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Mangú y Mofongo: Intergenerational Dominican-Puerto Rican Kinship, Intra-Latinx Subjectivities, and Latinidad

ALAÍ REYES-SANTOS AND ANA-MAURINE LARA

ABSTRACT

Interviews of Dominican-Puerto Rican families undertaken in March 2015 illustrate intra-Latinx kinship networks among Dominicans and Puerto Ricans that foster the articulation of Caribbean Latinidades across multiple generations. The first qualitative study of Dominican-Puerto Rican families in the United States documents multi-generational intra-Latinx kinship networks throughout the five boroughs that constitute New York City, as well as in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. Building on the work of Frances Aparicio, Ruby Danta, Delia Fernández, Milagros Ricourt, and Merida Rúa, on intra-Latinx relations and subjectivities, we argue that as scholars of Dominican and Puerto Rican Studies, and more broadly, Latinx Studies, we must not treat Dominican-Puerto Rican families as exceptional case studies in these fields; but rather we must approach Dominican-Puerto Rican families as integral components of Dominican and Puerto Rican communities in New York City. Moreover, paying attention to how the children of Dominican-Puerto Rican families assert their *dominicanidad* and *puertorriqueñidad*, as well as intra-Latinx subjectivities, such as "*plátano,*" "Dominican-Puerto Rican," "*hispano,*" or "*latino,*" we argue that we must rethink cultural nationalist methodological paradigms within Latinx Studies that implicitly ignore the specific challenges and experiences of these families, as well as engage what these families offer as intimate sites of knowledge production about intra-Latinx relations and solidarity in the U.S. [Key Words: Dominican-Puerto Rican families, latinidad, intra-Latinx subjectivities]

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"Somos plátanos" (Rosa 2015)
"Comemos mangú y mofongo. Es el mismo plátano hecho diferente" (José 2015)

In March 2015, we—a Puerto Rican woman and a Dominican-American woman—conducted a qualitative study of Dominican-Puerto Rican (DPR) families in New York City. We interviewed a total of twelve subjects from seven DPR families throughout the five boroughs: Staten Island, Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan, and Queens. The title of this article brings attention to a cultural-linguistic phenomenon that emerged through our interview process. Throughout the interviews the traditional Dominican dish, *mangú,* and the Puerto Rican dish *mofongo* kept appearing as metaphors for the national and intra-Latinx subjectivities Dominican Puerto Rican families claimed. Mangú is a widely recognized symbol of Dominican national cuisine, and mofongo plays the same role within everyday representations of Puerto Rican culinary traditions. It was not a surprise for us that Dominican-Puerto Rican families surveyed claimed mangú and mofongo as important components of their culinary and cultural heritage as intra-Latinx families, and as metaphors for their own subjectivities. These metaphors appeared throughout all of our interviews, as a way for our subjects to describe their intra-Latinx cultural experience and self-identification practices as members of Dominican-Puerto Rican families. José, a Dominican-Puerto Rican man who had been born and raised in Puerto Rico and migrated to New York City, invoked his culinary practices: "[*en mi casa*] *comemos mangú y mofongo. Es el mismo plátano hecho diferente*" ("[in my house] we eat mangú and mofongo. It is the same plantain cooked differently.") This indexing of the practice of cooking mangú and mofongo occurred repeatedly among the discourses of Dominican Puerto Rican children and served to make simultaneous claims to *dominicanidad, puertorriqueñidad,* and *latinidad.*

Similar to what scholars have noted about Dominicans and Puerto Ricans in New York City (Candelario 2007, Duany 1994, Duany 2001, Waldinger 2006), the Dominican-Puerto Rican families interviewed articulated a strong sense of pride in their Dominican and Puerto Rican heritages, as well as *hispanidad/*latinidad, in order to affirm their shared experiences as migrants or children of migrants of Latin American descent in the U.S. But, describing their culinary practices, they also conceptualized a Caribbean, Dominican-Puerto Rican latinidad, and varied notions of dominicanidad and puertorriqueñidad that were inclusive of their intra-Latinx subjectivities. *"Somos plátanos,"* Rosa, a young Dominican-Puerto Rican-Italian subject, stated. She spoke of being a "plátano" in the context of her friendships in high school

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and community college. Being a "plátano" enabled Rosa to articulate her intra-Latinx subjectivity and to claim a metaphor that rendered her legible in both Dominican and Puerto Rican circles, as someone who claims both cultural heritages.

Though all interviewees were comfortable asserting the Dominican and Puerto Rican heritages of their families, they shared how oftentimes family members and acquaintances in New York City, as well as in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, questioned their sense of belonging to Dominican and Puerto Rican communities. In their attempts to describe and affirm their intra-Latinx experiences, our subjects revealed historical tensions embedded in Latinx cultural nationalist projects in the U.S., as well as Dominican and Puerto Rican nationalisms on the islands. DPR families were highly aware of the documented history of discrimination of working class Dominican migrants and their children in Puerto Rico (Duany 2011; Duany, Angueira y Rey 1990; Reyes-Santos 2015). Pacini Hernández (2009) has shown how the contributions of Dominicans and Dominican-Puerto Ricans in the U.S. and on the island to reggaetón, a musical genre identified as Puerto Rican, tends to be ignored. Our interviewees experienced similar exclusionary practices while visiting not only Puerto Rico, but also the Dominican Republic, where stereotypical representations of "Dominicanyorks" as cultural outsiders and potential criminals (Torres-Saillant 1999), and their puertorriqueñidad, makes an impact on how people perceive them (or not) as people who appropriately represent Dominican values and cultural practices. While visiting either location, our subjects were sometimes told that they were either Puerto Rican or Dominican, not both: "I am not accepted in either country. In Puerto Rico, they tell me I am Dominican and in the Dominican Republic, that I am Puerto Rican" (José 2015). At other times, they were only validated as being Puerto Rican in Puerto Rico or Dominican in the Dominican Republic.

Our cultural nationalist frameworks have the potential to foster research questions and methodological approaches that implicitly treat intra-Latinx families as exceptional case studies, that is, not representative enough of our communities.

Dominican Studies and Puerto Rican Studies, as well as Latinx Studies, can replicate the exclusionary narratives of dominicanidad and puertorriqueñidad at times experienced by our Dominican-Puerto Rican subjects and their families if the fields do not consider intra-Latinx experiences central to our intellectual missions. Our cultural nationalist frameworks have the potential to foster research questions and methodological approaches that implicitly treat intra-Latinx families as exceptional case studies, that is, not representative enough of our communities. However, as Merida Rúa (2001), Delia Fernández (2013), and Milagros Ricourt and Ruby Danta (2003), have suggested, intra-Latinx family units are embedded in the social fabric of cities like New York City, Chicago, and Grand Rapids, where migrant communities

have built kin relations across multiple generations. Our interviews suggest potential openings in these fields by highlighting intra-Latinx kinship networks and subjectivities as articulated by Dominican-Puerto Rican families.

Potential Openings within Dominican, Puerto Rican, and Latinx Studies

Dominicans and Puerto Ricans are the two largest Latino sub-groups living in New York City. They share significant patterns of intermarriage, as well as kinship and political networks in New York City, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico (Aparicio 2006; Eizenberg 2012; Pantoja 1989). Scholarship on intermarriage in the U.S. has noted that high rates of intermarriage are possible when there is significant social proximity (Gilbertson et al. 1996; Gordon, 1964; Gurak and Fitzpatrick 1982; Landale 2006; Shin 2011; Stone, 1985) "in residential and occupational settings, or in other formal or informal settings, such as routine aspects of social life" (Gilbertson el al. 1996). Data on exogamous unions among Latinos reveal that the percentages tend to increase with each generation (Falcón 1992; Landale et al. 2006). Available data show that the majority of Dominicans (approx. 55%) and Puerto Ricans (62%) create endogamous families (Aquino 2011; Gurak at al 1996; Fitzpatrick 1966; Landale et al. 2006). However, Dominicans have the highest rate of intermarriage with other Latinos (Shin 2011, 1398). Scholarship on intermarriage rates have long documented that Dominicans and Puerto Ricans share kinship networks with one another. In the event of exogamous relationships, Dominicans choose Puerto Rican partners and vice versa (Gilbertson et al. 1996) at higher rates than with other ethnic/national groups. Our research builds on the existing literature. It draws on in-depth qualitative interviews to highlight the kinds of national and intra-Latinx subjectivities that emerge among our subjects, and the role of inter-ethnic kinship networks across multiple generations on the formation and articulations of these subjectivities.

Here we present some outcomes that show how members of Dominican-Puerto Rican families envision their relationship to their intra-Latinx families and surrounding communities, and articulate intra-Latinx subjectivities in a context where the cohesion of historically Dominican and Puerto Rican neighborhoods is threatened by high unemployment rates, high cost of living, and gentrification (Vargas-Ramos 2014). The fact that our subjects were found throughout the five boroughs of New York City, instead of historically Dominican or Puerto Rican neighborhoods such as Washington Heights, Spanish Harlem, or the Lower East Side, speaks to their displacement from these niches. Subjects repeatedly stated that they sought affordable housing, and better access to education, recreational facilities, and social mobility for their children. For some of them, moving away from historically Dominican and Puerto Rican neighborhoods meant being farther away from other family members and friends, but it did not entail foregoing their filial and parental obligations with them.

