

# The Educational Diversity Project



Results for Diversity of Family Background (Section B) from the  
EDP Baseline Survey of Incoming Law Students  
2006-05

EDP



THE UNIVERSITY  
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*at* CHAPEL HILL



# An Empirical Study of the Relationship between Race and Educational Diversity in U.S. Law Schools: The Educational Diversity Project

Results for Diversity of Family Background (Section B)  
from the EDP Baseline Survey of Incoming Law Students  
2006-05

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This publication should be cited as:

Panter, A. T., Daye, C. E., Allen, W. A., & Wightman, L. F. (2006).

*An Empirical Study of the Relationship between Race and Educational Diversity in U.S. Law Schools: Results from Diversity of Family Background from the Baseline EDP Survey of Incoming Law Students* [Research Report: 06-05].

Chapel Hill, NC: The Educational Diversity Project.

Additional copies of this report and an executive summary may be obtained from <[www.unc.edu/edp](http://www.unc.edu/edp)>.

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## Acknowledgements

The Educational Diversity Project is a national longitudinal study investigating relations between race/ethnicity (and other person characteristics) and educational diversity in U. S. law students. This study is a collaborative effort and has dependent on numerous data sources. We could not have assembled this rich data set without the good will and efforts on many individuals.

During our project period we continued to rely on the deans, admission officers, and law school faculty continued to support this project and provide assistance when we called upon them. We could not have conducted this study without the students who completed the baseline EDP survey in Fall 2004 and the focus group participants.

Meera Deo and Michael Peterman provide constant and outstanding support to the EDP. We are thankful for their thoughtful and scholarly contributions to the project.

At the L. L. Thurstone Psychometric Laboratory, Jason Derrick, our project manager, has worked tirelessly on the project's day-to-day management, interfacing with the 64 IRBs, showing enormous conscientiousness, dedication, and judgment in all aspects of the Year 3 web survey and the project at large. Nisha Gottfredson and Rachel Upton have contributed with data analysis, review of the study components, and in the overall functioning of the project. We thank our web designer, Elizabeth Lansing, for preparing a beautiful website for our project ([www.unc.edu/edp](http://www.unc.edu/edp)) and her careful work as a research assistant throughout the project. We also extend our very special thanks to Anna Cruz, for her four undergraduate years of assistance on this project.

Dr. William Kalsbeek, the director of the Survey Research Unit at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, has provided outstanding sampling guidance. We have benefited from the excellent advice and help from Andrea Thornton at LSAC.

The opinions and conclusions contained in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of LSAC.

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June 2006

## Introduction

The *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) Supreme Court case ruled that, because diversity “promotes learning outcomes” and “better prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and society,” it is legally acceptable for institutions of higher education to narrowly tailor their admissions policies for purposes of achieving “the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body.” A major goal of the Educational Diversity Project (EDP) was to determine whether a quantifiable measure of diversity exists and to identify such a measure.

Section B of the EDP Baseline Survey assessed family background of students as they entered law school in Fall 2004. It contained questions pertaining to the general areas of: family structure and parental attributes, neighborhood context, and messages received about race from family members. More specifically, Section B asked about number of and relationship to parents/guardians, parent/guardian occupation and income, languages spoken at home, neighborhood attributes, racial socialization and early experiences with race/ethnicity, and racial/ethnic identity. This technical report describes these family characteristics of the baseline EDP sample.

In addition to describing the sample, this report summarizes how each background characteristic relates to race/ethnicity and gender. Individuals of different race/ethnicities, and of different genders, often differ significantly in terms of their family background characteristics (such as number of parents/guardians, parent/guardian occupation and income, languages spoken at home, and messages received from family about race/ethnicity) and thus provide an informative measure of student diversity.

