



# Repeat Migration in the Age of the “Unauthorized Permanent Resident”: A Quantitative Assessment of Migration Intentions Postdeportation

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## Abstract

Drawing on postdeportation surveys ( $N = 1,109$ ) with Mexican migrants, we examine the impact of immigration enforcement programs and various social factors on repeat migration intentions. Our multivariate analyses suggest immigrants with strong personal ties to the United States have higher relative odds of intending to cross the border again, even when controlling modes of removal from the United States. Our findings highlight the inevitable failure of immigration policy and enforcement programs when placed against the powerful pull of family and home. These findings shed greater insight on the complex nature of unauthorized migration in an era of increased securitization and deportation.

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## Introduction

A better understanding of both the impacts and consequences of immigration enforcement and mass removal are paramount with the Trump administration's promise to escalate deportation of longtime unauthorized residents. These policies come alongside drastic changes to unauthorized Mexican migration over the past two decades. Increased border enforcement has disrupted cyclical migration and reduced the probability of unauthorized migrants returning to Mexico once in the United States, leading to the growth of the unauthorized population (Massey, Durand, and Pren 2015). In 1990, shortly after the implementation of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act and prior to increased border militarization efforts, there were an estimated 3.5 million unauthorized migrants living and working in the United States. By 2010, the unauthorized population had increased to approximately 11.3 million people and has since remained relatively stable (Passel et al. 2014). Recent data from the Pew Research Center find that the median length of time unauthorized immigrants have lived in the United States has increased in recent years. The proportion of "unauthorized-immigrant adults who have lived in the country for a decade or longer has risen from 41 percent in 2005 to 66 percent in 2014" (Passel and Cohn 2016, paragraph 6). One consequence of this so-called caging effect has been that unauthorized migrants have developed significant personal ties in the United States. We argue that strong social ties to the United States are among the most important factors in predicting future crossing intentions postdeportation<sup>1</sup> and will be significant drivers of future unauthorized Mexican migration.

The increasing length of time spent in the United States has created a large population of what we call "unauthorized permanent residents"<sup>2</sup> (UPRs). UPRs are a subgroup of the unauthorized population that possess similar cultural, social, and emotional ties to the United States as legal permanent residents (LPRs), but lack legal status, and in our sample, have been removed from the country. Lacking legal status is not a trivial distinction, as UPRs are more vulnerable to formal removal and have less access to legal protections. This phenomenon distinguishes UPRs from LPRs who can more easily navigate public spaces, experience greater legal protections, and have higher barriers for removal from the United States.

In order to apply for and be granted LPR status, aspiring LPRs must demonstrate a certain level of social connectedness to the United States, usually through ties to immediate family members who are US citizens or permanent residents. Many UPRs

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<sup>1</sup>We use the term "deportation" as a way to encompass the complex and varied legal definitions for removal from the United States. We use the term broadly, referring to the physical process of expelling someone from the country, which includes "formal removals" as well as "voluntary returns."

<sup>2</sup>We thank our colleague Emily Peiffer for coining the term "unauthorized permanent residents."

meet some or all of these criteria, but lack the appropriate financial and social capital required to regularize their status or may have immigration violations on their records that preclude them from being able to gain LPR status. And although many UPRs have notable social ties to the United States, we contend that what sets UPRs apart from other unauthorized immigrants in the United States is a self-reported subjective understanding that their “home” is located in the United States rather than in Mexico. The emergence of this connection to place is yet another consequence of the state’s approach to unauthorized migration. Nevertheless, continued border enforcement and relatively recent increases in interior immigration enforcement efforts have resulted in the physical removal of millions of unauthorized migrants over the past decade, leading to immigrant criminalization as well as family separation and dissolution (Martínez and Slack 2013; Slack et al. 2013; Slack et al. 2014). This places UPRs in a precarious position after being deported because they risk further criminalization if they attempt to return “home” to the United States. This article explores the postdeportation crossing intentions of unauthorized migrants along the US–Mexico border. We not only examine the efficacy of immigration enforcement programs, but also identify those who are least likely to be deterred by an increasingly punitive system.

The research questions guiding our analyses are as follows: (1) what role, if any, do strong social ties to the United States play in explaining future crossing intentions among recently deported Mexican migrants in the current era of increased border and immigration enforcement? Do the same social factors repeatedly shown to play an important role in precipitating unauthorized migration (Durand and Massey 2004) continue to spur repeat migration intentions upon deportation? Specifically, do migration-specific social capital (i.e., ties to family in the United States) and migration-specific human capital (i.e., first-hand migration experience) remain important parts of this process? And (2) what impact, if any, do immigration enforcement policies have on deported migrants’ future crossing intentions? We address these questions by drawing on the Migrant Border Crossing Study (MBCS), a unique dataset consisting of a random sample of recently repatriated unauthorized Mexican migrants in five Mexican border cities and in Mexico City ( $N = 1,109$ ).

Overall, we find migrants who indicate that their “home” is located in the United States, those with greater cumulative experience living in the United States, and those with family in their US destination are more likely to intend to return, net of all other factors. On the other hand, we find that people processed through Operation Streamline are less likely to return immediately, although as we highlight in this article, the deterrent effect of this program may be relatively short-lived. We also find that long-term detention appears to be a significant deterrent to future crossing intentions. However, the absolute effect of detention appears to be offset by having one’s home in the United States and having family in one’s US destination. These findings suggest that draconian policies aimed at criminalizing unauthorized migration may be relatively ineffective in deterring those with the strongest social ties to the United States. Due to a greater likelihood that they will return to the country,

policies aimed at prosecuting and incarcerating individuals for repeat unauthorized migration will result in this subpopulation representing an increasing proportion of the incarcerated migrant population. Therefore, the impacts of the Obama administration's mass removal programs, as well as Trump's escalation of these policies, will have implications that stretch for years by increasingly targeting people most connected to the United States through family, relationships, and a sense of belonging.

### *The Importance of Studying “Unauthorized Permanent Residents”*

Although not without controversy, some scholars have signaled the end of mass labor migration from Mexico to the United States (Durand 2013). Examining post-deportation crossing intentions is increasingly relevant in the current era of heightened border and immigration enforcement. Understanding who, among deportees, returns despite recent efforts to prosecute and incarcerate individuals for immigration infractions will help expand existing theories of migration to better-fit contemporary social dynamics. Moreover, research conducted in sending communities may overlook this dynamic all together, as many repatriated migrants remain near the border and attempt additional crossings. Heightened enforcement of unauthorized Mexican migration necessitates an evaluation of who intends to return postdeportation. While previous studies on Mexican migration have focused largely on macro- and microlevel economic rationales for migration as well as the role of social ties in the migration process (Massey et al. 1993; Massey and Espinosa 1997; Massey, Durand, and Malone 2003; Durand and Massey 2004), the concept of “home” in destination countries has not been examined quantitatively by social scientists.

### **Theories of Migration and “Unauthorized Permanent Residents”**

The established literature on unauthorized Mexican migration has identified mechanisms that initiate, facilitate, and perpetuate migration (Massey et al. 1993, 2005), but few studies have examined how these mechanisms operate in the post-deportation context. Moreover, most seminal quantitative studies of unauthorized Mexican migration were conducted in sending communities with people who had migrated years ago and therefore are not necessarily representative of the current situation along the US–Mexico border. Given this consideration, we (re)examine how factors such as migration-specific social capital (i.e., social ties in the United States) and migration-specific human capital (i.e., first-hand migration experience) affect the decision to return to the United States upon deportation. Nevertheless, the measurable aspects of social and human capital often examined by migration scholars fail to take into account the emotional pull of home. Place attachment is not *something* to be converted to other forms of capital to ensure success throughout the migration experience, like social capital, nor is it an individual trait that improves the

chances of some outcome, as is the case with human capital (Becker 1975). Rather, the pull of place spurs individuals to maximize utility in a far less rational fashion, perhaps even augmenting risk-taking behaviors such as engaging in repeat unauthorized migration despite the threat of incarceration. We contend that place attachment, manifested in people who identify the United States as “home,” represents an overlooked aspect of decisions to re-migrate. Social connections to place play an important role in determining who will return to the United States despite removal. To understand this process, we turn our attention to the increasing importance of “home” and a “sense of place” in repeat migration decisions.