The Dominican-Puerto Rican families surveyed were deeply moved and enthusiastic about this project because as Carla, a Dominican-Puerto Rican woman in her early twenties, born and raised in New York City, said: "No one ever talks about

us." Through our examination of intergenerational Dominican-Puerto Rican kinship networks we honor their histories and offer methodological points of departure for future research. By concentrating on intergenerational Dominican-Puerto Rican kinship networks in New York City, our methodology heeds our interviewees' desire to document the specificity of their experiences as members of Dominican-Puerto Rican families, and Frances Aparicio's call to deepen our understanding of "the analysis of an emerging intra-latino subject and subjectivity embodied in the children of intra-latino marriages and of the processes of negotiating their interstitial identities in their everyday lives" (2009, 66).

Our study then contributes to Dominican, Puerto Rican, and Latinx Studies scholarship that builds on, while transcending, the traditional segmentation of these fields by cultural nationalist paradigms. Like Aparicio (2009), Rúa (2001), and Fernández (2013), we are invested in exploring how Caribbean latinidades emerge from intra-Latinx "*convivencia diaria*" (Ricourt and Danta 2003) among Dominicans and Puerto Ricans, alongside the simultaneous mobilization of national sentiments like dominicanidad and puertorriqueñidad.

In "Cultural Twins and National Others: Allegories of Intralatino Subjectivities in U.S. Latino Literature," Aparicio discusses the contested meaning of Latinidad in Latino Studies:

> Since the 1980s, the use of the terms "Latino/a" and "Latinidad" inevitably have triggered critical reflection about their political and social implications, their negative or positive impact, and their semantic feasibility and potential. These debates reveal the contested value of our field and the ongoing politics of naming it and of naming ourselves. The term "Latinidad," or in its plural form, "Latinidades," has been deployed more recently to understand the shared experiences of subordination, resistance, and agency of the various national groups of Latin American descent that comprise the U.S. Latino/a sector (. . .) Latinidad, by contrast, is a conceptual site that engages the power dynamics behind the deployment of an umbrella, ethnic term that occludes the vast heterogeneity of our individual, regional, and national experiences. (2009, 624)

The Dominican-Puerto Rican families interviewed asserted their Latinidad as Dominican-Puerto Ricans, plátanos, hispanos, latinos, as people who cook and eat mangú and mofongo, speak Spanish like a Dominican and a Puerto Rican, dance salsa, bachata, and merengue. They narrated how family members relate to one another across ethnic lines, and located themselves within Dominican, Puerto Rican, and intra-Latinx communities in New York City, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. Their intra-Latinx subjectivity emerges from their everyday co-existence with Dominican and Puerto Rican family members, but does not homogenize their experiences. Our interviewees named the tensions existing between Dominicans and

Puerto Ricans, while also sharing the rich and varied histories of migration, and narrating the family memories of intra-Latinx marriages and child rearing shaped by their distinct cultural practices. Our subjects "theorize latinidad from lived experience" (Rúa 2001, 129) of intra-Latinx, intergenerational, kinship networks of care and support in the islands and New York City.

In her historical account of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in Grand Rapids, Michigan in the 1960s, Delia Fernández (2013) highlights the value of fostering affective ties amongst different Latino communities that enable them to reproduce their respective and shared cultural practices and support each other:

> **While the Grand Rapids' community experienced some conflicts, Latinos nonetheless created networks and friendships that overcame their perceived differences. In their new city, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans saw the value of crossing ethnic lines and fostering cultural exchanges. They cooperated to build a place for themselves in the Catholic Church, at dance halls, and on baseball diamonds. (2013, 99–100)**

Examining intergenerational DPR kinship networks allows us to explore the ways in which Dominicans and Puerto Ricans experience cultural cross-fertilizations, build kin relations and networks for mutual care across ethnic lines, and raise children who navigate and embody Dominican and Puerto Rican cultural registers. We get to see how affective connections between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans across generations are important for the configuration of notions of dominicanidad, puertorriqueñidad and latinidad that recognize the heterogeneity of intra-Latinx communities.

Documenting what we call intergenerational DPR kinship networks we highlight the constant triangular movements between, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and New York City that shape these families across multiple generations.

We therefore provide multiple openings for Dominican, Puerto Rican, and Latinx Studies' approaches by documenting intergenerational kinship networks among Dominicans and Puerto Ricans; our respondents' shared experiences of Dominican Puerto Rican families dating at times back to the early twentieth century and living in a triangular movement between Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and New York City. We study DPR families not as a new phenomena—and not only a U.S.-specific one—but rather one that has been a reality for Dominicans and Puerto Ricans on the islands and the mainland for generations. Documenting what we call intergenerational DPR kinship networks we highlight the constant triangular movements between the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and New York City that shape these families across multiple generations.

Methodology

Our study focused on: the relationship between intimacy and intercultural understanding; inter-ethnic identity formation; how DPR families are received and perceived by peers and communities; social issues that affect DPR families, in particular, their children; how DPR families interact with others in their communities to improve social conditions, within and across ethnic lines; their relationship to their neighborhoods; their political practices and the relationship between their political practices and their identities; how they build family, and how their family experiences shape them and the choices they make in terms of their values, where they live, the kind of work that they do, where they work, the communities they build and sustain, their political opinions and their sense of personal efficacy to affect social change.

Interviews were conducted with individuals from DPR families, where at least one member was born in New York City, including children over age 18 with parents of both Dominican and Puerto Rican origin, or mothers and/or fathers of children of interethnic Dominican-Puerto Rican heritage. We targeted specific communities—Dominican and Puerto Rican communities in New York City—to get our initial contacts. We recruited study participants through purposive sampling with the support of Dominicanos USA[1] and individuals from family, friend, and professional networks. We recruited a majority of participants using snowball sampling methods (i.e., word of mouth). Because snowball sampling reduces statistical randomness, generalizability is also reduced. And yet snowball sampling was a productive methodological tool to document relationships amongst Dominican-Puerto Rican families and communities; the social, academic, and activist networks through which the news of the project travelled revealed how embedded Dominican-Puerto Ricans are in New York City, including social actors primordially known for their advocacy on behalf of explicitly Dominican or Puerto Rican political institutions.

In March 2015, we conducted nine 90-minute, semi-structured qualitative interviews with members of DPR families. The instrument was divided into ten segments aimed to collect qualitative data: demographics, family structure, household, language, education, employment, family and identity, values, community, neighborhood, political participation, and identity. We conducted two group interviews and seven individual interviews. We let the interviewees determine if they were interviewed as family units or as individuals.

Conducting both individual and group interviews illuminated different aspects of intercultural intimacy and gender relations. In the group interviews, families included 1) two parents and a child, and 2) the two parents of a child. The mothers—both Puerto Rican—tended to be the primary interlocutors in the interviews, their Dominican husbands taking secondary, supportive roles. While mothers in both families were not the sole breadwinners, they were the source of primary income, the ones who organized their families and their children's lives, and who also played a role in the well-being of the neighborhood and their extended families. These families were both very intimate in how they sat with each other, the ways they shared their stories, and how they

shared space with us as interviewers. We sat in their intimate family spaces—either the kitchen table or the couch, usually close together, and "como familia." In the case of Tessa, a single mom, and her daughter Luz, both chose to be interviewed separately. They expressed deep intimacy and care for each other within the interviews. This intimacy was also expressed through a desire to respect each other's experiences and the space to tell their own stories. It was significant to Tessa and Luz that they lived in a home run by Tessa, and as a second generation of single women raising daughters. Though Luz's father is a part of her life, her relationships with her mother, her aunt, and her grandmother define her day to day lived experiences.

Interviews were conducted in Spanish and in English, and sometimes in both languages. Four of the interviews were conducted only in Spanish. Four of the interviews were conducted only in English. And four interviews were conducted in English and Spanish using an English language instrument. Study participants determined language choice. In theory, both the English and Spanish language instruments were exactly alike, but in actuality, administering the instruments required different culturally specific approaches. Whereas those participants who chose to answer in English comfortably responded to questions in a linear fashion—moving from Section 1 to Section 10 in order, participants who chose to answer in Spanish responded quite differently. In the latter case, participants responded to the demographics questions directly, and then jumped around in their responses to study questions, returning to earlier questions later on in the interview, or incorporating new questions into earlier answers. This distinction might be of interest to linguistic anthropologists, as it illuminates possible areas of study in the "the work done by and through language in 1) establishing, challenging, and recreating social identities and social relationships, 2) explaining to others as well as to ourselves why the world is the way it is and what could or should be done to change it; 3) providing frames for events at the societal as well as individual level; 4) breaking, or more often sustaining, physical, political, and cultural barriers" (Duranti 1989, 212–3). Focusing on how Latinx interview subjects respond to instruments delivered in either or both languages may also contribute to bodies of literature that assess the relationships between subjectivity, identity, and language (Wei 1994); assimilation and codeswitching (Duran 1981; Zentella 1981); and conversations as cultural activities (Keating and Egbert 2004).

