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Initial Host-Society / Migrant Relations: Implications for U.S. Refugee Integration

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INITIAL HOST-SOCIETY/MIGRANT RELATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. REFUGEE INTEGRATION

Research into factors affecting immigrant integration carries important implications for immigration scholars and policymakers. By immigrant integration we mean the nature and extent of temporal and generational convergence between newcomers and natives in sociocultural patterns and socioeconomic attainment (Brown and Bean 2006; Jimenez 2016). Although many studies have investigated the extent to which immigrants and natives come to resemble one another (Waters and Pineau 2015), fewer have devoted attention to whether newcomers arriving under various entry auspices exhibit different integration dynamics and outcomes. A notable exception involves research assessing the degree to which unauthorized entrants incur substantial handicaps compared to those entering with legal status. Because the United States has largely failed to extend official societal membership to unauthorized migrants, their families have been deprived of access to opportunities for achieving socioeconomic mobility (Brown and Bean 2016). Research shows that this has negatively affected migrants, their migrating children, and even their children born in the United States (e.g., Bean, Brown and Bachmeier 2015; Gonzales 2015). Although numerous studies provide striking examples of how this kind of host-society/migrant relationship strongly affects migrant integration, little investigation has delved into the nature and degree to which immigrants arriving under alternative forms of *legal* entry undergo different integration experiences.

For immigration scholars and policy makers interested in assessing theoretical perspectives and policies about integration, research into whether certain kinds of *legal* migration auspices foster more integration would be especially valuable. Studies comparing the integration experiences of U.S. refugees compared to those of legal non-refugee entrants offer a

partial exception to the relative lack of legal-entrant research. Indeed, some research has found positive integration outcomes among refugees compared to legal non-refugee immigrants and interpreted such results to U.S. refugees having received governmental financial and other tangible assistance (Capps, et al 2015; Evans and Fitzgerald 2017). In a similar vein, other scholars have suggested that U.S. refugee admission and settlement practices provide an example of a successful immigrant integration model (e.g., Waters and Pineau 2015). Other studies of refugees, however, have found that bureaucratic, organizational, and other factors attendant upon refugee arrival and settlement have often operated to impede successful integration (Fee 2019; Kyrakides 2018; Brown and Scribner 2014; U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations 2010). To our knowledge, research on the integration of refugees and their children has yet to reconcile such discrepant findings, leaving unresolved whether various integration theoretical perspectives better account for immigrant integration than others, or whether certain immigrant policies might be more likely to foster integration than others.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE GUIDING THE PRESENT RESEARCH

To shed light on why findings from prior research on U.S. refugee integration have been inconsistent, and to try to reveal more clearly the implications of research results on refugees for immigrant integration generally, the present research utilizes a relational conceptualization of integration to analyze U.S. refugee and legal immigrant integration. Such a framework directs attention to how various initial host-society/migrant relationships differentially affect integration, as illustrated by the dramatic research results noted above for the effects of unauthorized status on integration. We start by introducing relational notions of immigrant integration, and then we outline various initial societal/migrant relationships that have characterize refugees who came to

the United States from various places during and after the Cold War. These consist of different kinds and degrees of tangible assistance and intangible warmth of welcomes (i.e., relational contexts of reception) among various groups of refugees compared to regular legal immigrants, some of which seem likely to affect integration. Variation in motivational incentives among refugees to maximize integration may also arise from various contexts of migrant departure and lead to different degrees of integration (e.g., Cortes 2004; Nguyen 2017). For example, more positive initial host society/refugee relationships for certain migrants (e.g., Cold War refugees), in combination with stronger tendencies for some refugees to work harder owing to their departure circumstances (e.g., conflict-induced exits and lack of return options), may lead to greater integration than other relationship/context-of-departure combinations. To the degree that such patterns appear in the data we examine below, these may help explain previous research inconsistencies about refugee integration, as well as help clarify the factors making for greater or lesser immigrant integration in general.

Definitions of Host-Society/Migrant Relations and Immigrant Integration

Relational conceptualizations of immigrant integration emerge from two different but complementary perspectives on integration recently noted in the literature. They conceptualize integration (whether social, political, economic or spatial) as dependent on or interdependent with how the host society initially defines the societal/migrant nexus. One, articulated by Jimenez (2016), emphasizes the importance of viewing assimilation as a "two-way street," one that involves immigrants not only coming to resemble the members of host societies, but also host societies taking on new features and tendencies from immigrants. In this view, integration involves nothing if not relational processes. The other, articulated by Motomura (2006), emphasizes that the ways host societies perceive and define society/newcomer relationships

matters for the degree of newcomer integration. More specifically, societies may initially conceive of migrants in positive, neutral, or negative terms. By way of example Motomura (2006) notes that 19th century natives in the United States tended to perceive new immigrants as well on their way to becoming official members *of* society. That is, natives (and others) at that time *assumed* immigrants would in due course qualify for and obtain citizenship, an orientation that helped them to envision newcomers as worthy of initial welcome and support.

In the early 20th century, by contrast, natives often tended to view immigrants in more *laissez faire* or negative terms, defining them as newcomers *in* the country but not *of* the country. In short, they often conceptualized immigrants in more utilitarian terms, as workers more than settlers, as having been granted the opportunity to "make it" on their own, but not as newly arrived provisional members *of* society as in the mid-19th century. This latter perception of newcomers implied greater acceptance of new entrants and gave rise to formation of more positive, inclusive reception environments that could more readily provide settlement assistance (at least informally) and encourage social contacts between immigrants and natives. Such contexts are likely to foster greater immigrant integration compared to the fewer opportunities made available to mid-20th-century newcomers whom natives perceived in either more neutral terms, or early in the 20th century, more negative, nativist terms (Higham 1987). In these views, some harking back to the 19th century, the host society's initial perceptions of newcomers and their place in society either enhance the possibility or limit the likelihood of integration occurring.

Sociological and legal ideas about the incorporation of post-1965 U.S. immigrants have not overlooked the possibility that certain aspects of relational contexts of reception may affect integration. Such frameworks, as in the case of segmented assimilation, have emphasized

negative relational aspects of reception, such as hostile governmental and legal strictures facing unauthorized migrants that hamper integration (Motomura 2014; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). The present research complements this research vein by outlining features of reception contexts (i.e., their initial societal definitions of migrants) that entail more positive, inclusive relationships involving the host society and newcomers. Such factors carry more favorable implications for integration. For example, recent cross-national studies have shown that positive relational dynamics, at a country level, matter for the favorability of policies established to attract and support specific groups of migrants, as well as for inducing higher levels of political engagement on the part of newcomers (Bloemraad 2006; Poros 2011). At an individual level, researchers have found that favorable relational dynamics constitute important determinants of friendship choices, degree of contact between natives and newcomers and, subsequently, the sense of welcome experienced by migrants (Fussell 2014; Kotzur, Tropp, and Wagner 2018; Leszczensky and Pink 2019; Tropp, Okamoto, Marrow, and Jones-Correa 2018). Thus, contexts of reception may involve relational qualities that are either tangible (e.g., financial resources) or intangible (e.g., warm welcoming attitudes).

