

STRUCTURAL INTEGRATION AND SELECTIVE ACCULTURATION: Luso-Descendants in America

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, I present data from an online survey, which show that the descendants of Portuguese immigrants, who participated in this study, have achieved a high level of integration into American and Canadian societies, while remaining committed to their ethnic identity and culture, the Luso-American communities, and Portugal. Where appropriate, the survey information is supplemented by American Community Survey data, which provide more generalizable findings concerning the population of Luso-descendants as a whole in the United States.

Despite high levels of commitment to their ethnicity, Luso-descendants have followed a pattern of linguistic assimilation comparable to that of other immigrant groups in America. That is, they have experienced a rapid loss in fluency and the use of the ancestral language. In the post-industrial economic context of America and a globalized economy, where Brazil will in a few decades become the fifth largest economy in the world and the African countries of Portuguese expression continue to develop economically, the maintenance of fluency in Portuguese among Luso-descendants would be in the interest of the American Lusophone communities, the United States, Canada and all the countries of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP).

To take the survey click on one of the following links (must be a person of Portuguese descent born in the United States or Canada or who arrived in these countries before the age of 14 years):

United States: <http://questionpro.com/t/ADluIZGQ3q>

Canada: <http://questionpro.com/t/ADluIZGVfP>

INTRODUCTION

It has been commonly assumed in some Portuguese American and Portuguese circles that the Portuguese immigrant population and their American and Canadian born descendants are not well integrated into their respective American societies.

For Portuguese Americans, this assumption has been grounded on three main observations, which I will address in this article:

- their levels of educational achievement, which, albeit close to the U.S. average, are lower than those of other European ancestry groups, and which are seen as blocking their income, occupational and political integration.
- the degree to which Portuguese Americans are geographically concentrated and stick together as a group; and
- the extent to which Portuguese Americans, rather than adopting the mainstream culture, choose to retain their ethnic heritage.

The assumption of a lack of integration has also been framed in the context of classical assimilation theory, which, developed through interpretations of the experience of the descendants of the late 19th and early 20th century immigrants, postulated a “unified economy in which the newcomers started at the bottom and gradually moved up occupationally as they gained social acceptance.”¹ This single and irreversible path of integration, which generally was completed within three generations, was characterized by various stages of increasing assimilation, from acculturation to secondary and primary structural integration and psychological assimilation. Further it was grounded on increasing levels of education from generation to generation, which led to a corresponding rise from the working class status of the immigrant generation to the ranks of the middle class by the third generation.

Classical assimilation theory has been criticized on several accounts. Without spending time on the various criticisms of this theory, which I have covered elsewhere,² for the purposes of this paper it will suffice to say that current theorists postulate that there is, and there has always been, more than one path towards integration into American society, from upward to downward assimilation, to stagnation, to integration with selective acculturation, and through education or through entrepreneurship, just to mention a few.³

¹ Wilson, K. L., and A. Portes (1980), “Immigrant enclaves: an analysis of the labor market experiences of Cubans in Miami,” *American Journal of Sociology*, 86, pp. 295-319.

² See Scott D. M. (2009), “Portuguese Americans’ Acculturation, Socioeconomic Integration, and Amalgamation: How far have they advanced?” *Sociologia, Problemas e Práticas*, 61, 2009, pp. 41-64; and Scott, D. M. (2010), “A Integração dos Luso-Americanos nos Estados Unidos: Uma Análise Comparativa,” *Boletim do Núcleo Cultural da Horta*, 19:327-353

³ For an overview of different paths of integration identified by American sociologists see, among others, Portes, A., P. Fernández-Kelly and W. Haller (2009), “The Adaptation of the Immigrant Second Generation in America: A Theoretical Overview and Recent Evidence,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(7), pp. 1077-1104; Waldinger, R. (2007), “Did Manufacturing Matter? The Experience of Yesterday’s Second Generation: A Reassessment”, *International Migration Review*, 41(1), pp. 3-39; Waldinger, R. e C.

Thus, rather than asking whether the Portuguese are well integrated into the American societies, the appropriate question to ask is: how are they integrating into these societies? The path of integration taken by the Portuguese immigrants and their descendants has been typical for those who arrive with low levels of education and occupational skills, destined to work as manual laborers in the American job markets. Yet, many of these immigrants were able to launch their descendants on a path of upward socioeconomic mobility in these societies.

Based on an online survey of descendants of Portuguese immigrants and, where appropriate, American Community Survey data, I will address the three topics listed above of relevance to the thematic of the structural and cultural integration of Luso-descendants in America. Through the online survey, to date I have attained viable data from a total of 1542 respondents, 1204 from the United States and 338 from Canada. I will include the survey data from Canada, for the benefit of the Luso-Canadians who took the online survey, but, due to lack of additional sources of data, my analysis at this stage will focus primarily on the research pertaining to the United States.

I present data which show that the descendants of Portuguese immigrants, who have participated in my study, are well integrated into American society at a structural level, that is, in terms of educational, income and professional achievement and political participation. Culturally and psychologically they are also well integrated in America, yet they retain a simultaneous commitment to their ethnic identity, cultural heritage, ethnic communities, and Portugal.

Despite being committed to their ethnicity, Luso-descendants have followed a pattern of linguistic assimilation similar to that of the descendants of other immigrant groups in America, characterized by a rapid loss of fluency and use of the ancestral language. In today's globalized economy, the maintenance of fluency in Portuguese among Luso-descendants would be in the interest of the Lusophone communities, the United States, Canada and all the countries of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP). This reality calls for a more concerted effort on the part of the Luso-American, Brazilian-American, and Cape Verdean-American communities, and all the countries in question, towards the promotion and teaching of the Portuguese language in the United States and Canada.

After presenting some descriptive data of the sample of individuals who, thus far, have taken the survey, I examine data related to structural integration: education, income, occupational achievement, political participation, and spatial concentration. Then, I examine data related to identity, language, participation in ethnic cultural activities, and commitment to the ethnic communities and to Portugal.

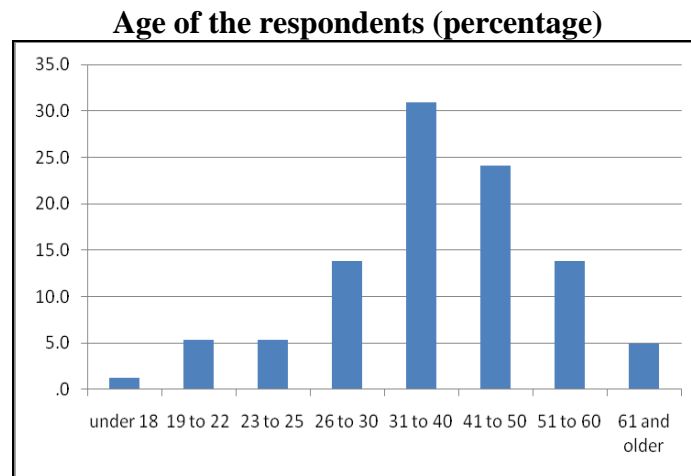
It is important that the reader is aware that the population surveyed is not representative of the entire Portuguese American and Canadian populations. First of all, it is a survey

Feliciano (2004), "Will the new second generation experience 'downward assimilation'? Segmented assimilation re-assessed," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 27(3), pp. 376-402.

about the American and Canadian born generations and those who arrived as children. It does not include those who immigrated as adults. Secondly, among other biases, it is an online survey, which perhaps is capturing a more educated and wealthier segment of the Luso-American and Luso-Canadian populations. Thirdly, a large number of the respondents are members of Internet sites that cater to Portuguese ethnicity in the Americas, and, as such, it is possible that the survey is attracting a segment of the population, which is more committed to the ethnic traditions and Portugal than the general Portuguese American and Portuguese Canadian populations are. Nevertheless, a positive aspect of an online survey is that it can capture responses from individuals of Portuguese descent residing throughout the United States and Canada, who would not have been included in a study conducted on the ground, in the geographical areas of immigrant concentration.

II SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

As of this writing, after eliminating the answers of those who did not complete at least two thirds of the survey questions and of those who due to age limits were ineligible to take the survey, I have collected useful data from a total of 1542 respondents, of which 1204 are from the United States and 338 are from Canada, 1003 are females (783 from the United States and 220 from Canada), 530 are males (416 from the United States and 114 from Canada), and 9 people did not indicate their gender. In terms of age, the most prevalent age group (for both the United States and Canada) was the 31-40 year old group, constituting 31 percent of the total number of respondents.



Overall, more than 55 percent of the respondents were born in the United States, 11 percent in Canada, and close to 32 percent were born in Portugal.

Respondents' place of birth

Place of birth	Canada	United States	Total
1. Portugal (Azores)	149 44.1%	279 23.2%	428 27.8%
2. Portugal (Madeira Islands)	2 0.6%	2 0.2%	4 0.3%
3. Portugal (continent)	10 3.0%	45 3.7%	55 3.6%
4. Former Portuguese African territories	0 0.0%	5 0.4%	5 0.3%
5. United States	0 0.0%	856 71.1%	856 55.5%
6. Canada	171 50.6%	3 0.2%	174 11.3%
7. Other	6 1.8%	14 1.2%	20 1.3%
Total	338 100.0%	1204 100.0%	1542 100.0%

As for the respondents' mothers, close to 66 percent was born in the Azores, with that percentage nearing 89 percent for the Canadian respondents.