It is important that our analysis and interviews did not require heterosexual, nuclear marriage as the primary mode of family formation. The study was open to a broad spectrum of family formations, including: nuclear families, co-parenting partnerships, single parent families, extended families, step families, and heterosexual and queer families. As a result of this methodological approach to kinship, we interviewed:

1. A single mother and her daughter; both subjects have an on-going relationship with both the mother's mother and sister and the daughter's father and his wife and children.
2. A mother, father, and daughter who share a home with the mother's uncle and aunt, and have an extended family network across New York City and New Jersey.[2]

3. A young woman who lives with her single mother, her mother's sister, and her mother's mother and was raised in her parental grandparents' home.
4. A young man who lives with his male partner, and his single mother who currently cohabitates with her male partner of 20 years and who helped raise her children as their step-father.
5. A man who was raised by his mother and step-father.
6. A single father who is raising his daughter.
7. A young woman, recently married, who lives in her husband's family's house with his sister, his brother-in-law, and his mother.

The interviews we undertook in March 2015 incorporated all these family structures, and found that Dominican-Puerto Rican families build extended intra-Latinx kinship networks of care and child-rearing support with Dominican and Puerto Rican relatives across multiple boroughs that deeply inform what being Dominican, Puerto Rican, Dominican-Puerto Rican, Hispano, Latino, or plátano means to our subjects.

In their everyday life, these families live between the boundaries that delimit Puerto Rican and Dominican communities in New York City. They must cross those boundaries every day in order to co-exist and fulfill parental and filial obligations, and to forge a home for the children of Dominican-Puerto Rican unions. Including interviews with parents, step-parents, and children of Dominican-Puerto Rican unions, we are able to get a sense of the intra-Latinx family as a site for the reproduction of cultural values, beliefs, and practices (Calzada et al. 2010; Hernández 2012). In the design of our study, we draw from Merida Rúa's ethnographic research about Portomex and Mexiricans in Chicago (2001), by including a diverse range of family structures to account for single-parent, common-law unions, married and separated/divorced couples and extended families. As Rúa, we found that:

> **many of the individuals I interviewed provide testimonials as to the diverse, uneasy, but rewarding ways in which they have grown up bilingual and bicultural. The interviews show that identities are historically informed—by personal and family histories as well as texts—even as they transform the nature and content of what is traditionally deemed as Puerto Rican, Mexican, and even Latino. (2001, 129)**

Study Participants

We interviewed twelve individuals from seven families, spread across eight households. We interviewed seven women and five men. The median age among women was 34. Among the men, the median was 58. Seven of the interviewees were DPR children, and five were parents; three were Puerto Rican and two were Dominican. Of the DPR children, one was ethnically Puerto Rican with a Dominican step-father,

and one was Dominican with a Puerto Rican step-father. One interviewee was both Dominican-Puerto Rican parent (his daughter's mother is Puerto Rican) and Dominican-Puerto Rican child (his mother was Puerto Rican, his father was Dominican). Six of our participants were born in NYC.

Ethnicity, Race, Citizenship, and Religion

In this study, we asked people to articulate their ethnicity, their racial classifications, their citizenship status, and their religious affiliations. Ethnicity was defined as Dominican, Puerto Rican, Dominican-Puerto Rican or Other. Among the twelve respondents, four identified as Puerto Rican, two as Dominican, three as Dominican Puerto Rican, one as Dominican American, one as Puerto Rican Italian, and one answered "*Depende*/It depends." Race was defined using standard 2000 Census categories: Black, American Indian, Asian, White, or Other. As existing research on race and U.S. Latino Caribbean communities has shown (Candelario 2007, Duany 2011, Kasinitz et al. 2008, Rodríguez 1989), these were not effective measures of racial identifications. Of the twelve respondents, four identified racially as Latino, three identified as Hispanic, one identified as Puerto Rican, one identified as *negro* and one identified as *mulata*. They could also choose one of the following to describe their citizenship status: U.S., Dominican, Dual, or Other. Of twelve respondents, ten were U.S. citizens, one was a Dominican citizen and U.S. resident, and one was a dual Dominican and American citizen. Six of the twelve respondents were Catholics, two were Evangelical Christians, one Agnostic, and three had no religious identification.

Residence/Place of Birth

Of the twelve participants, six were born in New York City, three were born in the Dominican Republic, and three in Puerto Rico. Eight of the nine adults over age 24 are house or condo-owners. We got participants from all the five boroughs. One from Queens, two from Manhattan, two from Staten Island, three from Brooklyn and four from the Bronx (including three participants who grew up in the Bronx and live in Yonkers).

Socio-Economic Factors

All three participants under age 25 live with their parents; of these, two are in college. Eleven participants work and one subject is retired. Except for the one who is retired, the remaining eleven are employed in the public sector, the non-profit sector, the finance sector, and in health care. Two participants are self-employed, and one subject is a driver for a company.

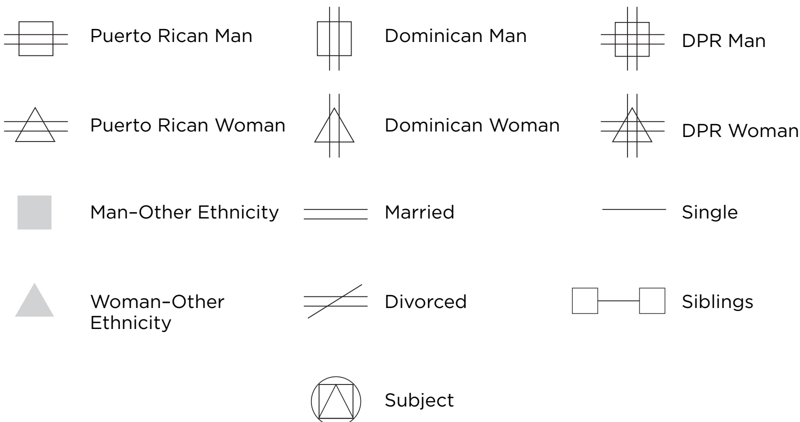
Household size varied. In total, we visited a total of eight households. Four had two heads-of-household, both employed; three of the households were run by single parents who have professional degrees; and one household was composed by a multi-generational extended family—in which two adults were retired and the other two adults in the household were employed.

Kinship Networks

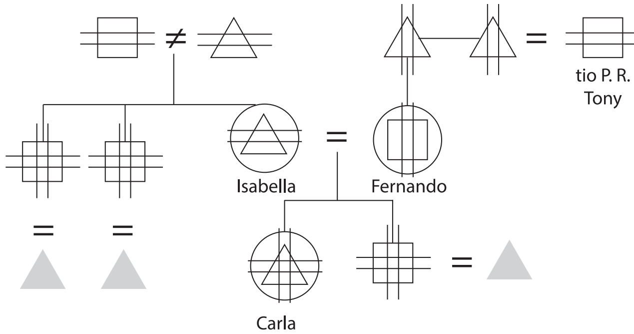
Available data show that the majority of Dominicans (approx. 55%) and Puerto Ricans (62%) create endogamous families (Aquino 2011; Gurak at al 1996; Fitzpatrick 1966; Landale et al. 2006). However, Dominicans have a higher rate of intermarriage with other Latinos (Shin 2011: 1398). The families we interviewed fell in the presumably 45 percent of Dominicans and 38 percent of Puerto Ricans who intermarry. What we found in DPR families is that, in most cases, the people we were interviewing were neither the first nor the only ones in their families to be Dominicans marrying Puerto Ricans or Puerto Ricans marrying Dominicans. In the families interviewed, we found that they had created broad kinship networks that included both consanguineous and affinal kin, intergenerational kinship, and a variety of family structures that included Dominican, Puerto Ricans, and others across homes in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and New York City.

In this section, we will map out the study participants' kinship networks, in an effort to highlight the high levels of variation of both family structures and interethnic relationships in Dominican-Puerto Rican families. We attempt to present the results of our research using polyvocality—that is, a multiplicity of voices—in an effort to both maintain some of the complexity of responses and to be attentive to questions of representation.

Legend for Kinship Charts



Family 1: Isabela, Fernando, Carla



Isabela started her interview by telling us that "*Dios me bendijo con tres mamás*—my aunt—the aunt is my *comadre* because she baptized my two kids. And the mother-in-law, who was the best."[3] Isabela is a Puerto Rican born in New York City, the youngest of ten children and the only one born in the U.S. She was born to a Puerto Rican mother and father. Her Puerto Rican mother, Elvira, divorced her Puerto Rican father when Isabela was a teenager and moved them both to Carmen's house in Brooklyn. Carmen was Dominican and was married to a Puerto Rican, Tony. Isabela describes in detail how Carmen helped Elvira care for her as a teenager. Carmen taught Isabela how to cook and clean the house following Puerto Rican *and* Dominican cultural norms. Their household consisted of Isabela, who was a teenager, her mother Elvira, Elvira's friend Carmen and Carmen's husband Tony. When Isabela was 18, Carmen's nephew, Fernando, came to Brooklyn from the Dominican Republic. He became part of the household, and despite themselves, a courtship developed between Fernando and Isabela.

By the time Isabela married Fernando, Isabela was already familiar with both Dominican and Puerto Rican cultural registers. At times, it was even hard for her to distinguish between the two. At other times, specific elements of each register became significant, for example, with specific cooking methods and household cleaning methods. Isabela was clear: "I can clean the house like a Dominican and a Puerto Rican," and "I learned from Carmen that you leave the lid on the rice. That's very Dominican, and Fernando noticed that." According to Isabela, she had three maternal figures in her life: her mom, her mom's friend Carmen, and her mother-in-law, Fernando's mother and Carmen's sister. Isabela had two children—a son and a daughter. When they were born, Carmen became their godmother, and a maternal figure for them as well.