Contexts of departure may also influence integration (e.g., Luthra, Soehl, and Waldinger 2017; Luthra, Waldinger, and Soehl 2018). Here again relational qualities that are either positive or negative, or tangible or intangible, may come into play and reflect initial host-society/migrant relationships. For example, one relational dynamic that is often important in refugees' exits from origin countries involves political tension between origin societies and emigrants. A familiar case involves refugees fleeing communist countries during the Cold War. A non-communist country of destination like the United States was not only been more inclined to accept such migrants compared to others, it also was more likely to provide such migrants with more tangible

assistance than other entrants because the former's choice of destination ostensibly reflected a preference for political orientations more like that of the destination government. Circumstances at origin (such as violence against dissidents) may also generate intangible relational factors among fleeing refugees, such as increased motivations to seek and ardently pursue long-term integration goals at destination (Cortes 2004). Thus, emigrants fleeing hostile and dangerous political situations may not only receive both more favorable receptions at destination than other emigrants, the contrast between the opportunities they receive at destination and their unfavorable treatment at origin may foster an unusually strong drive to achieve at destination, thus also leading to greater integration..

Host-Society/Refugee Relational Dynamics in the U.S. Case

In 1980, the United States for the first time passed general, permanent refugee legislation (as opposed to various previously adopted *ad hoc* temporary measures). Often called the 1980 Refugee Act, the law institutionalized tangible assistance and support for refugees upon arrival without providing similar benefits to other legal immigrants (Haines 2010). The passage of the Refugee Act also granted refugees the equivalence of Legal Permanent Resident (LPR) status at entry, and a fast track to citizenship (they could count their first year as refugees toward eligibility for citizenship), as well as financial and employment assistance, advantages not available to regular immigrants. This more positive relational treatment in the form of greater resource accessibility implies that U.S. refugees and their children would be more likely to show greater integration than regular immigrants, all else equal.

The 1980s also constituted the last decade of the U.S/Soviet Cold War. U.S. foreign policy exigencies at the time encouraged government agencies to provide special treatment to those leaving communist countries (Haines and Rosenblum 2010). Indeed, refugees admitted to

the United States during the 1980s from communist countries constituted a majority of refugees during the period (Zolberg 1988). After the Cold War ended in 1990, the geopolitical imperative to admit communist country refugees and view them in positive terms began to subside (Keely 2001). Thus, during the 1980s, more so than beforehand or since 1990, public officials and natives were more likely to adopt positive orientations toward refugees, adopting welcoming discourses and initiating practices facilitating arrival and settlement, processes more likely to foster integration (Kyriakides et al 2018). Refugees in those years were able to enter the United States while receiving not only tangible governmental support in the form of financial assistance (owing to the provisions of the 1980 Act), but also intangible support in the form of positive perceptions and warmer welcomes than those received by regular immigrants.

Refugees coming during the 1980s compared to those coming during the 1990s and later decades were more likely to benefit from supportive relational contexts than those faced by other legal entrants. They received both more tangible and intangible support than regular immigrants upon arrival, and their contexts of departure also often involved their having left their countries of origin under difficult circumstances. Many were departing hostile and violence-riven situations created or exacerbated by U.S.-Soviet proxy wars. Thus, these newcomers were likely also to receive more favorable treatment from both the U.S. government and the public, if for no other reason than they were seen as ideological allies (e.g., as exemplified in the adage, "the enemy of our enemy is our friend") (Bon Tempo 2008; Loescher and Scanlan 1986). Also, Southeast Asian refugees were perceived at least by some political entities as former U.S. allies to whom the United States had an obligation to assist (Zolberg 2005). The positive treatment stemming from these conditions also encouraged the Vietnamese to nurture their own sense of moral belonging in the United States and to leverage their position as a former U.S. ally to press

for more support and resources for Vietnamese refugees (Nguyen 2017). These more positive tangible and intangible relational dynamics emerging for refugees fleeing communist countries, and especially Vietnam, compared to those from non-communist countries, seem likely to have facilitated and enhanced integration.

The relative influence of tangible versus intangible relational factors in bringing about refugee integration may thus vary for different kinds of refugees. Prominent in the tangible assistance provided refugees after 1980 was financial support for both English language education and citizenship training. Such tangible support may reasonably be viewed as part of the host society's investment in the refugees, because becoming naturalized and attaining English proficiency increase structural access to economic opportunities (Portes and Rumbaut 2014). They thus may substantially account for (i.e., mediate) any greater integration among refugees compared to regular immigrants, who have not received such investments. If such factors, as products of refugee but not regular immigrant status, explain most of any integration advantage shown by refugees versus regular legal immigrants, it would imply that further intangible relational factors also associated with refugee status exert little independent influence on integration. In other words, it would suggest that naturalization and English proficiency, not more subjective factors like warmth of welcome and gratitude for having been able to obtain refugee status, bring about the positive influence of refugee status on integration. But if any intangible support received by refugees, along with any other tangible forms not captured by English proficiency and naturalization, were operating to boost education attainment, it would suggest the relationship between refugee status and refugees' children's education would *not* be fully mediated by English proficiency and naturalization.

In addition to relational reception factors, relational departure factors are likely to interact with the context of reception to influence integration. Negative and dangerous dynamics associated with departure are likely to accentuate positive relational effects on attainment at destination. Thus, refugees from violence-riven communist countries are more likely to identify with the host society and show greater integration than those leaving non-violence-riven communist countries, as noted above. And refugees coming from war-afflicted countries may especially be likely to seek out opportunities in the new context and be unusually motivated to achieve integration in the United States (Ludwig 2013). Many also face little prospect of returning to their homeland (although the geographic proximity of Cuban refugees to their origin country has sometimes generated continuing hopes of eventual return) (Perez 2007). Because we expect that encountering such circumstances is likely to increase the motivation to succeed in new destinations, greater integration among 1980s refugees who were leaving violence-riven communist countries may occur compared to those leaving non-war communist countries.