### *Migrating Home: A New Direction for Theories of Migration*

The sociology of migration has had only limited contact with the emotional turn that has existed for some time in other fields of study. While some migration scholars have highlighted the emotional pull of family and place across borders, this has been limited to qualitative studies (Chavez 2012; Alarcón Acosta, Escala-Rabadan, and Odgers-Ortiz 2014). Within critical human geography, scholars often discuss the emotional pull of place. This is part of the emotional turn in geography, particularly part of what is commonly known as affect theory (Thrift 2008). Our emotional geography, including the indescribable but almost universal feelings related to “home,” has long been a core concern within human geography (Tuan 1977). Recent scholarship has added to this debate, stressing that there are other intangible dimensions of “place” that should be understood as creating a different map for each individual, one that relates to their personal senses of trauma, desire, love, safety, and vulnerability (Pile 2011). For instance, prior research has highlighted the importance of “place attachment” in people’s decisions to return to New Orleans post-Hurricane Katrina (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2009; Li et al. 2010). Theories of affect have also explored the psychic-geographies of places and have emphasized how meaning or significance is produced, creating emotional and psychological relationships that actually shape and redefine space and place (Philo and Parr 2003; Kingsbury 2007). This body of research generally relies on qualitative research and has been criticized for lacking specificity in defining or operationalizing a sense of place. But our quantitative data demonstrate that identifying the United States as one’s home is the strongest predictor of future migration and therefore should be afforded greater consideration within quantitative migration research.

These understandings will be particularly useful for studies of illegality and deportability, whereupon scholars, generally working with unauthorized populations within the United States, explore the various forms of social control produced by the potential for removal (De Genova 2002; Núñez and Heyman 2007; De Genova and Peutz 2010; Menjívar and Kanstroom 2013; Horton 2016). These works explore the construction of the fundamental lack of belonging and absence of rights that have come to define the unauthorized population in the United States, and how the threat

of deportation leads to various forms of exploitation and discrimination. A better understanding of how people respond to deportation, especially by identifying who is most likely to return and why, adds an important new dimension to this burgeoning body of scholarship. By examining deportation not only as a potential consequence, but as an already existing condition, we are better poised to understand the material implications of mass removal beyond the ramifications to those left behind in the United States (see Abrego 2014 for a discussion of how families are impacted by the removal of their loved ones). We must theorize not only the emotional pull to return to family and home, but also the long-term consequences as more people are caught in the punitive immigration enforcement apparatus.

## **The Consequence Delivery System and Contemporary Immigration Enforcement**

Social and emotional ties to the United States are increasingly important in explaining repeat migration under the current immigration enforcement regime that has changed significantly in the past decade. In 2011, US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) adopted the Consequence Delivery System (CDS), which is a relatively new immigration enforcement strategy aimed at reducing the probability of unauthorized reentry. The CDS is a series of enforcement programs “that guide management and agents through a process designed to uniquely evaluate each subject and identify the ideal consequences to deliver to impede and deter further illegal activity” (US Congress 2011). By analyzing individuals’ experiences with these programs, we can gain a better understanding of how they have operated and whether or not they are effective in reducing recidivism, especially among migrants with strong personal ties to the United States. Despite widespread critiques in the media and by advocacy groups, migration scholars have rarely analyzed these programs empirically. Furthermore, our data allow us to identify other unintended social consequences of the CDS, including family separation stemming from deportation and immigrant criminalization.

The CDS is comprised of several complementary components, including Operation Streamline, the Alien Transfer and Exit Program (ATEP), the Mexican Interior Repatriation Program (MIRP), and expedited removals, among others (US Congress 2011). In theory, each person apprehended by the US Department of Homeland Security is assigned a corresponding punishment (i.e., consequence) based on their unauthorized immigration history and/or criminal infractions. Individuals without prior Border Patrol apprehensions are generally granted a “voluntary return,” which consists of a noncriminal administrative violation.<sup>3</sup> Others can be given an expedited removal, which is a criminal charge that does not require review by an immigration

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<sup>3</sup>Migrants processed through Operation Streamline are automatically given a formal deportation and are ineligible to sign a “voluntary return.”

judge. On the other hand, people with a history of prior apprehension or those caught beyond the 100-kilometer border zone may be more likely to receive a “formal removal” from the United States, which ultimately carries greater implications than a voluntary return.

One of the primary CDS programs is Operation Streamline, which is a “zero tolerance” trial *en masse* that processes 40 to 80 apprehended border-crossers on a daily basis in participating sectors, ultimately convicting them of either “illegal entry” (8 U.S.C. § 1325), which is a misdemeanor, or “illegal reentry” (8 U.S.C. § 1326), which is a felony. This program — carried out in all US Border Patrol sectors except San Diego, El Centro, and Big Bend during the time of our fieldwork — has led to higher incarceration rates of unauthorized migrants for immigration-related offenses. Prior to the adoption of this program, most immigration offenses were treated as administrative violations, which did not carry a criminal penalty. Increased detention time for “criminal” immigration violations, which has largely been driven by Operation Streamline, is also a major aspect of the CDS specifically aimed at reducing unauthorized reentry.

The ATEP is another key component of CDS. ATEP repatriates apprehended border-crossers to a Border Patrol sector other than the one in which they had originally crossed, at times in the middle of the night (De León 2013; Meyer and Isacson 2013; Slack et al. 2013). The MIRP, which is another significant component of CDS, “removes Mexican nationals to the interior of Mexico on a voluntary basis, away from high-risk areas of the Sonoran Desert, where temperatures spike and exposure-related deaths peak during summer months” (US Congress 2011). Although the stated “objective of the program is to save lives and disrupt the human smuggling cycle” (*ibid.*), the underlying logic of MIRP is that people repatriated to the interior of the country will be less likely to attempt another crossing after being returned to Mexico.

Finally, the Secure Communities initiative and 287(g) program were part of the larger Criminal Alien Program during our study period. In short, these programs consisted of an effort between local law enforcement agencies, correctional facilities, jails, or prisons, and Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE) to identify and remove all “deportable aliens” residing in the United States who encounter the criminal justice system (see Kubrin 2014 for a detailed discussion of Secure Communities). While the Obama administration scaled back or ended these programs during the last two years of his presidency, Trump has resumed interior enforcement initiatives that are reminiscent of those taking place during our study period.

Programs associated with CDS have been widely questioned and condemned by scholars and nongovernmental organizations. Operation Streamline has been criticized for violating migrants’ constitutional right to due process and for diverting federal resources away from the prosecution of more serious crimes such as human and drug smuggling (Lydgate 2010), as well as for serving the economic interests of private corporations that have secured federal contracts to house immigrants in detention facilities (Martínez and Slack 2013; MRS/USCCB and CMS 2015).

Critical scholars have also pointed to the possible unintended negative social consequences of processing largely economic migrants as criminals through Operation Streamline and incarcerating them alongside more serious criminal offenders (Martínez and Slack 2013). Interior immigration enforcement programs have been questioned for undermining community policing and straining community-police relations in immigrant communities, for separating US citizen children from their immigrant parents, and for focusing on relatively minor offenders rather than serious, violent offenders (Martínez and Slack 2013; Kubrin 2014; Martinez and Iwama 2014). In a similar vein, ATEP has been condemned for increasing the vulnerability of an already vulnerable population by deporting them to unfamiliar and dangerous areas in northeastern Mexico at all hours of the day (Meyer and Isacson 2013; Slack et al. 2013). Despite these critiques, there has been little empirical analysis about how people who have actually been through these programs are affected or impacted.