Place of birth of the respondents' mothers

Place of birth	Canada	United States	Total
1. Portugal (Azores)	299 88.5%	715 59.4%	1014 65.8%
2. Portugal (Madeira Islands)	1 0.3%	17 1.4%	18 1.2%
3. Portugal (continent)	19 5.6%	110 9.1%	129 8.4%
4. Former Portuguese African territories	1 0.3%	4 0.3%	5 0.3%
5. United States	0 0.0%	338 28.1%	338 21.9%
6. Canada	16 4.7%	4 0.3%	20 1.3%
7. Other	2 0.6%	16 1.3%	18 1.2%
Total	338 100.0%	1204 100.0%	1542 100.0%

Over 26 percent of the respondents, in sociological terms, are part of the “one and a half generation.”⁴ Just over 55 percent is “second” generation, 14 percent is “third”

⁴ For the purposes of this study, I classified the respondents who arrived in the United States or Canada between the ages of four and fourteen as being part of the “one and a half” generation, those who arrived before the age of four and those who were born here of immigrant parents as “second” generation, the grandchildren of the immigrants are “third” generation and the great-grandchildren are “fourth and beyond” generation. With the fourth and beyond generation, I included a few respondents who indicated that they were “fifth” generation and one who is “seventh” generation.

generation, and close to 8 percent is of the “fourth and beyond” generation. There was a higher percentage of respondents from the United States who were third generation and beyond than there were from Canada, a reflection of the more recent pattern of immigration to Canada than to the United States.

Respondents by generation first in the United States or Canada

	One and a half	Second	Third	Fourth and beyond	Total
Canada	112 33.1%	201 59.5%	24 7.1%	1 0.3%	338 100.0%
United States	250 20.8%	647 53.7%	192 15.9%	115 9.6%	1204 100.0%
Total	362 23.5%	848 55.0%	216 14.0%	116 7.5%	1542 100.0%

III STRUCTURAL INTEGRATION

3.1. Education

3.1.1. Levels of education

The educational achievement of Portuguese Americans and Canadians has been of great concern to scholars and community leaders. The American Community Survey of 2009 placed the high school graduation rate of the Portuguese ancestry group, which includes the foreign born and those born in the United States, at 82.6 percent and the college graduation rate at 22.6 percent. The average rates for the United States as a whole were 85.3% and 27.9% respectively. Given historical and political circumstances in Portugal, the level of education of Portuguese immigrants (the foreign born) is quite low, with 53.1 percent having completed high school and only 9.5 percent having attained a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Educational attainment of Portuguese-Americans (ancestral group)

	Total Population	High school graduate or higher	Bachelor’s degree or higher
United States	307,006,556	85.3%	27.9%
Portuguese ancestry (foreign born and American born)	1,477,335	82.6%	22.6%
Portuguese (foreign born only)	203,409	53.1%	9.5%

Source: 2009 American Community Survey

Although people of Portuguese descent in the United States in the aggregate are still below the national averages in terms of educational achievement, the American Community Survey data presented above show a considerable progress in educational achievement from the immigrant generation to the generations born in the United States. Such intergenerational progress is also shown by the data collected in the survey. Many of those who have attained high levels of educational achievement have parents with very low levels of education.

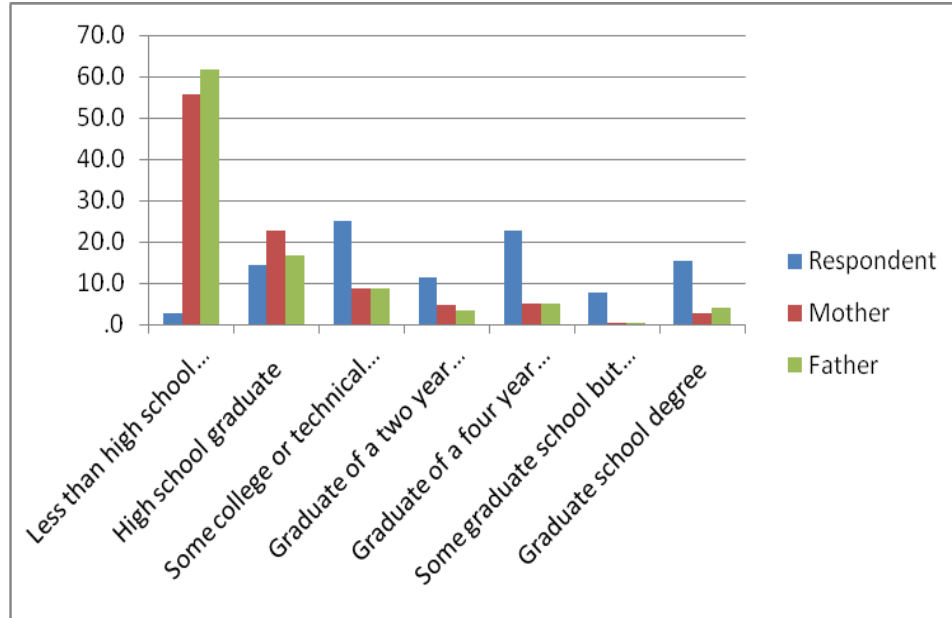
In the United States, whereas close to 56 percent of the mothers and close to 62 percent of the fathers of those who participated in the survey have educational levels lower than high school, only 2.7 percent of their children have a lower than high school level of education. Whereas more than 45 percent of the respondents completed at least a four-year college degree, for the parents' generation the college graduation rates were 8.0 percent for the mothers and 9.3 percent for the fathers (add items 5, 6 and 7 in the Table below), percentages very close to those provided by American Community Survey data for the foreign born in the Table above.

The data for Canada show somewhat lower levels of educational achievement, a reflection perhaps of the fact that immigration from Portugal to Canada did not begin in significant numbers until the mid-twentieth century.

**Level of education of the respondents, their mother and their father
(United States)**

	Respondent	Mother	Father
Level of education	Frequency Percent	Frequency Percent	Frequency Percent
1. Less than high school graduate	33 2.7	670 55.6	741 61.5
2. High school graduate	173 14.4	272 22.6	202 16.8
3. Some college or technical school	303 25.2	106 8.8	104 8.6
4. Graduate of a two year school or technical school	138 11.5	57 4.7	39 3.2
5. Graduate of a four year college or university	275 22.8	59 4.9	59 4.9
6. Some graduate school but no graduate degree	93 7.7	5 .4	5 .4
7. Graduate school degree	184 15.3	33 2.7	48 4.0
Missing values	5 .4	2 .2	6 .5
Totals	1204 100.0	1204 100.0	1204 100.0

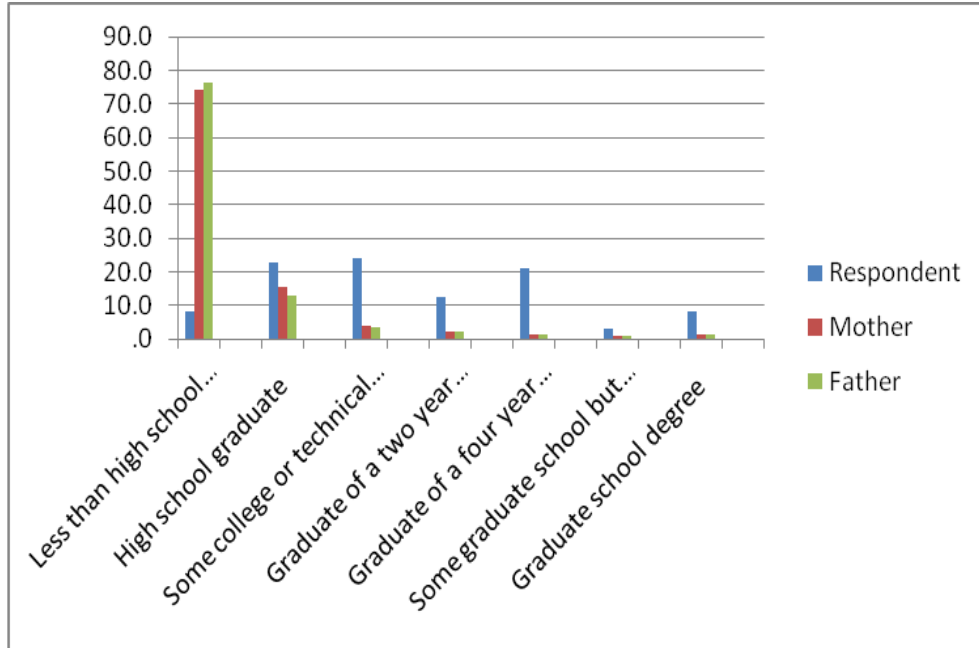
**Levels of education: respondent, mother, and father (percentage)
United States**



**Levels of education: respondents, their mother and their father
(Canada)**

	Respondent	Mother	Father
Level of education	Frequency Percent	Frequency Percent	Frequency Percent
1. Less than high school graduate	27 8.0	250 74.0	258 76.3
2. High school graduate	77 22.8	53 15.7	44 13.0
3. Some college or technical school	81 24.0	13 3.8	12 3.6
4. Graduate of a two year school or technical school	43 12.7	8 2.4	8 2.4
5. Graduate of a four year college or university	71 21.0	4 1.2	5 1.5
6. Some graduate school but no graduate degree	10 3.0	3 .9	3 .9
7. Graduate school degree	28 8.3	5 1.5	4 1.2
Missing values	1 .3	2 .6	4 1.2
Totals	338 100.0	338 100.0	338 100.0

**Level of education of the respondents, their mother and their father (percentage)
Canada**



The table below shows the high school and college completion rates by generation, and again we can verify a very rapid increase in educational achievement from one generation to the next. It also shows a progression in the level of education of the older immigrant generations, with the parents of the one and a half and second generations having very low levels of education, while the parents of the fourth and beyond generation have educational achievement levels closer to those of their children.