Fernando moved into the house with his mom, Carmen's sister. Fernando is Dominican, born in the Dominican Republic. Fernando courted and married Isabela. Fernando is thankful to Elvira, Isabela's mother, and Tony, Carmen's husband—two Puerto Ricans who helped him navigate U.S. bureaucratic processes as a visa-holder. Tony helped him find a full-time job with benefits and retirement as a custodian

working for the City's Housing Development organizations. It was a job that Fernando held until 2014, when he retired.

Isabela still lives in the same house that her mother moved her to back when she was a teenager. This is the house where she met Fernando and raised her own children. After Carmen died, her mother Elvira moved to Puerto Rico and Isabela and Fernando stayed on to take care of Tony, Carmen's husband. Isabela and Fernando's daughter, Carla, lives at home with them and helps with Tony's care. She, like her mother, is proud to be part of a multi-generational family home.

According to Carla, Dominicans and Puerto Ricans share the same values, in particular, the kind of respect for maternal figures she inherited from her mom: "We are Puerto Rican. We are Dominican. It does not matter what our mothers do, our mothers are our world."

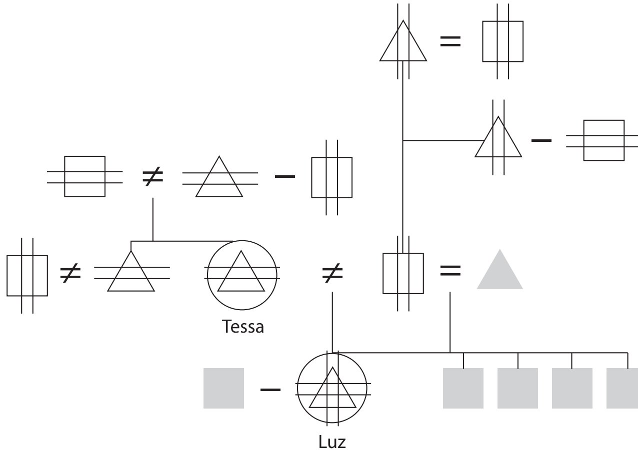
Carla is both Dominican-Puerto Rican and born in Brooklyn. She was born into her mother's multi-generational home. When Carla was growing up, her household included her older brother, her parents, her grandmother Elvira, her father's Dominican mother, her father's Dominican aunt (Carmen, Carla's great aunt), and Carmen's Puerto Rican husband. Carla's brother, Julio, is married to a Bolivian woman, and they live on Staten Island. Julio's geographic distance is a source of sadness for the family "because he is so far away" (Isabela), and they only get to see him on certain occasions. Isabela's mother retired to Puerto Rico, where she is cared for by Isabela's older sibling. Carla visits her grandmother in Puerto Rico regularly. According to Carla, Dominicans and Puerto Ricans share the same values, in particular, the kind of respect for maternal figures she inherited from her mom: "We are Puerto Rican. We are Dominican. It does not matter what our mothers do, our mothers are our world."

In Isabela's family, there is not only exogamous marriage between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans. There is also marriage with other Latinos, as in Julio's case. Julio is also not the first in his family to marry outside of Puerto Rican and Dominican ethnic communities. One of Isabela's brothers is married to an African-American woman. They have 13 children and live in New Jersey. Another one of Isabela's brothers is married to a Filipina woman. They live in Mississippi. In Isabela's family, endogamy is the exception, instead of the norm. The extended family maintains relationships through regular family gatherings throughout the year and on holidays. They also maintain contact through phone calls, visits between cousins, and caring for Elvira in Puerto Rico.

This multi-generational family, a kinship system that includes mutual care, support, *convivencia,* and childrearing, produces Caribbean intra-Latinx subjectivities that affirm an intimate knowledge of Dominican and Puerto Rican cultural registers: "somos hispanos ... la familia y educación son importantes para nosotros . . . yo bailo

merengue, salsa, bachata y reggaetón . . . hablo español como dominicana y puertorriqueña" (Carla). These intra-Latinx subjectivities are informed by exogamous marriages across generations with Latinos and other communities as well.

Family 2: Tessa, Luz



Tessa is a Puerto Rican woman born in Puerto Rico. She came to the U.S. as a teenager. She and her sister were raised in Brooklyn by her Puerto Rican mother, after her mother divorced her Puerto Rican father in Puerto Rico and migrated to the U.S. Tessa was a young mother. She married and had her daughter, Luz, with a Dominican man born in the Dominican Republic. They divorced shortly after Luz was born. From that time forward, she was a single mother. But, as she pointed out to us, "Even though I divorced her father, our families did not divorce. We have extended family vacations—mostly with her father's family." Tessa did not just remain close to her ex-husband, she is also very close to her ex-husband's extended Dominican family in New York City. In addition, Tessa and her ex-husband always made a point of sending Luz to both Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic to spend time with her extended family back on the islands. Luz not only has a strong relationship with her mother and father's families in New York City; she also stated that "I have a strong relationship to where my parents are from, to their towns (in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico)."

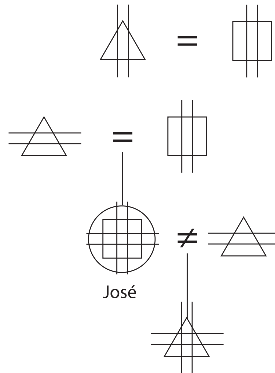
Luz was born in Brooklyn, and she and Tessa lived with her grandmother until she was a teenager. Tessa and Luz moved to Staten Island during Luz's adolescence when Tessa was able to purchase a home there. During Luz's childhood and teenage years, her Puerto Rican grandmother and aunt living in Brooklyn, as well as her Dominican father's family in Washington Heights, provided child care and daily support to Tessa who was raising Luz as a single, working, mom. For a few years, Tessa's mom and sister took Luz to school in Brooklyn, until Luz went to high school in Staten Is-

land. Now a college student in Manhattan, Luz visits, stays, and attends family functions every week in her mother's home in Staten Island, her maternal grandmother's home in Brooklyn, and her father's home in Long Island.

Intra-Latinx, Dominican-Puerto Rican, family structures in Tessa's and Luz's DPR kinship networks are intergenerational. Tessa's Puerto Rican mother currently has a Dominican boyfriend. Her sister was also married to a Dominican. Luz's Dominican father's sister is married to a Puerto Rican. Because of these elaborate inter-ethnic ties, Luz made it clear that "there is a stereotype that Dominicans and Puerto Ricans don't get along. I have no clue why. Being a person where my family is both, I don't see it. Both my mom and aunt ended up with Dominicans. And the other side ended up with Puerto Ricans. So much of my family is blended."

But exogamous intra-Latinx relationships are not only just amongst Dominicans and Puerto Ricans in their family. Luz's father remarried a Bolivian woman, and they have four sons, Luz's Dominican-Bolivian brothers. Luz herself has a boyfriend who is Guatemalan-Ecuadorian. Exogamous, inter-ethnic marriages, romantic/sexual relationships, and families are not uncommon in Tessa's and Luz's kinship network. A Dominican uncle is married to a Russian woman. As Tessa points out, "In our family, we have people of all kinds of backgrounds." Similar to Isabela's story of inter-generational filial support, these intra-Latinx, and more broadly inter-ethnic, families support their members educational and economic well-being throughout multiple New York City boroughs and the islands.

Family 3: José



José was born in Puerto Rico to a Dominican father and a Puerto Rican mother. His Puerto Rican family rejected him after his mother's death, "*porque mi papá era dominicano*" (Jose). After his mother's death, José's father returned to the Dominican Republic, and José was raised by his Dominican grandparents in Puerto Rico in a poor, working class neighborhood in San Juan. José went to college in Puerto Rico, earned a professional degree, and married a Puerto Rican woman. They had one

daughter, Rita, in Puerto Rico. When Rita was seven years old, José divorced her mother and migrated to Queens, New York.

José explained to us that he chose to live in Queens because he wanted to expose his daughter to a diverse multicultural migrant setting. He said, "I don't want her to assimilate [to U.S. society]; I want her to understand that she is a child of the world." This was explicitly important to José because of his own experiences of discrimination, violence, and poverty in Puerto Rico, and because of how Dominicans in the Dominican Republic have questioned his sense of belonging to the Dominican Republic. Together, these two sets of experiences motivated him to raise a child who does not adopt exclusionary notions of ethnicity, family, and community. At the same time, José travels with his daughter to the Dominican Republic on an annual basis. This is because:

> **My daughter—even though her father is Puerto Rican and her mother is Puerto Rican—feels Dominican. She has gone to the Dominican Republic. She has used a latrine, so that she has no hang ups or confusion about where she is from. So that she sees she is part of our land, and our culture. That the difference is that one people eats mangú and the other mofongo—two different ways of cooking plantain. She loves to go to the DR and to PR. She was raised in PR until she was seven years old."**[4]

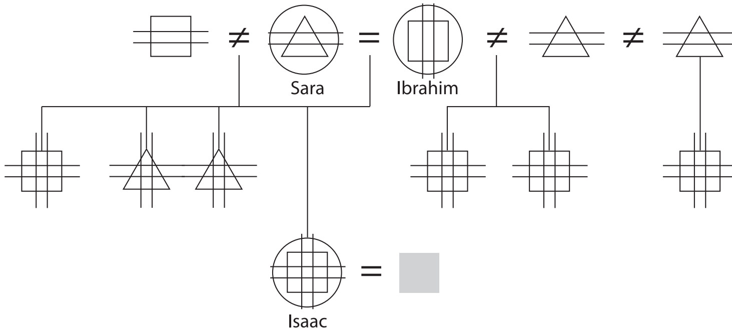
They go on annual trips to Puerto Rico to visit his grandparents. However, they return to the Dominican Republic as part of José's commitment to the educational programs sponsored by a NYC-based hometown civic association, of which he is a member. Despite having been raised in Puerto Rico, José never lost ties to his father's hometown community. And, when he migrated to New York City, it also became his hometown community.