### **Future Crossing Intentions among Deportees**

Our unique methodology, consisting of interviews with recently repatriated migrants along the US–Mexico border, expands upon the growing body of post-deportation literature. Relatively little work exists explicitly examining people’s repeat crossing intentions upon repatriation or deportation. An exception is the work by Hagan, Eschbach, and Rodriguez (2008), which examined repeat migration decisions among Salvadoran deportees. The authors find that deportees who leave spouses and children behind, younger deportees, and repeat crossers are more likely to plan a return migration to the United States (also see Cardoso et al. 2014). However, Salvadorans make up 5.8 percent of the unauthorized population residing in the United States, while Mexicans account for nearly 55 percent (Warren 2014). We ask to what extent do these findings among Salvadorans deportees, that were likely surveyed less than a day’s bus ride from their hometowns, apply to Mexican migrants repatriated to border towns far from their communities of origin. Thus, our work improves upon prior studies by specifically examining future crossing intentions of Mexican deportees during the CDS era, with special attention paid to the importance of strong personal ties to the United States and experiences with specific removal programs.

Other exceptions are recent studies by Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo (2014) and Amuedo-Dorantes, Pozo, and Puttitanun (2015). Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo (2014), drawing on data from EMIF-Norte survey, examine the impact of increased border enforcement and US state-level immigration policies on future crossing intentions of Mexican deportees. With regard to increased border enforcement measures, the authors find that there is no statistically significant difference in crossing intentions between individuals apprehended by Border Patrol in sectors practicing Operation Streamline compared to those apprehended in sectors that do not. That is, there appears to be no deterrent effect

of Operation Streamline. In addition, there is no evidence that the expansion of Operation Streamline into other Border Patrol sectors reduces recidivism. On the other hand, the authors find that there is a significant deterrent affect for individuals apprehended in states with omnibus immigration laws (e.g., Arizona's SB 1070) (Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo 2014, 2273). Nevertheless, a more recent study of Central Americans conducted by Amuedo-Dorantes, Pozo, and Puttitanun (2015, 1825), using the EMIF-Sur survey, finds that parent-child separations — stemming from interior enforcement — increases the “likelihood that parents forcedly separated from their young children report the intention to return to the United States, presumably without documents.”

But the Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo (2014) and Amuedo-Dorantes, Pozo, and Puttitanun (2015) studies are not without limitations. The EMIF surveys do not collect data on *specific* immigration enforcement programs through which migrants were processed. For instance, rather than relying on *individual-level* experiences with Operation Streamline, Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo (2014) employ a dichotomous indicator for whether or not the respondent crossed through an Operation Streamline *sector*, regardless of whether the individual was *processed* through the program. To date, not all unauthorized migrants apprehended in sectors practicing Operation Streamline are processed through the program. In fiscal year 2012, there were approximately 13,393 criminal prosecutions referred by CBP to border judicial districts in the state of Arizona, largely as a direct consequence of Operation Streamline (Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse 2013). Yet, Border Patrol made 120,000 apprehensions in the Tucson Sector, which encompasses nearly the entire state of Arizona, during the same period (US Customs and Border Protection 2015). This suggests that *most* apprehensions in the Tucson Sector do not lead to Operation Streamline proceedings. If the authors' primary aim was to examine the deterrent effect of the program, a more reliable estimate would have been obtained by examining the effect of being *processed* through Operation Streamline, not necessarily of being apprehended in a sector practicing Operation Streamline. The same limitation holds for interior immigration enforcement programs examined in the two studies, which come in various forms and affect people in myriad ways. Because our data are able to connect individuals to the specific border and immigration enforcement programs through which they were processed, our analysis advances the empirical understanding of how these enforcement measures operate.

## Research and Methodology

We examine migrants' future crossing intentions postdeportation by drawing on data gathered through the second wave of the MBCS ( $N = 1,109$ ). The MBCS is an unprecedented cross-sectional survey of Mexican migrants who attempted an unauthorized border crossing, were apprehended by any US authority (either while crossing the border or once in their destination in the US interior), and

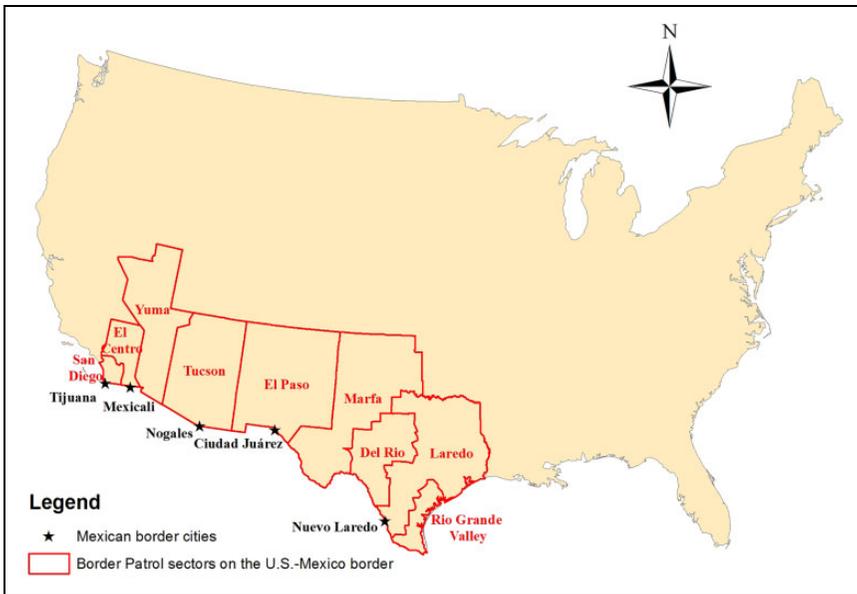
ultimately returned to Mexico by the US government through a formal deportation or voluntary return. The sampling frame does not include people who returned to Mexico by their own volition without encountering US officials (i.e., “return migration”). Interviews were completed with migrants in person at ports of entry and in migrant shelters immediately following respondents’ most recent deportation experience. We selected shelters that work directly with the Mexican government (although none were government-operated) because Mexican authorities directly transport migrants to these shelters from ports of entry upon repatriation, thus providing the most representative sample. The MBCS limits its sample frame to individuals 18 years of age or older, who had not previously been interviewed for the study, who crossed the US–Mexico border post–September 11, 2001, and who had been repatriated or deported to Mexico within one month of the interview (Slack et al. 2013). Potential study participants were randomly selected using a spatial sampling technique, were screened for eligibility, and then invited to participate if they met the eligibility requirements. These criteria were established to allow for reasonable comparison between cases within a specific timeframe, most notably during an era of increased border and immigration enforcement. Interviews lasted around 45 minutes and were completed in Spanish by the authors, graduate students, and professional interviewers. The response rate for the survey was approximately 94 percent.

The surveys were completed in Tijuana and Mexicali, Baja California; Nogales, Sonora; Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua; Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, and Mexico City between 2010 and 2012 (see Figure 1), with the overwhelming majority (90%) of interviews being completed in 2011. All respondents surveyed in Mexico City had participated in the MIRP, which provides flights to Mexico City among an eligible subsample of people apprehended in the Tucson Sector during summer months. Sixty-six percent of all migrants repatriated to Mexico in 2011 were returned to one of these six cities (Slack et al. 2013). And although surveys were only carried out in five of the nine Border Patrol sectors along the border, all sectors are represented in terms of where deportees/returnees had attempted their most recent crossing. In terms of place of origin, all 31 Mexican states and the Federal District are represented in the Wave II sample of the MBCS. The MBCS is therefore generalizable to Mexican deportees to the six study cities during the study period.