Respondent, mother and father’s educational attainment by respondent’s generation (United States)

Generation	Respondent		Mother		Father	
	High school graduate or higher	Bachelor’s degree or higher	High school graduate or higher	Bachelor’s degree or higher	High school graduate or higher	Bachelor’s degree or higher
One and a half	231 93.5%	91 36.8%	42 16.9%	3 1.2%	47 19.0%	6 2.4%
Second	634 98.1%	323 50.0%	252 39%	48 7.4%	194 30.1%	43 6.7%
Third	189 98.4%	81 42.2%	135 70.3%	27 14.1%	111 58.1%	30 15.7%
Fourth and beyond	112 97.2%	57 46.0%	103 89.6%	19 16.5%	105 92.1%	33 28.9%

*Missing values were not presented in this Table

Respondent, mother and father’s educational attainment by respondent’s generation (Canada)

Generation	Respondent		Mother		Father	
	High school graduate or higher	Bachelor’s degree or higher	High school graduate or higher	Bachelor’s degree or higher	High school graduate or higher	Bachelor’s degree or higher
One and a half	101 90.2%	33 29.5%	20 17.9%.9	4 3.6%	22 19.6%	4 3.6%
Second	186 92.5%	66 32.8%	51 25.4%	7 3.5%	47 23.4%	9 4.5%
Third	23 95.8%	13 54.2%	14 58.3%	1 4.2%	7 29.2%	3 12.5%

*Only one respondent from Canada is fourth generation.

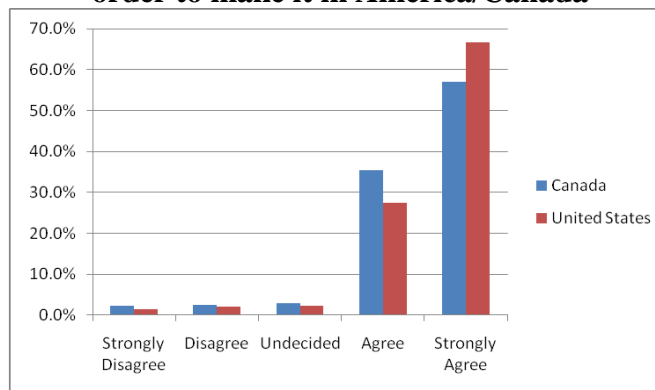
**Missing values were not presented in this Table

Given that the online survey might be capturing a more educated segment of the Portuguese American and Portuguese Canadian populations, these educational data are higher than the actual average for the Luso-descendants. Either way, when referencing educational achievement rates, one needs to take into consideration the point of departure, that is, the very low levels of education of the immigrant generations and what has been achieved by subsequent generations.

3.1.2. The value of an education

Portuguese immigrants have often been assumed to not understand the value of an education. To what extent this claim is true is not known since, to my knowledge, a survey asking Portuguese immigrants whether or not they valued education has not been done. While we know of parents who did not encourage their children to pursue higher education or took them out of school at sixteen years of age, there were also working class parents with low levels of education, as this survey shows, whose children, through educational pursuits, were able to rise into typical middle class occupations, such as doctors, nurses, teachers, professors, lawyers, and social workers, among others occupations, many within one generation.

Getting an education is very important in order to make it in America/Canada



The descendants of Portuguese immigrants, who have taken this online survey, including those who have not achieved very high levels of education, understand the value of obtaining an education (see the Chart above). The respondents expressed overwhelming agreement with the statement that “getting an education is very important in order to make it in America/Canada.” Less than 5 percent of the respondents both in the United States and Canada disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, whereas the level of agreement (both agree and strongly agree) was over 92 percent in Canada and over 94 percent in the United States.

3.2. Income

Despite having attained lower levels of education than other European ethnic groups, census data show that Portuguese immigrants and their American born descendants have achieved average income parity with these groups.⁵

Median income, health insurance and poverty rates of Portuguese Americans in comparison with United States rates.

INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (IN 2009 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)		
	United States	Portuguese-Americans
	Income level	Income level
Median household income (dollars)	50,221	57,985
Median family income (dollars)	61,082	69,161
Mean for those with earnings	69,918	74,848
HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE		
	United States	Portuguese-Americans
	Percent with coverage	Percent with coverage
With private health insurance coverage	67.40%	73.50%
With public health coverage	28.50%	25.40%
No health insurance coverage	15.10%	11.50%
POVERTY RATES FOR FAMILIES AND PEOPLE		
	United States	Portuguese-Americans
	Percent living in poverty	Percent living in poverty
All families	10.50%	7.40%
All people	14.30%	9.40%

Source: 2009 American Community Survey 1/Year Estimates

Data from the 2009 American Community Survey, presented in the Table above, shows that the median income levels of the Portuguese ancestry group are considerably higher than those of the American population in general. Portuguese Americans also have higher

⁵ See Scott, D. M. (2009) and Scott, D. M. (2010), op. cited.

rates than the average of private health insurance coverage, which may be attributable to higher rates of employment in stable sectors of the American economy that provide insurance coverage and, perhaps, other employment benefits.

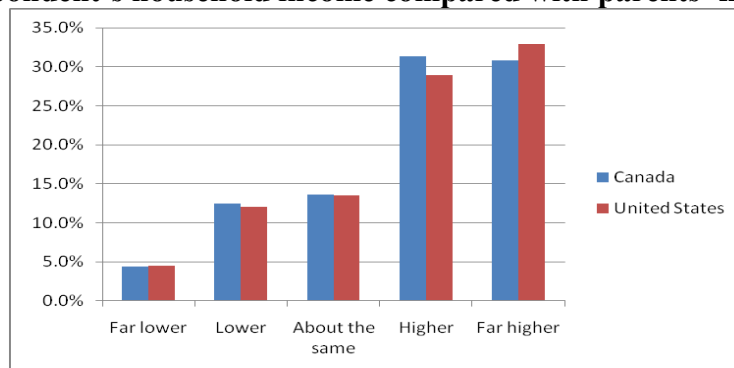
The higher level of participation of the post-1965 Portuguese immigrant generation, until the early 1990's, in traditional immigrant areas of activity, in manufacturing and other blue collar jobs, as well as agropecuary occupations in California, areas from which higher wages and earnings could be attained than from lower service sector occupations, as well as the rise of many of their children into middle class occupations, perhaps accounts for the high median income and comparatively low poverty rates of this population group, as indicated by census data. A higher rate of married couples, and thus of dual-earner families, may also account for higher average income levels and lower poverty rates as compared to the American population in general.

The online survey asked the respondents to indicate how their level of income compared with that of their parents. It also asked what their income level was. We have to take into consideration that a significant portion of the respondents are still young and have not yet realized their full income potential.

Respondent's household income compared with parent's income

Level of household income compared to parents income	Canada	United States
1. Far lower	15 4.4%	54 4.5%
2. Lower	42 12.4%	145 12.0%
3. About the same	46 13.6%	163 13.5%
4. Higher	106 31.4%	350 29.1%
5. Far higher	104 30.8%	396 32.9%
6. Not applicable (student / still living at home / dependent)	25 7.4%	89 7.4%
7. Missing values	0 0.0%	7 0.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Respondent's household income compared with parents' income



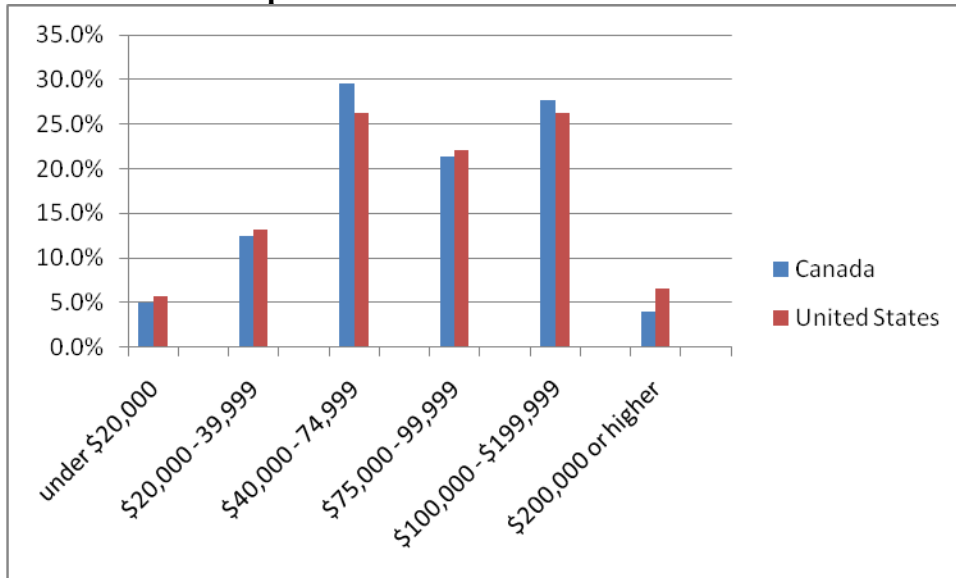
The data show a clear pattern of upward economic mobility among the descendants of Portuguese immigrants in the United States and Canada, who took this survey, with about 62 percent of the respondents in both countries indicating that their income was higher or far higher than that of their parents.