## Results for Diversity of Family Background (Section B)

### Family Structure

#### Parental Guardians before Age 18 Years

89.7% of the students in the EDP sample had two or more parents while growing up, whereas the remaining 10.3% of students had fewer than two parents. A logistic regression evaluated the effects of race, gender, and the race by gender interaction on the number of parents/guardians while growing up. Results indicated that in comparison to White students, students from all remaining racial/ethnic groups were more likely to report having fewer than two parents/guardians while growing up ( $ES = .09$ ):

- African American ( $OR = .22$ )
- Asian/PI ( $OR = .53$ )
- Mexican ( $OR = .27$ )
- Hispanic/Latino ( $OR = .29$ )
- Multiracial of Color ( $OR = .19$ )
- Multiracial-White ( $OR = .49$ )

### **Grew Up with a Mother; Grew Up with a Father**

Nearly all students (98.1%) reported growing up with a mother, yet 90.6% reported growing up with a father. The presence of a mother was not predicted by race or gender. In contrast, students from all ethnic groups, except for Asian/PI students, had higher odds than White students of having grown up without a father ( $ES = .10$ ):

- African American ( $OR = .20$ ;  $.95 CI = .14, .29$ )
- Mexican ( $OR = .24$ ;  $.95 CI = .13, .42$ )
- Hispanic/Latino ( $OR = .29$ ;  $.95 CI = .16, .51$ )
- Multiracial of Color ( $OR = .19$ ;  $.95 CI = .10, .37$ )
- Multiracial-White ( $OR = .38$ ;  $.95 CI = .24, .62$ )

### **Relation of Mother; Relation of Father**

Among parents/guardians of respondents, 97.3% of mothers and 93.4% of fathers were biologically related to students. Results of a logistic regression showed that race, but not gender, predicted mother's ( $ES = .02$ ) and father's biological status ( $ES = .02$ ).<sup>2</sup> African American students had a lower odds of having a biologically-related mother ( $OR = .43$ ;  $.95 CI = .28, .66$ ) or father ( $OR = .43$ ;  $.95 CI = .23, .66$ ).

### **Highest Completed Education for Parental Guardians**

There was a high level of education in the EDP core sample with one in three mothers having at least some graduate school, a master's degree, or a doctorate or professional degree (32.6%) and one in two fathers having this level of education. Highest education levels of mothers and fathers were correlated .46.

A multivariate regression that tested the effects of race, gender, and the race by gender interaction showed a small, statistically significant effect for race ( $ES = .03$ ). Mothers of Mexican students and Hispanic/Latino students had significantly lower levels of education than all other racial/ethnic groups. Overall, fathers had more education than mothers. Fathers of Mexican students, Hispanic students, and Multiracial Students of Color had significantly lower levels of education than fathers of Asian/PI students, Multiracial White students, and White students.

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<sup>2</sup> Due to the very high proportion of mothers who were biological parents to the respondents, the logistic regression to predict mother's status was first conducted for race and then conducted for gender to increase stability of findings.

Table 1

Percentage of Parents with Different Educational Levels

	Mother ( <i>n</i> = 5,800)	Father ( <i>n</i> = 5,366)
1. High School or Less	18.4	15.6
2. Some College or Associates Degree	23.1	15.2
3. Bachelors Degree	25.8	22.4
4. Some Graduate School or Additional Coursework	5.2	4.0
5. Masters Degree	21.1	18.1
6. Doctorate or Professional Degree	6.3	24.8