Though his daughter is being raised in multicultural Queens (and not traditional Dominican or Puerto Rican neighborhoods), her father inculcates a strong sense of relationship and connection to both Dominican-ness and Puerto Rican-ness through ongoing, annual visits to family in both islands.

José's family is another example of an intergenerational DPR kinship networks that complicates our understandings of belonging, place, and kinship. In this case, José's identity as a Dominican-Puerto Rican was shaped by being raised in Puerto Rico by Dominican grandparents; his father's departure and return to their family's community in the Dominican Republic informs his own understanding of himself as a migrant in New York City, and informs how he raises his daughter. According to José, his daughter also identifies as Dominican-Puerto Rican. This is mediated not only by how he is raising her, but also through her on-going relationship with her

mother. Though his daughter is being raised in multicultural Queens (and not traditional Dominican or Puerto Rican neighborhoods), her father inculcates a strong sense of relationship and connection to both Dominican-ness and Puerto Rican-ness through ongoing, annual visits to family on both islands.

Family 4: Sara, Ibrahim, Isaac



Sara is a Puerto Rican woman born in Puerto Rico. For years, Sara was married to a Puerto Rican man. She had four children with him—two of them were born in Puerto Rico, two were born in Manhattan. In the mid-1970s, as a young adult, Sara migrated to New York City with her Puerto Rican ex-husband and worked in a factory in the Bronx, where her older brother was a manager. There, she lived with two other sisters, their husbands, and their children. They shared households in various Bronx housing projects. Together they supported each other economically, and with child-rearing. After a few years struggling to make ends meet, in the early ‘80s, Sara returned to Puerto Rico. There, she divorced her children's biological father and got a college degree while raising her children as a single mother. In the early 1990s, with her four children, Sara returned to New York City. She became a nurse. While living and raising her children in the Bronx and working in Manhattan, Sara met Ibrahim. In the early 2000s, Sara was able to save enough money to move to Yonkers, where she and Ibrahim eventually bought an apartment. Her two oldest children eventually returned to Puerto Rico, and one child moved to Florida.

Ibrahim is a Dominican man raised in Puerto Rico by his Dominican grandmother. He came to New York City as a young adult to live with his Dominican mother and siblings. But he always felt excluded from the family because “I am *moreno*.” It was because he was “moreno” that he had spent so many years living with his grandmother in Puerto Rico. When it became clear that he would not be able to re-integrate with his mother's family because of his skin color, he left them to live on his own. At that time, Ibrahim started working at a Puerto Rican mechanic's garage in the Bronx. That is where he was working when he met Sara.

Ibrahim has three Dominican-Puerto Rican children with two other Puerto Rican women. As a Dominican raised in Puerto Rico, Ibrahim identifies as ethnically Dominican, but he feels affectively closer to his wife's Puerto Rican extended family: "*ellos son mi familia*." Recently, after having helped Sara raise her youngest son, Isaac, he has sought to build a closer relationship with his Dominican-Puerto Rican children and his grandchildren. They all live in New York City.

Sara met Ibrahim at the garage where he worked. When Ibrahim began courting her, she originally thought that he was Puerto Rican because they met at the Puerto Rican-owned garage. She told us that "he sounded Puerto Rican" and had been raised in Puerto Rico. Once she learned that he was Dominican, she became suspicious of dating him. She said, "I had heard they only seek us [Puerto Rican women] out for citizenship." But all that changed when Isaac, Sara's son, insisted that Sara consider marrying Ibrahim. For months, while Sara worked, Ibrahim had been picking the children up from school, getting them home, cooking them food and generally taking care of them. Isaac became very attached to him and considered him to be his father.

Isaac is Sara's youngest child. He is Puerto Rican-born and raised in New York City. Ibrahim, his step-father, raised him: "Ibrahim is more my father than my biological father." Through their close-knit relationship, Isaac has come to understand himself as both a man and a gay man. Because of Ibrahim's love and kindness, Isaac "encouraged him to be as close to his other children as he is with me." It was Ibrahim's acceptance of him that allowed Isaac to develop a strong sense of himself, to not doubt his own ability for success, and to be open to his Cuban husband's family and culture. Isaac proudly talks about his Dominican stepfather, how he cared for him, and how both Sara and Ibrahim accepted his homosexuality and his partner. As an adult, Isaac lives in Manhattan with his Cuban husband. However, they visit Sara and Ibrahim frequently—on weekends and for holidays.

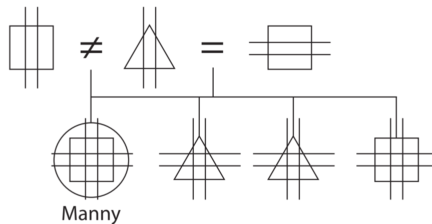
For Isaac, "Being Puerto Rican and Latino is important to me. I am a Puerto Rican, gay man. But being a gay man has been my struggle."

Isaac's family is not determined by blood, but rather by marriage, child rearing, and deep affective ties. Isaac's kinship network includes his Puerto Rican biological family, his Dominican step-father and his step-father's grown children, and his "gay family"—his circle of gay and gay-supportive friends—many of whom are Anglo-American and gay Latinos/as. Isaac's intra-Latinx, inter-ethnic, subjectivity is deeply informed by having been raised by a Dominican stepfather in a multi-racial and multi-ethnic neighborhood; having lived with working class and middle class Italian Americans, white ethnics, Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, other Latinos, and African Americans; going to a magnet school with a small minority student body; and also through his experiences as a gay man. For Isaac, "Being Puerto Rican and Latino

is important to me. I am a Puerto Rican, gay man. But being a gay man has been my struggle." Isaac's kinship network broadens across ethnic lines and blood ties to include people who support him as a gay man and his advocacy for gay rights in the U.S.

This kinship network illustrates heterogeneous bonds between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans and intra-Latinx subjectivities across multiple sites: Puerto Rico, the Bronx, Manhattan, and Yonkers. Whereas Ibrahim is a Dominican who identifies with and embodies Puerto Rican cultural registers as a Dominican raised in Puerto Rico, Isaac is a Puerto Rican born in Manhattan and raised by his Puerto Rican mother and Dominican step-father. Isaac, in adopting Ibrahim as his "papi," also intentionally developed sibling-like relationships with Ibrahim's biological Dominican-Puerto Rican children, who he feels "did not get to know [Ibrahim] as a dad like I have." Sara had to question her preconception about Dominican men, and what dominicanidad and puertorriqueñidad meant for her because her Dominican husband could navigate both Puerto Rican and Domincian cultural registers and easily passes as a member of her Puerto Rican family. Lastly Isaac's homosexuality led him to partake in inter-racial, inter-ethnic, and intra-Latinx "chosen families" that support him as a gay man. These chosen families include how his Puerto Rican mom, Dominican step-father, and Cuban family-in-law accept him and his partner as gay Latino men.

Family 5: Manny



Manny was born in the Dominican Republic. He was raised in the Puerto Rican *barrio* in New York City by his Dominican mother and his Puerto Rican step-father in the 1960s. His biological father is Dominican. Manny is the oldest of his siblings; his three younger siblings are Dominican-Puerto Rican. Manny believes that being raised by a Puerto Rican stepfather and being surrounded by Puerto Ricans deeply shaped his upbringing and his sense of self as a young man and a migrant from the Caribbean in the U.S. He used to protect himself from racist attacks by police and gangs walking to school with Puerto Rican men from the neighborhood. School friends and acquaintances in his immediate community used to call him "Puerto Rico Santo Domingo." Manny makes reference to this nickname as a way to describe his intra-Latinx subjectivity and experience.

Manny's Dominican father eventually migrated to New York City. He moved into a nearby neighborhood and, with the help of a Jewish investor, opened a mechanic's

garage. It was here, at the garage, that Manny's father introduced him to other Dominicans, in particular the many men who visited the garage in search not just of car services, but employment, mutual assistance, and support with documents. It was at the garage that Manny's father and grandfather recruited him to translate government paperwork from English to Spanish and back again. Here, he was taught to be in service to his community through small, daily acts of support. But he was also very active with his grandfather in church, and through church, with the broader Latinx community:

Mi mamá se preocupaba mucho que yo aprendiera inglés, que participara en actividades con mi abuelo y fuera con él a la iglesia. Así se aseguraban que yo pudiera interpretar de inglés a español en la iglesia y para ayudar a la comunidad. Yo me acuerdo que era muy jovencito . . . Había necesidad de ayudar a la gente a peticionar (por sus documentos). Pusieron a alguien una vez a la semana y fue mi obligación la traducción.