Respondents' annual household income

Income level	Canada	United States
under \$20,000	14 5.0%	61 5.7%
\$20,000 - 39,999	35 12.5%	142 13.2%
\$40,000 - 74,999	83 29.5%	283 26.3%
\$75,000 - 99,999	60 21.4%	238 22.1%
\$100,000 - \$199,999	78 27.8%	283 26.3%
\$200,000 or higher	11 3.9%	70 6.5%
Total	281 100.0%	1077 100.0%

*Missing values were excluded from this Table

Respondents' annual household income



The data also show that those who took the survey have a high level of income. Close to 33 percent of the respondents earned a total household income higher than \$100,000 per year.

3.3. Occupation

Occupational integration is influenced by the opportunity structure found upon arrival and the educational and occupational skills brought to America by the immigrant group.⁶ For example, when the Portuguese arrived in New England after the 1960's, there were still plenty of low skill, entry-level jobs in the manufacturing sector of the economy, suitable for a population with low levels of education and occupational skills, but the structural changes in the American economy brought about by globalization were starting to occur. A few decades later, de-industrialization and a downturn in the fishing industry generated massive occupational losses among Portuguese-Americans in the Northeast. How were the children of this essentially working class immigrant group affected by these structural changes? Did they experience upward socioeconomic mobility into professional areas and higher paying occupations within the service sector or did they experience downward assimilation into low paying occupations in this sector of the economy?⁷ Likewise, in what type of occupations are the children of the dairy owners and farmers of California involved?

Data from the online survey (see the Table below) indicated that for fathers the most common profession was factory worker, followed by laborer in construction, and then farming, dairying and related work, the latter mostly for the fathers of the respondents from California. The occupational distributions were similar in the United States and Canada, but for the fathers in the latter country cleaning services were among the top five occupations but farming was not. For the mothers the top three occupations were factory worker, homemaker, and cleaning services. For the respondents the main occupations were office employee/clerical work, professional (doctor, lawyer, engineer, scientist, college professor, etc.) and other education related occupations.

A comparison of the occupations of the respondents in Massachusetts and California shows that in both states the children have to a large extent moved from the primary sector of production, in factories, construction and dairying, to middle class service sector occupations, exhibiting thus a pattern of intergenerational upward socioeconomic mobility.

⁶ Steinberg, S. (1989), *The Ethnic Myth: Race, Ethnicity, and Class in America*, Boston, MA, Beacon Press.

⁷ For an overview of the emergence of the concept of downward assimilation, see Zhou, M. (1997), "Segmented Assimilation: Issues, Controversies, and Recent Research on the New Second Generation," *International Migration Review*, 31(4), pp. 0975-1008.

**Top five occupations held by the respondents, their fathers and their mothers
(United States and Canada combined)**

Respondent		Father		Mother	
Occupation	Number Percent	Occupation	Number Percent	Occupation	Number Percent
Office employee / clerical	246 16.0	Factory worker	425 27.6	Factory worker	481 31.2
Professional (doctor, lawyer, engineer, university professor, scientist, etc.)	211 13.7	Laborer in construction	241 15.6	Homemaker	383 24.9
Education (teacher, counselor, administrator, etc.)	163 10.6	Farmer / dairy / farm related work	181 11.8	Cleaning services (homes or offices)	168 10.9
Government employee/political administration	101 6.6	Had his own business	142 9.1	Office employee / clerical	110 7.1
Social work/human services/health services	99 6.4	Crafts/trades	87 5.6	Social work/human services/health services	45 2.9

3.4 Political Participation

3.4.1 Types of political participation

According to census data, Portuguese immigrants overall have lower levels of citizenship than other European immigrant groups. Undoubtedly, lower levels of citizenship contribute to a lower level of political integration among Portuguese Americans and Canadians. Yet, the descendants of Portuguese immigrants who participated in the online survey showed a significantly high level of political participation as compared to, for example, the overall voter turnout of 63 percent of eligible voters in the presidential election of 2008 in the United States (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voter_turnout). For the respondents of the online survey, regular voter turnout was 74.4 percent in the United States and 68.5 percent in Canada, with significant percentages engaging in additional types of political activity, such as calling or writing to their representatives, contributing monetarily to political campaigns, and working on political campaigns. Only 11.5 percent had not voted at all (see the Table below).

Respondents' political participation

Type of participation	United States	Canada
Have not voted	122 11.0%	40 13%
Have voted once in a while	149 13.5%	51 16.7%
Have voted regularly in elections	826 74.8%	209 68.5%
Have written to or called my political representatives	391 35.4%	66 21.6%
Contributed money to a political campaign or candidate	294 26.6%	31 10.2%
Worked in a political campaign	175 15.8%	38 12.5%
Have run for political office	23 2.1%	3 1.0%
Other types of participation	21 1.9%	3 1.0%

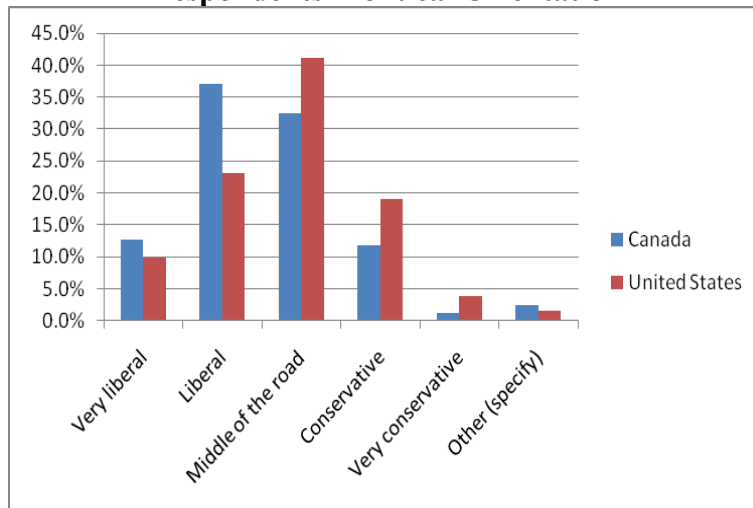
*Missing values were excluded from these calculations.

Census data show an increase in the percentage of Luso-Americans involved in political government occupations,⁸ a fact associated with a more noticeable political presence and political weight of this ethnic group. In the last mid-term elections, in November 2010, several Luso-Americans were elected to political office at the state and local levels.

3.4.2 Political orientation of the respondents

In terms of their political orientation, the Luso-descendants who took the survey tend to be middle of the road, with a stronger leaning towards the left of the political spectrum (see the Chart below).

Respondents' Political Orientation



⁸ See Scott, D. M. (2009) and Scott, D. M. (2010), op. cited.

The respondents from Canada tended to have a somewhat more liberal political orientation than the respondents from the United States, but given that the samples are not representative of the entire Luso-Canadian and Luso-American populations, we cannot generalize these results to the entire population, although it seems plausible that such a difference might be factual.

Census data on education, income, and occupation and data collected in this survey indicate, therefore, that the children of Portuguese immigrants in the United States to a large extent have experienced a model of incorporation characterized by upward mobility into professional and higher level service sector occupations. Undoubtedly, some Luso-descendants, having achieved a lower socioeconomic status than that of their parents, have experienced downward assimilation into America society. For others the increase in socioeconomic status in relation to that of their parents might have been modest and taken place within the ambit of working class occupations.⁹

3.5 Spatial concentration

Census data show that the Portuguese American population is highly concentrated geographically. According to the 2000 census, more than 72 percent of this population resides in four states: California, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Jersey. In Canada, there are also pockets of high Portuguese immigrant concentration in Toronto and Quebec, among other provinces. Within these states and provinces, there are areas of well-known spatial concentration, where Portuguese American ethnic culture thrives.

The Table below shows the top thirteen states and six provinces where the respondents were born, or in which they first lived after arrival in the American societies, and where they live now. The data show a concentration in the states and provinces where Portuguese immigrants originally settled, with the highest number of respondents residing in California, Massachusetts and Rhode Island in the United States and in Ontario in Canada.

⁹ Criticizing the initial conceptualization of Portes at al. (in various publications) of three paths of assimilation (classical upward assimilation, selective acculturation and downward assimilation), Waldinger and Feliciano (2004, op. cited) argue that the children of many of today's labor immigrants are not experiencing downward assimilation, as Portes at al. claim, but, instead, and like many of the children of the older immigrants, are experiencing a path of progressive upward socioeconomic mobility within the ranks of the working class. Based on criticisms of their original conceptualization of three paths, Portes at al. (2009, op. cited) have added a fourth path, that of stagnation, where there is no progress from one generation to the next, with the children of immigrants remaining at the same socioeconomic level of their parents.