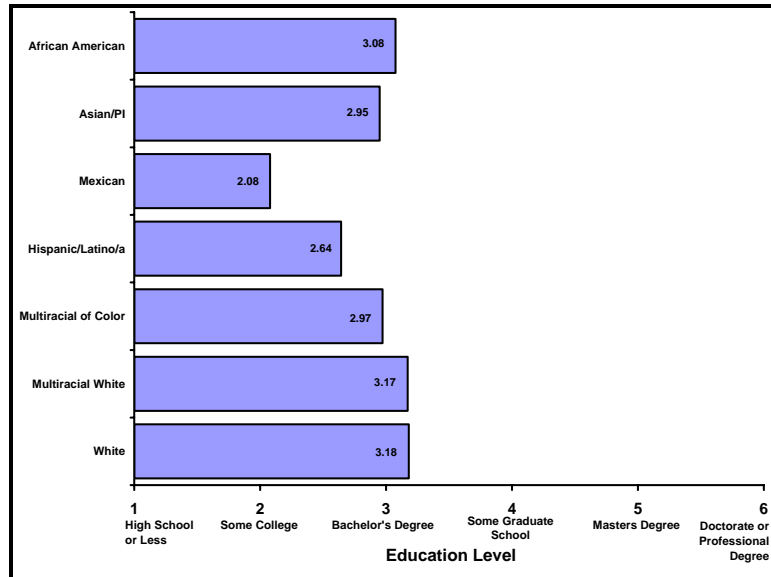


Figure 1. Mother's Highest Educational Level by Race

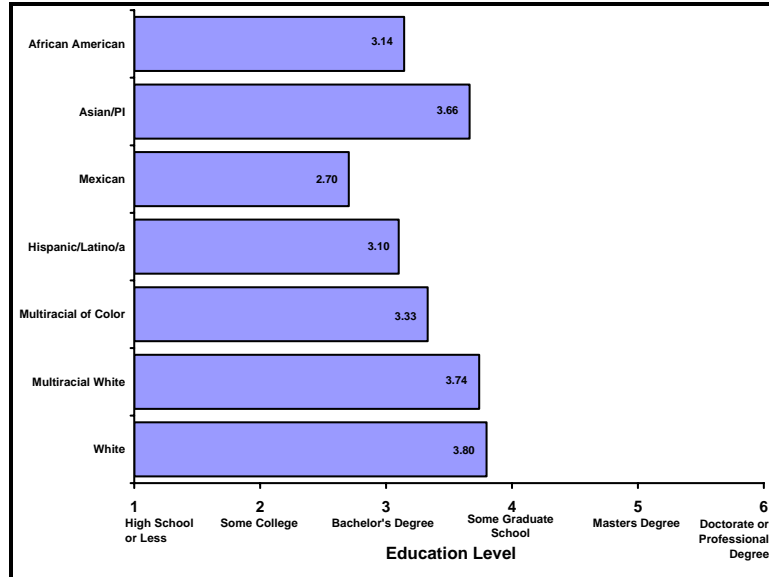


Figure 2. Father's Highest Educational Level by Race

### Longest Occupation for Parental Guardians

- Mother.** 95.1% of the responses given about mothers' occupations can be described by these seven professions: *Professional or technical worker* (40.1%), *Homemaker* (26.1%), *Clerical worker* (9.7%), *Manager or administrator* (7.3%), *Service worker* (5.4%), *Sales worker* (3.3%), and *Other* (3.3%). Logistic regression analyses were conducted for each of these seven occupations to determine whether race, gender, or their interaction predicted the occupation held by students' mother. A few small effects emerged for
  - Professional or technical worker ( $ES = .02$ )
    - Higher Odds
      - African American ( $OR = 1.48$ ;  $.95 CI = 1.09, 2.01$ )
    - Lower Odds
      - Mexican ( $OR = .42$ ;  $.95 CI = .24, .73$ )
      - Hispanic/Latino/a ( $OR = .50$ ;  $.95 CI = .30, .82$ )
      - Asian/PI ( $OR = .65$ ;  $.95 CI = .47, .89$ )
  - Homemaker ( $ES = .03$ )
    - African American ( $OR = .26$ ;  $.95 CI = .16, .43$ )
    - Women ( $OR = .80$ ;  $.95 CI = .70, .92$ )
  - Clerical worker ( $ES < .01$ )
  - Manager or administrator ( $ES = .01$ )
  - Service worker ( $ES = .02$ ) but no clear effects.
- Father.** 91.7% of the responses given about fathers' occupations can be described by these seven professions: *Professional or technical worker* (50.5%), *Manager or administrator* (14.5%), *Skilled worker or craftsman* (10.3%), *Sales worker* (5.3%), *Service worker* (4.8%), *Other* (3.6%), and *Business owner* (2.7%). Less than one percent of fathers were

homemakers (.25%). Seven logistic regression models were tested to evaluate the predictive contribution of race, gender, or their interaction on reported occupation held by fathers of students. There were no major effects for these occupational categories ( $ES = .01$  for all categories). A small effect ( $ES = .02$ ) emerged for service worker, such that fathers of students of color had higher odds of holding a service worker post than fathers of White students.