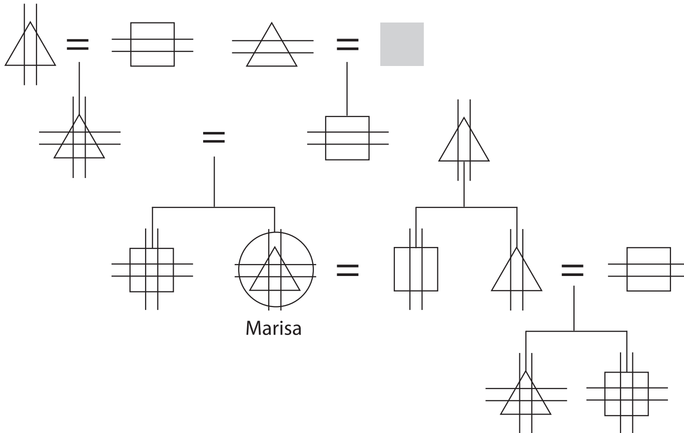
But Manny explains that at the time Puerto Ricans were the most represented Latinx population in the City and which directly impacted his coming of age as a civic leader. He cited various examples of Puerto Rican local leaders who provided educational and professional mentorship, and paved the way for Latino leadership in the City that included emerging Dominican political and civic figures like himself. While being deeply grounded in Dominican political and civic life in New York City, Manny married a Jamaican woman a few years ago. He laments that the neighborhood he grew up in—the Upper West Side—has now been gentrified, and that his siblings have all moved to New Jersey, where they can better afford housing.

Manny's kinship network exemplifies a Dominican-Puerto Rican kinship network built through affective ties and intra-Latinx political solidarity. His intra-Latinx subjectivity emerges from his experience as a Dominican man who was raised alongside and shares strong affective ties with his Dominican-Puerto Rican siblings, who provided an important service to the local Latinx community at his Dominican father's business, and identifies profoundly with his Puerto Rican step-father and older Puerto Rican political leaders. He claims Puerto Ricans' history of political struggle in New York as his own, as part of a larger intra-Latinx effort, that enabled him to grow as a civic leader that advocates now on behalf of Dominican and Latinx access to voting.

Along with Isaac, who was raised by his Puerto Rican mother and his Dominican step-father, Manny also provides another example of how kinship amongst Dominicans and Puerto Ricans emerges from single-mother households that are transformed into intra-Latinx families through exogamous marriage. While Isaac adopts his Dominican step-father as his dad, gives him credit for his upbringing and seeks a relationship with his Dominican-Puerto Rican children, Manny describes how his Puerto Rican step-father was a significant paternal figure in his life and raised a Dominican Puerto Rican family with Manny's Dominican mom. Moreover, like with Isaac's marriage to a Cuban man, Manny's marriage to a woman from the English-speaking Caribbean reproduces their parents' exogamy. Throughout each one of

these case studies, exogamy does not appear to be an exception for our subjects as members of intra-Latinx, Dominican-Puerto Rican, families in New York City. Exogamy may even be a constitutive aspect of their intra-Latinx subjectivities. That would be a question to consider for future studies.

Family 6: Marisa



"My Dominican and Puerto Rican friends, we make fun of ourselves. We call ourselves plátanos, the banana boat clan. I try to have friends who are like me, accepting, not judgmental" (Marisa).

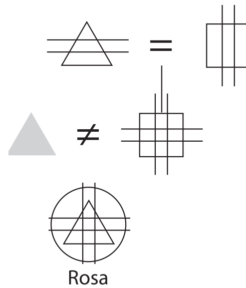
Marisa and her brother, Esteban, are Dominican-Puerto Rican, born in New York City, raised both in New York City by her parents and the Dominican Republic by her grandparents. Marisa's parents share the experience of being first-generation Dominicans in the Dominican Republic. Marisa's mother is the daughter of a Dominican man and a Puerto Rican woman, and was raised in the Dominican Republic. Her father was born in Puerto Rico, a son of a Puerto Rican woman and a Spanish man. He was raised in the Dominican Republic. Her parents migrated to New York City, to the Bronx, where Marisa and her brother were born. When she was seven years old, her parents sent Marisa and Esteban to live with their grandparents in the Dominican Republic. There, she was raised in a middle-class neighborhood in Santo Domingo. Her grandparents, and their cultural differences as migrants in the Dominican Republic, were important aspects in her upbringing. As a result, Marisa identifies as a "Dominican with Puerto Rican roots."

Marisa married a Dominican man, Marcos. Her husband's Dominican sister is married to a Puerto Rican. They are currently raising their two Dominican-Puerto Rican children, Marisa's niece and nephew. While Marisa and her husband have their own house in Yonkers, they own a gym at his Dominican mother's house in the Bronx—where his Dominican sister and her Dominican-Puerto Rican children live.

Marisa and her husband travel almost daily between Washington Heights, the Bronx, and Yonkers as members of DPR families that support each other's business, child-rearing practices, and elderly care. They also travel to the Dominican Republic once a year, both to visit their grandparents and to carryout social service projects.

Marisa's kinship network illustrates how her intra-Latinx subjectivity is constituted by intergenerational Dominican-Puerto Rican kinship networks that emerged initially due to early-twentieth-century Puerto Rican migrations to the Dominican Republic, and re-emerge in her husband's Dominican family, where exogamous marriages and child rearing with Puerto Ricans seems to be normative.

Family 7: Rosa



Rosa's kinship network is another example of a Dominican-Puerto Rican family that has its origins on the islands, not in New York City. Rosa's father, Carlos, is a Dominican-Puerto Rican man born in the Bronx. Her Dominican grandfather was born in the Dominican Republic at the turn of the twentieth century. His family migrated to Puerto Rico, where he was raised. Rosa's family rarely mentions their Dominican heritage because their Dominican grandfather, Juan, refused to discuss it publicly; Rosa spoke at length about the discrimination her Dominican grandfather experienced from Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico and in the Bronx. After marrying Rosa's grandmother, a Puerto Rican woman, the couple migrated to New York City. Rosa shared the family narrative in which her grandmother was forced to leave Puerto Rico because her grandmother's family could not accept her marriage to a Dominican.

Carlos, Rosa's father, married an Italian woman and had Rosa. We interviewed Rosa in her mother's house, which has been in her Italian mother's family for four generations. However, Rosa was raised by her father and his parents, and continues to be very close to them. Though she currently lives with her Italian-American mother while going to college, she identifies strongly with her Puerto Rican heritage. She wants to learn more about her Dominican family's history. For her the terms "Hispanic" and "plátanos" help her convey the Dominican and Puerto Rican roots of her intra-Latinx subjectivity and her Dominican-Puerto Rican group of friends in the Bronx.

Though she currently lives with her Italian-American mother, while going to college, she identifies strongly with her Puerto Rican heritage. She wants to learn more about her Dominican family's history.

Rosa's kinship network is provocative because 1) it traces a New York-based Dominican-Puerto Rican family and Rosa's intra-Latinx subjectivity to early-twentieth century migrations among Caribbean islands; 2) once again, we find an example of Dominicans raised in Puerto Rico, and Dominican-Puerto Ricans, who face xenophobic and racist violence in Puerto Rico and Puerto Rican communities in the U.S.; 3) passing as Puerto Rican, and not revealing a Dominican-Puerto Rican intra-Latinx subjectivity by blood ties, kinship networks or child rearing, at times seems to be a survival strategy for DPR family members; and, 4) subjects moving to Upper Manhattan, Yonkers, Staten Island, and Brooklyn mention building close ties with white ethnic communities in those areas. Rosa's Dominican-Puerto Rican-Italian American family may be symptomatic of how DPR families build exogamous kinship networks within and outside Latinx communities in the second and third generation.

Throughout the kinship networks documented by the study, inter-ethnic and exogamous unions appear to be normative, not exceptional, across several generations. All the DPR children we interviewed were raised by extensive, intergenerational, intra-Latinx, kinship networks that include their parents, grandparents, aunts and/or uncles, and step-parents. These family constellations illustrate a variety of intra-Latinx subjectivities emerging from distinct intergenerational DPR kinship networks: Dominican-Puerto Ricans who are born from exogamous unions on the islands and NYC, Dominicans raised in Puerto Rico, Puerto Ricans raised in the Dominican Republic, Dominicans with Puerto Rican step-parents and Puerto Ricans with Dominican step-parents, as well as their family members of various ethnic backgrounds. All these are intra-Latinx subjectivities emerge from migratory patterns, cross-cultural exchanges, inter-ethnic upbringing, and kin relations. Some claim to be both Dominican and Puerto Rican; others, only or mostly claim puertorriqueñidad or dominicanidad; some claim to be hispanos, latinos, and/or plátanos. But as members of Dominican-Puerto Rican families they all negotiate their own sense of self and how others perceive, the cultural boundaries of dominicanidad and puertorriqueñidad, and their cultural histories as migrants in New York City who have ties to the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and communities across various New York City boroughs. From those meaningful, though at times painful, negotiations, we find intra-Latinx families that push the limits of our fields of study. Dominican-Puerto Rican subjectivities may not yet appear significantly in quantitative and qualitative research about Dominican and Puerto Rican familial structures, but our subjects suggest they are integral components of Latinx communities in New York City.