States and provinces with the highest number of survey respondents

	State/Province of birth or first lived in upon arrival		Sate/Province of residence now		Percent Difference
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
UNITED STATES					
CA-California	516	42.9	453	37.6	-5.3
MA-Massachusetts	383	31.8	302	25.1	-6.7
RI-Rhode Island	152	12.6	106	8.8	-3.8
FL-Florida	3	.2	34	2.8	2.6
CT-Connecticut	27	2.2	31	2.6	0.2
NY-New York	18	1.5	27	2.2	0.7
NJ-New Jersey	32	2.7	26	2.2	-0.5
VA-Virginia	5	.4	18	1.5	0.9
NH-New Hampshire	1	.1	15	1.2	1.0
ID-Idaho	2	.2	14	1.2	1.0
AZ-Arizona	2	.2	12	1.0	0.8
TX-Texas	5	.4	12	1.0	0.6
WA-Washington	5	.4	12	1.0	0.6
CANADA					
ON-Ontario	226	66.9	207	61.2	-5.7
BC-British Columbia	43	12.7	45	13.3	0.6
QC-Quebec	40	11.8	37	10.9	-0.9
AB-Alberta	13	3.8	14	4.1	0.3
MB-Manitoba	13	3.8	10	3.0	-0.2
NS-Nova Scotia	3	.9	4	1.2	0.3

Nevertheless the data collected in this survey, as well as data provided by the United States Census, show that there is a movement away from the traditional areas of settlement in the United States, with California, Massachusetts and Rhode Island losing some Portuguese American population.¹⁰ According to census data, and to some extent corroborated by data collected through the online survey, the greatest movement has been to Florida. Southern and southwestern states, like Texas, Nevada, and Arizona, have experienced sizeable increases in the population of Portuguese ancestry and so have two

¹⁰ See Scott, D. M. (2009) and Scott, D: M. (2010), op. cited.

northwestern states, Oregon and Washington. Additionally, there has been movement to New Hampshire, perhaps away from Massachusetts. Portuguese Americans are moving to some of these states perhaps in search of better employment opportunities and in some states better climatic conditions, exhibiting patterns of spatial mobility that are somewhat similar to those the majority population of this country.¹¹

In the past, sociologists have assumed that geographical concentration impedes socioeconomic integration and acculturation of the immigrant populations and their descents.¹² More recent studies, however, have provided evidence that this is not the case.¹³ The descendants of old immigrant groups, such as the Irish and the Italians, have not dispersed geographically to the extent expected by theoretical predictions. Yet, these populations have long been assimilated into the mainstream of American society.

Geographic concentration, in fact, can provide various socioeconomic and psychological benefits to an ethnic population.

Ethnic groups may initially close ranks and create dense ethnic networks and institutions that replicate the ethnic culture and support the economic activities of group members. For example, how many Portuguese American and Canadian businesses would not have been able to get off the ground and survive if it were not for the existence of a concentrated ethnic market to which they had privileged access?

The “sticking together” of the ethnic population helps that population succeed socially and economically. However, that very economic success will inevitably permit the first generation to launch their children on a path of socioeconomic upward mobility and thus to higher levels of integration and assimilation into the mainstream societies and economies.¹⁴

Overall, the respondents who took this online survey have achieved high levels of structural integration in American society, despite the fact that their parents generally possessed low levels of education, remained concentrated in blue collar occupations, and tended to stay concentrated in specific geographical areas. As the data presented in the next section show they have maintained a simultaneous commitment to their ethnicity and Portuguese identity, even though in general they have lost fluency in the Portuguese language.

¹¹ See recent Census 2010 data releases.

¹² For an overview of spatial mobility as a measure of assimilation see Massey, D. S. (1985), “Ethnic and Residential Segregation: A Theoretical and Empirical Review,” *Sociology and Social Research*, 69, pp. 315-50. For an assessment of the literature on spatial mobility analysis, see Allen, J. P. e E. Turner (1996), “Spatial Patterns of Immigrant Assimilation,” *The Professional Geographer*, 48(2), pp. 140-155.

¹³ Portes, A. e R. G. Rumbaut (2006), *Immigrant America: a Portrait*, 3rd ed.. Berkeley, CA, University of California Press; Waldinger, R. (2007), “Did Manufacturing Matter? The Experience of Yesterday’s Second Generation: A Reassessment,” *International Migration Review*, 41(1), pp. 3-39

¹⁴ Sociologists have referred to this phenomenon as the “ethnic paradox.” See, for example, Lal, B. B. (1995), “Symbolic Interaction Theories,” *American Behavioral Scientist*, 38, pp. 421-441.

IV ETHNIC IDENTITY, LANGUAGE, AND CULTURE

The retention of the ethnic culture and identity does not impede integration into the wider society. In fact recent sociological research has shown that children who grow up with a solid ethnic identity and are proud of their ethnic culture tend to attain higher levels of educational achievement in America.¹⁵

Newcomers and their descendants can engage in “selective acculturation,” that is, they may choose to adopt aspects of the dominant culture that will permit them to function successfully within the mainstream, while simultaneously electing to retain aspects of their ethnic culture and to participate in the social and organizational life of their ethnic communities. The data collected in the online survey suggest strongly that the respondents, while highly integrated and committed to their American societies, have elected to remain connected to their ethnic culture and communities and Portugal.

As a country of immigrants, the United States has had to face the challenge of integrating into its socioeconomic and cultural fabric successive waves of immigrants, some of whom have brought with them cultural practices very foreign to the Anglo American mainstream. For the sake of national unity, immigrants were often compelled to assimilate into Anglo-American culture, a path of assimilation known as “Anglo-conformity,” which encouraged immigrants, and especially their children, to adopt the customs and norms of American society as well as the English language.

Our immigrant ancestors (and, using material from in-depth interviews, I will elaborate on this point at a later time) often felt the sting of prejudice directed at their way of life and their language, many feeling compelled to Anglicize their names, forbid their children from speaking Portuguese, and hide in shame other visible signs of their ethnic origins.

America was and continues to be an assimilationist society. However, in today’s highly globalized economy, it is in the interest of any country that its citizens speak a variety of languages and possess what has come to be known as “intercultural competency,” that is the capacity to relate to and successfully interact with people of other cultural backgrounds. It would be thus in the interest of the United States as a superpower in the current economic and political world order to encourage the children of its immigrant populations to engage in “selective acculturation,” that is in maintaining bilingualism and multiculturalism while integrating into the mainstream socioeconomic institutions of American society.

¹⁵ See studies cited in Portes, A., P. Fernández-Kelly, and W. Haller (2005), “Segmented assimilation on the ground: the new second generation in early adulthood,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28 (6), pp. 1000-1040.

We should not forget, however, that acculturation can be a two-way process or, as Alba and Nee (2003) would say, it involves a “boundary reduction”¹⁶. While the minority group can adopt the culture of the dominant group, those of this group can also be acculturated into the minority ethnic culture, and, as a result, aspects of the ethnic culture become incorporated into the mainstream cultural fabric of the region. In the long run, in areas of Portuguese geographical concentration, the Portuguese American culture will mesh and become part of the mainstream, and people of other ethnic groups in those areas will be integrated into a mainstream that contains elements of Portuguese culture.

The data collected through the online survey show that the respondents who participated in this study are, for the most part, engaging in selective acculturation, that they identify with both American and Portuguese cultures and that they do not see a contradiction in being both American or Canadian and Portuguese at the same time. In a post civil rights movement era in the United States, where America’s identity is no longer that of a White Anglo-Saxon and Protestant (WASP) nation, but that of a multicultural and multiracial society, people of Portuguese descent no longer feel compelled to hide their ethnicity.

4.1 Identity

Psychological assimilation has been postulated by some sociologists as the last stage in a multi-stage assimilation process.¹⁷ At this stage of assimilation, individuals see themselves, and are identified by others, as Americans or Canadians rather than as members of a specific ethnic group. Descendants of the original ethnic groups may retain some memory of their ancestry, but they no longer identify with it and no longer participate in the ethnic group’s social and organizational life.

Respondents’ identity (United States)

Identity	Number	Percent
Portuguese American	707	58.7
Portuguese	312	25.9
American	121	10.0
Mixed	29	2.4
Azorean / Azorean American	15	1.2
Other	12	1.0
American of Portuguese descent	8	0.7
Total	1204	100.0

¹⁶ Alba R. and V. Nee (2003), *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

¹⁷ See, for example, Marger, M. (2000), *Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives*, 5th ed.. Belmont, CA, Wadsworth.

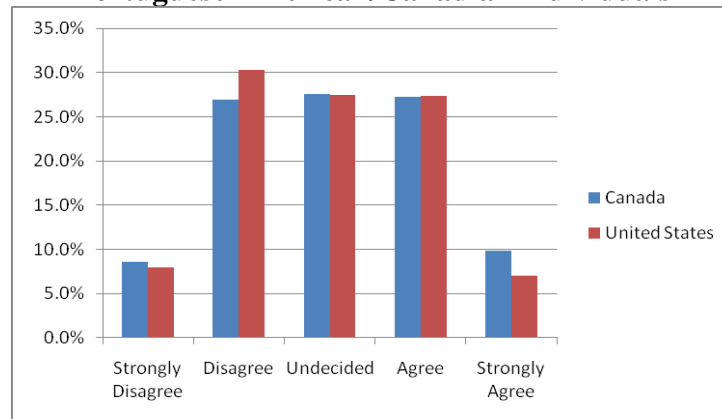
Respondents' identity (Canada)

Identity	Number	Percent
Portuguese Canadian / Luso-Canadian	227	67.2
Portuguese	71	21.0
Canadian	31	9.2
Canadian of Portuguese descent	6	1.8
Other	2	0.6
Mixed	1	0.3
Total	338	100.0

The data from the survey show that in both the United States and Canada 10 percent or less of those who participated in the survey identified themselves as American or Canadian only. Over 20 percent in both countries identified themselves exclusively as Portuguese. The majority of the respondents, close to 60 percent in the United States and over 67 percent in Canada, identified themselves as Portuguese Americans or as Portuguese or Luso-Canadians.