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Because of its critical importance for upward socioeconomic mobility (Breen and Muller 2020), the aspect of U.S immigrant integration under scrutiny in the present research is the educational attainment of immigrants' accompanying children by the time they've become adults. Although the younger children among such entrants are sometimes termed the 1.5 generation and analyzed separately from their older counterparts (Rumbaut 2004), here we include all who came at age 18 or younger. We do not analyze the schooling of immigrant parents (as a dependent variable) because their attainment would largely have taken place before

arrival in the United States, thus potentially biasing destination-country integration experiences (Hirschman, Kasinitz and DeWind 1999).

Our analytical research sample thus consists of those who would have come as either U.S. refugees or regular immigrants. To capture as much of the force of official refugee status on integration as possible, we include immigrant parents coming after 1980, when the first permanent refugee legislation was passed in the United States (as opposed also to including earlier coming refugees who arrived under temporary *ad hoc* legislative initiatives). We also include the children of immigrants whose parents came from 1991 to 1995. We do not include post-95 parental arrivals because their children would not have become adults by 2011-2018, the years when we measure educational attainment using data from the American Community Survey.

We thus examine immigrants' children's schooling for those children of immigrants coming in either of two periods. The first ranges from 1980 until 1990, a time we call the Cold War period because it begins with the passage of the 1980 Refugee Act and ends with the demise of the Cold War. The second spans the years 1991 through 1995, a time we label the post-Cold War period. These years not only witnessed the thawing of the Cold War, they encompassed a time when the tangible governmental assistance provided by the 1980 Refugee Act began to weaken considerably (Bruno 1996). Our main interest revolves around comparing the relative integration of the adult children of refugees and other immigrants across varying host-society/migrant relations to shed light on the relational circumstances under which refugees fared relatively better or worse than other legal immigrants.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the conceptualizations and theoretical perspectives introduced above, we examine how educational attainment varies within- and across- categories of migration status, period-of-arrival, and departure context. Because refugees receive more tangible governmental support than regular immigrants, our first expectation is that refugees' adult children (irrespective of period-of-arrival) will show higher educational attainment than will those whose parents came as regular immigrants, all else equal. Second, we expect refugees' adult children whose parents arrived during the Cold War years to exhibit higher attainment than those whose parents arrived after the Cold War ended, all else equal. Third, we expect a more positive education difference between refugees' and regular immigrants' adult children for those whose parents were Cold-War entrants as compared to those whose parents were post-Cold-War arrivals. Fifth, because Cold War refugees were more likely than post-Cold-War refugees to develop stronger achievement inclinations, we expect a significant portion of any observed positive difference between refugees' and regular immigrants' children's educational attainment to remain after taking into account tangible mediating factors like naturalization and English proficiency. Fifth, we anticipate that refugees' children's educational attainment will be higher among those coming from communist countries that had experienced a U.S-Soviet proxy wars than among those from non-war communist or noncommunist countries.

Data Sources

The lack of information in most surveys on either refugee status or parents' characteristics, or both, along with our need to identify refugees and obtain usable information on immigrants' children's completed education controlling for background parental cohort characteristics, requires that we pull together data from multiple sources. Hence, we employ three different kinds of official governmental information. The first provides much of the data

for our main analytical sample. It consists of pooled eight-year information on respondents for the years 2011 through 2018 from the American Community Survey (ACS) of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Each ACS provides individual-level information on educational attainment and other variables for adult immigrants (including refugees) who arrived as children between the years 1980 (the year the Refugee Act was passed) and 1995 (the last year someone could have arrived and had enough time to be age 24 or over by 2018).

The second involves information from the 1990 and 2000 Integrated Public Use Microdata samples (IPUMs) from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. These data enable us to develop aggregate information on the characteristics of arrival cohorts of immigrants coming during the 1980s and 1990s. These cohorts contain the parents of the analytical-sample immigrants from the ACS data, and we connect them with the ACS respondents in corresponding year-of-arrival cohorts. The third, compiled by the agency formerly called the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), contains administrative information on the numbers of refugees/asylees and on persons becoming Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) in the United States from specific countries for each of the years 1980 through 1995.

The ACS and census data sets used here are not without limitations. For example, they are cross-sectional, not longitudinal. However, they offer the advantages of providing sufficiently large, randomly selected samples of immigrants and refugees both to enable our utilization of a comparative research design and to support generalizability of results. Moreover, to our knowledge, no other data alternatives exist for these purposes. Even though the present research focuses specifically on the educational attainment of immigrants who arrived as children under different migration auspices and in different time periods, we have enough cases to analyze foreign-born respondents (including refugees) who arrived in the United States at or

before the age of 18 from certain countries in the 1980s and early 1990s, *and* who had reached at least age 24 by the time of the particular ACS survey to which they responded.

Measures of Dependent and Independent Variables

Educational attainment. We measure educational attainment by the number of years of schooling completed by respondents. The ACS reports respondents' highest level of education completed, which we recode into a numerical variable by assigning to each schooling level the standard number of years of schooling required to complete it.

Initial host-society/migrant relations. The nature of initial relationships between the host society and immigrants matters for integration. Here we examine how and to what degree three relational factors influence immigrants' children's educational attainment. The first is *Migration Status*, coded using a refugee status proxy to capture the effects of the availability of tangible governmental assistance for refugee resettlement and integration, with U.S refugees qualifying for such aid since 1980 and regular immigrants not. We identify initial refugee status using the procedures outlined in Appendix A. Essentially, we use individuals' self-reported country of origin and migration year to calculate their refugee weight or the likelihood (from 0 to 1) of them immigrating as refugees. The second is *Period of Arrival*, coded as a dummy variable for coming in 1980-1990, which signals an eras with a geopolitical orientation (Cold-War) involving more favorable attitudes toward refugees coming from communist countries, and also higher levels of financial assistance which tended to diminish in the non-Cold war years of 1900-1995.

The third is *Departure Context*, also coded as dummy variables for various departure countries. During the Cold War, the United States pursued a geopolitical strategy of containment toward communism and thus prioritized the successful integration of immigrants who defected from communist countries, especially ones that had experienced heavy U.S. military

intervention. For individuals whom we categorize as arriving as refugee who arrived during the Cold War, we further subdivide them into three categories: those that came from a communist country that had experienced a U.S-Soviet proxy war shortly before or during the 1980s (i.e., Afghanistan, Cambodia, and Vietnam); those who arrived from a communist country (i.e., Cuba, Laos, and the Soviet bloc countries); and those from countries that were neither communist nor had experienced a large-scale U.S. military intervention in the 1980s (i.e., Haiti, Thailand, and Iraq). Cold-War regular immigrants are left as a unified group. See Table 4 for the lists of countries and cases included.