The MBCS specifically asks respondents to answer two questions pertaining to future crossing intentions,<sup>4</sup> (1) “Do you plan on crossing the border within the next

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<sup>4</sup>As noted by Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo (2014), the COELF’s EMIF project has asked these important questions for nearly a decade.



**Figure 1.** Field Sites, MBCS II.

Source: Rolando Díaz Caravantes, El Colegio de Sonora.

week?"; and (2) "Do you believe you will cross again in the future?" We address our research questions by examining the variation in the "yes" responses relative to "no" responses to these survey questions.

## Measurement of Variables Used in the Analysis

### Dependent Variables

Table 1 provides the descriptions and proportions for the dependent variables examined in our analyses. When asked, "Do you plan on crossing the border within the next week?" 30 percent responded "yes," 55 percent "no," and 15 percent "don't know." When asked more broadly, "Do you think you'll cross the border again in the future?" 55 percent responded "yes," 23 percent said "no," and 22 percent indicated they were unsure. We emphasize that we are measuring people's future crossing *intentions*, not their actual crossing behavior. Although intentions do not always perfectly predict behavior, the "theory of planned behavior" suggests intentions are the most proximate determinant of actual behavior (Ajzen 1988). While some scholars have criticized the conflation between self-reports and actions (Jerolmack and Khan 2014), examining intentions is the convention in literature examining international migration, especially with a hard to reach and mobile population such as recent deportees (see Hagan, Eschbach, and Rodriguez 2008; Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo 2014).

**Table 1.** Descriptions and Descriptive Statistics for Dependent Variables (Multiply Imputed Data).

Variable	Description	Percent
Do you plan on crossing again <i>next week</i> ?		
Yes	R plans on crossing next week	30%
No	R does not plan on cross next week	55%
Don't know	R does not know if they'll cross again next week	15%
Do you think you'll cross the border again sometime in the <i>future</i> ?		
Yes	R thinks they'll cross again in future	55%
No	R does not think they'll cross again in future	23%
Don't know	R does not know if they'll cross again in future	22%
N = 1,062		
m = 20		

Note: MI was estimated with the inclusion of the dependent variables. Cases in which values for dependent variables were missing were omitted from the analyses ( $N = 47$ ), ultimately yielding a sample size of 1,062. "R" denotes "respondent".

Source: Migrant Border Crossing Study II, weighted data.

### *Focal Independent Variables: Personal Ties in the United States and the Consequence Delivery System*

Table 2 provides the descriptions and descriptive statistics for the independent variables used in our analyses. Our aim is to examine how strong social ties to the United States affect migrants' future crossing intentions postdeportation when controlling for the specific enforcement programs through which they were processed. We operationalize personal ties in the United States through four measures: *US Home*, *Years in the US*, *US Citizen Child*, and *Social Ties in US Destination*.

We asked respondents three questions regarding place of origin, (1) where were you born? (2) Where were you living before your most recent crossing attempt? And (3) where do you consider your home (*hogar*) to be located? The purpose of this approach is to capture the complex geography of migration that frequently involves multiple cities, trajectories, and allegiances. The *US Home* variable represents whether or not a respondent's home is located in the United States ("yes" = 1; "no" = 0). This measure consists of a subjective understanding of "home", as we asked respondents to identify where they considered their current "home" (*hogar*) to be located. We contend that this subjective understanding of home is a fundamental indicator of locational attachment to the United States that drives repeat migration intentions. Approximately 31 percent of respondents stated that their home was in the United States and not Mexico. We also include a measure representing the cumulative number of years respondents had lived in the United States (*Years in the US*). The typical respondent had accumulated an average of 6.7 years of experience living in the United States. We also asked respondents to indicate whether they had at least one US citizen minor child (*US Citizen Child*) ("yes" = 1; "no" = 0). Nearly 20 percent

**Table 2.** Descriptions and Descriptive Statistics for Key Independent Variables (Multiply Imputed Data).

Variable	Description	Mean (Coef.)	SE
<b>Personal ties in the United States</b>			
US home	The subjective understanding that R's "home" ( <i>hogar</i> ) is located in the US	0.31	0.017
Years in US	Cumulative number of years the R has lived in the US	6.68	0.278
US citizen child	R has at least one US citizen child who is a minor	0.19	0.014
<b>Social ties in US destination</b>			
Family	R has family in US destination	0.40	0.018
Friend	R has at least one friend in US destination, but no family	0.44	0.018
No strong tie	R has no strong ties in US destination	0.16	0.014
<b>Consequence delivery system</b>			
Detained	R was detained for a week or longer after apprehension	0.37	0.018
ATEP	R was repatriated to a different sector than that of crossing	0.14	0.013
Secure Communities	R was processed through Secure Communities	0.25	0.017
Operation Streamline	R was processed through Operation Streamline	0.24	0.017
MIRP	R was processed through the Mexican Interior Repatriation Program	0.03	0.003
<b>Last crossing attempt</b>			
Success	R successfully arrived at destination	0.40	0.019
Permanent stay	R intended on staying permanently in the US	0.45	0.019
Debt	R has debt from last crossing	0.35	0.018
Port of entry	R's last crossing was through a port of entry	0.06	0.009
Traveled with family	R traveled with family members	0.19	0.014
Coyote or guide	R traveled with a coyote or guide	0.71	0.017
Bandits	R encountered bandits while crossing	0.14	0.013
Days traveled	Number of days R traveled before apprehension or pick up	2.21	0.089
Officer hit	R was physically abused by US authorities	0.12	0.012
Officer take	R had possessions taken and not returned before repatriation	0.31	0.017
<b>Migration-specific human capital</b>			
First crossing	Last crossing was R's first	0.16	0.014
Number of crossings	Number of R's lifetime crossings	5.30	0.440
<b>Demographics, general human capital, and financial capital</b>			
Age	R's age in years	32.11	0.313
Male	R is male	0.90	0.008
Indigenous	R speaks an indigenous language	0.09	0.009
Education	R's years of educational attainment	8.02	0.105

(continued)

**Table 2.** (continued)

Variable	Description	Mean (Coef.)	SE
Log income	R's monthly household income in log dollars	5.63	0.030
Employed	R was employed before most recent crossing	0.63	0.018
Provider	R is sole economic provider of their household	0.41	0.019
Region of origin and state-level context			
North	R is from northern region of Mexico	0.20	0.018
Traditional	R is from traditional region of Mexico	0.35	0.018
Central	R is from central region of Mexico	0.19	0.014
South/southeast	R is from southern region of Mexico	0.26	0.015
Migration homes	% of homes in R's state with a member in US (2010 CONAPO)	2.58	0.056
State-level unemployment rate	Unemployment rate in R's state (2006 CONAPO)	7.28	0.084
<i>m</i> = 20			
<i>N</i> = 1,062			

Note: "R" denotes "respondent."

Source: Migrant Border Crossing Study II, weighted data.

of respondents had a least one US citizen minor child. Finally, we include a variable measuring the type of social ties unauthorized migrants had to others in their desired US destination (*Social Ties in US Destination*: "family" = 1; "friends, but no family" = 2; "no strong tie in US destination" = 3). About 40 percent of respondents had at least one family member in their US destination, 44 percent had at least one friend (but no family), and 16 percent had neither family nor friends.

An additional aim of our analyses is to examine how immigration enforcement programs affect unauthorized migrants' future crossing intentions postdeportation. We also include five dichotomous measures ("yes" = 1; "no" = 0) capturing people's experiences with the CDS and other related programs: *Detained*, *ATEP*, *Secure Communities*, *Operation Streamline*, and *MIRP*. The *Detained* variable indicates whether respondents were held by US authorities for a week or longer. We chose the cutoff point of one week to differentiate between unauthorized migrants detained during the Border Patrol intake process, which generally lasts 72 hours but no more than one week, and those incarcerated for longer periods. Approximately 37 percent of our sample was detained for one week or longer after apprehension. The *ATEP* variable indicates whether a respondent was repatriated to Mexico through the ATEP (14%). The *Secure Communities* variable represents whether a respondent was apprehended through Secure Communities or a similar interior immigration enforcement program (25%). This variable consists of respondents apprehended by local law enforcement agents after successfully reaching their US destination.