Overall, the data show that the survey respondents have a strong ethnic identity and still identify with Portugal and their ethnic communities in the United States and Canada. On the other hand, when answering the question of whether they saw themselves as having more in common with Portuguese individuals or with mainstream Americans and Canadians, the responses were mixed, with about equal numbers agreeing or disagreeing with this statement.

Currently, I see myself as having more in common with regular Americans/Canadians than with other Portuguese American/Canadian individuals

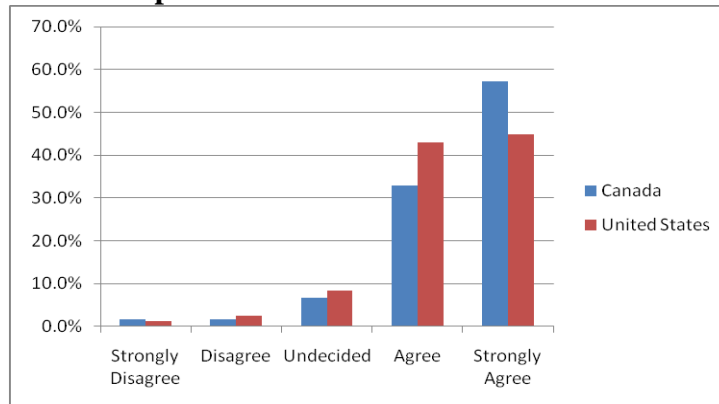


Most of the survey respondents are committed to both the Portuguese ethnic background and American and Canadian societies. Mr. Al Pinheiro, Mayor of Gilroy, California, illustrated this existential stance, in a personal interview, with the following statement: “One of the great things about America is that while it provides us with opportunities that

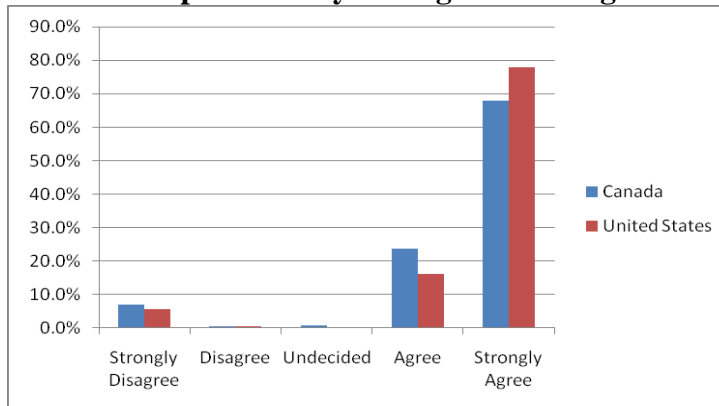
permit us to integrate and assimilate where we are, it also allows us the freedom to carry on with our traditions and celebrate our roots.”¹⁸

This duality in identity and cultural commitment is substantiated further with additional data collected by the survey. A large majority of the respondents is proud to be American and Canadian, but they are also proud of their Portuguese heritage and agree that people of Portuguese ancestry should do everything possible to maintain their ethnic culture in the Americas. Nevertheless, a large percentage indicated that they liked Portuguese and American / Canadian cultures equally and that they thought the United States and Canada were good places in which to live.

I am proud to be an American / Canadian

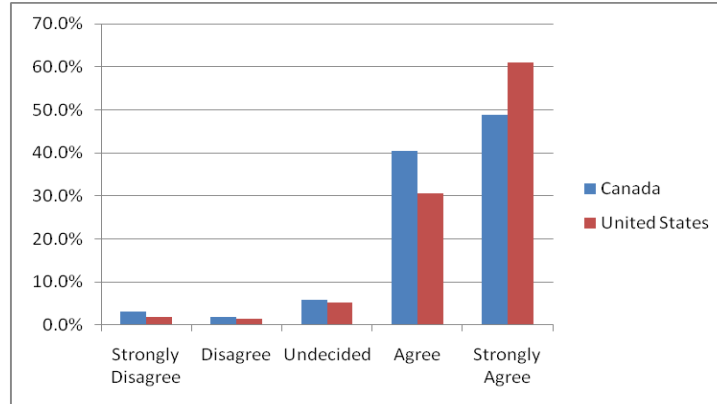


I am proud of my Portuguese heritage

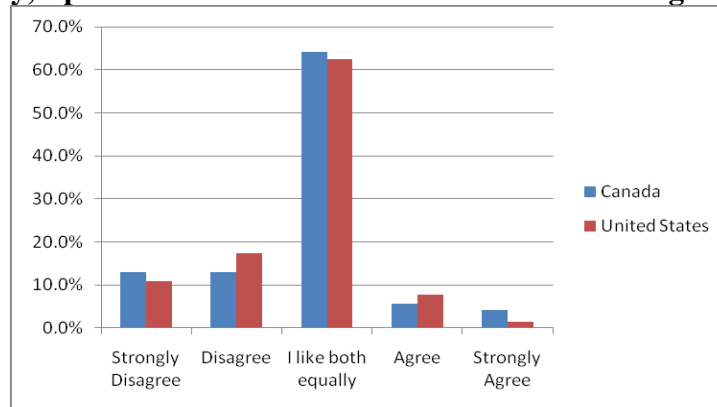


¹⁸ Interview conducted on June 8, 2010 at the Mayor’s office in the city of Gilroy, California. Mr. Pinheiro immigrated to California from the island of Terceira when he was twelve years old.

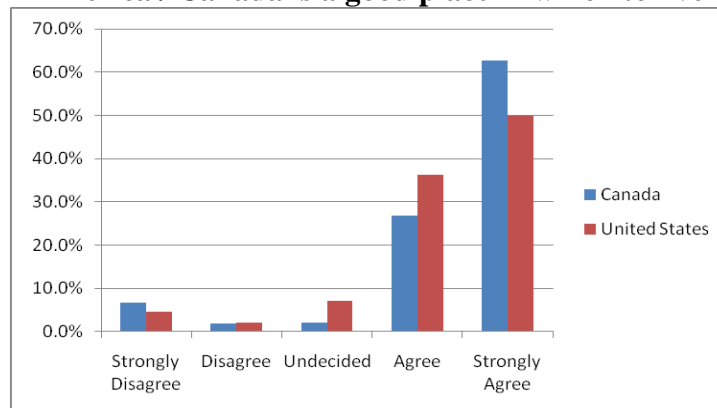
People of Portuguese ancestry should do everything possible to maintain their ethnic culture in the Americas



Currently, I prefer American/ Canadian culture to Portuguese culture



America / Canada is a good place in which to live



The answers to these questions show a selective pattern of acculturation into American society. The respondents, while experiencing high levels of cultural, structural and psychological integration into American and Canadian societies, have also retained a strong ethnic identity and commitment to their ethnic culture.

4.2. Language

Sociologists have identified a three generational model of language assimilation, characterized by a rapid decline in the use and fluency in the ancestral immigrant language.¹⁹ The native language remains dominant within the immigrant generation, their children are bilingual, and their grandchildren speak English only. This model, however, is misleading because the first American born generation’s command of the ancestral language tends to be limited and usually restricted to the vocabulary needed for communication within the household.²⁰

Language spoken at home and capacity in English

	EUA	Brazilians	Cape Verdeans	Portuguese
Total population	307.006.556	372.650	90.828	1.477.335
Population 5 years and over	285.797.349	335.937	82.362	1.382.570
English only	80,0%	15,1%	46,4%	72,9%
Language other than English	20,0%	84,9%	53,6%	27,1%
Speak English less than "very well"	8,6%	40,0%	23,4%	10,3%

Source: 2009 American Community Survey

Data from the 2009 American Community Survey show that close to 73 percent of all Portuguese Americans speak only English at home. Given that about 14 percent of the Portuguese ancestry group was born outside of the United States, and thus are immigrants to this country, it might indeed be a small percentage, about thirteen percent of the American born, that speaks Portuguese at home. On the other hand, the much higher percentage of the Brazilian ancestry group that speaks a language other than English at home reflects the more recent immigration flows from Brazil to the United States. The middle range percentages of Cape Verdeans who speak only English at home are also reflective of a more stable pattern of immigration over the past few decades.

The rapid loss of capacity and fluency in Portuguese among Luso-descendants is reflected in the data collected through the online survey. Rumbaut et al.²¹ apply the demography concept of “life expectancy” to the survival of ancestral languages among the descendants of immigrants in the United States. These scholars attribute a linguistic death certificate to any respondent who indicates that they do not speak the language very fluently. If a person does not speak a language very fluently then they are not likely to

¹⁹ See Portes A. and L. Hao (1998) “*E Pluribus Unun*: Bilingualism and the Loss of Language in the Second Generation,” *Sociology of Education*, 71 (October), 269-29

²⁰ Waters, M., e T. Jiménez (2005), “Assessing immigrant assimilation: new empirical and theoretical tools,” *Annual Review of Sociology*, 31, pp. 105-25.