Control Variables

Sociodemographic Variables. Other variables employed consist of measures to adjust for socio-demographic differences that may affect educational outcomes. These include youthfulness of arrival; gender; and ethno-racial background. Youthfulness of arrival is obtained by reverse coding the age at which respondents reported migrating to the United States. This variable captures earlier developmental exposure for immigrants to the United States and would be expected to affect integration positively (Myers, Gao & Emeka 2009; Lee and Edmonston 2011; Beck, Corak, and Tienda 2012;). We also control for gender because it is a known social determinant of educational outcome, especially among the children of immigrants (Bean, et. al. 2011; Feliciano and Rumbaut 2005).

Ethnoracial status. Because ethnoracial status is related to educational attainment, we also control for this in the regression models. We use four ethnoracial categories: Asian, Hispanic, Black (or other), and non-Hispanic white, and sort foreign-born respondents in the ACS are classified into one of these four groups.

Socioeconomic background. Because immigrants may be selected by social class, depending on their mode of migration, it is also important to control for respondents' parental socioeconomic status (SES). Due to the lack of individual-level indicators of *parental* SES in the ACS data, we employ as a recourse a measure of the average SES for the annual cohorts of arrivals with the same national origin and immigration year. We do this for four indicators: parental absolute educational attainment, relative educational attainment, average number of children in household, and relative family income. Together, these country/year cohort averages are used as controls in regressions of educational attainment on host-immigrant relations. We use the U.S Census' 1990 and 2000 IPUM 5-percent sample to construct the SES measures. To compile cohort averages for parental absolute educational attainment for example, we calculate the average years of schooling by origin country/migration year of mothers who immigrated as adults (ages 19 to 62) in 1980 to 1995, and who reported to have one or more of their own children living under their household. We attach these averages to the ACS sample for those who share the same country/year cohort. In doing so, we create a variable that estimates the cohort-specific parental education for the adult children of immigrants in the ACS sample. We also constructed a father's education variable using the years of schooling completed by adult male respondents in the 1990 and 2000 IPUM sample who reported having their own children living with them. We find mother and father's education, constructed in this way, are highly correlated and produce the same results. Thus, we decide to only use mother's SES because children are more likely to be under the care of their mothers.

Relative education. A parent's absolute years of schooling completed, however, may not fully capture the effect of socioeconomic status for migrant parents because educational norms and attainments vary significantly across different countries (Feliciano and Lanuza, 2017). Thus,

we also calculate averages for mother's relative attainment. Barro and Lee's (2003) Educational Attainment Dataset reports educational distributions by country, gender and age. We use this information and Ichou's (2014) methodology to convert absolute attainment into relative attainment. The result is a percentile score that reflects where mothers' average absolute attainment stands relative to the average education of female co-nationals of comparable age who did not migrate. A low average for absolute attainment does not necessarily translate to low relative attainment because the mothers who migrated could have more education on average than those who remained in the origin country. We do not use a similar variable for father's relative attainment because it correlates very highly with mother's attainment.

Relative family income and family size. We also use a country/year cohort average to measure parental relative family income and family size for the ACS sample. We define relative family income as the ratio of family income to the poverty-level income threshold defined by the federal government, which is included in the Census as a poverty measure. Again, we use 1990 and 2000 IPUMS data for immigrant mothers to calculate average cohort-level relative family income. We also take the average of the reported number of children ever born to immigrant mothers by origin country and migration year to calculate cohort-level numbers of children in family. We attached these values to respondents in the ACS sample who have the same country/year cohort.

Resources after migration. Two factors that may potentially shape educational outcomes and may themselves be influenced by host-immigrant relations (and the policies and programs resulting from these relations) are English proficiency and naturalization. We code respondents as English proficient if they reported speaking English as their only language or speaking English well or very well. We also note whether the respondent has obtained U.S. citizenship.

Including these variables in the analyses makes it possible to assess one of our hypotheses: whether and to what extent access to resources via English abilities and citizenship after migration act as mechanisms through which resources provided by host society exert influence on educational attainment.

Analytic Model and Plan of Analysis

To model the direction and degree of relationship between host-society/migrant relations and educational attainment among immigrants' adult children, controlling for other factors and including mediating factors, we use ordinary least squares regression. We anticipate several patterns to emerge from the data. First, we expect refugee status (i.e., likelihood of immigrating as a refugee) to have a positive effect on educational outcome, even after controlling for sociodemographic and socioeconomic background factors. We also expect to see an interaction between refugee and arrival period, wherein the magnitude of the refugee effect should be greater among Cold-War arrivals than post-War arrivals. Among those arrived from majority-refugee countries, Cold-War arrivals should have higher attainment than post-War arrivals, all else equal. We do not expect to see a Cold War period difference for regular immigrants, who were not eligible for resettlement support during either period.

The other component in host-society/migrant relations is immigrants' origin country. To assess the possibility that tangible and intangible support effect varies by departure context, we run similar but separate models in which we breakdown Cold-War refugees further into three subcategories: those from communist countries that had undergone a U.S-Soviet proxy war; those from Communist, non-war-afflicted countries; and those from non-communist countries. Within the refugee group, we expect the proxy-war, communist-country group to show the

largest positive education difference compared to regular immigrants, the communist-country group the next largest, and the non-Communist-country group the smallest difference.

Finally, we also explore to what extent the expected positive association between refugee migrants and educational attainment can be explained by the tangible skills and resources represented by the acquisition of English proficiency and naturalization. If our chief expectation of greater resettlement support for refugees leading to an educational advantage for their children is supported, then those arriving as refugees should show greater English proficiency and a higher frequency of naturalization. Because these factors also contribute to greater educational attainment, they should thus mediate a notable portion of any positive refugee status effect on educational attainment. We also expect the magnitude of this mediation effect to be stronger for post-Cold-War arrivals compared to Cold-War arrivals, for reasons noted above. That is, we expect it to account for more, if not all, of the refugee effect among post-Cold War refugees compared to Cold-War refugees.