- Service worker ( $ES = .02$ )
  - Mexican ( $OR = 3.63$ ; .95  $CI = 1.59, 8.28$ )
  - Hispanic/Latino/a ( $OR = 2.89$ ; .95  $CI = 1.28, 6.53$ )
  - Asian/PI ( $OR = 2.09$ ; .95  $CI = 1.15, 3.79$ )
  - African American ( $OR = 2.08$ ; .95  $CI = 1.05, 4.13$ )

## Family Context

### Language at Home and Spoken English

19.6% of the respondents in the EDP core sample had a language other than English spoken in their home while growing up. Out of these individuals, 6.1% indicated that they spoke the other language better than English and 15.0% stated that they spoke the other language equally well as compared to English. The top other languages that were listed as being spoken in the home were: Asian (26.7%), Latin American (26.0%), Eastern European/Slavic (9.5%), Middle Eastern (9.5%), Indian (9.4%), European (8.6%), Pacific Islands (4.0%), and African (2.7%).

Speaking a language other than English in the home was strongly predicted by race ( $ES = .53$ ), but not by gender or the interaction between race and gender. Consistent with Chapter 4 findings about international differences, students of color (compared to White students) had higher odds of growing up in a home where a language other than English was spoken:

- Asian/PI ( $OR = 95.17$ ;  $.95 CI = 62.98, 143.81$ )
- Hispanic/Latino ( $OR = 68.39$ ;  $.95 CI = 39.37, 118.79$ )
- Mexican ( $OR = 51.83$ ;  $.95 CI = 29.77, 90.23$ )
- Multiracial of Color ( $OR = 32.07$ ;  $.95 CI = 17.22, 59.71$ )
- Multiracial White ( $OR = 2.89$ ;  $.95 CI = 1.79, 4.67$ )
- African American ( $OR = 2.67$ ;  $.95 CI = 1.67, 4.27$ )

An ordinal regression was conducted to examine the contribution of race, gender, and their interaction in predicting the ordered categories regarding speaking a language other than English (*Speak the other language better than English, Speak the other language the same as English, Speak English better than the other language*). Race, but not gender or the interaction between race and gender, predicted who spoke English better than the second language ( $ES = .06$ ). Out of the students who had a language other than English spoken at home while growing up, Multiracial students and White students indicated that they spoke English better than the other language.

### Estimated Family Income

Students described their family income growing up in two ways. First, they reported their family's income during high school compared to that of a typical American family. They used a five-point scale ranging from *Far Below Average* (1) to *Far Above Average* (5). Second, they used a nine-point scale from *Below \$10,000* (1) to *Over \$500,000* (9) to estimate the dollar figure that best described their household income at that time. Students reported slightly above-average household incomes ( $M = 3.33$ ,  $SD = .92$  on five point item), which corresponded to an income between \$99,999 and \$149,999. 47.5% of the students reported that their family's household income was *above average* or *far above average*, whereas only 17.3% of students reported a *below average* or *far below average* household income.

These two income estimates correlate very highly ( $r = .72$ ).

A multivariate regression model that included race, gender, and their interaction as predictors of the two income outcome variables revealed statistically significant effects associated with race, but not gender or the race by gender interaction ( $ES = .06$ ). Race more strongly predicted the

comparative income measure ( $ES = .06$ ) than the ordered income estimate ( $ES = .03$ ).

For both income assessments, Mexican students reported significantly lower family income estimates compared to Asian/PI students, Multiracial White students, and White students.

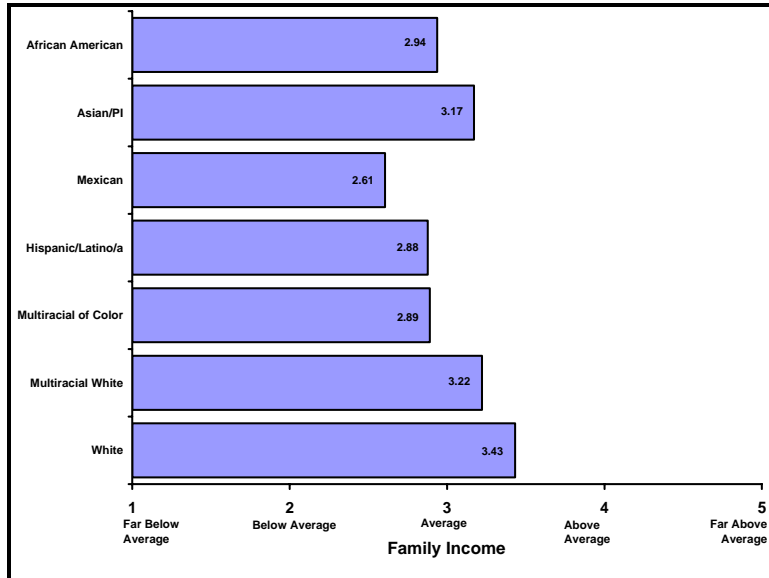


Figure 3. Comparative Judgment about Family Income Growing Up as a Function of Race

