, and "local notables" of different races and ethnicities.

Several chapters highlight different ways in which networks offer social support and leverage, which, in turn, affect respondents' social mobility. Chapter 3 emphasizes the importance of strong family ties in immigrants' lives. The next chapter shows evidence that despite relative network isolation due to severed family and friendship ties, social mobility can be promoted through weak work ties and strong intimate ties. Chapter 5 illustrates how trajectories of social mobility can become successful when respondents learn to navigate and leverage social networks by positioning themselves in situations of access to information and resources that their background would otherwise not permit them to mobilize. Chapter 6 shows how the experience of domestic violence and abuse can stifle individuals so that they become unable to take advantage of opportunities in the rare situations when those opportunities emerge. Chapter 7 develops the point further but focuses on a more hopeful case in which an institutional intervention in the form of mental health treatment is successful in allowing a respondent to bounce back from homelessness to educational advancement and work promotions.

The book's prose, powerful when presenting immigrants' stories, sometimes loses clarity and persuasiveness in the theoretical discussions. First, focused prominently on social mobility, the book notes that most respondents are able to "get ahead." However, the definition of mobility is not

sufficiently problematized. While most respondents are able to secure and keep low-paying jobs, it seems that there are also important limits to their social mobility. Adding an objective assessment of these limits would offer a critical perspective in understanding respondents' perceptions of agency and mobility. Second, similar to much of the early work on social capital, the argument seems somewhat tautological. To what extent is access to social flow (the precondition) independent of social mobility (the outcome)? Third, the concept of a "self-propelling agent" (SPA), as the author presents it, does not seem falsifiable. Since all respondents in this study were deemed SPAs, it is not clear what would be a proper contrast group. It is even less clear that some types of non-SPAs would not "get ahead" even faster. Fourth, I find very useful the idea that groups need to have adequate numbers of SPAs, who can offer social modeling and support. However, the phrase "efficient populations" (p. 10) seems too general and imprecise to represent this idea well. In the broader picture, however, the contributions are more significant than the limitations.

Overall, *Getting Ahead* adds valuable insights to the literature on the social immobility of low-income minorities, the literature on social disorganization, and the literature on the downward assimilation of immigrants living in contexts of concentrated urban poverty. Rather than simply focusing on the structural barriers, discrimination, and limited access to opportunities and resources, Dominguez also identifies core characteristics of the supportive social systems that, in transcending neighborhoods of residence, may propel low-income immigrants upward on the social ladder. At the same time, she highlights specific opportunities for individual action and for social, structural, and institutional intervention. This type of study cannot specify whether the identified factors and conditions are sufficient and necessary for social mobility, or causal rather than correlational. The book is, nonetheless, greatly valuable in its longitudinal design and its focus on individual agency and family dynamics, as well as on the complex social structures at the intersection of neighborhoods, organizations, and work contexts. Even though the sampling strategy does not permit the author to make direct generalizations to the larger immigrant population, the findings are powerful, informative, and generative of new theoretical insights and of further research directions.

New Destination Dreaming: Immigration, Race, and Legal Status in the Rural American South. By Helen B. Marrow. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2011. Pp. xiii+370. \$80.00 (cloth); \$24.95 (paper).

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There is a growing literature on Latino immigration to new gateways such as the southeastern United States. Patterns of migration and settle-