RESULTS

Analyses of Migration Status and Period-of-Arrival Effects

Descriptive results. The 2011-2018 ACS sample includes a total of 64,711 observations, of which 30,080 were those arriving as part of a majority refugee flow within a given origin-country/year-of-migration group, and thus were classified as children of refugees. Another 34,631 observations are classified as the children of regular immigrants.[1] Table 1 displays descriptive statistics by migration status (i.e., refugee and regular immigrants) and arrival period (Cold War and post-Cold War). At ages 24 or older, the children of refugees show higher educational attainment than regular immigrants (1.4 years more among Cold-War arrivals and

2.3 years more among post-War arrivals). These two groups also exhibit different ethnoracial, sociodemographic and socioeconomic background composition. While Hispanics make up the overall ethnoracial majority among the children of regular immigrants, Asians and Whites are the largest groups among Cold-War and post-Cold War children of refugees, respectively. On socioeconomic background, little variation emerges among the children of regular immigrants by arrival period, but refugee children evince a bi-furcated pattern. Post-Cold-War children of refugees display the highest levels of parental human capital for all four groups, while Cold-War children of refugees are generally the most disadvantaged for all socioeconomic indicators except maternal relative education.

Overall, the results are roughly consistent with expectations that migration status and arrival period, as two dimensions of host-immigrant relations, mark meaningful differences in immigrants' integration patterns. One unexpected result is the extent of high human capital among post-Cold War refugees as indicated by parental socioeconomic status at the cohort level. These differences in ethnoracial background and human capital in parental cohorts reinforce the need to control for such background factors. On post-migration accumulated resources and skills, refugees, regardless of arrival period, show decisively higher rates of naturalization and somewhat higher levels of English proficiency than regular immigrants. This pattern is consistent with theoretical expectations that those receiving more governmental support upon arrival (i.e., refugees) will benefit more from tangible transitional and cultural resources. We later test the extent to which these resources mediate a notable portion of the education differentials due to migration status, and whether the expected mediation effect is smaller among Cold War refugees.

Multivariate analyses. Model 1 of Table 2 shows the education differential by refugee status after adjusting for ethnoracial and sociodemographic compositional differences as well as socioeconomic background differences. There is a 0.72 year of schooling increase ($p<0.01$) for a change in refugee status from 0 to 1. Substantively, this indicates that, all else equal, immigrants who are refugees have about seven-tenths of a year's schooling advantage over non-refugees. This result is consistent with our first expectation. The second hypothesis of a positive Cold War effect among refugees is also evident. After including an interaction term for Cold War refugees in Model 2, although a small negative Cold War main effect emerges (-0.14; $p<0.01$), the interaction term is sizably positive and significant (0.45; $p<0.01$). Thus, Cold War refugees exhibit especially higher educational attainment compared to post-Cold War refugees, with the former group showing 0.31 years of schooling more than the latter group ($\beta_{Cold-War} + \beta_{Cold-War*Refugee\ Status} = 0.45 - 0.14$). This pattern is shown in Figure 1, which presents predicted educational outcomes and 95-percent confidence intervals by migration status and arrival-period for Model 2. The arrival-period effect is reversed for the children of regular immigrants, for whom arrivals coming during the Cold-War attained less schooling compared to their post-Cold-War counterparts ($\beta_{Cold-War} = -.014$).

To assess hypotheses three and four, we estimate separate models for Cold-War and post-Cold-War arrivals (see Table 3). The refugee effect is higher in Model 1*a* ($\beta_{Refugee\ Status} = 0.91$; $p<.01$) compared to 1*b* ($\beta_{Refugee\ Status} = 0.59$; $p<.01$), which is consistent with the expectation that a positive education differential between the children of refugees and those of regular immigrants would be greater among Cold-War arrivals than post-Cold-War arrivals due to post-Cold War cutbacks in financial assistance and less welcoming receptions toward refugees after the Cold War ended. Models 2*a* and 2*b* introduce naturalization and English proficiency to

test whether and to what degree resources gained after migration mediate the refugee status effect. The answer is they do, but not completely among Cold-War arrivals, for whom including naturalization and English proficiency in the model reduces the refugee coefficient from 0.91 to 0.45 ($p<.01$). As predicted, there remains a significant educational differential by migration status for Cold War arrivals not explained by these factors. For post-Cold-war arrivals, however, these two factors completely explain the educational differential as the refugee coefficient becomes non-significant. These patterns support the fourth hypothesis.

Assessing Cold-War Refugees by Departure Context

Descriptive results. Another factor we expect to affect host-society/migrant relations is departure context. For this, we examine whether the magnitude of the refugee effect for Cold-War arrivals varies by departure context. We show results by subdividing the refugee group into those who arrived during the Cold War into three categories based on the relational dynamics between the United States and the origin country during the War (see Table 4 for list of origin countries in each subcategory). Table 5 shows immigrants who came from communist nations that had experienced heavy U.S. involvement during the Cold War also show the highest refugee proportions, as demonstrated by the near universal refugee stream of those coming from Afghanistan, Cambodia, and Vietnam (refugee weight ranging from 0.88 to 0.98); those who arrived from regular communist countries have, on average, lower refugee weights, and those from non-communist countries have lower weights still. There is also significant heterogeneity among Cold-War refugees by departure context. As the descriptive statistics in Table 5 show, the refugees from non-communist-countries tend to be more advantaged in socioeconomic status, to attain higher education, and to be more English proficient; however, they are less likely to naturalize than the war-afflicted-communist and communist-country groups.

Multivariate analyses. Model 1 in Table 6 shows that, after controlling for background factors, the war-afflicted communist-country group exhibits the highest positive education differential compared to regular immigrants (0.81 years; $p<0.01$). This is followed by the communist country group with a positive differential of 0.74 year ($p<0.01$). The non-communist country group, on the other hand, do not significantly differ from the regular immigrant group. This pattern remains even after controlling for naturalization and English proficiency in Model 2. These results are consistent with the last hypothesis, which is based on the idea that departure country conditions that induce receiving countries to assist refugees more extensively enable and motivate refugees to achieve more at destination.

ASSESSMENT OF ROBUSTNESS OF FINDINGS

The adequacy of refugee identification. To gauge the extent to which the 2011-2018 ACS samples used to assess educational attainment are satisfactorily representative of the numbers of immigrants arriving from 1980 to 1995, especially those coming from refugee-sending countries, we compare the country-specific, yearly-specific numbers of foreign-born persons in the ACS samples (adjusted to population totals using person weights) to their counterparts in the admission statistics from the INS Yearbook (see Appendix Table A for extensive list of admission statistics). We would expect some attrition in the numbers of arrivals in the ACS due to mortality, return migration, and errors in reporting, but overall the ACS numbers should show only slight deviations from the Yearbook statistics if attrition is appropriately small. Indeed, this is what we find (see Appendix Table B). Note that we did not include former USSR countries due to inconsistencies in origin country identification over time, which may lead to inaccurate population projection. The ACS numbers are, on average, 12

percentage points smaller than those indicated by the Yearbook, as we would expect given a not unreasonable rate of attrition. The ACS country-specific entry numbers are generally consistent in showing reasonably lower figures compared to the INS county-specific admission statistics.