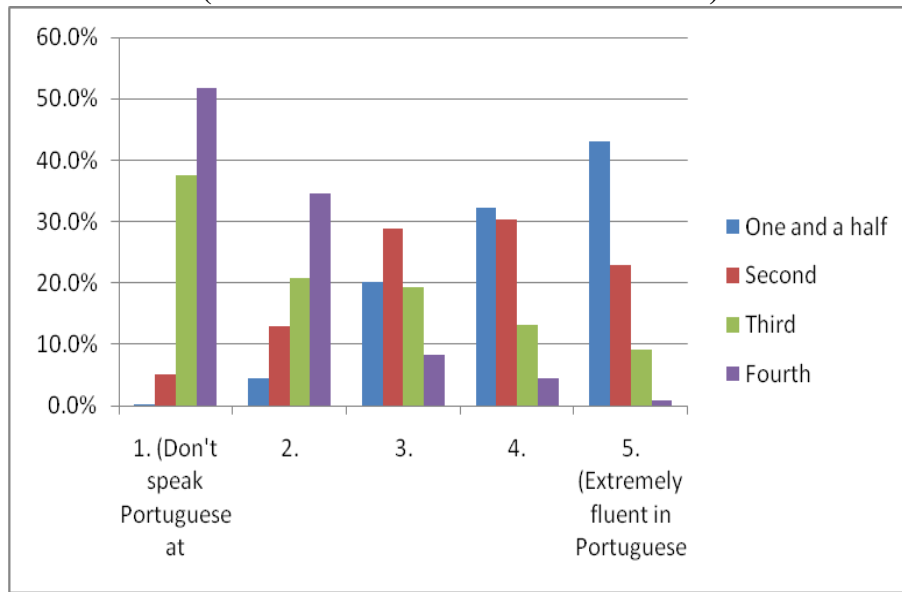
²¹ Rumbaut, R. D. Massey e F. Bean (2006) “Linguistic Life Expectancies: Immigrant Language Retention in Southern California,” *Population and Development Studies Review* 32 (3), 447-460.

use it for most linguistic functions and, as such, the probability that they will transmit it to their children is minimal. They also attribute a linguistic death certificate to the respondents who indicate that they do not speak the ancestral language at home. If the language is not spoken at home, then it is very improbable that it will be passed to the next generation. Results from different studies of descendants of immigrants show that in general only 2 to 3 percent of the third generation (grandchildren) are fluent in the ancestral language. Among Mexican-Americans who live in the highly bilingual cities near the border between the United States and Mexico, about 9 percent of the third generation maintains fluency in Spanish.

**Level of fluency in Portuguese by generation among Luso-descendants
(United States and Canada combined)**

Generation	Level of fluency					Total
	1. (Do not speak Portuguese at all)	2.	3.	4.	5. (I am extremely fluent in Portuguese)	
One and a half	1 0.3%	15 4.4%	69 20.2%	110 32.2%	147 43.0%	342 100.0%
Second	41 5.1%	104 12.9%	232 28.8%	244 30.3%	184 22.9%	805 100.0%
Third	74 37.6%	41 20.8%	38 19.3%	26 13.2%	18 9.1%	197 100.0%
Fourth and beyond	57 51.8%	38 34.5%	9 8.2%	5 4.5%	1 0.9%	110 100.0%
Total	173 11.9%	198 13.6%	348 23.9%	385 26.5%	350 24.1%	1,454 100.0%

**Level of fluency in Portuguese by generation among Luso-descendants
(United States and Canada combined)**



The data presented in the Table and Chart above show that there is a rapid decline in Portuguese fluency from generation to generation. They also show that the intergenerational retention of Portuguese is similar to that of the Mexican Americans who live near the border between Mexico and the United States, that is, 9 percent of the respondents from the grandchildren’s generation consider themselves to be extremely fluent in Portuguese. This higher rate than the general 2 to 3 percent displayed by the descendants of immigrant groups in general may be a result of high levels of geographical concentration. Portuguese Americans tend to live in cities in the United States and Canada where Portuguese is spoken not only at home but also in places of employment. Also keeping in mind that the online survey may be tapping a more educated population, it is possible that the level of bilingualism among the respondents is higher than for the average Portuguese American and Canadian populations.

The data on the language spoken at home during childhood and now as adults show how very rapidly the Portuguese language is lost among Luso-descendants (see the Tables and Charts below). For example, close to 90 percent of the “one and a half” generation (born in Portugal and immigrating with their parents between the ages of 4 and 14) spoke only Portuguese at home during childhood; however, as adults only 14 percent speak only Portuguese at home. As Rumbaut et al. (op cited), would say, if the language is not spoken at home, it is very unlikely that it will be transmitted to the next generation, and as such, it dies.

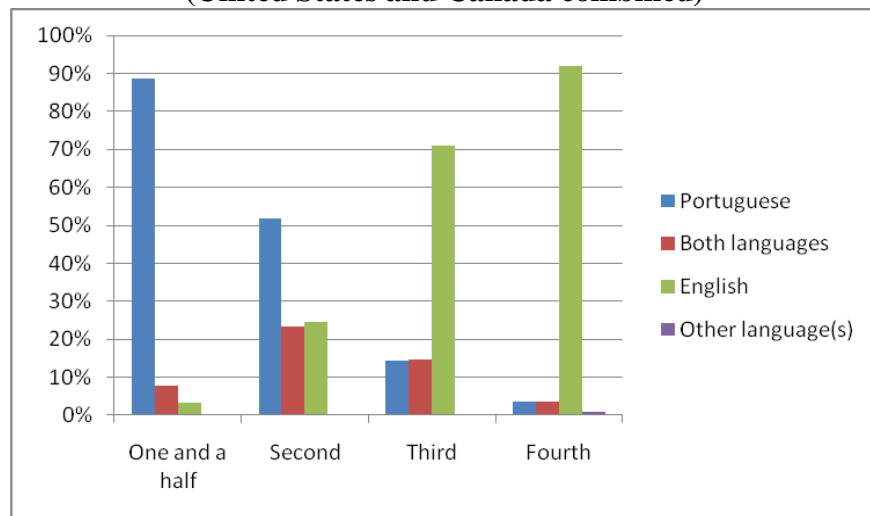
Language spoken at home during childhood (United States and Canada combined)

Generation	Portuguese	Both languages	English	Other language(s)	Total
One and a half	303 88.6%	27 7.9%	11 3.2%	1 0.3%	342 100.0%
Second	418 51.9%	187 23.2%	197 24.5%	3 0.4%	805 100.0%
Third	28 14.2%	29 14.7%	140 71.1%	0 0.0%	197 100.0%
Fourth and beyond	4 3.6%	4 3.6%	10 91.8%	1 0.9%	110 100.0%
Total	753 51.8%	247 17.0%	449 30.9%	5 0.3%	1454 100.0%

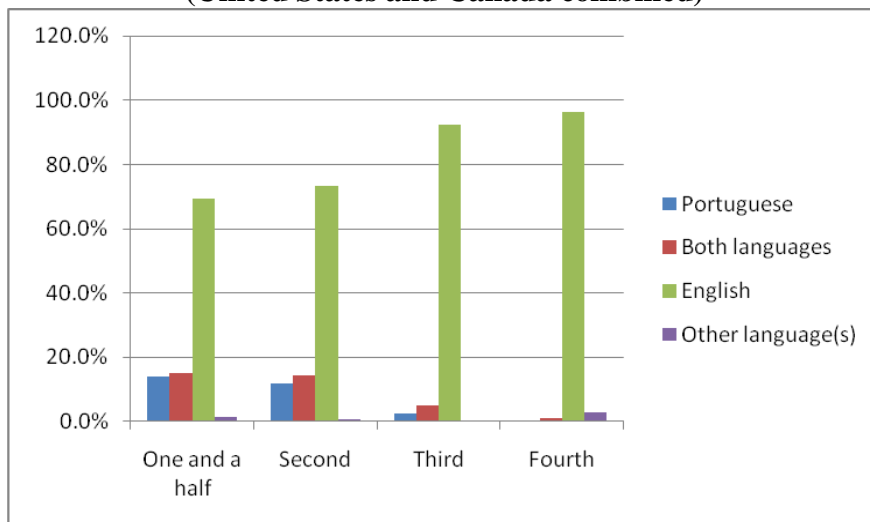
Language spoken at home in adulthood (United States and Canada combined)

Generation	Portuguese	Both languages	English	Other language(s)	Total
One and a half	48 14.0%	52 15.2%	237 69.3%	5 1.5%	342 100.0%
Second	94 11.7%	115 14.3%	591 73.4%	5 0.6%	805 100.0%
Third	5 2.5%	10 5.1%	182 92.4%	0 0.0%	197 100.0%
Fourth and beyond	0 0.0%	1 0.9%	106 96.4%	3 2.7%	110 100.0%
Total	147 10.1%	178 12.2%	1.116 76.8%	13 0.9%	1.454 100.0%

Language spoken at home during childhood (United States and Canada combined)



Language spoken at home in adulthood (United States and Canada combined)



The data on Portuguese language retention among Luso-descendants suggests that much work needs to be done to promote the ancestral language among Luso-descendants. As Brazil is expected to become the fifth largest economy in the world by 2050, and African countries of Portuguese expression become more developed, the importance of Portuguese as a language of international communication is increasing. Those who are able to speak Portuguese, in addition to having a more cosmopolitan world view, will also have a comparative advantage in the international labor market. It would be in the interest of the Portuguese speaking communities of the United States and Canada and of all the countries of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) that the Portuguese language is nurtured and maintained among Luso-descendants in the United States and Canada. A more concerted effort in the direction of supporting the teaching of Portuguese in the United States and Canada, principally on the part of Portugal, Brazil and the Lusophone communities of the United States, is urgently needed.²²

4.3. Participation in Ethnic Cultural Activities

The survey inquired about the respondents' attendance of ethnic feasts and festivals during childhood and as adults. The data show that the descendants of Portuguese immigrants, who answered the online survey, continue to be interested in attending ethnic feasts and festivals, but that their level of attendance declined substantially from childhood to adulthood. Some of the respondents indicated that the reason for their lack of attendance was the non-existence of Portuguese communities in the areas to which they had moved as adults.