The *Operation Streamline* variable captures whether a respondent was processed through Operation Streamline (24%). Finally, the *MIRP* variable represents whether a respondent was repatriated to Mexico City through the MIRP (3%).

### **Other Controls**

Prior research establishes a number of other factors related to migration decisions. We include various control variables in our statistical models to account for alternative factors that may be related to both migration intentions and our focal independent variables. Our controls are organized according to theoretically relevant conceptual groupings that range from most to least proximate as related to migrants' most recent crossing experience: "Last Crossing Attempt," "Migration-Specific Human Capital," "Demographics, General Human Capital, and Financial Capital," and "Region of Origin and State-Level Context." The "Last Crossing Attempt" variables pertain to unauthorized migrants' most recent (successful or unsuccessful) border-crossing attempt prior to apprehension. The unauthorized border-crossing experience has become increasingly risky and physically dangerous over the past two decades with increased border enforcement. Therefore, we control for variation and exposure to physically and socially risky situations that one may have encountered during their most recent crossing attempt, as these factors likely affect future migration intentions postrepatriation. For the sake of brevity, the descriptions and descriptive statistics for the variables associated with each of these theoretically relevant conceptual groupings are detailed in Table 2.

### **Analytic Approach**

We employ multinomial logistic regression to model future crossing intentions as a function of individual-level characteristics. The categories *yes*, *no*, and *don't know* are not logically ordered so multinomial logistic regression is an appropriate analytic method (Long 1997). One limitation of multinomial logistic regression is the implicit assumption of independence of irrelevant alternatives (IIA). We test violations of this assumption by comparing estimates of restricted choice models and find we do not violate this assumption. However, some scholars suggest that traditional "restricted choice" tests of the IIA assumption are "unsatisfactory" (Cheng and Long 2007). Instead, they advise researchers to use alternative models that do not make IIA assumption. In addition to restricted choice tests, we estimated multinomial probit regression models. However, substantive results did not vary across models; therefore, we present the results of the multinomial logistic regression model. We also test for multicollinearity using Stata 14's variance inflation factor (VIF) command on linear probability models. We found no evidence of multicollinearity between any of our independent variables, as none of the VIFs exceeded 2.80 (Menard 1995).

The methodological challenges associated with missing data were addressed using multiple imputation (MI) to deal with missing observations (Rubin 1987;

Schafer 1997). MI preserves valuable information that would be lost in inferential analyses relative to listwise deletion (i.e., complete case analysis) (Graham, Olchowski, and Gilreath 2007). Following the recommendation of Graham, Olchowski, and Gilreath (2007), we conduct 20 imputations ( $m = 20$ ) using the multiple imputation by chained equations (MICE) method (Royston 2009). Each imputation substituted cases with missing information with unbiased plausible values using their predictive distributions in a separate dataset. We then estimated variable means and conducted multinomial logistic regressions on each of the imputed datasets and combined the results using “Rubin’s Rules” to yield coefficient estimates and standard errors (Rubin 1987).

## Results

### *Cross Again Next Week: “Yes” Versus “No”*

One of the main research questions driving our analyses was whether strong social ties in the United States drive repeat migration intentions postdeportation. Table 3 reports the coefficients, standard errors, and significance levels for the multinomial logistic regression model predicting crossing intentions within the next week of the survey. Results are presented comparing “Yes versus No,” “Yes versus Don’t Know,” and “Don’t Know versus No.” For the purpose of this article, we focus exclusively on the results comparing “Yes versus No” responses.

As noted in Table 3, we find support for the assertion that strong personal ties in the United States are associated with increased odds of someone responding “yes” versus “no.” Specifically, we find that the relative odds of intending to cross again in next week are nearly 2.6 times higher for respondents who indicated their home is located in the United States relative to those who did not (relative odds ratio =  $\exp(\beta k)$ ; statistically significant at  $p < 0.001$ ). In a similar vein, the relative odds of intending to cross again are 1.07 times greater for each additional year spent living in the United States (statistically significant at  $p < 0.001$ ). We also find that the relative odds of a respondent with at least one family member in their desired destination are about two times larger than for a respondent without family ties in their destination (statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$ ). Clearly, strong personal ties are strong drivers of repeat migration postdeportation, net of all other factors.

As noted in Table 3, results also suggest that respondents from Mexican states with higher unemployment rates have greater relative odds of reporting they will cross again within the next week, which is consistent with traditional economic “push/pull” macrolevel theories of migration (Massey et al. 1993). We also find that the relative odds of intending to cross again are nearly 1.4 times larger for respondents who intended on settling permanently prior to their most recent crossing attempt compared to those who did not.

On the other hand, several factors examined are associated with *lower* odds of wanting to cross again within the next week. Surprisingly, we find that respondents

**Table 3.** Multinomial Logistic Regression Coefficients and Standard Error Estimates for “Cross Next Week.”

	“Yes” vs. “No”	“Yes” vs. “Don’t Know”	“Don’t Know” vs. “No”
<b>Personal ties in the United States</b>			
US home	0.95*** (0.23)	0.20 (0.34)	0.65 <sup>+</sup> (0.39)
Years in US	0.07*** (0.01)	0.10*** (0.03)	0.03 <sup>+</sup> (0.02)
US citizen child	-0.67*** (0.17)	-0.16 (0.39)	-0.26 <sup>+</sup> (0.15)
Family destination	0.70** (0.24)	0.79 <sup>+</sup> (0.48)	-0.08 (0.29)
Friend destination	0.35 (0.38)	0.10 (0.47)	0.10 (0.34)
<b>Consequence delivery system</b>			
Detained	-0.96*** (0.13)	-0.93*** (0.29)	-0.28* (0.13)
ATEP	-0.14 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.31)	0.17 (0.13)
Secure Communities	0.81* (0.41)	0.88*** (0.27)	0.20 (0.35)
Operation Streamline	-0.64** (0.22)	0.25 <sup>+</sup> (0.15)	-0.56 <sup>+</sup> (0.29)
MIRP	-2.20*** (0.50)	0.63* (0.29)	-2.16*** (0.62)
<b>Last crossing attempt</b>			
Success	-1.01 <sup>+</sup> (0.53)	-1.10** (0.37)	-0.14 (0.39)
Permanent stay	0.31* (0.15)	0.27* (0.12)	0.34** (0.13)
Debt	0.42 <sup>+</sup> (0.22)	0.37*** (0.12)	0.23 (0.36)
Port of entry	-1.23*** (0.23)	0.09 (0.49)	-0.85* (0.38)
Traveled with family	-0.47** (0.17)	-0.32 (0.21)	-1.06* (0.41)
Coyote or guide	-0.14 (0.12)	-0.32 (0.21)	0.49* (0.22)
Bandits	0.28 (0.36)	0.47 (0.46)	0.57 (0.35)
Days traveled	-0.03 (0.02)	0.01 (0.06)	-0.00 (0.03)
Officer hit	0.13 (0.22)	0.07 (0.10)	0.80*** (0.11)
Officer take	-0.77*** (0.19)	0.23 (0.24)	-0.69*** (0.13)

(continued)