National origin-fixed effects. The purpose of this analysis is to ascertain if unmeasured country characteristics account for the refugee effects we observe. The results of the country fixed-effects analyses (see Appendix Table C) show that, even after controlling for country-level differences, higher refugee status (ranging from 0 to 1) are associated with higher educational attainment for Cold-War children of refugees, but not for post-Cold-War children of refugees. These results are consistent with results from the main analysis, suggesting that the method of identifying refugee status among immigrants used here can capture important effects of host-society/migrant relations that are not just associated with aspects of the origin country.[2]

Refugee proportion threshold: We also test the robustness of the refugee status effect using different binary variables indicating different intervals of refugee weight. These includes intervals greater than or equal to 0.9 (n = 11,877), between 0.80 and 0.89 (n = 9,029), between 0.55 and 0.79 (n = 8,153), and between .05 and 0.54 (n = 30,080). We run an analysis using these different refugee weight intervals ((see Appendix Table D). The results show that, for both Cold-War and post-Cold-War arrivals, there are significant positive effects for all refugee weight intervals even after controlling for exogenous factors. This suggests that, all else equal, those who are more likely to arrive as refugees tend to have higher educational attainment. For Cold-War arrivals, as this likelihood increases, the magnitude of the positive education differential increases. These results are consistent with our hypotheses and suggest that the method of approximating refugee status used in this research is sensitive to even small differences in likelihood of refugee status.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The first goal of this research has been to shed light on why results from prior studies of refugee integration have yielded inconsistent results, with some studies suggesting refugees fare better than regular immigrants and others that they do not. The findings here imply that prior research may not so much have generated contradictory findings as different reflections of two separate patterns of integration for refugees, one involving positive and the other less positive findings, or in some cases even negative, ones. Even so, it leaves unanswered the question of what sort of factors moderate the difference? Here we suggest that initial host-society/migrant relations explain the difference. The decades of the 1980s and 1990s witnessed two significant changes in U.S foreign policy---the passage of the 1980 Refugee Act and the end of the Cold War --- that present an opportunity to gauge whether host-society/migrant relations help account for differences in refugees' and other immigrants' integration experiences. We accomplish this by comparing the educational attainment of U.S. legal immigrants' adult children arriving 1) as refugees or not, 2) during the Cold War or not, and 3) from communist countries or not, as well as various combinations of these.

Specifically, we find that the highest educational attainment among immigrants' adult children reaches higher levels emerges among Cold War refugees coming from communist (war-afflicted) countries, all else equal. And conversely, refugees coming in post-Cold War years from non-communist countries did not show such attainment advantages. We suggest this difference in educational integration results from two factors -- improvements in host-

society/migrant relations following the passage of the 1980 U.S. Refugee Act (by virtue of its institutionalization of tangible refugee financial assistance) *and* the shifts in the salience of Cold War geopolitical orientations that spawn both more welcoming societal relations and stronger motivations to integrate among refugees leaving communist countries. Immigrants arriving as non-refugees and after the Cold War dissipated, faced distinctively less favorable initial host-society/ migrant relations than Cold War refugees, and accordingly evinced lower attainment. The results support the idea that notable refugee integration occurs when positive initial host-society/migrant relations are obtained, but often does *not* when relations are *laissez-faire* or negative.

That refugees' children's educational attainment often exceeds that of the other legal immigrants' children suggests that tangible financial assistance and human capital acquisition not only generate economic stability in the short run, as previous research has shown (see Capps et al. 2015; Evans and Fitzgerald 2017; Fix, Hooper and Jong 2017), but also that they foster long-term positive effects on the integration of the children's generation. Thus, refugees who arrived during the Cold War attained higher education than those who arrived after the Cold War, all else equal. Although, the United States did not slow its refugee admissions after the collapse of the Soviet Union, it almost immediately slashed funding for refugee resettlement. When the refugee assistance program was first established in 1980, new arrivals received cash and medical assistance for up to three years. After 1991, the length of eligibility was reduced to eight months. Other regulations adopted in the 1990s reflected further deteriorations in host-society/migrant relations. Refugee support relied more on anti-poverty programs to deliver assistance to refugees, which meant the new programs increasingly failed to meet the unique needs of refugee newcomers, who in addition to economic difficulties may also face challenges

arising from language, cultural, and institutional unfamiliarity (Yoko and Biswas 2014). Funding for public welfare programs also shrank and the length of eligibility for noncitizens became more restrictive (Bruno, 2011). Thus, as host-society/migrant relations changed from positive to more neutral or negative, refugee integration declined.

This idea is also supported by the analyses of English proficiency and citizenship as mediating factors in the effect of refugee status on education. Specifically, these two variables together account for only about half of the education advantage among Cold War refugees, but they account for all of it among non-Cold War refugees. Thus, unmeasured factors account for the other half of the education increment among the Cold War refugees, suggesting the possibility that other forms of assistance and/or intangible motivation factors could be coming into play. This receives further support from the analyses in which we subdivide Cold-War arrivals into different departure contexts. In these instances, refugees from communist countries that had experienced a U.S-Soviet proxy war show the largest residual effect on educational attainment. Research has shown that greater effort was made to integrate refugees coming from such departure context due to former geopolitical alliances (Nguyen 2017). Thus, the result is consistent with the hypothesis that reception factors and motivational factors unrelated to English proficiency and naturalization exert more influence on educational attainment on Cold War refugees coming from war-afflicted communist countries.

These results lend support to the idea that the children of refugees coming to the United States under host-society/migrant relationships that entail (or generate) tangible and intangible support will attain more education than the children of those coming without such relations. The United States as a nation might thus benefit from modifying its longstanding *laissez-faire* approach toward newcomers. Although portions of the U.S. public have been skeptical about

immigrant integration and have viewed public assistance recipients negatively, the evidence here for 1980s refugees suggests that immigrant socioeconomic integration can be enhanced through settlement assistance and social support. Indeed, policy researchers have been emphasizing the critical role that resettlement assistance plays in refugees' integration and noting that funding levels have not kept pace with the challenges facing more recent refugee groups, thus negatively affecting their integration (Brown and Scribner 2014; U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations 2010).