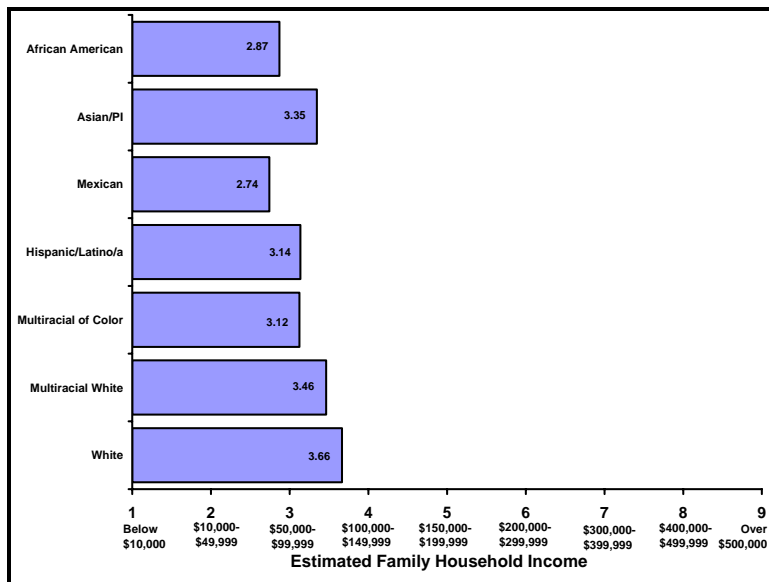


Figure 4. Estimated Family Household Income in Dollar Ranges as a Function of Race

## Messages about Race

### Intergroup Contact

- **Contact with Same Racial/Ethnic Groups While Growing Up** (three items;  $\alpha = .73$ ). Respondents were asked to indicate their exposure to their own ethnic/racial group growing up using three statements. They responded whether they experienced the statement, did not experience the statement, or do not know whether they experienced the statement. Because the *do not know* categories were very small, for these analyses we created dichotomous items where students either endorsed the statement or indicated they did not know or did not experience the option.
  1. When I was growing up, most of my neighbors were of my same racial or ethnic background.
  2. At my high school, most of the other students were of my same racial or ethnic background.
  3. During my high school years, most of my close friends were of my same racial or ethnic background.

Most students indicated that they were the same race/ethnicity as their neighbors (73.2%), high school classmates (61.1%), and close friends (71.1%).

We conducted separate logistic regression analyses for each contact item with race, gender, and their interaction as predictors of whether or not the statement was experienced. Race strongly predicted whether or not students indicated that their neighbors were of the same race ( $ES = .31$ ), the students in their high school were of the same race ( $ES = .23$ ), and their close friends were of the same race ( $ES = .14$ ). As expected, students of color were far less likely than White students to have experienced these three contexts. Among students of color, Asian/PI students and Multiracial Students of Color had the lower odds of having experienced contact with others from the same racial or ethnic background compared:

#### Neighbors

- Asian/PI ( $OR = .04$ ;  $.95\ CI = .02, .05$ )
- Multiracial of Color ( $OR = .06$ ;  $.95\ CI = .03, .12$ )
- Hispanic/Latino/a ( $OR = .14$ ;  $.95\ CI = .09, .21$ )
- Multiracial White ( $OR = .16$ ;  $.95\ CI = .11, .22$ )
- African American ( $OR = .18$ ;  $.95\ CI = .13, .24$ )
- Mexican ( $OR = .22$ ;  $.95\ CI = .13, .35$ )