**Table 3.** (continued)

	“Yes” vs. “No”	“Yes” vs. “Don’t Know”	“Don’t Know” vs. “No”
<b>Migration-specific human capital</b>			
First crossing	-0.01 (0.33)	-0.58* (0.24)	0.73** (0.27)
Number of crossings	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.03 <sup>+</sup> (0.02)
<b>Demographics, human, and financial capital</b>			
Age	-0.03* (0.01)	-0.02 <sup>+</sup> (0.01)	0.00 (0.02)
Male	-0.21 (0.17)	0.16 (0.33)	-0.52 <sup>+</sup> (0.31)
Indigenous	-0.13 (0.28)	0.94** (0.32)	0.01 (0.18)
Education	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.04)	0.00 (0.03)
Log income	0.14 (0.23)	0.10 (0.11)	-0.18 (0.17)
Employed	-0.35 (0.25)	-0.31 (0.26)	-0.22 (0.21)
Provider	-0.05 (0.11)	0.01 (0.13)	0.03 (0.17)
<b>Region of origin and state-level controls</b>			
North	0.26 (0.36)	-0.08 (0.24)	-0.18 (0.60)
Central	-0.13 (0.24)	-0.51 (0.31)	0.15 (0.31)
South/southeast	-0.10 (0.38)	-0.60* (0.28)	0.39* (0.20)
Migration homes	-0.20*** (0.06)	-0.24* (0.10)	0.02 (0.09)
State-level unemployment rate	0.11** (0.04)	0.11 (0.07)	-0.01 (0.03)
McFadden’s pseudo $R^2$ (mean)	0.177		
$m = 20$			
$N = 1,062$			

Note: “Traditional” region and “No Strong Ties in Destination” are referent categories.

Source: Migrant Border Crossing Study II, unweighted data.

\*\*\* $p < 0.001$ . \*\* $p < 0.01$ . \* $p < 0.05$ . <sup>+</sup> $p < 0.10$ .

with at least one US citizen minor child have lower relative odds (49% lower or  $1 - \exp(\beta k)$ ) of intending to cross again within the next week. Although this finding may seem counterintuitive, it is likely that people with US citizen minor children may be more willing forego unauthorized migration in favor of exploring legal migration channels through family sponsored visas, especially considering the increased

penalties associated with a subsequent failed crossing attempt. However, it is also possible that people with US citizen minor children planned to bring their children back to Mexico. In fact, we find some support for this assertion, as over 20 percent of those with US citizen minor children responded they planned to do so. We also find that people from Mexican states with higher rates of household members in the United States have lower relative odds of expressing interest in crossing within a week.<sup>5</sup> Results also indicate that traveling with family members during one's most recent crossing *decreases* the relative odds of wanting to cross again within the next week. It is likely that people traveling with family — quite often children — want to avoid the risk of attempting another crossing in such a short period.

The second research question driving our analysis was whether immigration enforcement programs serve as a deterrent to future crossing intentions. Here, our analysis reveals novel findings related to enforcement measures associated with CDS programs. We find that being repatriated to the interior of Mexico and having tried to cross through an official port of entry without authorization decrease the relative odds intending to cross again within a week of being removed from the United States. Being repatriated to the interior of Mexico makes it logistically difficult to return north to the border and attempt another crossing within the next week, while being caught at a port of entry (while either making false claims of citizenship or using false documents) carries disproportionately harsher penalties when compared to being charged with unauthorized entry or reentry (Slack et al. 2014). We also find that people processed through Operation Streamline have lower relative odds (47% lower) of wanting to cross again within the next week than those not processed through the program, while people detained for a week or longer<sup>6</sup> have lower relative odds as well (62% lower). Interestingly, we find people processed through Secure Communities have *higher* relative odds of intending to cross within the next week, while we do not find any support for deterrence stemming from the ATEP.

In sum, aside from the additional explanatory power of having one's home in the United States, our findings tend to be consistent with the literature. People with strong social connections to the United States, those with greater experience living in the United States, and those from Mexican states with higher unemployment rates

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<sup>5</sup>We believe this counterintuitive finding deserves further examination in future research. For instance, some scholars have described unauthorized migration to the United States as an important rite of passage for young people in communities with a more pronounced "culture of migration" (Kandel and Massey 2002). It is possible that people from such communities are simply conforming to these norms with no real social or economic desire to migrate beyond the rite of passage itself and are thus less likely to express a desire to cross again once they experience the difficulty and dangers of the border-crossing experience.

<sup>6</sup>We specify being detained for "one week or longer" to account for transfer out of Border Patrol processing centers into detention centers or prisons. Processing generally takes one to three days. This is a way to ensure that the individual is referring to a more sustained detention experience and not the ubiquitous processing phase of removal.

are much more likely to express interest in attempting a crossing within a week. On the other hand, being detained for a week or longer, being repatriated to the interior of Mexico, and experience with Operation Streamline all *decrease* the chances of crossing next week. Nevertheless, the deterrent effects stemming from CDS programs should be interpreted with caution. As we discuss below, the deterrent effects associated with Operation Streamline and MIRP appear to be relatively short-lived. And while the deterrent effect of detention is robust, it may be offset by having one's home in the United States or family in one's US destination.

### *Crossing within a Week Versus Crossing Again in the Future*

Table 4 compares statistically significant results from the “Yes versus No” model predicting desire to cross within the next week (column 1 in Tables 3) to “Yes versus No” responses to the following question: “Do you think you’ll cross the border again in the future?” Table 4 provides the relative odds ratios (i.e., exponentiated coefficients) and significance levels associated with each variable.<sup>7</sup>

The results are consistent between the two sets of analyses, with a few exceptions. Each model illustrates the importance of personal ties in the United States — particularly having one's home in the United States — driving repeat migration intentions. We conclude that repeat crossing intentions are centered on establishing real and lasting connections with places and people, particularly “home.” And while social and kinship networks are interrupted by the deportation process and thus become more difficult to maintain, they are not destroyed. Immediate and long-term crossing intentions are unquestionably tied to having established personal ties to the United States. This presents a difficult situation for migrants who possess a strong social need to return to the country: They must constantly avoid contact with the state or risk further criminalization.

As far as deterrence goes, the effect of detention also appears to be robust in both models (see Table 4). Simply put, people who are detained for a week or longer are less likely to state they want to cross the border again within a week of deportation or sometime again in the future. Nevertheless, the coefficients associated with the interior repatriation (MIRP) and Operation Streamline variables are *not* statistically significant in the “cross future” models. These findings are particularly important, as they strongly suggest that being processed through Operation Streamline or MIRP is relatively ineffective in deterring long-term crossing intentions. Yet the permanent record received for an Operation Streamline prosecution and conviction is long lasting. This increases one's risk of future criminalization if they attempt to return “home” to the United States.

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<sup>7</sup>Multinomial logistic regression coefficients and standard errors estimates for the complete “Cross Ever” models can be found in Appendix A.

**Table 4.** Relative Odds Ratios and Significance Levels for “Cross Next Week” and “Cross Future.”

	Cross Next Week?	Cross Future?
	(Yes vs. No)	(Yes vs. No)
<b>Personal Ties in the United States</b>		
US home	2.59***	3.00***
Years in US	1.07***	1.05**
US citizen child	0.51***	0.66***
Family destination	2.01**	1.84*
Friend destination	—	—
<b>Consequence delivery system</b>		
Detained	0.38***	0.43**
ATEP	—	—
Secure Communities	2.25*	1.75 <sup>+</sup>
Operation Streamline	0.53**	—
MIRP	0.11***	—
<b>Last crossing attempt</b>		
Success	0.36 <sup>+</sup>	—
Permanent stay	1.36*	—
Debt	1.52 <sup>+</sup>	1.35*
Port of entry	0.29***	0.61***
Traveled with family	0.63**	0.71***
Coyote or guide	—	—
Bandits	—	—
Days traveled	—	—
Officer hit	—	1.72 <sup>+</sup>
Officer take	0.46***	—
<b>Migration-specific human capital</b>		
First crossing	—	—
Number of crossings	—	—
<b>Demographics, human, and financial capital</b>		
Age	0.97*	0.96***
Male	—	—
Indigenous	—	—
Education	—	—
Log income	—	—
Employed	—	—
Provider	—	—
<b>Region of origin and state-level controls</b>		
North	—	—
Central	—	0.64***
South/southeast	—	0.77
Migration homes	0.82***	0.90*
State-level unemployment rate	1.12**	1.08*
McFadden's pseudo $R^2$ (mean)	0.177	0.130
$m = 20$		
$N = 1,062$		

Note: “Traditional” region and “No Strong Ties in Destination” are referent categories. “—” denotes a non-significant finding.