Intra-Latinx Subjectivities: DPR Kinship and the Boundaries of Our Fields

"When I speak to my dad's family, they say I am 100% Dominican; when I am with my mom's family, I am 100% Puerto Rican" (Carla)

Carla, the proud daughter of a Puerto Rican mother and a Dominican father, suggested that her intra-Latinx subjectivity was interpreted differently by her Dominican and her Puerto Rican relatives. Unlike other subjects, Carla's Puerto Rican family did not deny her puertorriqueñidad for having a Dominican father; and her Dominican family did not deny her dominicanidad for having a Puerto Rican mother. However, both sets of family members affirmed only the ethnic heritage that she shares with them. She was proud of embodying cultural and linguistic registers that identified her with her Dominican and Puerto Rican families, yet felt the need to constantly remind herself that she is both "dominicana y puertorriqueña." As she quickly added, "I dance merengue, bachata. I go to both parades." Carla's intra-Latinx, Dominican Puerto Rican, subjectivity—her Caribbean latinidad—requires her to navigate how Dominicans and Puerto Ricans represent their similarities and what distinguishes them from one another.

Luz, in turn, noted that both her Dominican and Puerto Rican grandmothers faced similar economic challenges and labor histories when they migrated to New York City as young women: "Both of my grandmas [on the Dominican and Puerto Rican sides] worked in a sewing factory. They also both lived in a jam-packed apartment [with lots of family members]."

In our conversations with DPR families, we were attentive to whether participants a) had experienced internal or social conflict regarding their identities, legitimacy and/or belonging; and/or b) had developed a unique set of tools to navigate their place within multiple communities—both distinctly Dominican and Puerto Rican ethnic communities, but also home communities in New York City and back on the islands. Participants were asked to reflect on what it means for them to be Dominican or Puerto Rican, and what it means for them to be both Dominican and Puerto Rican. We asked them to evaluate cultural, historical, and social similarities between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans, and the impact of being Dominican, Puerto Rican, or DPR on how they relate to family, friendships, and communities in the islands and New York City.

In their initial responses to our questions Dominican, Puerto Rican, and DPR subjects emphasized similarities. Tessa, Luz's mother, emphasized musical and culinary traditions shared by Dominicans and Puerto Ricans: "We [Dominicans and Puerto Ricans] share certain traditions: salsa and merengue are played everywhere. We have similar food: mofongo, mangú." Luz, in turn, noted that both her Dominican and Puerto Rican

grandmothers faced similar economic challenges and labor histories when they migrated to New York City as young women: "Both of my grandmas [on the Dominican and Puerto Rican sides] worked in a sewing factory. They also both lived in a jam-packed apartment [with lots of family members]." Marisa from the Bronx finds that her Dominican and Puerto Rican families in New York City share similar values about family and education: "Family and education are important to everyone. When I was little, my grandmother sat me down and told me I have to become a professional, and family is everything. And my other grandparents the same." Whether in the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico or New York City, Marisa's family's values transcend ethnic specificity.

DPR children would often be explicit about how they were constantly crossing between communities. Like Manny, who was born to two Dominican parents, but was raised by a Dominican mother and a Puerto Rican step-father in Manhattan's 1960s barrio: "When I was young, they would call me Santo Domingo [in the Puerto Rican barrio], but my friends called me Santo Domingo Puerto Rico."[5] Isaac, a Puerto Rican man raised by his Dominican stepfather and Puerto Rican woman, and in a romantic relationship with a Cuban man, conceptualized Caribbean Latinidad based on culinary and other cultural similarities between Dominican, Puerto Ricans, and to some extent Cubans: "Latino Caribbean cultures—they are the most similar. Out of those three [Cuban, Dominican and Puerto Rican], Dominicans and Puerto Ricans have the most similarities. Even the sazón is similar."

For some Dominican-Puerto Rican subjects, such as Luz and Marisa, it was difficult to distinguish if some of the culinary traditions and linguistic practices that characterize them are either Dominican or Puerto Rican:

"I cannot tell you I was raised to be Dominican or Puerto Rican. I can tell you what traditions I was raised with." (Luz)

"I think I was raised to be everything. Even my grandmother – the Spanish side – was a big influence. She would dance flamenco and I was raised with that. I was very much raised to be a part of all these cultures being very much a part of me." (Marisa)

Our subjects' intra-Latinx, DPR asserted a shared Caribbean latinidad—common experiences, values, and cultural practices—among Dominicans and Puerto Ricans. This intra-Latinx subjectivity was accompanied in each interview by an expansive idea of kin relations, child rearing, and belonging across racial and ethnic lines: "In terms of differences, I have a hard time with that. In my family, we have people of all kinds of backgrounds. I see more commonalities" (Tessa).

While affirming similarities among Dominicans and Puerto Ricans, our subjects do not presume an intra-Latinx homogeneous experience, nor identified always to the same degree with dominicanidad and puertorriquenidad. As Luz stated: "When I think

of going to my home country, I think of Puerto Rico. When I think of music and other cultural traditions, Dominican." Luz also noticed linguistic differences: "Dominicans and Puerto Ricans speak different...Dominicans, everything is mushed. They speak at a quicker pace than Puerto Ricans...When you speak Spanish—that is when I can tell the difference between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans" (Luz). And Marisa's mother, who was raised by her Dominican and Puerto Rican parents in the Dominican Republic, identifies as Dominican though her intra-Latinx household combines Dominican and Puerto Rican linguistic practices in their everyday life: "When my mom speaks, they say 'Oh, you're puertorriqueña.' 'No,' she responds, 'yo soy dominicana.' But it's because of some of the words we say that are more Puerto Rican. Which I didn't know, but there are words that are more Puerto Rican and words that are more Dominican, so when we speak everybody is like, where are you from?" Subjects also shared moments when others identify them with only half of their heritage because of what they perceive to be racial or cultural differences between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans. Growing up in a predominantly Puerto Rican, Italian American, Irish American neighborhood, DPR Marisa from Yonkers and the Bronx explains: "I was called Dominican in school. But other times people would say 'You're Puerto Rican because Dominicans are darker.'"

José identifies significant historical differences between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans, and leans more favorably toward what he identifies as Dominican survival strategies than Puerto Rican ones: "The difference between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans is basically about points of view on life. Genetically, [we are] the same thing, culturally almost the same."[6] For José, the differences between both peoples was based in the history of peoples' communities back on the islands. This, for him, could explain differences in how Dominicans and Puerto Ricans on the island and in New York City manage life:

> **The differences between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans have to do with basic needs. They are not the same for a Dominican as they are for a Puerto Rican. They always clash because their ideas about life are different. The Dominican will always try to make a life, wherever he is. The Puerto Rican has always watched other people manage his life. They [in Puerto Rico] have never, we have never taken up arms, like Dominicans have had to—whether they are military or not, they had to take up arms. And they lived through a dictatorship.**

For José, a Dominican-Puerto Rican raised by his Dominican grandparents in Puerto Rico, this kind of insight reflects an important element of how he understands himself in relationship to both Puerto Ricans and Dominicans. So, though he makes a point of always "making a life on his own terms—like Dominicans—, he also marks how, as a Puerto Rican, he has never taken up arms to resist an oppressive government like Dominicans did during the Trujillo dictatorship. In this case, José is mapping a terrain for the ways in which he understands his masculinity as both a Puerto Rican and a Dominican man. He invokes Dominican and Puerto Rican history to articulate a theory about why Dominicans and Puerto Ricans, specifically men, behave as they do to meet their basic material needs.

For those who had been born on the islands, or who frequently visited their families on the islands, their experiences back home were significant to their self-understanding as migrants or children of migrants in New York City. This was especially the case for José, as a man born in Puerto Rico and raised there by his Dominican grandparents. He migrated to New York City as a young adult, and had a daughter with a Puerto Rican woman. The way he describes how Puerto Ricans and Dominicans on the islands treat him as a Dominican-Puerto Ricans is an example of how intra-Latinx subjectivity are informed by geographical location and intra-island migrations. Yet these subjectivities do not necessarily get any clearer once subjects have migrated to New York City.

José: "If I am in Puerto Rico, I am Dominican. If I am in the DR, I am Puerto Rican."[8]
PI: "Why is that?"
José: "Because I am not accepted in either country. In Puerto Rico, they tell me I am Dominican and in the DR, that I am Puerto Rican. Well, since I was little I have learned to live with this. And to see more similarities than differences. But, people like to see difference where there are none."[9]
PI: "What about here in New York City?"
José: "In New York, it's more flexible because people don't ask. I participate in both cultures—to put it that way—without any problem. People get confused. There are people who think I am Dominican and there are others who think I am Puerto Rican. I play with that. Though usually I have had more problems with Dominicans than Puerto Ricans: they don't accept me as Dominican. Why do they say that? Because I don't have a very marked Dominican accent, as if an accent could determine your culture. Many tell me I'm Boricua, that I am Puerto Rican, not Dominican, as though it's that easy to remove someone's cultural genetics."[10]

Similarly, Rosa's experiences as a child of a Puerto Rican-Dominican father and an Italian mother were very much influenced by racial attitudes back on the island of Puerto Rico:

With my family, it was very predominantly Puerto Rican. Nobody talked about the Dominican side. My grandmother is from Lares, she's very light-skinned. My grandfather claims that he is from Mayagüez. He's from the Dominican Republic, but they never told me where. His family came in through Mayagüez. My grandfather was very dark-skinned. There were a lot of race issues with him. When my grandmother met my grandfather, everybody freaked out. Oh no! He doesn't look Puerto Rican—he's dark! So, they moved to New York. My grandfather would insist he was Puerto Rican. And I asked him, when I was older, about him being Dominican. And he said if I insisted, he would kick me out of his house.