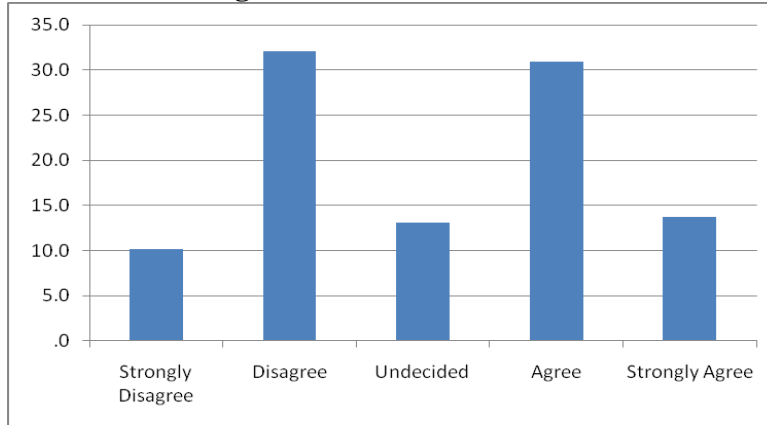
Attendance of ethnic feasts and festivals

	Attendance as a child		Attendance as an adult		Percent Difference
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Several times per year	72	5.0	37	2.6	-2.4
A few times per year	970	67.3	513	35.6	-31.7
Once or less per year	264	18.3	454	31.5	13.2
Never	136	9.4	438	30.4	21.0
Total	1442	100.0	1110	100.0	

* Missing values were excluded from this Table

²² I have written more extensively about this topic in Scott, D.M. (2010) O Ensino do Português nos Estados Unidos em Transição: Factores Demográficos e Sociais,” presentation delivered at the *II Congresso da Língua Portuguesa*, Instituto Piaget, Almada Campus, November 26-27, 2010 and in Scott, D. M., (2010), “O ensino do português nos Estados Unidos: como e a quem), *Comunidades* (<http://ww1.rtp.pt/icmblogs/rtp/comunidades/?m=10&y=2010&d=21>).

As an adult, I participate actively in social activities within the Portuguese American/Canadian communities



The response to the statement of whether the respondents participated actively as adults in social activities within Portuguese communities corroborated the pattern of attendance decline as adults, with about one half disagreeing and another half agreeing with this statement.

4.4. Interest in Portugal

The data show that the descendants of the Portuguese immigrants surveyed remain highly interested in Portuguese culture and Portugal. Close to 79 percent of the respondents indicated that they had visited Portugal, many repeatedly, and that they were planning to visit Portugal again. As the Table below indicates, the respondents from the one and a half and the second generations were more likely to have visited Portugal than those of subsequent generations. Visiting relatives and going on vacation were the main purposes of the visits to Portugal. 976 respondents indicated they had gone to Portugal on vacation, 917 to visit relatives, 177 to participate in religious holidays, 78 to live there part of the year, 13 to attend youth meetings, and 72 for an assortment of other reasons.

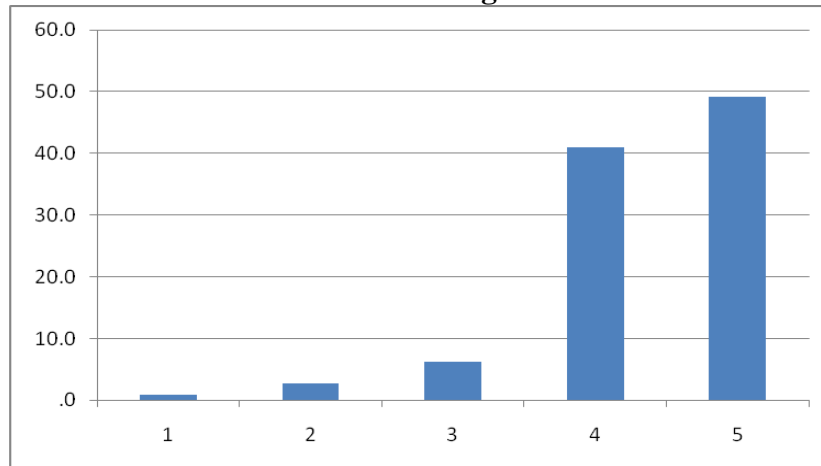
**Have you ever visited Portugal?
(United States and Canada combined)**

	No	Yes	Total
One and a half	40 11.7%	302 88.3%	342 100.0%
Second	97 12.1%	707 87.9%	804 100.0%
Third	92 46.7%	105 53.3%	197 100.0%
Fourth and beyond	81 73.6%	29 26.4%	110 100.0%
Total	310 21.3%	1143 78.7%	1453 100.0%

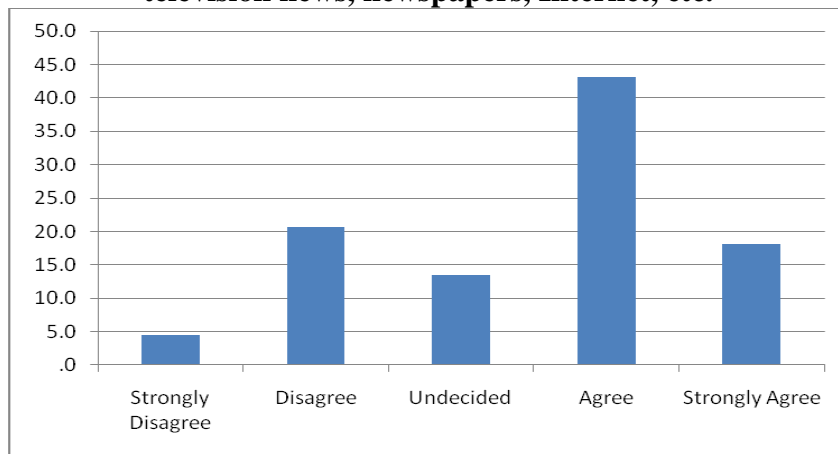
In addition to visiting Portugal, one third of the respondents also indicated that they had sent money to Portugal. The major recipients of these remittances were relatives, followed by churches. A few had also sent money to a school and a hospital, while a few others indicated that they had sent money for disaster relief, some mentioning specifically the recent floods in Madeira.

In addition to visiting Portugal, a large percentage indicated that they are very interested in things that are Portuguese and that they keep up with what is going on in Portugal through various types of media (see Charts below).

Currently, as an adult, I am very interested in things that are Portuguese



Currently, I keep up with what is going on in Portugal through television news, newspapers, Internet, etc.



The data presented in this section showed that the Luso-descendants, who participated in this survey, despite being well integrated socioeconomically and culturally into the North American societies, remain highly interested in their ethnicity, their ethnic communities and cultural activities within those communities. They also identify with Portugal and are interested in what happens there.

V CONCLUSION

The data collected in this survey show that for the majority of those who participated in the study, structural integration, characterized by rapid intergenerational upward socioeconomic mobility, is occurring. Even though, to a large extent, the immigrant generation experienced a model of incorporation in the manual labor market, at a time when the industrial sectors of Canada and the United States were still viable, they were able to launch their descendants on a path of upward assimilation into professional and higher service sector occupations and higher educational and income levels.

Additionally, data presented in the United States Census and the 2009 American Community Survey show a progression in terms of income, educational and occupational achievement in the aggregate among descendants of Portuguese immigrants in the United States. Although I have not, as of yet, analyzed census data for Canada, it is probable that the same progression is taking place in that society.

Despite having achieved high levels of structural integration, the data collected show that the descendants of Portuguese immigrants, who participated in the survey, have to a large extent maintained a simultaneous commitment to their ethnic culture and communities and to Portugal. Theirs, therefore, has been a path of integration characterized rapid upward socioeconomic mobility in conjunction with selective acculturation.

Despite their commitment to their ethnicity and ancestral land, to a large extent Luso-descendants have not been able to retain fluency in, and the use of, the Portuguese language. It would be in the interest of Portugal to reach out to Luso-descendants in the United States and Canada to cultivate among them ties to Portugal, a Portuguese identity, and the use of the Portuguese language, for, as successfully integrated Americans, they are best equipped to defend the interests of the ancestral home in these countries. Portugal should create more Portuguese language immersion programs for young people and students, not only designed to teach a general knowledge of the Portuguese language and culture, but also to teach more specialized linguistic registers for occupational functions, such as in law, social services, science and the economy. It would be important also to develop touristic programs that cater to the interests of the Luso-descendants, whereby, for example, opportunities to get to know the places where their ancestors came from and to do genealogical research are provided, in addition to the visits to the historically significant monuments and spaces. Whereas the visits of the immigrant generations are motivated by “saudades,” the visits of the American and Canadian born generations are journeys of self-discovery, of finding out where their parents, grandparents or great-grandparents came from, and thus of finding out who they, themselves, are...

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