Source: Migrant Border Crossing Study II, unweighted data.

\*\*\* $p < 0.001$ . \*\* $p < 0.01$ . \* $p < 0.05$ . <sup>+</sup> $p < 0.10$ .

## Discussion: A Case for The Elimination of Immigrant Criminalization

It is important to acknowledge the complex social costs of the current approach to immigration enforcement. Although detention may serve as a deterrent in some cases, it is likely ineffective at deterring people with strong personal ties to the United States. As noted in Table 4, there are statistically significant positive associations between stronger personal ties in the United States (i.e., having one's home in the United States, greater experience living in the United States, and having family in one's US destination) and the relative odds of intending to cross again. Table 4 also illustrates a negative association between detention and intending to cross again within the next week as well as sometime in the future.

While Table 4 provides a clear assessment of how each factor impacts the odds of crossing intentions within said factor (e.g., having one's home in the United States or each additional year of US experience), it is unclear how effect magnitudes compare across variables. Thus, we estimate predicated probabilities to better illustrate how the motivating effects of social ties in the United States compare to the deterrent effects of immigration enforcement programs. We calculate predicted probabilities based on the point estimates presented in Table 3 and Appendix A. We hold all variables at their means, with the exception of the statistically significant variables in Table 4 under the "Personal Ties in the United States" and "Consequence Delivery System" headings. We report the predicted probabilities in Table 5 (below).

For the sake of interpretation, we find that a respondent whose home is located in the United States has 33 percent probability of intending to cross again within the next week, compared to 18 percent for someone whose home is not in the United States. In other words, having one's home in the United States increases the predicted probability by 15 percent. On the other hand, a respondent who was detained for a week or longer has a 14 percent probability of intending to cross again within the next week, compared to 28 percent for someone who was not detained. Here, detention decreases the predicted probability by 14 percent. A similar pattern emerged when respondents were asked more broadly if it were possible that they would cross again sometime in the future. Ultimately, Table 5 illustrates that the absolute effects of "US Home" and "Detained" are comparable. In other words, the motivating effect viewing your home as being in the United States overcomes the deterrent effect of detention.

We must emphasize that these findings are likely conservative estimates, as we generally surveyed people within several hours (but no more than 30 days) of their deportation. The negative aspects of being incarcerated are fresh in people's minds and the hope of finding an alternative life in Mexico may seem more viable. David Spener (2009) also notes that migrants have a tendency to downplay the negative aspects of the migration process as time passes. Therefore, the social and economic pressures to return to the United States likely mount as the incarceration and deportation experience fade into the past. Scholars and policymakers must consider the

**Table 5.** Adjusted Predictions at Representative Values, All Other Variables Set at Means.

	“Cross next week”: Yes	“Cross future”: Yes
Personal ties in the United States		
US home		
US home = “0”	0.18	0.54
US home = “1”	0.33	0.71
Motivating effect	+0.15	+0.17
Years in US		
Years in US = mean – 1	0.21	0.58
Years in US = mean	0.22	0.60
Years in US = mean + 1	0.23	0.62
Motivating effect (marginal)	+0.01	+0.02
US Citizen Child		
US citizen child = “0”	0.24	0.61
US citizen child = “1”	0.14	0.54
Deterrent effect	–0.10	–0.07
Family destination		
Family destination = “0”	0.17	0.52
Family destination = “1”	0.29	0.69
Motivating effect	+0.12	+0.17
Consequence delivery system		
Detained		
Detained = “0”	0.28	0.67
Detained = “1”	0.14	0.46
Deterrent effect	–0.14	–0.21
Secure Communities		
Secure Communities = “0”	0.19	0.56
Secure Communities = “1”	0.34	0.72
Motivating effect	+0.15	+0.16
Operation Streamline		
Operation Streamline = “0”	0.25	—
Operation Streamline = “1”	0.16	—
Deterrent effect	–0.09	
MIRP		
MIRP = “0”	0.24	—
MIRP = “1”	0.04	—
Deterrent effect	–0.20	
M = 20		
N = 1,062		

Note: All adjusted predictions are statistically significant beyond  $p < 0.001$ . “—” denotes a “non-significant” finding.

Source: Migrant Border Crossing Study II (unweighted data).

long-term consequences of immigrant criminalization as those with stronger social ties to the United States continue to cross, be apprehended, charged with “illegal reentry,” and incarcerated for longer periods.

A thorough review of the critiques levied against mass incarceration in the United States is beyond the scope of this article, but this critical scholarship is useful in formulating a theoretical understanding about the future of unauthorized Mexican migrants determined to return to the United States, especially for those processed through Operation Streamline or incarcerated for immigration violations. For instance, Golash-Boza (2015) contends that labor displacement, immigration, incarceration, and deportation are processes inherently connected to the global neoliberal project that are likely to continue unabated in the absence of major economic structural transformations. Others have connected Garland's (2001) notion of "criminology of the other" and the "emerging culture of control" in late modernity to the increasingly exclusionary and punitive approach to immigration control (Aas 2013). In the US context, Alexander (2010) argues that mass incarceration has resulted in the creation and perpetuation of an under caste that mirror previous systems of racialized social control such as Jim Crow and slavery.

As Alexander notes, the criminal justice system *should not* and *cannot* be seen as an independent system, but rather as a gateway into a much larger system of racial stigmatization and permanent marginalization. She utilizes the term mass incarceration to not only refer to the criminal justice system, but a much "larger web of laws, rules, policies, and customs that control those labeled criminal both in and out of prison" (Alexander 2010, 13). This system locks a sizeable percentage of communities of color "out of the mainstream society and economy" (ibid.) — including unauthorized Mexican immigrants and other Latino/as. This fits directly with critiques of the social consequences of incarcerating largely nonviolent immigration offenders with other more serious offenders (Martinez and Slack 2013), resulting in an *overcriminalization* of racialized unauthorized immigrants (Chacón 2012).

Perhaps most important, the propensity to migrate despite deportation and detention implies that unauthorized migrants with strong personal ties to the United States are being disproportionately affected by the immigration enforcement apparatus. Return migration carries an escalating penalty that, in some cases, can reach a sentence of 20 years for illegal reentry. High numbers of US citizen children will be affected by having one or both parents incarcerated, removed from the country, and often placed in serious danger upon deportation. The disproportionate targeting of people socially attached to the United States — people we refer to in our sample as Unauthorized Permanent Residents, but officials deem "repeat offenders" (US Government Accountability Office 2012) — has enormous potential consequences for the 16.6 million people who live in mixed-status families, nine million of which include at least one unauthorized adult and one US-born child (Taylor et al. 2011; Zayas 2015). The current immigration enforcement system targets this group through a lack of options for people to regularize their status despite significant personal ties to the United States, increasing penalties for unauthorized migration, and longer, harsher prison sentences.