When we asked her to elaborate on how her family articulated these differences among Dominicans and Puerto Ricans, Rosa responded:

> **I think how Puerto Ricans portray themselves. I know Puerto Rico now is coming together, and in the past Dominicans there were under constant attack. I guess if you go to a country where you are made to feel like an outsider, then there's a superiority that Puerto Ricans think they have over Dominicans. It's sad, because we're all a part of the same people.**

These examples of how cultural nationalisms are deployed to limit how Dominicans and Puerto Ricans articulate an intra-Latinx subjectivity and sense of belonging, may help explain why Tessa's DPR daughter Luz "takes advantage of being Dominican, Puerto Rican and American. She goes with whichever works best for her in the moment" (Tessa). At times letting others identify them as either Puerto Rican, Dominican, or American serves to minimize the potential marginalization, exclusion, or isolation produced by racist and xenophobic narratives.

Puerto Rican Tessa, DPR Luz's mother, believes the following: "We need to stay committed as parents…I am not talking about Puerto Ricans or Dominicans, but about Latinos. We can't let our kids fall through the cracks."

Our subjects articulated narratives of dominicanidad and puertorriqueñidad that are not predetermined by exclusionary cultural boundaries used to socially delimit who belongs in one community or the other, but rather are inclusive of intra-Latinx kin relations, and cross-cultural exchanges, as well as intra-Latinx subjectivities. Nonetheless, these Dominican-Puerto Rican subjects are aware of tensions, distinctions, and historical differences between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans; they negotiate them within their intimate life constantly.

While acknowledging challenges in intra-Latinx relations, specifically amongst Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, and Dominican-Puerto Ricans, they deploy the terms Latino, Hispanic, and plátano to assert their intra-Latinx experience, but also to connote a unified political struggle amongst Latin American migrants and their children in the U.S. Marisa's father was aware that her DPR daughter would have to work hard to overcome the racism she would face as a "Hispanic woman" when attending an upstate New York private university on fellowship: "My dad told me when I was young that, unfortunately, you live in a world that when people see you they are going to see a minority—in two ways. They're going to see a woman and their going to see a Hispanic woman. You're going to have to work a little harder." Puerto Rican Tessa, DPR Luz's mother, believes the following: "We need to stay committed as parents…

I am not talking about Puerto Ricans or Dominicans, but about Latinos. We can't let our kids fall through the cracks." Her intra-Latinx experience as a member of an extended, intergenerational, DPR family informs how she articulates a broader intra-Latinx subjectivity, a "we," which must care for Latino youth of all backgrounds, and provide them with educational and employment opportunities. Carla, a Dominican-Puerto Rican woman in her early twenties, believes that her intra-Latinx experiences should motivate other Latinos/as to work together, across ethnic lines, on behalf of their communities: "Me being Dominican and Puerto Rican, and that I embrace both sides, it shows people that Latinos have respect, the idea of different cultures together, seeing us all work together, stick together—it is like joining forces."

Our subjects share extensive intergenerational, inter-ethnic networks of care. Tessa talked about moving from Brooklyn to Staten Island but how she continues to help support her mother living in Brooklyn like her mother did with her grandparents in Puerto Rico. Tessa's mother and aunt also helped her raise Luz. And invoking a history of collaboration between Puerto Ricans and Dominicans that others had mentioned to the researchers informally, Manny stated that "Puerto Ricans are a bridge for Dominicans."[11] In his experience, Puerto Ricans were key to his survival on the streets as a young Dominican man; Puerto Ricans helped him find jobs, and he also had a key role as an interpreter and translator for Puerto Rican elders; Puerto Ricans were also key to opening up political spaces for other Latinos, including Dominicans, in New York City's political world. And, Isabela shared many stories about how her Puerto Rican mother and her Dominican mother-in-law were the ones who together taught her how to take her of her home and her family. Fernando shared his appreciation for his Puerto Rican father-in-law, who helped him get a maintenance job working for the city after migrating from the island to New York City. People in all of the families we interviewed care for each other in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and across New York City.

Delia Fernández describes the value of similar affective ties amongst Mexicans and Puerto Ricans for these communities in Grand Rapids, Michigan in the 1960s and 1970s:

> **In the tumultuous late 1960s and 1970s new Latino migrants' political activity could have polarized the community along ethnic lines, but because the early migrants had baptized each other's children and danced alongside one another, the Mexican American and Puerto Rican communities did not fracture. (2013, 100)**

It is possible that the political potential Carla finds in telling the story of mutual care and solidarity within her intergenerational Dominican-Puerto Rican kinship network is the kind of intra-Latinx affective foundation needed to maintain Latinx communities together during what promise to be equally tumultuous times: an era of state-sanctioned, virulent, nativist, anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies.

Pushing Past The Boundaries

Our research project suggests that as scholars of Latinx, Dominican, and Puerto Rican Studies, we must not treat Dominican-Puerto Rican families as exceptional case studies in these fields; but rather we must approach Dominican-Puerto Rican families as integral components of Dominican and Puerto Rican communities in New York City. Here, within a relatively small sample, we found evidence that these intra-ethnic relationships extend to the islands, too. Latinx Studies must explicitly engage the specific challenges and experiences of these families, as well as what they offer as intimate sites of knowledge production about intra-Latinx relations and solidarity in the U.S. and the islands.

Through our examination of intergenerational Dominican-Puerto Rican kinship networks we attempt to honor their histories and offer methodological points of departure for future research. We studied DPR families not as a new phenomenon—and not only a U.S.-specific one—but rather one that has been a reality for Dominicans and Puerto Ricans on the islands and the mainland for generations. Documenting DPR kinship networks, we highlight the constant triangular movements between the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and New York City that shapes these families and their intra-Latinx Caribbean subjectivities across multiple generations. The children of Dominican-Puerto Rican families assert their dominicanidad and puertorriqueñidad, as well as intra-Latinx subjectivities, such as "plátano," "Dominican-Puerto Rican," "hispano," or "latino" in all our interviews. Following Frances Aparicio's, Delia Fernandez's, and Merida Rua's lead, by exploring how Caribbean latinidades emerge from intra-Latinx "convivencia diaria" and families (Ricourt and Danta 2003), we open more avenues of research about Dominican-Puerto Rican families and other intra-Latinx family formations. Intergenerational DPR kinship networks illustrate how Dominicans and Puerto Ricans experience cultural cross-fertilizations, build kin relations and networks for mutual care across ethnic lines, and raise children who navigate Dominican and Puerto Rican cultural registers, as well as articulate their very own intra-Latinx subjectivities.

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NOTES

[1] Dominicanos USA is a non-profit organization dedicated to registering Dominican voters in New York City.

[2] Extended families constituted by children, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and/or other relatives within a household continue to be a common social structure within Latinox communities, including Dominicans and Puerto Ricans (Hernández 2012; Landale et al. 2006).

[3] "Cuando yo era pequeño, me decian que yo era Santo Domingo, pero los compañeros me decian Santo Domingo Puerto Rico."

[4] "La diferencia entre el dominicano y el puertorriqueño es, principalmente, perspectiva de vida. Genéticamente es la misma cosa, culturalmente casi es lo mismo."

[5] "¿Cuáles son las necesidades básicas? No son las mismas, las de un dominicano y un puertorriqueño. Siempre chocan porque su concepto de vida es diferente. El dominicano va a siempre tratar de superarse donde quiera que este. El puertorriqueño siempre ha estado viendo que otras personas le manejan la vida. Nunca cogieron, nunca hemos cogido un fusil, como el dominicano, que militar o no militar tuvo que coger un fusil, y vivió una dictadura."

[6] "Si estoy en Puerto Rico, soy dominicano. Si estoy en República Dominicana, soy puertorriqueño."

[7] "Porque no me aceptan en ninguno de los dos países. En Puerto Rico me dicen que soy dominicano y en República Dominicana, que soy puertorriqueño, pues...desde pequeño esa parte la he digerido muy bien en términos de que no me afecta. Y ver más las similitudes que las diferencias. Pero, la gente le gusta ver diferencia donde no las hay." (José)

[8] "En Nueva York es más flexible porque no te preguntan. Yo ando en ambas culturas—por decirlo así—sin ningún problema. La gente se confunden. Hay gente que piensan que soy dominicano y hay otros que piensan que soy puertorriqueño. Mas bien lo que hago es relajar con eso. Aunque a veces he tenido más problemas con los dominicanos que los puertorriqueños. No me aceptan como dominicano. ¿Por qué no lo soy? No tengo el acento dominicano totalmente marcado, como si un acento determina una cultura. Muchos me dicen boricua, no tú eres puertorriqueño, no eres dominicano, como si es fácil quitarse la genética cultural que uno tiene." (José)

[9] "Los puertorriqueños son el puente para los dominicanos."

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