More disconcerting is the fact that, instead of a trend toward more inclusive and extensive assistance and support for all immigrants, the nation has seen social welfare and support contracting in recent years, not only for immigrants but also for the native population. Given that integration is inherently a relational process, and given that natives' initial assumptions about immigrants influences the extent to which immigrants receive support and feel welcome, if economic inequality and insecurity in the U.S.-born population grow over time, this could lead to deterioration in host-society/migrant relations and threaten immigrant integration. The development of such tendencies out of native economic decline is thus a factor that must be ameliorated if anti-immigrant sentiments is to be avoided and if immigration is to provide a solution to the worker shortages emerging from U.S. demographic change (Peri 2019; Bean 2019). The findings of this paper about what enhances refugee integration indicate that political action needs to be taken to provide economic support for both newcomers and the U.S. population at large in order to maintain a healthy economy with benefits for all.

[1] Note that this is a 15-percent sample from the original number of cases qualified as regular immigrants

[2] Some recent analyses note that controlling for country-of-origin eliminates any positive effe of refugee status on children's educational attainment (Fitzgerald and Arar 2018). In effect, o country fixed-effects model controls for such differences. However, our focus on refugees is on *all* refugees coming to the country, but only on those coming under the auspices of the 198 Refugee Act *and* during the Cold War (i.e., 1980-1989) and shortly after the Cold War (i.e., 1990-1995). As expected, the refugee status differences found here do *not* disappear in count fixed-effects models (see Appendix Table C).

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TABLES

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations for Educational Attainment and Independent Variables by Migration Status and Arrival Period, Foreign-Born Adult Children of Immigrants, 2011-2018

	Cold-War				Post-Cold-War			
	Refugees		Regular Immigrants		Refugees		Regular Immigrants	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Education	13.5	3.8	12.1	4.3	14.3	3.2	12.0	4.0
Age immigrated	10.4	5.2	10.7	5.8	10.1	5.0	11.6	5.2
Male	0.53		0.52		0.50		0.51	
Ethnoracial Status								
White	0.16		0.08		0.58		0.07	
Asian	0.79		0.22		0.24		0.19	
Black/Others	0.02		0.07		0.02		0.06	
Hispanics	0.03		0.63		0.15		0.67	
Socioeconomic Background (Cohort)								
Maternal absolute education	9.1	2.5	10.1	2.5	12.8	3.0	10.0	2.7
Maternal relative education (%-tile)	67.2	7.0	63.9	16.6	71.5	9.0	62.4	17.1
Income relative to poverty(%-tile)	188.2	57.8	198.0	74.4	283.0	67.7	214.9	75.2
Avg. # of Children	2.7	0.6	2.2	0.4	2.0	0.6	2.2	0.4
Naturalized	0.88		0.64		0.87		0.49	
English proficient	0.90		0.84		0.95		0.81	
Sample size (n)	20,831		20,875		9,249		13,756	

Source: Authors' calculations from ACS data (see Ruggles, et al. 2018).

Table 2. Regressions of Educational Attainment for Foreign-Born Adult Children of Immigrants on Migration Status, Arrival Period, and Control Variables (ACS 2011-2018)

	(1)	(2)
Refugee Status (0-1)	0.72***	0.44***
	(0.05)	(0.07)
Cold-War Arrivals (1980-89)	-0.02	-0.14***
	(0.03)	(0.04)
Refugee Status * Cold-War Arrivals	--	0.45***
		(0.08)
Ethnoracial Background		
Asian	0.69***	0.64***
	(0.05)	(0.05)
Hispanic	-1.33***	-1.31***
	(0.07)	(0.07)
Black/others	0.29***	0.27***
	(0.08)	(0.08)
Sociodemographic Background		
Male	-0.38***	-0.38***
	(0.03)	(0.03)
Youthfulness	0.14***	0.14***
	(0.00)	(0.00)
Socioeconomic Background (Cohort)		
Maternal education	0.33***	0.34***
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Maternal relative education	0.02***	0.01***
	(0.00)	(0.00)
Average # children	-0.52***	-0.52***
	(0.05)	(0.05)
Log family income relative to poverty	-0.30***	-0.26***
	(0.08)	(0.08)
Constant	10.40***	10.23***
	(0.43)	(0.43)
Observations	64,711	64,711
Adjusted R-squared	0.260	0.260

Source: Authors' calculations from ACS data (see Ruggles, et al. 2018).
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Figure 1. Predicted Educational Attainment by Migration Status and Arrival Period, Adjusting for Differences in Sociodemographic and Socioeconomic Background (Model 2 of Table 2), Foreign-Born Adult Children of Immigrants

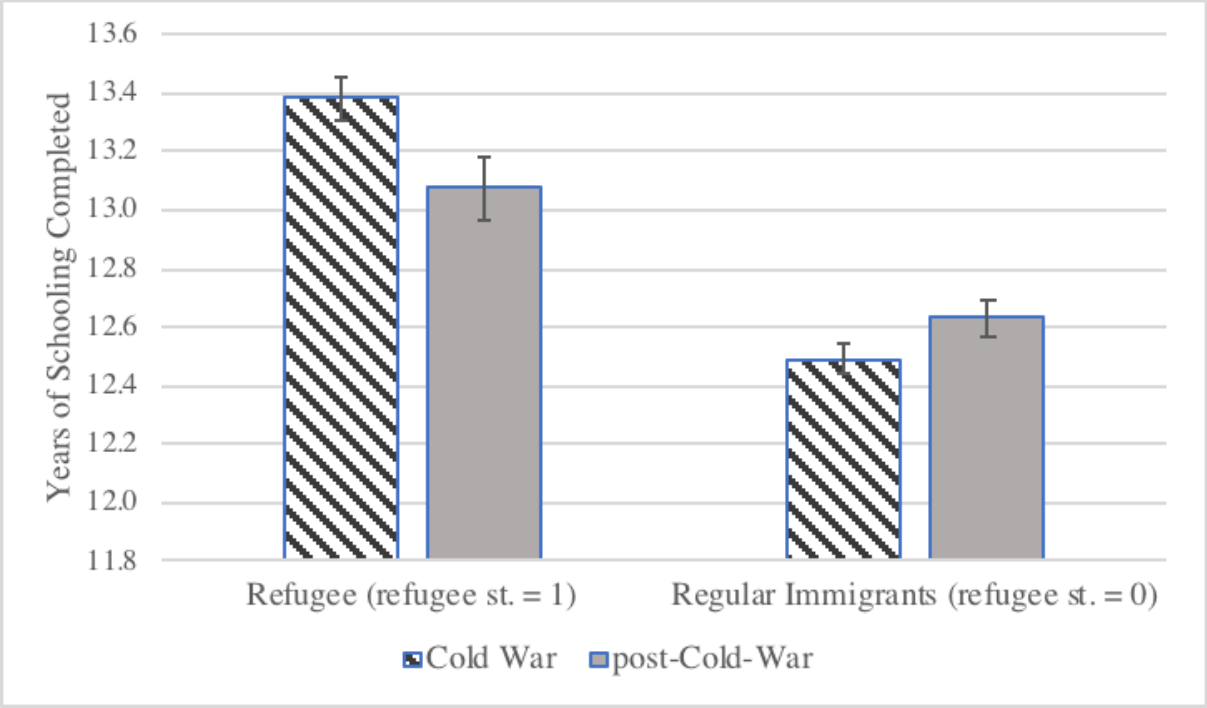

Table 3. Regressions of Educational Attainment for Foreign-Born Adult Children of Immigrants on Migration Status and Control Variables, Separated by Arrival Period (ACS 2011-2018)