## Conclusion

Place attachment to destination countries is an increasingly important but often neglected factor in repeat migration intentions postdeportation. This has been touched upon qualitatively (Chavez 2012; Alarcón Acosta, Rabadan, and Ortiz 2014), but has not been empirically examined in quantitative analyses beyond conventional measures of social capital. People may define the concept of “home” in many complex and subjective ways, but there appears to be a very strong commonality between this group of people in our sample, both in their desire to return “home” and in their resilience in the face of ever-increasing sanctions for immigration violations. Unauthorized Permanent Residents are clearly much more likely to intend on returning to the United States — especially in the long run — despite being processed through Operation Streamline or incarcerated for immigration-related infractions. Our findings demonstrate that enforcement measures have a distinctly different impact on people who consider the country from which they were deported to be their home, as opposed to those with weaker connections. The concept of UPRs not only allows us to develop a better understanding of repeat migration, but it also calls attention to the consequences of current immigration enforcement policies. Moreover, it adds a layer of complexity to the discussion of deportation and illegality, as people react to enforcement in different ways. The MBCS data clearly illustrate that some people are deterred by increasingly punitive anti-immigrant measures, while others, particularly those with stronger personal ties to the United States, are much more resilient in their resolve to return. Furthermore, as Table 5 illustrates, the social ties migrants have to the United States largely negate the deterrent effects of punitive approaches to immigration enforcement.

We clearly demonstrate that immigrants who call the United States their home, those with greater experience living in the country, and those with family in their destination are more likely to intend on returning compared to those without these connections. However, our data are not without limitations. For instance, there are likely other dimensions of place attachment beyond those captured in our survey instrument such as the quality of consistent US employment in a good job or home ownership. Nevertheless, our data allow us to question the efficacy of specific enforcement programs that target unauthorized migrants in transit with strong personal connections to the United States — a population that is largely overlooked in the postdeportation literature or immigration enforcement policy discussion. Moreover, our findings highlight the inevitable failure of immigration policy and enforcement programs when placed against the powerful pull of family and home. One plausible interpretation of our findings is the increased importance that “affectual ties” play in repeat migration. While our measures of personal ties in the United States signal as much, future research should attempt to develop more valid and reliable measures of “affectual ties” to countries from which people were deported. Doing so will undoubtedly provide an additional dimension of understanding to the complex nature of unauthorized migration in an era of increased securitization and deportation.

The punitive approach to immigration enforcement disproportionately negatively affects UPRs and their US citizen family members (Cavazos-Rehg, Zayas, and Spitznagel 2007; Zayas 2015). We believe that scholars and policymakers do not yet have an adequate grasp on the longterm social consequences of this approach. Scholars have begun to explore how people fail to re-adapt to a country they no longer call home (Brotherton and Barrios 2011), but this literature is still in its nascent phase. Others have called attention to a new American diaspora of global deportees and the US-born children they leave behind, a process Young (2007) describes as “social bulimia” (Arias 2013; Brotherton and Naegler 2014). Thus, the irrationalities of the contemporary punitive approach to immigration control have not only given rise to UPRs, but have also manifested in a new American diaspora of deportees throughout the world, which is quickly becoming a *global* social problem. We call for scholars to connect these traumas with the systematic criminalization of immigration in the United States to better understand the impacts of our current immigration enforcement projects. This can expand the larger sociological literature on race, crime, and the incarceration industrial complex.

On September 5th, 2017, the Trump administration announced it would repeal the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. If the repeal holds, an additional 800,000 young women and men, which represent a notable group among UPRs, will be at risk of deportation and criminalization. Taken within the current resurgence of anti-immigrant rhetoric, we must remember that deportation is not a solution, not only because of the trauma that it inflicts on individuals and their families through separation, but also because of the simple fact that this population is so determined to return. Despite the dangers of the desert crossing, the costs associated with unauthorized migration, and the threat of incarceration or violence from authorities, UPRs intend to return.

## Appendix A

### Multinomial Logistic Regression Coefficients and Standard Error Estimates for “Cross Future”

	“Yes” vs. “No”	“Yes” vs. “Don’t Know”	“Don’t Know” vs. “No”
Personal Ties in the United States			
US home	1.10*** (0.25)	0.20 (0.34)	0.90*** (0.27)
Years in US	0.05** (0.02)	0.10*** (0.03)	−0.05** (0.02)
US citizen child	−0.41*** (0.12)	−0.16 (0.39)	−0.25 (0.45)

(continued)

**Appendix A.** (continued)

	“Yes” vs. “No”	“Yes” vs. “Don’t Know”	“Don’t Know” vs. “No”
Family destination	0.61* (0.27)	0.79+ (0.48)	-0.18 (0.34)
Friend destination	0.43 (0.33)	0.10 (0.47)	0.32 (0.29)
Consequences delivery system			
Detained	-0.84** (0.29)	-0.93*** (0.29)	0.09 (0.47)
ATEP	0.12 (0.23)	-0.09 (0.31)	0.21 (0.42)
Secure Communities	0.56+ (0.29)	0.88*** (0.27)	-0.33 (0.26)
Operation Streamline	-0.07 (0.23)	0.25+ (0.15)	-0.32* (0.16)
MIRP	-0.31 (0.22)	0.63* (0.29)	-0.93** (0.34)
Last crossing attempt			
Success	-0.18 (0.38)	-1.10** (0.36)	0.92* (0.40)
Permanent stay	0.31 (0.22)	0.27* (0.12)	0.04 (0.19)
Debt	0.30* (0.13)	0.37*** (0.12)	-0.07 (0.17)
Port of entry	-0.49** (0.18)	0.09 (0.49)	-0.58 (0.44)
Traveled with family	-0.34*** (0.08)	-0.32 (0.21)	-0.02 (0.20)
Coyote or guide	-0.18 (0.18)	-0.30 (0.19)	0.13 (0.25)
Bandits	0.14 (0.27)	0.47 (0.46)	-0.33 (0.70)
Days traveled	0.04 (0.03)	0.01 (0.06)	0.03 (0.06)
Officer hit	0.54+ (0.32)	0.07 (0.10)	0.47 (0.32)
Officer take	-0.12 (0.26)	0.22 (0.24)	-0.34* (0.15)
Migration-specific human capital			
First crossing	-0.43 (0.27)	-0.58* (0.24)	0.15 (0.30)
Number of crossings	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)

(continued)

**Appendix A.** (continued)

	“Yes” vs. “No”	“Yes” vs. “Don’t Know”	“Don’t Know” vs. “No”
<b>Demographics, human, and financial capital</b>			
Age	−0.04*** (0.01)	−0.02 <sup>+</sup> (0.01)	−0.01 (0.01)
Male	−0.22 (0.30)	0.16 (0.33)	−0.38 (0.23)
Indigenous	0.30 (0.37)	0.94***	−0.64 (0.56)
Education	−0.02 (0.37)	−0.04 (0.04)	0.01 (0.04)
Log income	0.02 (0.17)	0.10 (0.11)	−0.08 (0.16)
Employed	−0.03 (0.20)	−0.31 (0.26)	0.28 (0.17)
Provider	−0.07 (0.20)	0.01 (0.13)	−0.08 (0.20)
<b>Region of origin and state-level controls</b>			
North	−0.32 (0.44)	−0.08 (0.24)	−0.24 (0.46)
Central	−0.45*** (0.15)	−0.51 (0.31)	0.06 (0.41)
South/southeast	−0.26 <sup>+</sup> (0.15)	−0.60* (0.28)	0.34 (0.37)
Migration homes	−0.11* (0.04)	−0.24* (0.10)	0.13 (0.08)
State-level unemployment rate	0.08* (0.04)	0.11 (0.07)	−0.03 (0.09)
McFadden’s pseudo $R^2$ (mean)	0.130		
$m = 20$			
$N = 1,062$			

Note: “Traditional” region and “No Strong Ties in Destination” are referent categories.

Source: Migrant Border Crossing Study II, unweighted data.

\*\*\* $p < 0.001$ . \*\* $p < 0.01$ . \* $p < 0.05$ . <sup>+</sup> $p < 0.10$ .

**Acknowledgments**

The authors would like to thank Josiah Heyman, Timothy Dunn, and the anonymous reviewers for their useful recommendations, and Scott Whiteford for his continued support.

**Declaration of Conflicting Interests**

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: The authors received financial support from Ford Foundation Mexico for the research of this article.

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