#### High School

- Asian/PI ( $OR = .07$ ;  $.95\ CI = .05, .10$ )
- Multiracial of Color ( $OR = .12$ ;  $.95\ CI = .07, .24$ )
- African American ( $OR = .14$ ;  $.95\ CI = .10, .20$ )
- Hispanic/Latino/a ( $OR = .22$ ;  $.95\ CI = .15, .35$ )
- Multiracial White ( $OR = .29$ ;  $.95\ CI = .21, .40$ )
- Mexican ( $OR = .34$ ;  $.95\ CI = .21, .53$ )

### Close Friends

- Multiracial of Color ( $OR = .14$ ;  $.95 CI = .08, .26$ )
- Asian/PI ( $OR = .18$ ;  $.95 CI = .13, .24$ )
- Multiracial White ( $OR = .23$ ;  $.95 CI = .16, .31$ )
- Hispanic/Latino/a ( $OR = .25$ ;  $.95 CI = .16, .38$ )
- Mexican ( $OR = .37$ ;  $.95 CI = .23, .60$ )
- African American ( $OR = .47$ ;  $.95 CI = .34, .64$ )

### Racial Socialization

The EDP survey included four items ( $\alpha = .84$ ) that reflected the extent to which respondents' parents engaged in racial socializing behaviors, while the students were growing up. Respondents were asked to use a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from *Never* (1) to *Very Often* (5) to indicate how often: their parents encouraged them to be proud of their ethnicity, promoted their awareness of their culture and history, and talked about the value of diversity and ethnic/cultural bias.

Race and to a small extent gender predicted students' mean scores on racial socialization ( $ES = .12$ ). African American students ( $M = 3.63$ ) and Multiracial Students of Color ( $M = 3.52$ ) reported that their parents gave them messages related to racial socialization more often than all other groups, especially Multiracial White students ( $M = 2.95$ ) and White students ( $M = 2.63$ ). Women ( $M = 2.97$ ) received these messages more often than men ( $M = 2.69$ ).

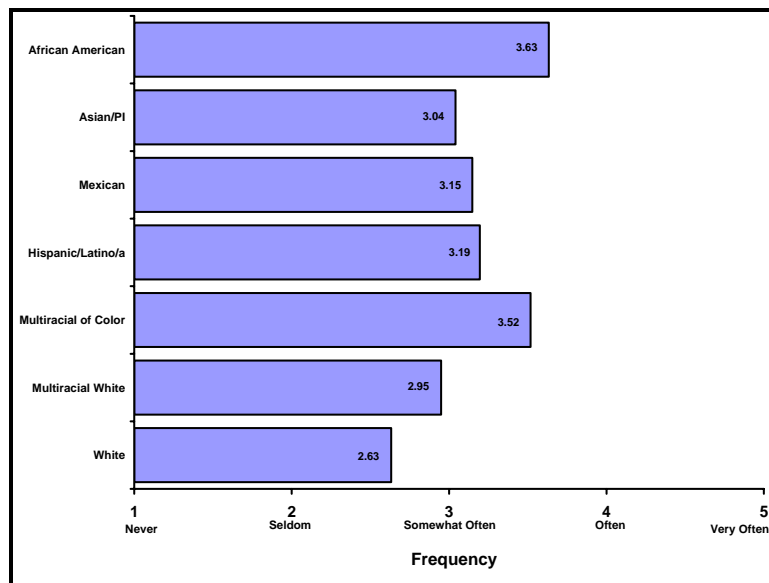


Figure 5. Racial Socialization as a Function of Race

### Ethnic Identification

Three items were combined ( $\alpha = .73$ ) to express the extent to which respondents identify with their ethnicity, feel close in ideas and feelings about things to others with the same ethnicity, and want to spend time with individuals sharing their ethnicity. On average, the sample felt that they identified somewhat closely with their racial/ethnic group ( $M = 3.12$ ), were somewhat close to ideas and feelings to others with the same ethnicity ( $M = 2.86$ ), and wanted to spend some time

with others of the same ethnicity ( $M = 3.11$ ). Race, but not gender or the race by gender interaction, predicted ethnic identity ( $ES = .05$ ).

### **Common Fate**

Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they believed what happens generally to people of their same racial/ethnic group in this country has something to do with what happens in their life. They responded *no* (32.4%), *yes* (43.3%), or *don't know* (24.2%). A multinomial regression was used to predict these three possible responses using race, gender, and their interaction as predictors. Race and gender predicted responses to this item about destinies linked to others from the same racial/ethnic group as their own ( $ES = .07$ ).