	Cold War		Post-Cold War	
	(1*a*)	(2*a*)	(1*b*)	(2*b*)
Refugee Status (0-1)	0.91***	0.45***	0.59***	0.08
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Naturalized	--	1.57***	--	1.44***
		(0.04)		(0.05)
English proficient	--	3.11***	--	2.86***
		(0.05)		(0.07)
Ethnoracial Background				
Asian	0.63***	0.52***	0.76***	0.57***
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.09)	(0.08)
Hispanic	-1.31***	-1.03***	-1.18***	-0.88***
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.11)	(0.10)
Black/others	0.23**	0.16	0.33**	0.13
	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.13)	(0.12)
White				
Sociodemographic Background				
Male	-0.33***	-0.30***	-0.45***	-0.41***
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Youthfulness at arrival	0.16***	0.12***	0.11***	0.06***
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)

Table 3 (con't).

Socioeconomic Background (Cohort)				
Maternal absolute education	0.33***	0.25***	0.37***	0.29***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Maternal relative education	0.02***	0.01***	0.01*	-0.01***
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Average # children	-0.63***	-0.55***	-0.28***	-0.20**
	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Log family income relative to poverty	-0.35***	-0.25***	-0.15	0.12
	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.19)	(0.18)
Constant	10.25***	7.81***	9.42***	6.73***
	(0.49)	(0.46)	(1.04)	(0.98)
Observations	41,706	41,706	23,005	23,005
Adjusted R-squared	0.241	0.333	0.302	0.389

Source: Authors' calculations from ACS data (see Ruggles, et al. 2018).
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4. Numbers of Cases and Mean Refugee Weights in the 2011-2018 ACS Data of Foreign-Born Adult Children of Immigrants Coming from Majority Refugee-Sending Countries During Cold-War Period

	n	mean refugee weight
War-afflicted Communist Countries		
Afghanistan	275	0.88
Cambodia (Kampuchea)	2617	0.98
Vietnam	10498	0.87
Communist Countries		
Cuba	531	0.82
Albania	3	0.87
Bulgaria	9	0.60
Czechoslovakia	21	0.72
Hungary	61	0.59
Poland	145	0.59
Romania	662	0.76
Yugoslavia	0	na
Latvia	43	0.81
Lithuania	30	0.80
Laos	3217	0.98
USSR		
Russia	116	0.78
Byelorussia	160	0.79
Moldavia	52	0.80
Ukraine	649	0.78
Armenia	514	0.74
Azerbaijan	31	0.78
Republic of Georgia	11	0.77
Uzbekistan	0	na
Other USSR	551	0.78
Non-Communist Countries		
Iraq	26	0.63
Ethiopia	222	0.78
Haiti	203	0.73
Nicaragua	0	0.63
Somalia	0	na
Sudan	8	0.66
Thailand	176	0.56

Source: Authors' calculations from ACS data (see Ruggles, et al. 2018) and U.S Dept. of Homeland Security's Office of Immigration Statistics.

Table 5. Means and Standard Deviations for Educational Attainment and Independent Variables by Departure Context, Foreign-Born Adult Children of Refugees, Cold-War Arrivals, ACS 2011-2018

	War-Afflicted Communist		Communist		Non-Communist	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Education	13.5	3.9	13.5	3.7	14.2	2.8
Age immigrated	10.9	5.1	9.6	5.3	9.8	6.1
Male	0.55		0.51		0.47	
Ethnoracial Status						
White	0.02		0.45		0.05	
Asian	0.98		0.47		0.29	
Black/Others	0.00		0.00		0.66	
Hispanic	0.00		0.08		0.01	
Socioeconomic Background (Cohort)						
Maternal absolute education	8.7	1.3	9.6	3.9	11.0	1.0
Maternal relative education (%-tile)	67.8	4.8	64.2	8.0	85.1	4.4
Income relative to poverty(%-tile)	185.9	37.5	189.7	84.4	221.8	48.5
Avg. # of Children	2.7	0.2	2.6	0.9	2.0	0.3
Naturalized	0.91		0.84		0.79	
English proficient	0.89		0.93		0.98	
Sample size (n)	13,390		6,806		635	

Source: Authors' calculations from ACS data (see Ruggles, et al. 2018).

Table 6. Regressions of Educational Attainment for Foreign-Born Adult Children of Immigrants on Refugee Subcategories and Control Variables, Cold-War Arrivals, ACS 2011-2018

	(1)	(2)
Refugee Subcategories		
War-Afflicted Communist	0.81***	0.39***
	(0.06)	(0.06)
Communist	0.74***	0.29***
	(0.07)	(0.07)
Non-Communist	-0.06	-0.00
	(0.16)	(0.15)
Regular Immigrant	--	--
Naturalized	--	1.57***
		(0.04)
English proficient	--	3.12***
		(0.05)
Ethnoracial Background		
Asian	0.60***	0.47***
	(0.08)	(0.07)
Black/Others	0.34***	0.17
	(0.12)	(0.11)
Hispanic	-1.32***	-1.09***
	(0.10)	(0.09)
White	--	--

Table 6 (con't).

Sociodemographic Background		
Male	-0.33***	-0.30***
	(0.04)	(0.03)
Youthfulness at arrival	0.16***	0.12***
	(0.00)	(0.00)
Socioeconomic Background (Cohort)		
Maternal absolute education	0.30***	0.24***
	(0.02)	(0.02)
Maternal relative education	0.02***	0.01***
	(0.00)	(0.00)
Average # children	-0.63***	-0.54***
	(0.08)	(0.07)
Log family income relative to poverty	-0.29***	-0.24***
	(0.10)	(0.09)
Constant	10.08***	7.82***
	(0.50)	(0.47)
Observations	41,706	41,706
Adjusted R-squared	0.241	0.333

Source: Authors' calculations from ACS data (see Ruggles, et al. 2018).
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1