#### **Yes, Higher Odds**

- African American ( $OR = 5.60$ ;  $.95\ CI = 3.61, 8.69$ )
- Multiracial of Color ( $OR = 5.48$ ;  $.95\ CI = 2.27, 13.21$ )
- Asian/PI ( $OR = 2.94$ ;  $.95\ CI = 2.05, 4.21$ )
- Women ( $OR = 1.29$ ;  $.95\ CI = 1.12, 1.49$ )

#### **Yes, Lower Odds**

- Hispanic/Latino/a ( $OR = .46$ ;  $.95\ CI = .28, .78$ )

#### **Don't Know**

- Asian/PI ( $OR = 1.85$ ;  $.95\ CI = 1.21, 2.82$ )
- Women ( $OR = 1.61$ ;  $.95\ CI = 1.37, 1.90$ )

Out of the people who said that they believed in a common fate for their racial/ethnic group, 9.4% indicated that they did it *not very much*, 65.1% said that they believed in it *some*, and 25.5% indicated that they believed in it *a lot*.

### **Relation between Common Fate and Ethnic Identity**

Respondents who stated that they believe in common destiny with their own ethnic/racial group had lower ethnic identity ( $M = 2.90$ ) compared to respondents did not know whether they believed in common fate ( $M = 3.02$ ), and respondents who said they believed in a common fate with their own racial/ethnic group ( $M = 3.11$ ;  $ES = .03$ ).

## **Summary of Major Findings**

The EDP national survey findings showed a number of areas in which a law student's family context while growing up varied as a function race/ethnicity and sometimes gender.

### **Family Structure**

Family structure differed as a function of race. For example, African American students had higher odds of having fewer guardians, had lower odds of having a father, and had higher odds of having mother who was a step parent, an adoptive parent, or other guardian.

### **Parental Attributes and Communications**

Students' parents varied in their educational and occupational attainment, and this attainment was predicted by race, particularly for education. Fathers of Mexican students, Hispanic students, and Multiracial Students of Color had significantly lower levels of education than fathers of Asian/PI students, Multiracial White students, and White students.

Parents also communicated messages about race and the importance of diversity (e.g., racial socialization) to a different extent due to race. African American students reported that their parents engaged in racial socialization more frequently than White students. Small gender effects emerged with women reporting that their parents engaged in racial socialization more than men.

### **Household, Neighborhood, and Social Context**

Compared to White law students, students of color had higher odds of growing up in a home where a language other than English was spoken and had higher odds of reporting that spoke the "other" language better than English. In addition, estimates of family income varied as a function of race, with Mexican students reported significantly lower family income estimates compared to Asian/PI students, Multiracial White students, and White students. As expected, there were large effects associated with the odds of students of color having neighbors of their same race, close friends of their same race, and going to high school with students of their same race. Students of color were far less likely than White students to have experienced these three contexts. These findings point to experiences with language, resources, and social support that vary as a function of one's racial/ethnic background.

### **Student Ethnic Identity**

A student's ethnic identity and perceived tie to others sharing the same ethnicity was predicted by race. African American students, Multiracial Students of Color, and Asian/PI students had higher odds compared to White students of having a strong ethnic identity and feeling strongly tied to the destiny of individuals of their own ethnicity. Hispanic/Latino/a did not express the common fate principle as did other students of color.

### **Areas Not Showing Effects Due to Race or Gender**

Parental occupation was only weakly predicted by race.

## Conclusion

EDP Baseline Survey respondents are diverse in many respects. Law students in our sample have experienced a wide array of family contexts. While some students originated from upper-class homes and neighborhoods, others had very different experiences. These varied family contexts help contribute to the diversity of the student bodies represented in law schools around the country.

In addition to describing the baseline sample, this report summarized how race/ethnicity is related to a variety of family background characteristics. Results reported from section B indicate that race/ethnicity predicts many facets of educational diversity, including parental income and occupation, number of parents/guardians, racial/ethnic identity and socialization, and languages spoken at home.

This report supports the “minor premise” of the *Grutter v. Bollinger* decision; that is, racial diversity contributes to educational diversity as defined by student characteristics.